ISSUE 7 MAY/JUNE 1991 £1.95

PC Leisure

The complete guide to PC entertainment



F29 RETALIATOR INSIDE

EXCLUSIVE REVIEW

OUTSIDE

FULLY PLAYABLE MISSION ON DISK

UPSIDE DOWN

TURNS THE IDEA OF FLIGHT SIMS ON ITS HEAD

OUT OF THIS WORLD

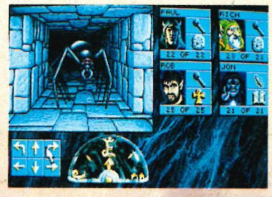
SPACE QUEST IV

FREE FLYING LESSONS

JET FIGHTER II COMP

PUTS YOU IN THE HOT SEAT

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER



DUNGEON ADVENTURES RISE TO NEW DEPTHS

PLUS..

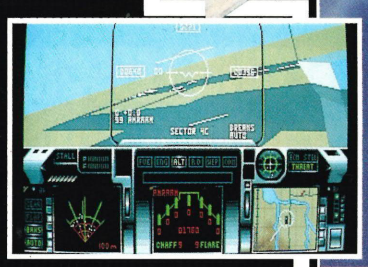
Das Boot, Corporation, Vaxine, Lexicross and a whole new budget section

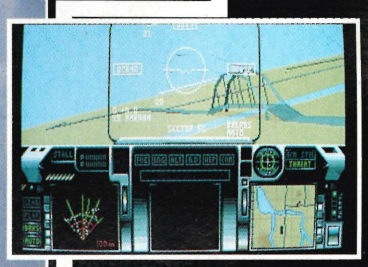
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F29

RETALIATOR

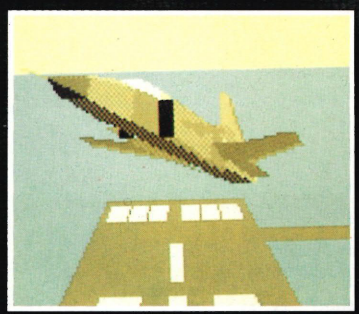




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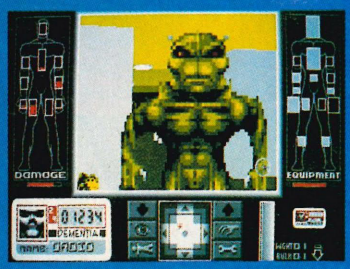
IBM / AMSTRAD PC
& COMPATIBLES



Ocean's latest game, F29 Retaliator. Is this the perfect fusion between flight sim and shoot-em-up. See page 52...



Eye of the Beholder from US Gold/SSI gives a whole new meaning to the world of underground adventures. Grab your sword and turn to page 68



The long-awaited Corporation from Core hits the PC. Is it as good as the lads claim? All the answers on page 60



Clear the bridge and crash dive in Das Boot – not something to do with leather, but the latest sub sim to date from Mindscape. Note for Jurgen Prochnow fans, this is not a license of the TV series!



CD on PCs gives you the opportunity not only to explore new graphic possibilities, but does it all with CD audio sound – and learn about pussycats into the bargain.

Melany Costain

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PC Leisure

May/June 1991

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Britain's only PC magazine dedicated to entertainment software. We reckon that the PC is now the Number One choice for gamesplayers around the world – and if you're either contemplating joining the PC Games Brotherhood, or are already a member, then THIS is the magazine for YOU! We spare no effort or expense in bringing you the best. Now read on...!

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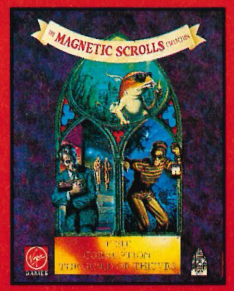
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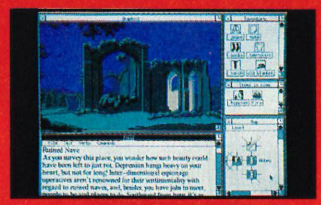




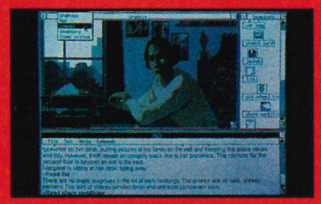
THREE INTO ONE WILL GO!

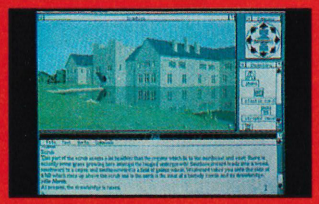
THE MAGNETIC SCROLLS COLLECTION (VOL. 1)

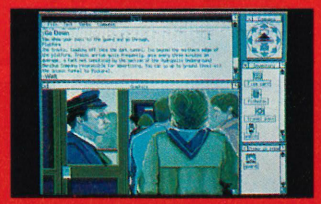












IBM PC VGA SCREEN SHOTS SHOWN

Three Magnetic Scrolls' hits in one package - now enhanced to run under WONDERLAND's Magnetic Windows game environment.

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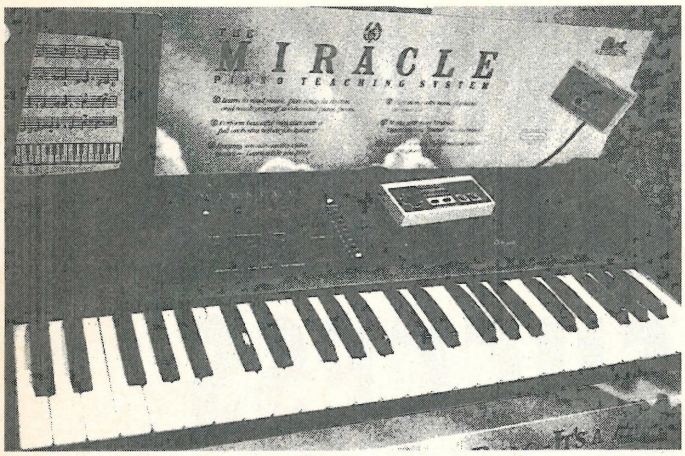
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IBM PC (VGA, MCGA, Tandy, EGA)	**£34.95**
Amiga (1 megabyte only)	**£29.99**
Atari ST (1 megabyte only)	**£29.99**

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Virgin GAMES CONCEPTS IMMACULATE

Magnetic Scrolls



NEWS

This Issue... Sierra UK flexes its muscles ● Sound Master II ● Simis MiG follow-up: Harrier ● Sid Meier's Civilisation I Miracle ● 21stC Entertainment...and much, much more

MIRACLE KEYBOARD SOUNDS OUT ON PC

The Miracle is a new package from Mindscape which should have even the more ham-fisted of us thumping out Chopsticks on the piano. It's a computer-based piano tutor, which Mindscape believes, takes away much of the drudgery of finger exercises and note learning, while still taking you from a raw beginner who wouldn't know middle C if it slapped you, to around Grade 5 standard once you've completed the course. The package comprises software, a full-size synthesiser and cables. The software will take you through a course of lessons, introducing you to musical notation and timing via the computer-generated metronome gradually, with the emphasis on learning to play real tunes from as early a stage as possible. Alongside the set lessons, it features a range of auxiliary 'practice' sessions, revision exercises, and a bank of tunes for you to play with it. Notation is presented on-screen, with the software detecting whether you hit the correct notes on the keyboard. The keyboard has 128 different instrument sounds and rhythms programmed into it - you can choose to play your pieces with full orchestral backing if you like, or simply play your own compositions: you don't have to be following the on-screen prompts all the time. The Miracle should be available for PCs in August. Prices have yet to be finalised, but Mindscape hopes it will cost around £150, which compares well with the cost of conventional music lessons.

WORLD BUILDING FOR BEGINNERS

The 3D Construction Kit (featured in PC Leisure, issue 6) will come packaged with a tutorial on VHS video, as well as a complete mini-adventure to inspire you to create your own. For anyone who for some unaccountable reason doesn't have issue 6, the 3D Construction Kit is a utility which enables you to create your own 3D worlds, either for fun, or to develop your own graphic adventure style games - by selecting icon-driven menus, rather than typing in computer code. Publisher Domark has decided that including a video tutorial of the Kit's basic concepts (as well as a conventional manual) would be the best way to ease users into understanding how it all works. Further support for buyers will also come in the form of the 3D Construction Kit User's Club. Registered users will get a bi-monthly newsletter with advice, hints and tips on using the Kit.

Meanwhile developers Incentive have launched a new company, Dimension International, to market Superscape, a professional version of 3DCK. Boss Ian Andrew hopes to sell the product into the virtual reality and TV graphics markets, joining the likes of Sense8 and VPL, whose activities we reported on last issue. Apparently the package offers an environment resolution of 1mm, up to the 'size of Great Britain'!

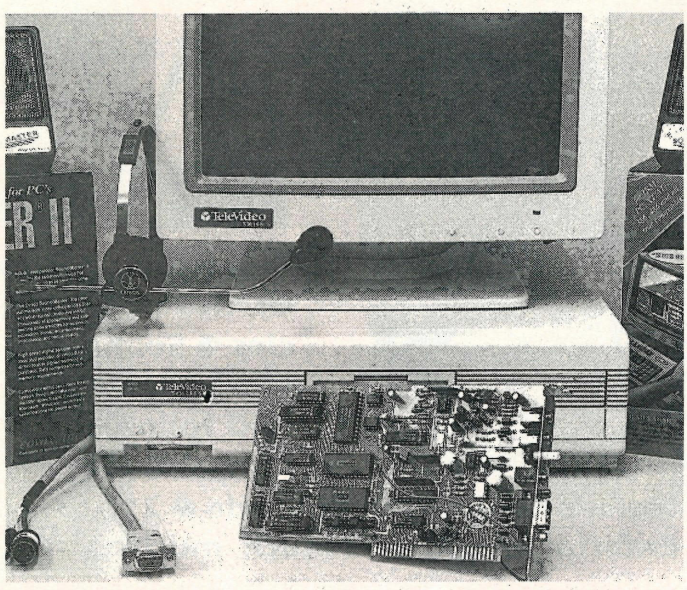
CINEMAWARE CLOSES ITS DOORS

One of the most highly-rated names in PC gaming, Cinemaware, has undergone some fundamental changes. The US company, known for its 'interactive movie' style games, has been effectively disbanded, although the brand name will live on, while its boss, Bob Jacob, has formed a new outfit, Acme Interactive. Last year, Cinemaware appeared to have its future worked out nicely (see PC Leisure, issue 2). There was cash from Japanese giant NEC, an embryonic European set-up in Ireland, and a roster of plans for future releases. Then Jacob was approached by a US movie studio with a view to acquisition. "We ended up spending six months doing nothing. We'd known for some time that the second half of 1990 would be quiet as far as product releases were concerned, and we'd thought we might need to make some staff cutbacks, but with the negotiations going on we couldn't do anything on that front - or the studio wouldn't be buying the resources they thought they would." Six months later the negotiations fell through, leaving Cinemaware still with its high overheads and some product delays. "We were still running as a big company - our rent was £11,000 per month, for heaven's sake." Consequently, Jacob has cut his losses, wound down Cinemaware and set up Acme Interactive with 12 staff, all ex-Cinemaware. The Irish operation has been closed. Acme's first task is to complete work on unfinished Cinemaware products, which will be released, as previously, in this country through Mirrorsoft. These include TV Sports Hockey (which means ice hockey in the US) and Baseball. Further Acme releases will also bear the Cinemaware label in Europe.

HEWSON REBORN

Hewson is dead; long live 21st Century Entertainment. One of the first publishers to establish itself in the games market, Hewson Software, went into receivership following withdrawal of funding from its bank. Its eponymous founder, Andrew Hewson, has been backed by local businessmen in Hewson's home territory of Berkshire to buy Hewson's assets and form a new company, 21st Century Entertainment. This means that development on unfinished Hewson products can now be continued, and should see the light of day later this year under the new name.

The deal also prompts speculation about the future of classic games titles like Uridium and Paradroid, which had been tipped for success on Nintendo but never made it...



TALKING SOUND

Covox has recently launched the successor to its Sound Master soundboard in the UK. Sound Master II is fully Ad-Lib compatible and has a number of extra modules for anyone wishing to explore the potential of computer-generated sound and music more fully than simply getting tunes and sound effects with your games. A MIDI-compatible interface is included in the package (and a MIDI cable comes in the box as well), plus a DMA digitiser with a maximum sampling rate of 25KHz. It also comes with voice recognition software, and a music synthesiser - play up to nine sounds with five different backing rhythms on your keyboard. The board itself is an 8-bit card so it should fit any PC from XT-style upwards.

Sound Master II is priced at £179.95 plus VAT; further details are available from Covox Europe on (0983) 864674.

TIT BYTES...

COCKTEL VISION has produced a CD-ROM version of its Space Shuttle Simulator, to be published in the UK by Electronic Zoo. Enhancements include digitised footage of US space missions, including Neil Armstrong's historic first steps on the moon, plus the "one small step for man ..." speech.

*

FOLLOWING the release of its retrospective compilation, Magnetic Scrolls is working on a role playing game for release at the end of this year, and we can expect to see another Magnetic Scrolls Collection next year.

*

STUCK in the depths of an Infocom adventure? To accompany the re-release of ten Infocom classics, Mastertronic is putting together two volumes of hints and tips to be published in the autumn. The first book will deal with the first five adventures relaunched by Infocom/Mastertronic earlier this year: Hitchhiker's Guide, Zork 1, Wishbringer, Planetfall and Leather Goddesses of Phobos. Volume two will cover the rest. Each one should cost £9.99.

*

ACCLAIMED PROGRAMMING TEAM GRAFTGOLD is working on a strategy game for Virgin, to be released in September. Better known for its arcade-style games, Graftgold plans to make Realms playable and accessible to convert arcaders over to strategy techniques. Set in a fantasy world, Realms has you fighting for the control and welfare of five races over five different terrains against up to 16 computer-controlled opponents.

*

TITUS has licensed the cult movie The Blues Brothers for an arcade-style computer game which will appear in October. You'll be able to take the parts of Dan Aykroyd and John Belushi as they create mayhem in the style of the film. Price will be around £25.

SIERRA ON LINE FOR SUCCESS

"The PC is set to become the leading games format in Europe within 18 months." So says Peter Jones, head of the newly-established European division of US giant Sierra. He also believes that PC gamers are increasingly playing adventure, strategy and simulation games out of preference, leaving the arcade-style shoot 'em ups to console buyers.

If he's right, Sierra is in an excellent position to tap the market, with its strong catalogue of adventures, and simulations through its sister label Dynamix. Jones's task is to set up Sierra Europe as a publishing force, and to establish the US parent's high standards of customer support in the European division. Customer support for leisure software is not usually very high on publishers' priority lists, but in the US, Sierra has around 750,000 registered users, who can contact the company for advice, help, or simply to talk about its games either by telephone or bulletin board. Sierra Europe's first move was to train two members of their team to staff its helpline. The European bulletin board number is also up and running on (0734) 304227, with an automated hints and tips phone line on (0734) 304004. Conventional telephone support is provided on (0734) 303171. You shouldn't expect to see any great changes in the Sierra style just because they are now more accessible in the UK. The company intends to stay squarely in its established market for strategy adventures, and there are at present no plans to begin sourcing product from UK or continental programmers. Unfortunately, there is also little prospect of the games being available more cheaply now that the company has its own UK office - at an average of £35, Sierra games have always been on the expensive side. "We do need to look at our pricing closely," said Peter Jones. "But you have to remember that the titles aren't produced by one guy bashing out the code. The development costs are more akin to a software variant of the Disney studios: King's Quest V cost a total of $1.5 million, for instance.

"Sierra will have 13-14 people in a development team, and the costs are going up all the time. To be honest, I think you're more likely to see the price of premium games software rise rather than fall over the next 12 months. But then, you're not talking about a product that will keep someone amused for a few hours before they go out and buy the next one, but something that will keep customers entertained for six months to a year."

Sierra's development work in the CD-ROM field is also far advanced. Many of its existing titles have CD-ROM versions in development, and these, Jones is keen to stress, are specially written CD-ROM versions with digitised speech and sound effects and so on, rather than simply being the original game code on a different storage medium. "I think we're the only company that is seriously developing for CD-ROM now. When that market opens up, we'll be there."

Although CD-ROM appears to have been 'coming soon' for ages, Jones believes its time is almost here. "Once it becomes a mass market in the US, it will hit Europe within 12 months. The technology gap between the States and over here is narrowing all the time. I think that within three years CD-ROM will be established as a software format." Rather sooner than that, Sierra fans can expect to see three brand new titles from the company in the next few months: Heart of China, Longbow, an adventure centred around Robin Hood (why are Americans so keen on tales of Merrie England?), and Dynamix has an as yet untitled World War II simulation coming out at the end of the year.

THE TOP TEN PC GAMES

(Compiled By Gallup)

1	COLOSSUS CHESS X	CDS	£24.99
2	MOONWALKER	KIXX	7.99
3	SIM EARTH	OCEAN	34.99
4	WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD	KIXX	7.99
5	DEFENDER OF THE CROWN	MIRROR IMAGE	9.99
6	PLANETFALL	MASTERTRONIC	9.99
7	BATTLE OF BRITAIN	USG/LUCASFILM	29.99
8	ELECTROCOP	US GOLD	29.97
9	GAUNTLET 3	US GOLD	29.97
10	KICK OFF 2	ANCO	29.99

We can learn some interesting lessons from this month's charts. First, the continued success of Battle of Britain is good circumstantial evidence for the likely appearance of Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe in the number 1 slot as soon as it appears this summer. Provided it isn't riddled with bugs (highly unlikely) then it's a game to start saving for.

Kick Off 2 languishes at the bottom of the charts and is powerful testimony to the fate that awaits any smash hit which gets anything less than the 100% treatment in its conversion to the PC. Anco are planning upgrades to the Kick Off system for the PC, so we can only live in hope.

Then there's the phenomenal number of budget bargains available – and the apparent willingness of PC gamesters to fork out for them. PC owners are apparently people of taste who prefer the extended gameplay of Leaderboard, even if it is a bit dated, over the empty attractions of Mutant Ninja Turtles...

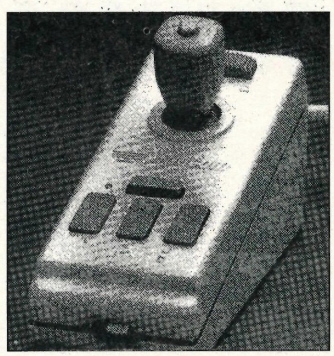
...Or DO they?? Last month, it was the Turtles in number one place. So the lesson has to be that PC owners are completely unpredictable.

One thing we can say, however – these titles clearly indicate that there are many PC owners who are entering the games market for the first time, hence the high sales of vintage classics like Defender of the Crown and Gauntlet III, all of which have already appeared on other formats.

OPTIMUM CONTROL

A background in manufacturing precision controllers and switches for industrial use and for wheelchairs means that US company CH Products can make high claims for the accuracy and reliability of its joysticks. The company bandies around terms such as "linear potentiometers rated at four million life cycles" and talks about the four different blends of plastics used for durability; more accessibly, CH's Dan Hayes claims its products last 100 times longer than the competition. Its standard PC joystick, the FlightStick, should be available here in June, but you will pay a premium for all this engineering expertise: the expected price is £64.95. "We need to get the message across that you are buying a quality instrument here," said Hayes. Current UK contact for the company with further details is Optima International on (0494) 488551.

A MOUSE ON YOUR LAPTOP



The ICONtroller is a cross between a joystick and mouse designed by Suncom Technologies specifically for use with laptops. The ICONtroller fits snugly on the side of the portable with a Velcro strip, without adding greatly to the space and weight. Movement of the control knob can be set at three different speeds and it has three mouse-style function buttons. There is also a top switch which is user-programmable. It's also both Microsoft and Mouse Systems compatible so should work with most mouse-using applications. Furthermore, an extension cord is supplied so that you can detach it from your laptop and use it with your desktop machine as well. The ICONtroller costs £69.99; Call Suncom on (0453) 753565 for further details.

ENCYCLOPAEDIAS GET FOOT IN THE DOOR

While many people agree that CD-ROM is the way forward for software - and the PC is one of the few machines that actually has CD-ROM drives and software available for it - progress has been slow in the UK, compared to the US, where there are an estimated 300,000 CD-ROM users. One of the latest firms to cross the Atlantic with CD-ROM products is Britannica Software, the programming arm of Encyclopaedia Britannica (American-owned, despite the name). Britannica has Compton's Multimedia Encyclopaedia and a World Atlas on its books (actually available, as opposed to in development), and now holds the rights to the Guinness Disk of Records, as well as a CD-ROM authoring system which Britannica believes could provide a real stepping stone for companies wishing to produce CD-ROMware. The system, the Software Publishing Toolkit, provides search and replace and cross-referencing facilities for information stored on CD, and is based on the software Britannica used to put together Compton's Multimedia Encyclopaedia. It enables would-be CD publishers with suitable mass information to convert this data on to the electronic format.

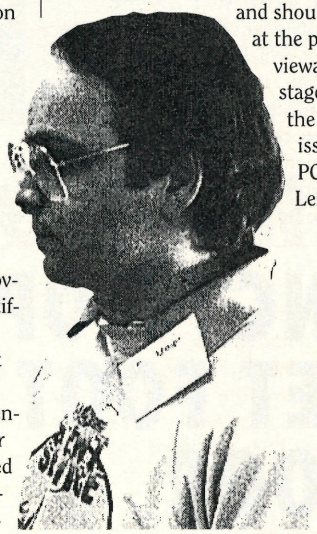
RESPRAY

If you can ill-afford to splash out £30-odd for brand new games, you'll be pleased to hear that more and more publishers are re-releasing their golden oldies at budget prices. The latest company to delve into the realms of its back catalogue is Domark, which is repackaging earlier hits such as Klax and Trivial Pursuit under the Respray label for just £7.99. The first Respray titles to reach the shops will be Hard Drivin', Licence to Kill, Xybots, TP and Dragon Spirit, which should be available now. Further releases will come through in the autumn: as well as Klax, Escape From the Planet of the Robot Monsters and Cyberball are due for the budget treatment.

FROM RAILROAD TYCOON TO CIVILISATION

Railroad Tycoon programmer Sid Meier is working on a new game for Microprose, which will give you the challenge of shaping the destiny of mankind. Civilisation kicks off with you as the head of a team of four adventurers in 3000BC. Your task is to use your skills to build up a civilisation throughout the ages to the present day. Along with building relationships and alliances as the population grows, you must also make sure enough food is grown and that progress is made to discover fire, the wheel and, later, scientific breakthroughs. Comparisons with Sim Earth seem obvious, but Microprose says that where Sim Earth concentrated on environmental factors to create its worlds over time, Civilisation will be concerned with mankind and human endeavour. At present, four game scenarios are planned for inclusion: you can begin your population centres in Mesopotamia, North America, you can start with the whole world and let it develop around you, or play with computer-generated worlds.

Civilisation is due out in October, and should be at the previewable stage for the next issue of PC Leisure.



Is the future of mankind too bizarre to comtemplate? Sid Meier watches a virtual reality demonstration at a recent conference in California

RIP CRL OK CDTV

On-Line Entertainment has risen from the ashes of the bankrupt CRL company. It is planning to release a number of games expressly for the CDTV over the coming months. A few 16–bit games will also be released, but these are expected to be less and less as the CDTV takes off. Women in Motion and Psycho Killer will be out in June. "CDTV will take off," says On-Line boss Clement Chambers "but we're not expecting it to replace the traditional market."

Meanwhile, Women In Motion appears to be encountering some opposition in the States, where the game has had the female figures 'whitened out'.

PALACE MOVES COURT

Palace Software, publisher of Dragon's Breath and Demoniak, is under new management. French company Titus has bought the software division from the film and video company in a deal which according to Palace boss Pete Stone leaves Palace running as virtually an autonomous company. Following the deal, Palace will continue development work on titles using its Pure Fiction game system, and maintain its UK publishing link with Silmarils: a Silmarils title, Metal Mutant, a futuristic shoot 'em up, should be in the shops in next few weeks for £25.99. It has also signed up French programming team Microids, and will release Swap, a puzzle game based on coloured tiles, and Sliders, a sort of cross-country air hockey. Both of these are due out in July at £25.99.

CONTRIVER PAKS IT IN.

In the space efficient age of the PC, huge amounts of information can be stored on one disk, but it sometimes takes more than one desk to store space-busting items like printers and the yards and yards of paper that they feed on. Contriver now sell a Printer Pak which should contribution to reducing clutter on a desk. The stand keeps the printer paper under the printer, and effectively gives you parts of your desk back that you may not have seen before. The Contriver Printer Pak has been available in France for sometime Where it has been very successful, but it has only just been launched in the UK. It consists of a printer stand, a cable and over 100 yards of computer paper. Contriver boss, Adolfo Giannini, commented "Our Printer Pak is a must for anyone who uses a printer." I'll bet he did, but other than using a stout carboard box with a whole in the back, there's not much else you can use for this sort of price. The Contriver Pak retails for £19.99. and the printer stand reatails at £14.99. Contriver can be contacted on 0280 822803, at Unit 3, Buckingham Industrial park, Buckingham, MK18 1UH.

NEWS COURT

CodeMasters' legal battle between Nintendo and giant US toy firm Galoob has finally gone to court. The row centers around a software "cheating" device called Game Genie, developed by a small UK publisher for the NES console. The Genie enables novices to master NES software in minutes rather than hours. Galoob - a $200 million firm behind hit toy lines such as Micro Machines - intended to launch the product last year, but when it learned of the product's existence, Nintendo issued an injunction, claiming copyright infringement. A hearing began in San Francisco on the 22nd of April and Nintendo are already taking precautions against losing the case and has placed a $100 million bond with the court which will remain untouched until the final outcome. This is sure to be heavily contested as the potential market for the Genie is enormous. NES claims that it creates "derivative" works of Nintendo copywrited games in violation of US law. We are waiting eagerly for a PC version!



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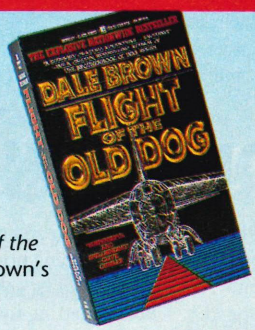
MEGAFORTRESS



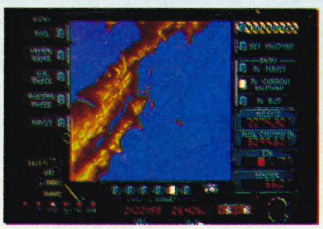
Electronic Countermeasures



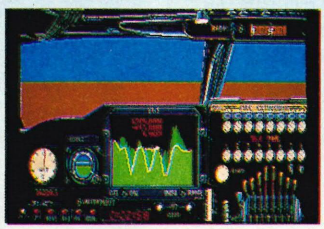
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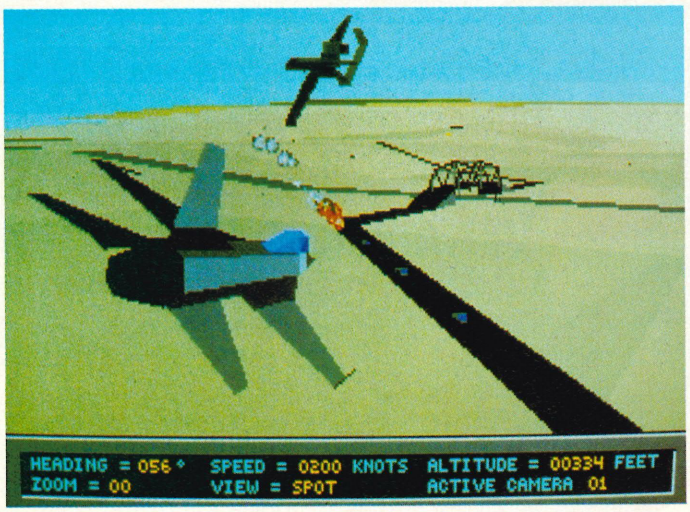
FALCON 3.0 GOES EBS...

EBS, just in case you didn't know, means Electronic Battlefield System. It's Spectrum Holobyte's answer to limited multi-player simulations, enabling players with different SH games to link them together and open hostilities on a single battlefield.

The first EBS compatible game will be Falcon 3.0, which promises to be a blockbuster in its own right, never mind the EBS capability. First, it offers a full topographical terrain to fly over (in 64 colours taken from a 256 colour palette). This means you can nip along valleys, round mountains, and bomb the backsides of the poor devils who thought they'd found a safe nook to shelter in.

You get multiple missions involving three different theatres of war, including Kuwait. You get multiple aircraft management, the option fly single missions or campaigns, a huge variety of weaponry, multiple viewpoints and instant replay, and two player mode (either head to head or joint missions).

And then you get EBS – or rather you do next year. The next EBS title to come out will probably be A10 Tank Killer, followed by Tank itself. So you and Fred can fly the skies while Joe rumbles across the dunes. And if you and Fred are particularly mean, you can gang up on Joe and give him the time of his life, or at least the last few minutes of it.



Falcon 3.0 and EBS put you and your pal up in the clouds and your worst enemy down on the ground, opening up new multi-player horizons – and all in glorious 256 colour topographical 3D...

The EBS concept is highly impressive because it opens up the long term interest of games enormously. Once you've completed all the missions in Falcon (in itself a daunting task) and your pal has completed Tank, you can then link up and discover a whole new world of interactive gaming. Nice one, Spectrum Holobyte – and there are plans to put it into the arcades as well. We can't wait.

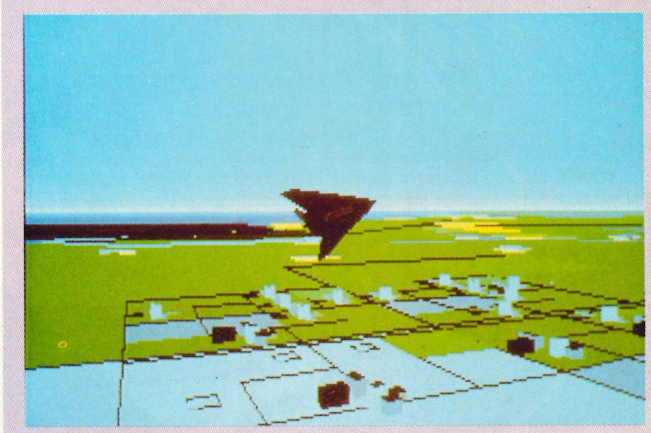
SOUND SQUABBLE!

It must be a teensy-weensy bit frustrating to be a games publisher, putting all that effort into scorching sound tracks knowing that most of your audience have to mortgage their Ladas to get a sound board.

So hurrah for Sierra, who appear to have put Roland's nose out of joint by making a mass purchase of LAPC boards in the States, bringing them across to the UK and selling them to you and me for £254.41.

As the going price for these widgets was £379, you can understand Roland getting miffed, but they've responded bravely by reducing the price to £245 and threatening not to give technical support to Sierra soundboard customers. Will Sierra now respond with a further price cut? Hagglers could phone Sierra on 0734 303322, and buyers can phone Roland on 0792 700139.

ON THE...



F117A STEALTH FIGHTER

Microprose's F19 Stealth Fighter, the supersonic fighter, made quite a supersonic bang when it first rolled out of the hanger three years ago and as with all great planes (and games), the original design has now been improved and modified in order to take you to new heights with its sequel F117A.

It boasts a whole host of improvements over the Mark I Stealth Fighter, with three new scenarios; Columbia/Panama, Northern Japan and good old Iraq and added improvements to the other six original countries. There's even the chance to load in battles of the future too and the actual artificial intelligence of your adversaries has been up-rated too to give even the most battle-hardened pilots of F19 and F15 a run for their money.

F117A Stealth Fighter 2.0 will cost £39.99 for PC's; will use VGA, EGA and Tandy 16 colour, and have support for AdLib, Roland, SoundBlaster and IBM sound and have mouse or joystick support. At the time of writing F117A is scheduled for release in October and we'll be getting our sweaty little palms on it as soon as we can. For further details phone Microprose on (0666) 504326

WRATH OF THE DEMON

Readysoft have just announced the forthcoming release of its first CDTV release - Wrath of the Demon which will have you battling your way through caves, swamps, temples and castles as you seek to defeat an evil demon and his hideous hordes to rescue the missing Princess. All this action takes place with the aid of over 3 Megabytes of graphics which of course means that this version will be released only on CDRom - which will be able to give you over 100 colours displayed on screen, along with over 100 monsters displayed in various sizes.

No release date has been given yet but further information can be obtained on (0268) 541126.



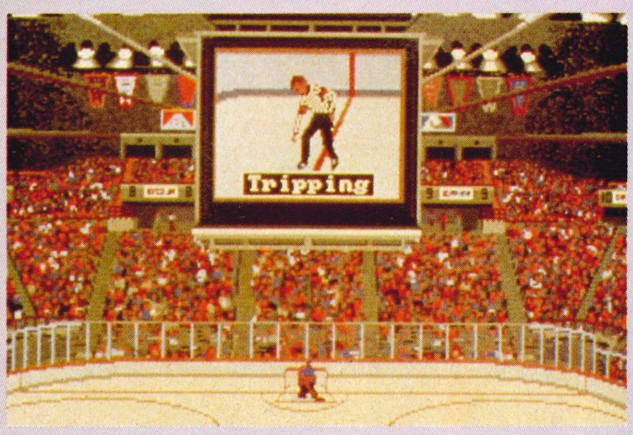
Wrath of The Demon's graphics are stunning, but we have yet to see how fast it can get them onto the screen, bearing in mind CD's notoriously slow data access and transfer rates. However, it's encouraging to see CDTV titles coming onto PC CD ROM – let's hope it's the start of a trend

...HORIZON

WAYNE GRETZKY HOCKEY 2

Apart from having one of the most unlikely surnames to be put into a computer game (outside of the States that is, of course), Wayne Gretzky Hockey is also notable by the level of success it achieved in the U.S.A. And now, Bethesda intend to bring that success into the European ring (or rink) with the games long-awaited sequel. As with most game updates, the sequel sports several new features including; two players in the same side, instant replay goal highlights at the end of each game, a play editor which lets your team learn up to 16 special set pieces and a save option with which to record your favourite plays for prosperity.

At this time, a price for the British version is not fixed but it will retail in the states for $54.95. If you can't wait until November then you talk direct to them in Maryland USA on (301) 926 8300



CHUCK YEAGER'S AIR COMBAT

Not content with his role as trainer, Chuck Yeager is now back in the pilot's seat with over 50 combat missions to complete, including action in Korea, World War II, and Vietnam. You get to fly both allied and opposing planes, ranging from P51 Mustangs to Mig-25s.

Good news for lasting interest comes from the Custom Mission feature, which allows you to select your plane, altitude, tactical situation, enemy pilot skill, and opposition numbers. Since you can mix periods, this gives you the rather unsporting opportunity of selling the farm to miserable Luftwaffe ME109 pilots while sitting comfortably in your F4 Phantom. Shame! Available from Electronic Arts (0753 49442) in June at £29.99.



SHADY STUFF

Empire are planning to pack you off to Jupiter in Eye of the Storm, a trading/combat scenario featuring Gouraud shading.

Featuring what?? Well, apparently Gouraud (initial H) described this technique back in 1971. Empire describe it as a 'linear interpellation technique which averages colours upon the faces of a shape. this blurs the boundaries between polygons and gives the shape a smoother appearance'.

This is somewhat puzzling because 'interpellation', as any fule kno, is a parliamentary procedure whereby members can interrupt the order of the day by demanding explanations from Ministers. We suspect a spell chcker error here, the correct term being 'interpolation', or the ability to insert intermediate colour shades on a shape by estimating the variance between the different faces of your polygon.

The game also features texture mapping, over 210 different objects to use, and 'unlimited strategy and gameplay..'. The scenario pitches you into Jupiter's mysterious 'eye' – declared a law-free zone – and an orgy of destruction.

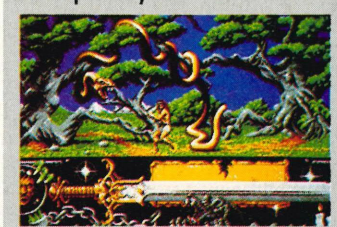


Going Gouraud in Eye of the Storm

TIT BYTES...

Hero animation may take a new step forward with the release of Deathbringer from Empire (0268 541126), which boasts no less than 64 frames of animation for the central figure. The only problem is, we don't know how many different actions this has to encompass. If it's walking only, we're looking at some top quality anim files here. If it covers 64 different actions, the jerk factor will be abysmal. It just goes to show that you can make programming statistics mean almost anything you want...

Deathbringer also features 30 levels, 600 graphic scenese, 36-level parallax scrolling, full screen end of level guardians, and digitised sound. So maybe the statistics are worth paying attention to after all! Available in May, but no price as yet...



Deathbringer from Empire

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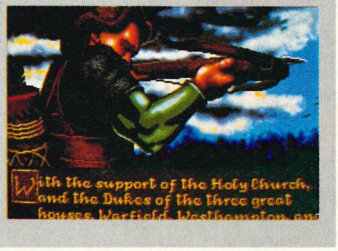
Interplay's Castles is nearing completion and should be available as you read this from Electronic Arts (0753 49442), though no price has yet been announced. You take the role of a land-owning Baron in the reign of Edward I and must knock together a castle under authentic contemporary castle knocking-together conditions.

This means not only finding a decent plot of land, but also sourcing and managing all the resources you need to get the building completed. So, on the one hand you're battling with the mediaeval equivalent of site foremen, and on the other you're fending off the unwelcome attentions of those people who your castle is eventually intended to keep out.

Even better, you get to design your own castle, with help from extensive documentation about the original science of fortification and defensive architecture. Towers, walls, doors, battlements and so forth have to be positioned to optimum effect if you're expensive hide-away isn't to turn into an expensive tomb later in the game.

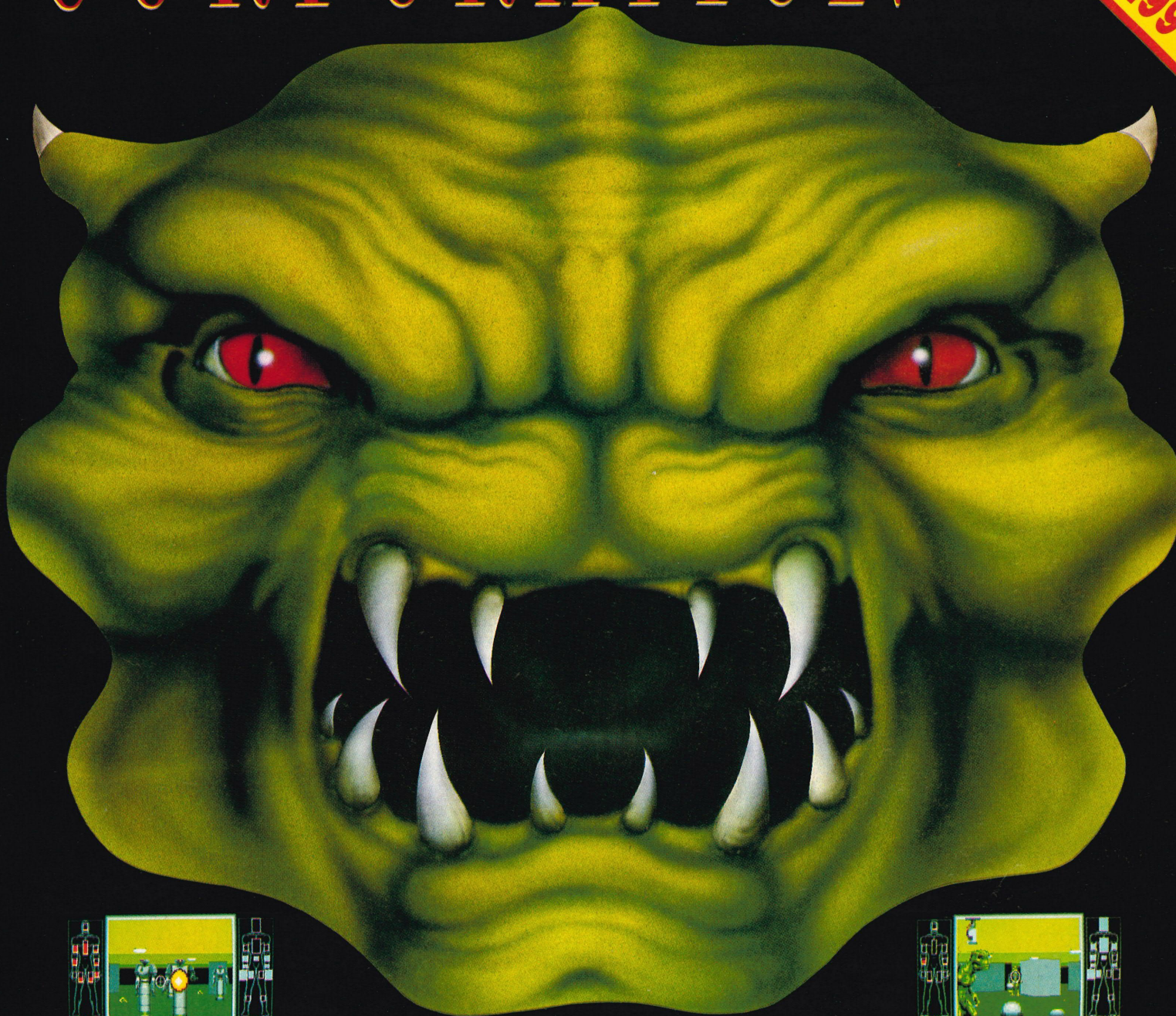
The graphics on Castles are clearly inspired to some extent by Railroad Tycoon's minimalist approach, in which sprites are kept to the minimum possible size, to provide the widest possible view over your environment. The game features 256 colour VGA graphics, a full musical score (get that sound board), three levels of difficulty, individual or eight castle campaigns and realistic or magical settings.

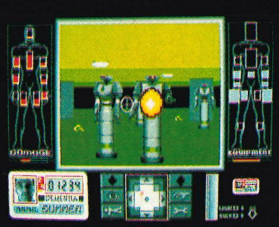
Castles from Interplay



CORPORATION

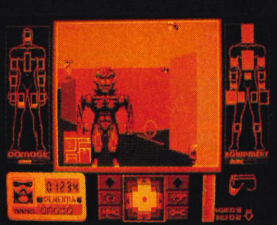
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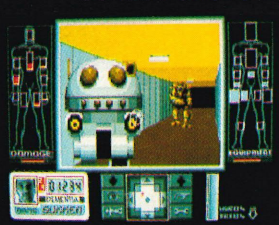


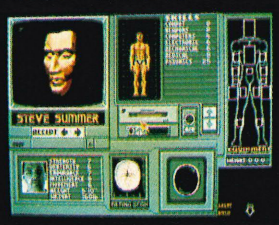


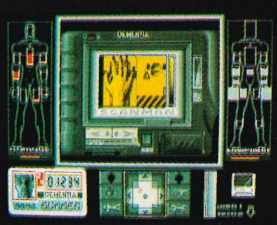


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LETTERS

Problems, gripes, worries, questions - don't let it lie. Drop a line to PC Leisure Letter – you could win a PC Leisure Five Star game and worldwide acclaim...

CAN I SWOP MY MOTHER?

For the past 3 years I have had an Amstrad PC2086. As you will know it comes with a boring old 8086 processor, but at least it has a full VGA display. To begin with, everything looked good in VGA and it all ran at a decent speed. Now every piece of software I buy always states "Turbo PC - 12 Mhz 80286 or faster recommended", but I buy them anyway. This produces very slow frame rates in games and slow processing in business applications, and is especially noticeable in using full 256 colour VGA, as in TV Sports Basketball.

To overcome this I have considered buying a 386 accelerator card to plug into the expansion slots. Problem - they are all used up. The only other alternative would be to remove the existing motherboard and plug a faster one in its place. I have just read your article in March/April issue about upgrading PC's and you said that, if you have a 8088 PC, you can replace it with a 386 motherboard and impress your friends. Great! No more boring 8086 jerkiness. But wait... isn't there a problem here? I wrote to Amstrad and they told me that it is not possible to add an 386 motherboard to my computer. So who do I believe?
T. Watts, Letchworth, Herts.

This subject will be covered in detail later in our upgrade course. There's always going to be a bit of a problem here because of the variations between machines and, in this case, because Amstrad's tendency to custom hardware in their machines to cut manufacturing costs. For example, some Amstrads have their floppy drives connected directly from the mother board – and the non-standard key layout on some of their machines could cause some typographical hilarity. I've no doubt that you could upgrade to a third party mother board, but unless you can get REAL expert advice, or are prepared to wait till the right instalment of our guide is published loater this year, don't bother!

CHECK MATE

I have little opportunity to play games so when I do I enjoy QUALITY games – thus your excellent magazine enables me to assess the game and not the packaging! One of my great disappointments has been Colossus Bridge where the display is unbelievably crude and renders the program unplayable with any enjoyment. This is such a contrast with the graphics of Hoyles Book Of Games, which are excellent and infinitely more playable.

My questions therefore are: Is there a good bridge game about and can the display on Colossus be modified? Even a choice of colour might help) I am reasonably computer literate. Thank you.
Paul Hector, Leaden Roding, Essex.

Unfortunately there are no plans to release a follow-up to Collossus Bridge, but if you have a VGA machine, the company tell us that an upgrade has been programmed to improve the display and that they will gladly supply you with the new version. To get this, send your original disk, together with a covering note explaining the problem, to CDS Software, Nimrod House, Beckett Road, Doncaster, South Yorks, DN2 4AD.

CROSSED LINES

I would like to express my disgust at one of the advertisers irregularities in your latest magazine. On page 30 of issue 6 entitled "Disk Direct" 400 disks are given away free to the first callers, wonderful. Both my children called this number to be given some instructions to do. Dial 5 on hearing the bleep. This was done on two or three occasions and then I tried to no avail.

This is not the first time that this company has embezzled money from the general public. The article in your paper apologises for the previous incompetence of this company. I would estimate that I was on the phone for at least 3 minutes along with my children therefore British Telecom and whoever had collected the money have made a sizable sum from this deception.

If one thousand people call the revenue is quite considerable. Their marketing strategy is brilliant but their execution of the product is abysmal. As editor of this magazine I would wish that you convey to this company that their deceit in fooling the public is totally unacceptable and that the credibility of your magazine rests with the likes of us.
Robert Cole, Newport, Gwent

P.S. Apart from this, your magazine gives my children hours of pleasure. Keep it up. (A single, unemployed parent) Great when it rains!

I'm always a little sceptical of any magazines that don't seem to have any published letters of direct criticism. PC Leisure has no such policy and lo, here's the reason for what happened. In order to process telephone lines we use tone dialing phone lines - so that if you are asked for a response to a question, the answer can be dialed in. The problem here arises from the fact that this was not mentioned in the article, since the company who set up the phone line failed to point this out to us. We really are extremely sorry about this – especially since, as you point out – it's the second time the phone line has got us into trouble. Obviously it does us no good at all when things like this go wrong, and we're doing everything we can to ensure that it's third time lucky. What's more we'll ensure that the next free disk offer does NOT require a phone call, so that readers have an alternative means of applying. Apologies to all readers who had a similar problem.

DIRECT MALE

I have a number of questions which I hope you can answer...
1) Could you tell me the address of Zenith and Modular Technology and also Ferranti in the UK. Plus if possible their phone numbers.
2) Of all the sound-boards available for PC's (mine is a Zenith) which is the best? Does compatibility come into it or will any board work with any PC?
3) Could you tell me how to subscribe to your magazine?
Andrew Smith, Skerries, Eire

Short and direct Mr Smith, a little like a pygmy in particle accelerator. So likewise, here are your answers:
1) No. As a general rule, we do not act as a referral service for companies whose products are not covered in the magazine. Try directory enquiries or our sister magazine PC User. 2) Sound boards should fit in any PC with expansion slots and just need to be configured to the system (where appropriate). Always check compatibility with the supplier but as general rule you shouldn't have any problems. In choosing a soundboard, you generally have to expect some trade off between quality and software availability. The

MT32-type unit from Roland (the LAPC1) is good on sound but not supported by as many companies as is the AdLib board. The best sound unit we've seen to date was the MSound (see last issue) which features some emulation software for other sound boards and is available from the manufacturers in canada on +604 732 4849 3) Subscriptions to PC Leisure are featured on page 82.

BITMAP HOLDUP

I am a big fan of the Bitmap Brothers – a friend of mine has an Amiga and their games (along with Psygnosis') always come out above the rest. However everyone knows that we PC owners are the last to receive conversions so when exactly can we expect to see some of their great games (Speedball 2 perhaps?).
David Marks, Maida Vale, London

Only the other evening I found myself propping up a very selective bar in the (very supportive) company of the Bitmaps. Among the host of topics that were discussed (punctuated with friendly arguments as to the owner of the bar bill) was Speedball 2's forthcoming conversion to PC. Indeed, the boys are now looking to the PC as an ideal medium to utilise their particular brand of all-action games and the days of the PC being last in line for arcade conversions seem soon to end. Products originating on the PC and then being converted to 'other' computers, should become the norm soon as more and more software producers realise that the PC market in this country will soon be a worthy rival to the huge hardware base already established in the States and growing throughout Europe. Speedball 2 should be with us in July for £25.99, and lead times will reduce noticeably thereafter...

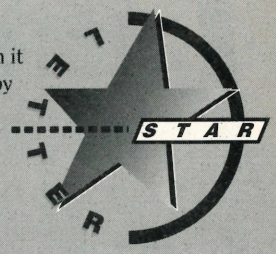
STEALTHY BUSINESS

I agreed whole-heartedly with your review of Operation Stealth in issue 4. The game is extremely entertaining and at running the risk of being too over-enthusiastic about it, I could almost say that it was the closest I've been to being involved with fictional characters without watching a film. However, I feel it was let down by some tiring mouse work. Trying to find the right use of the command words was sometimes a nightmare. My question is that in the review you state that Delphine should iron out the last remaining bugs in their system before the release of Cruise for a Corpse. I would like to know if any such undertaking has been made by them and when can we see it in the shops. Long live Agent Glames!
Mark Webb, Bracknell, Berkshire

Delphine's control system, like so many others, is one that is adapted to their style of games - and obviously with all stylised control methods, they constantly undergo a process of change. Delphine believe that the latest control method used in Cruise should have no problems at all, but the acid test will take place when the game is reviewed.

THIS MONTH'S STAR LETTER

COPYRIGHT OR COPY WRONG?



I have a copy of a game by Psygnosis which I have installed on my machine at work – and jolly good fun it is too. Recently, however, our company was warned by our maintenance engineers that this may be illegal. I really can't understand how this can be the case, as I have paid for the game and simply followed the installation procedures in the manual. How can I be breaking the law if I haven't copied it?
Jenny Forshaw, London

Hmmm.This gets this month's Star Letter award for touching on the most obscure legal query we've ever received. This really is a question at the cutting edge of computer law, Jenny. You may be surprised (in fact most people may be) to know that your maintenance engineer could be correct. However, what he didn't point out is that it is not your version that may be illegal, but his acting as your maintenance engineer! This area of law doesn't really apply in practise to games, but for the record there have been cases where software publishers have claimed that any back-up regimes or temporary back-ups made by maintenance engineers during their work are an infringement of copyright. However, it is worth remembering in the workplace that any multiple copying of games is almost certainly illegal. You don't have to buy a copy for every terminal, but ask the software house about a network license or a site license. They will probably be so impressed by your honesty that it shouldn't cost you the earth and will earn you many angel points when the Day of Software Piracy Judgement arrives...

PINBALL WIZARD

I have an undying passion for pin ball. My wife will not let one into the house and the nearest arcade is fifty miles from here. So can you tell me if there are any half decent computer versions. If not are there any good pool games?
Tommy Lee, Dublin, Ireland

Pinball games on the PC hasn't been an oversubscribed area exactly. You can try Infogrames' Macadam Bumper for £30.64 (see you dealer or telephone 071 738 8199). Pool however, is a different issue with the recent release of the very competent Sharkey's 3D pool. News on the horizon though is that Archer McClean is currently working on a super fast snooker game that I saw at the recent ECTS show. It's scheduled to be ready around October/November and if you don't mind what you cue up to hit (sic) then it could be worth waiting for. Whatever happens, we'll be watching its progress closely.

CD QUERIES

I've read a lot in PC Leisure recently about CD games. But I have a few questions...
a) If CD is a read-only system, how do I save my hi-scores and game positions to disk? Normally I instal a game on my hard disk, but I haven't *quite* got 550Mbytes free on mine. Any answers?
b) Just exactly how many CD games are there out there? Is it really worth my rushing out and buying a drive? And if I do, how much will it cost me?
c) If I do get one, will it be compatible with my machine? And will all PC CD games be compatible with it?
d) If CD is so fabulous, how come there aren't more games out there?
James Lerwick, Preston

OK James, yours is just one of dozens of letters we've had on this subject recently. Here are the answers...

a) The most usual solution would be for your CD game to create a SAVEGAME.CDR file on your hard disk, and look for it every time you boot it up. If you don't have a hard disk, a floppy would do just as well. In other words, no problem. Incidentally, other systems (like Commodore's CDTV) use smart cards for this purpose and, when CD gets more popular, we may seen CD-only PC-compatible units with smart card for storage instead of floppies...

b) Not a lot. It's impossible to tell exactly, but we reckon there are about 100 leisure titles out there. However, this number is expected to double in the next six months and the added value you get with CD makes it extremely attractive. A CD should definitely be on the buying list of anyone with money to spend this Christmas. Expect to pay around £300 for a drive and supporting software...

c) Very good point. First, most PC CD-ROM drives accord with the ISO 9660 standard, so make sure you get one of those. Check with your dealer for details.

Note also that Microsoft have defined a standard for PC CD software called MPC. This standard specifies the minimum hardware configuration required that will be supported by ALL MPC software, games and otherwise. This seems like a good idea, but it also means that you'll need the following kit:

- *10Mhz 80286*
- *2 Mbytes RAM*
- *30Mbyte hard disk*
- *VGA*
- *DOS 3.3 with CD-ROM extensions*
- *Windows 3.0 with ~Multimedia extensions*

As you can guess, this is a clever ploy by Microsoft to sell lots of copies of Windows. The MPC standard may be the price we have to pay to ensure that all CD-ROM titles demand the same hardware set-up.

c) The principal benefits of CD are increased storage and CD-audio. The first requires a greater investment from developers, who are unwilling to forge ahead until more drives are sold. The second doesn't suit all applications. However, in the long run, CD can put such an added punch behind any application that software houses are bound to support it strongly. It's also harder to copy. By the end of this year, there will be very few games companies who have not released at least one CD product. By the end of next year, the killer applications are almost certainly to be CD-based. So start saving those pennies now!

LAPTOP GAMING

I own an EGA compatible Toshiba laptop witha 20Mbyte hard disk and am also addicted to Ultima V. Is there any hope for me? And are games in general laptop compatible?
Simon Wentham, Basildon

Yes, there is hope for you, Simon, because we'll be covering laptop gaming in PC Leisure in some detail in the next issue. As far as Ultima V is concerned, you shouldn't experience any problems, but remember that some objects (e.g. secret doors) are difficult to spot on a mono screen. The biggest problem, however, with laptops is that many don't have hard disks (so you have to play from floppy, which is often a serious drawback) and that, when they do, they tend (as yours is) to be limited to 20Mb. Since several modern games demand at least 5Mbytes of storage, this could pose space problems for you. Our advice: scrap all those boring spreadsheets and word processors and use the laptops for what they were REALLY designed for – action!

MORE BACK ISSUES QUERIES...

After buying issues 4 and 5 of your excellent magazine and unfortunately missing no 6, I though to look in my other issues to find details of how to get back issue. But, alas, nowhere could I find what I wanted. I would be most grateful if you could publish details of how to buy back issues, since I am sure there are many other people like me who missed the first few issues.
Simon Walker, Reading

The horrible truth, Simon, is that our back issues service is currently very limited – due to the popularity of PC Leisure, many issues have completely sold out. Even here in the office we have to scrablle around for early issues. The good news for other readers, however, is that all issues from No 6 onwards will now be available from the following address, and that a complete back issues service will be maintained for all future issues. Send your order, together with £2.50 (inc P&P) for each copy, to:

Alan Wells International
Memberline House
Farndon Road
Market Harborough
LE16 9NR

Tel: 0858 410510

Don't forget to include your name and address! And don't forget that currently only issue 6 is available!

ENTERING THE UNDERGROUND CITY

With regard to a letter in your last edition concerning the Savage Empire, the way to find the underground city is as follows...

If you have rescued Aiela from Darden the Huge successfully, she will be carrying a giant gem. If you haven't yet found the Kuraks, try lookin in the unmarked caves in the Northeast quarter of the valley, as marked on your map. If you have trouble getting past Mr T Rex, it's every man for himself...

It's also much easier to get back fromthe Juraks if you have rescued Faboxx. He is in a cave and needs light. Providing you have the right person in your party, someone can make the right sort of light without magical help – it's a snap, really!

In attempting to complete the Barrab chieftain's task to get medicine for his son, you will have to go north from their settlement until you reach the Great Mesa. The first level here is reached by some steps (watch out for birs). Also make sure your party are all ingood health as Myrmidex attacks are likely.

Your route at one stage will be blocked by a tree and a gap ion the path. If Rafkin has given you some explosive knowledge, this will cause you no problems.

After you have crossed the gap, move generally in a northwest direction. Kill the carnivorous orchid and get the root to cure the Barrab chieftain's son. Continue Northwest to the very edge of the cliff and you will come to the Gem Holder. Need I say more? Move it!

I have on other point to make regarding Savage Empire. Whenever my character dies by a blow which would take the hit pionts well past my remaining health, the program freezes and I have to reboot my machine and start again. Quite annoying, if I have forgotten to save for some time. Has anyone else had this problem?

As I have been so kind, could someone else help me with Future Wars? I have got to the stage where I have been taken prisoner by the Crughons from the plane and am in a cell. I have documents, a gas canister, a lance, and a key. I use the key on the grill and operate the canister on the hole. However, every time I do, gas drigts back into the room and I am killed. Have I got everything I need? Can someone save me? Does anyone want to??
M Hicks, Leytonstone

More help for aggrieved gamesters in our QED section on pages 74 to 78.

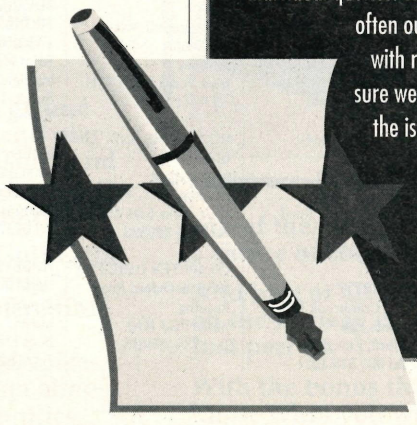
CHEAT SEEKING MISSIVE

I often enjoy a game at work, but I run the perpetual risk being discovered by my supervisor. The other day, someone told me that the PC has a cheat key that will display a 'spread sheet-alike' screen on the monitor whenver you need it without having to quit out the game. Is this true? Which key is it?
Anon.
PS I haven't printed my name, for obvious reasons...

Ho ho ho...someone's been having you on. It is true that some PC games have a 'boss key' – check your instructions for details – but most don't and there is certainly no standard key on the PC that does as you describe. The only possible key combination that can help you here is CTL-ALT-DEL...Either that, or invite your boss for a game. PC

WRITING TO PC LEISURE

Every letter we receive gets read, though we regret that we can't always reply to individual queries. The letters bag is often our most direct link with readers so make sure we get YOUR side of the issues by writing to us at: PC Leisure Letters, Priory Court, Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.



SHOPPING LIST

If you're looking for a new game, a peripheral, or even a whole new state-of-the-art system, check out your local dealer. We list here the addresses you need – there's one near YOU!

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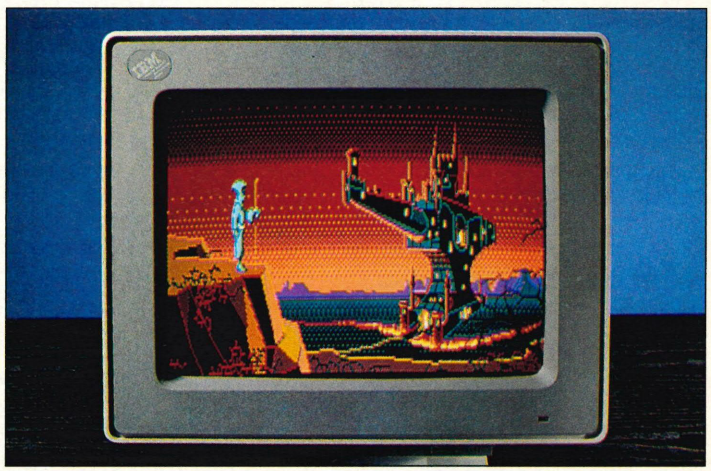
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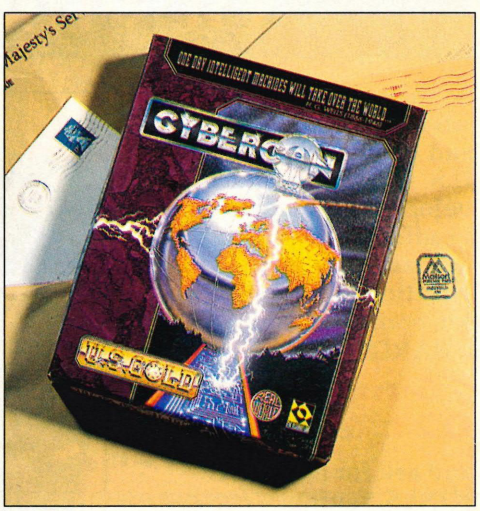
Britain's survival rests in your hands. If only your M.D. could see you now.....

A BREAK IN THE OLD ROUTINE

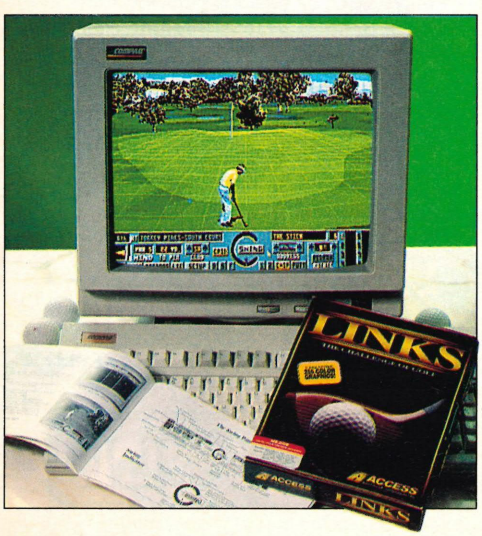
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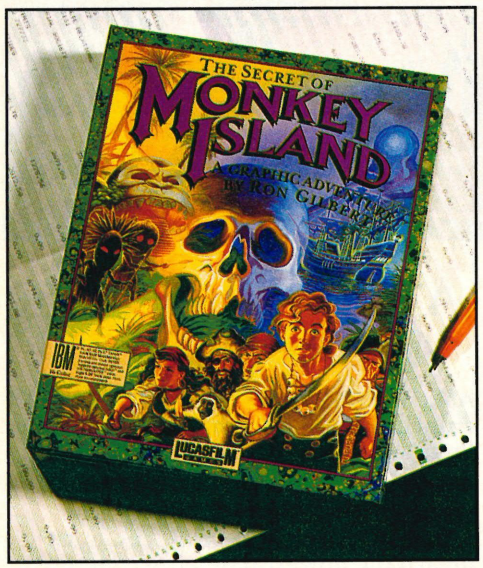
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Nothing much. Go and sedate the piranha poodles... rob the Governor's mansion... discover whether the fat voodoo priestess has plans for your rubber chicken, smelly fish or a pack of breath fresheners....

You'll love it. Plus the great sound effects with Calypso and reggae music tracks. Next day, wear an eye patch at the office.

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So that you can taste the adventure, challenge and excitement of U.S. Gold PC products before you plunge headlong into the 'pleasure mode', a selection of 'samplers' are available FREE OF CHARGE.*



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and ask for NICOLA JONES, stating your machine specification and the size of disk (5¼" or 3½") you require. If you have difficulty in obtaining any of the U.S. Gold PC titles, we will be pleased to supply them direct to you. Phone the number above to check availability then pay by quoting your ACCESS or VISA card number.
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SOFTWARE COMPATIBILITY

Cruise For A Corpse

PC & Compatibles
Graphic Support: CGA, EGA, VGA, Tandy
Sonic Support: Ad-Lib™ & Roland™.

The Secret of Monkey Island

PC & Compatibles
Graphic Support: EGA, CGA, VGA, MCGA
Sonic Support: Ad-Lib™ & Roland™.

Links

PC & Compatibles: VGA, MCGA, 256 Colours only
Sonic Support: Ad-Lib™, SoundBlaster™ & Roland™.

Cybercon III

PC & Compatibles
Graphic Support: LGA, EGA, Tandy 16, VGA, MCGA
Sonic Support: PC Speaker, Ad-Lib™ & Roland™.
Memory Reg: 512K (640K for 256 Colour mode)

Their Finest Hour: The Battle of Britain

PC & Compatibles
Graphic Support: EGA, CGA, VGA, Tandy
Sonic Support: Ad-Lib™ & Roland™.

U.S. GOLD®

FLYING FOR FREE

(AND DOING THE FLYING YOURSELF)

TWO HOURS OF FLYING LESSONS FOR YOU AND A FRIEND

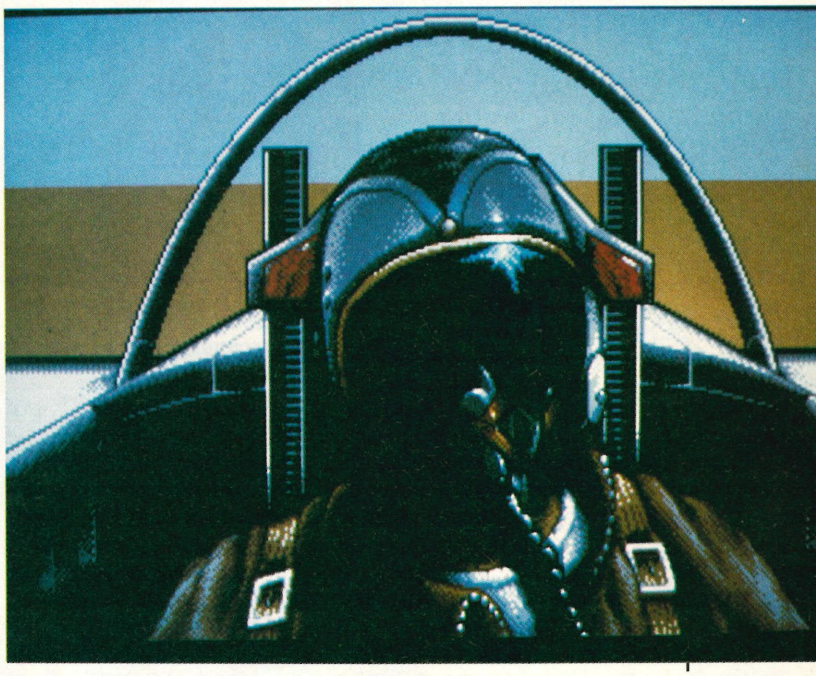
Jetfighter II is the very latest in state-of-the-art fighter combat, with all the action taking part over sunny old San Franciso, with you at the controls of the F23 Black Widow.

Now, don't be bashful, because I reckon that all you flight sim fans out there have at one point or another wondered if you could transfer your hand skills learnt behind your PC to the real thing.

Then of course, you remember that english Tornado pilots cost £2M to train, that it takes 2 years just to get their jet engine rating. So you simply let out a sigh, promise that when your rich you'll definately take up a real joystick and then turn your attention back to the PC screen, increase thrust and then continue chasing after that MiG that you've been trying to blow up for the last half hour.

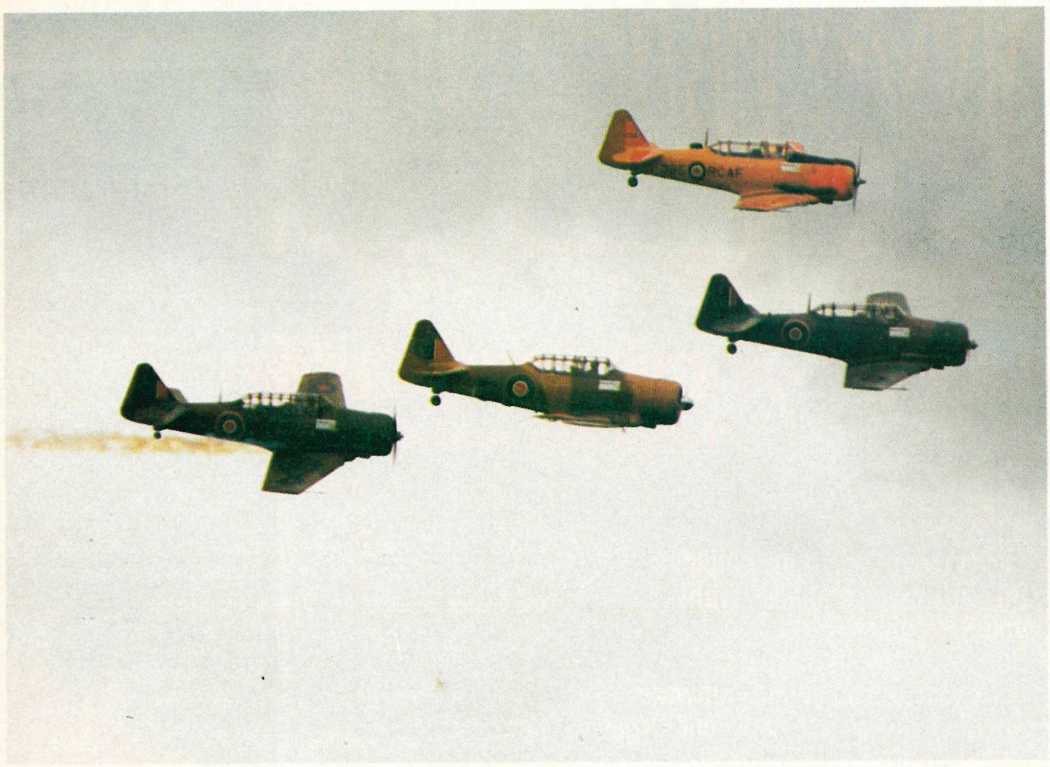
Sigh no more dear reader! PC Leisure, in connection with Velocity the producers of Jetfighter II and US Gold (their British distributors) are bringing the chance to see if you've got what it takes to be Top Gun.

One lucky winner and a friend will find themselves with a one-hour crash course (Eeek!).. er, one-hour intensive flying lesson at their nearest local flying school. All costs of the two, one hour lessons will be paid for. That includes insurance and parachute hire (ho ho!) and the five runners-up will all receive a fully-blown copy of Jetfighter II



All you have to do to enter, is to just tell us what the name is of the most mass produced training aircraft built during World War II. And just to give you a clue, Gary Numan flies one with the Harvard Display Team in Britain. In fact, the Gazza of the pop world is even the star of that show as his aircraft is painted up in the colours of a Japanese Zero.

Still can't get it? Well, you'll have to put some work into it! A free flying lesson for yourself and a lucky friend is worth a little work!



Send your entries to I Can't Let Maggie Go, PC Leisure, Priory Court, Farringdon Lane, LONDON EC1R 3AU to arrive here before 1st of July.

THE SMALL PRINT

The winners name will be published in a later issue of PC Leisure. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Employees of EMAP, Leisuresoft, Origin and their subsidiaries (and friends and relations thereof) are prohibited from entry.

CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY
P T E L T D

TRADE ENQUIRIES WELCOME

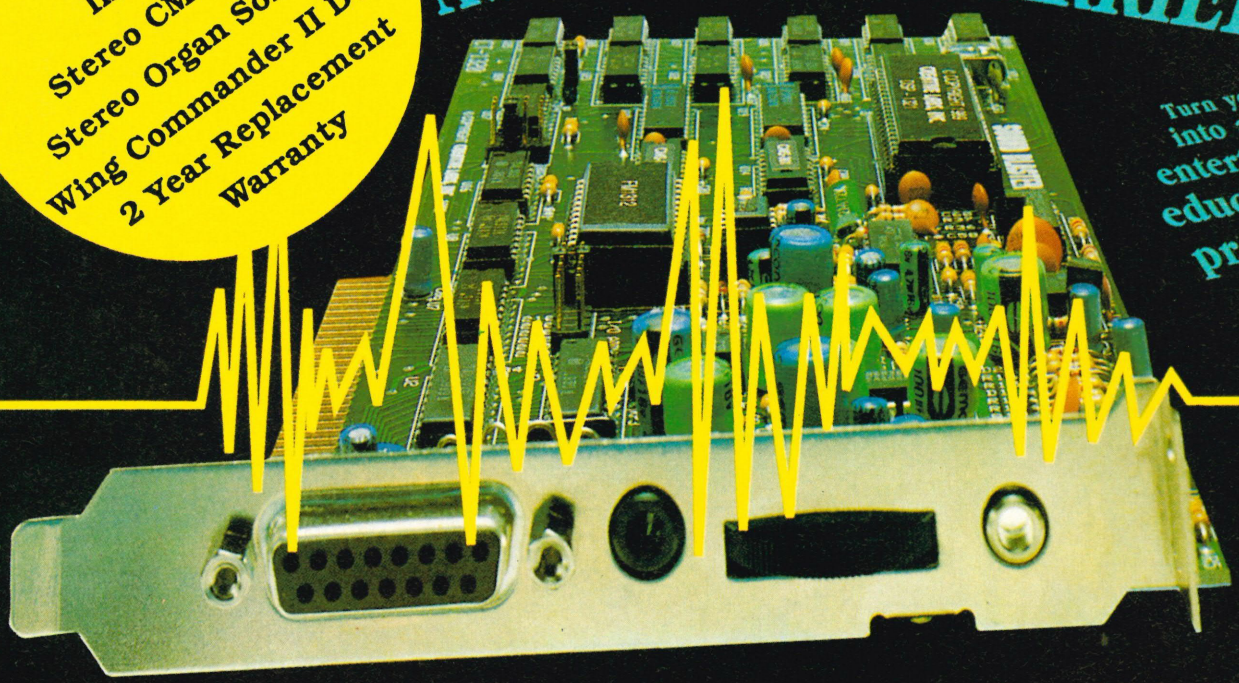
SOUND BLASTER

STEREO MUSIC/VOICE/MIDI/GAME PORT

THE ULTIMATE SOUND BOARD FOR YOUR PC

NEW!
Version 1.6
Includes
Stereo CMS Chips
Stereo Organ Software
Wing Commander II Demo
2 Year Replacement Warranty

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Turn your PC into a super entertainment, education and presentation machine !

24-VOICE ALL-IN-ONE SOUND CARD

with all the great features you dreamt of ...

- 12-Voice C/MS stereo music synthesizer
- 11-Voice FM music (AdLib* compatible)
- Digitized voice output
- Digitized voice input
- DMA and decompression hardware to conserve CPU time and memory
- Standard joystick port
- MIDI interface
- Microphone jack with amplifier
- Stereo Power amplifier with volume control
- Supported by the largest library of music/sound software
- Bundled Software: Intelligent Organ / Talking Parrot / The VoxKit

SOUND BLASTER plugs into any internal slot in your IBM* PC, XT, AT, 386, PS/2 (25/30), Tandy (except 1000 EX/HX) & compatibles.

This package includes:
- SOUND BLASTER CARD
- C/MS Intelligent Organ Software
- Talking Parrot Software
- VoxKit Software
- 5.25" and 3.5" disks enclosed

System Requirements
- 512 KB RAM minimum
- DOS 2.0 or higher
- CGA, MGA, EGA or VGA compatible graphic board

AdLib* Compatible

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COVER DISK

Once more, PC Leisure presents - THE VERY BEST IN DEMOS AND SHARE-WARE GAMES - ALL PACKED ONTO ONE DISK

There's only one thing to say about PC Leisure cover disks and that's "How do we do it?" To be honest even we're not sure, the one thing that we are certain about though is that each issue, we're committed to bring you a demo of one the best PC games we can find before it gets to the shelves. We think that we've got one of the rating systems for games anywhere, but there's nothing better than being able to 'try before you buy'

LOADING PROBLEMS

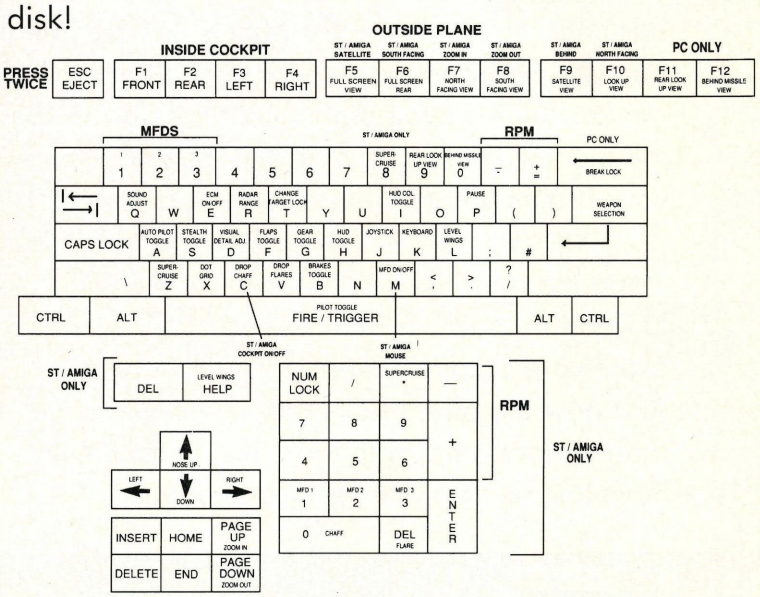
The contents of the disk are compressed with PKZip. The games will self-extract automatically if you just log your drive with the disk in (normally A:) and then type GO and press enter to get the on-screen menu. If you have a strange machine that can't (or won't) run the menu, then just enter DIR and type DS to get Retaliator or MARS to get Monuments of Mars.

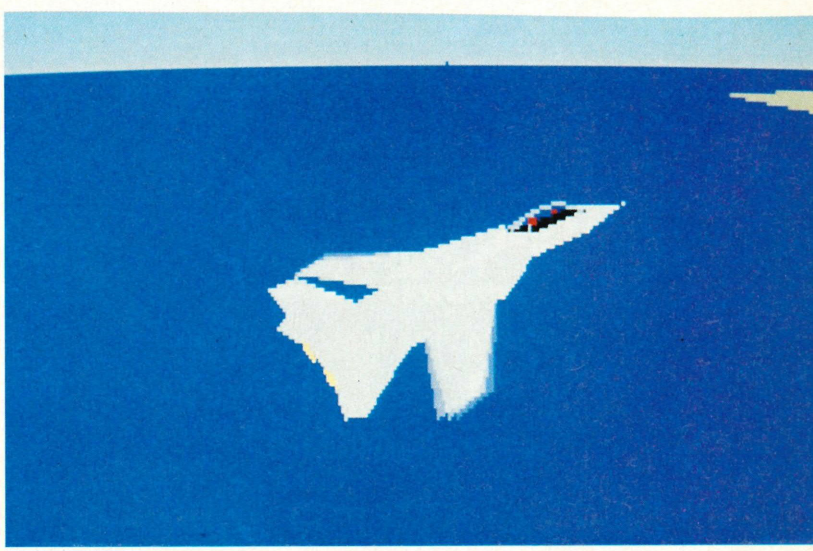
It's easy, and here's how to play each game.

F29 RETALIATOR

(Keyboard layout card came with the disk)

We've got what is probably the best shoot–em–up on the market at the moment, F29 gives the impression of being a flight simulator with teeth whereas the opposite is really the truth! And what a truth! But in the true style of PC Leisure disks, when we play an excellent game ourselves, we don't ask you to take our word for it, just play it for yourself on the free disk!





There's just one mission on the demo, but it plays exactly the same as the whole game, and so the keyboard controls are reproduced for your ease of play.

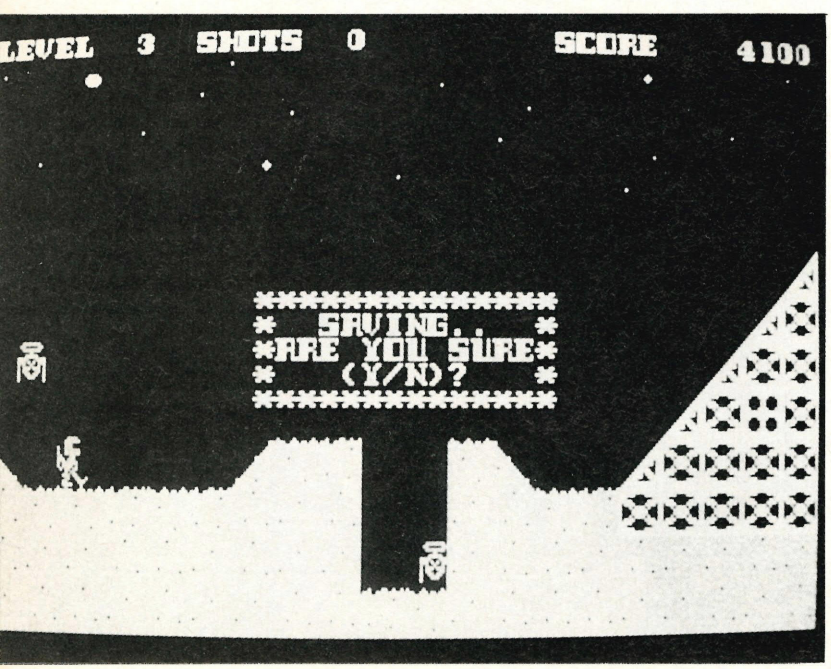
If you'd like further details however, why not try reading the review of the whole game on pages 52-53 of the review section?
Go get 'em hotshot!

F29 Retaliator will be published by Ocean Software; further details on availability can be found by dialling 061 832 6633.

MONUMENTS OF MARS

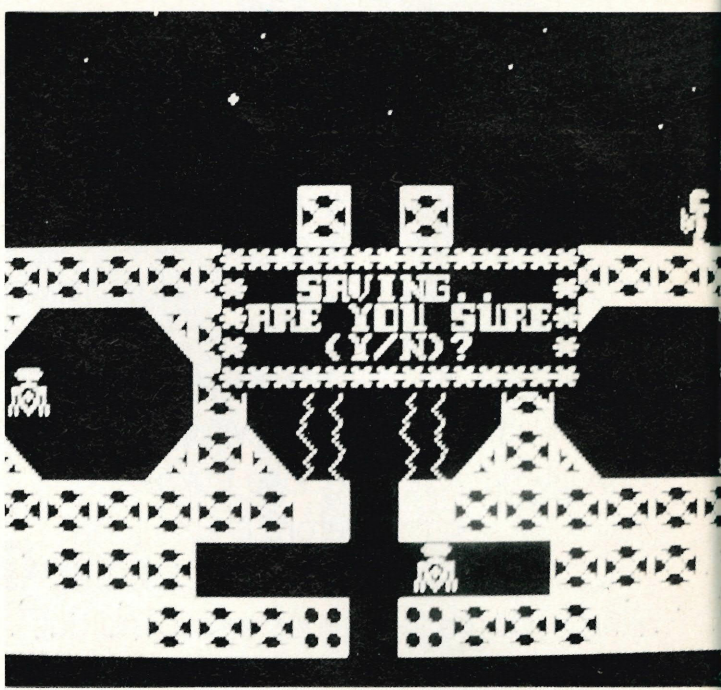
There's a lot of shareware about and America has until recently been the main hotbed of talent but with the amazing growth in the British PC market, there's a fair amount of home-grown on the market, and some of it will blow your brains your brains out. (Well, probably!)

And the most likely candidate for that particular job this month is Monuments of Mars, a shareware arcade adventure.
And now the plot! NASA has sent several manned missions off to Mars but so far they have lost contact with every one of them.



You have been chosen from a very small list of volunteers for the perilous quest of finding out what's going on. You must survive 20 levels of puzzles, traps, strange creatures and weird artifacts – some of which are used in your quest.

Hardware requirements: Monuments of Mars will run an 8086, 80286 (AT), 80386 or 80486. A graphics card, CGA, EGA or VGA is also needed along with at least 350K of RAM



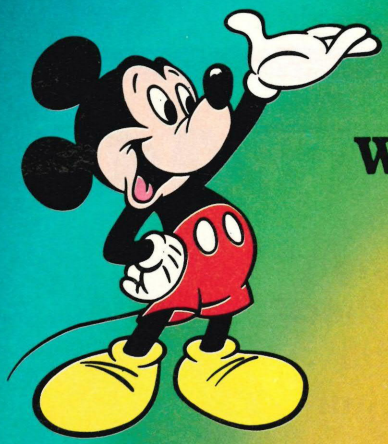
Monuments of Mars is a shareware product and on disk is the first part of a four volume set. If you would like to get the next three volumes in the series (for $10 dollars each, including hint sheet) or just more information on Public Domain\Shareware titles further details are available from the Public Domain Software Library, (0892) 663298. Tell them PC Leisure sent you.

Disney SOFTWARE

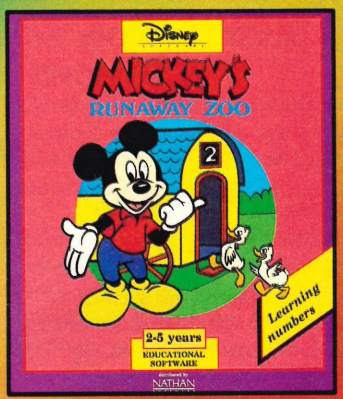
PRESENTS

EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE

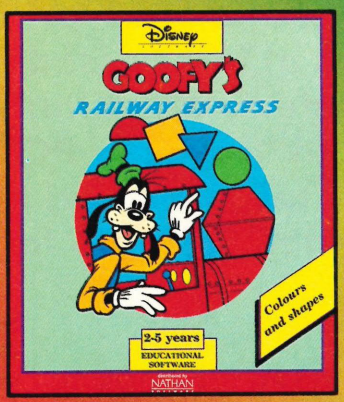
WHERE LEARNING IS FUN !



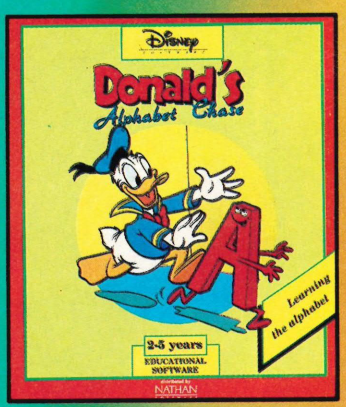




LEARNING NUMBERS



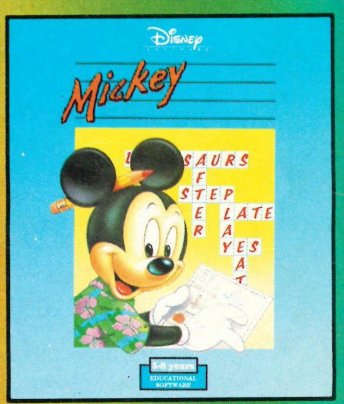
COLOURS AND SHAPES



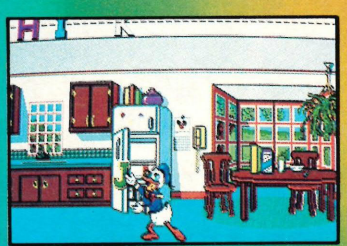
LEARNING THE ALPHABET

A RANGE OF EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE ADAPTED TO CHILDREN'S NEEDS:

PLAYING WITH DISNEY HEROES,
BECOMING FAMILIAR,
WITH THE COMPUTER WORLD,
DISCOVERING BASIC SKILLS.



READING AND VOCABULARY SKILLS



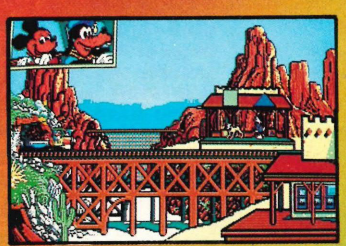
DONALD'S ALPHABET CHASE

In this magical game, children learn the letters of the alphabet. Whilst helping Donald Duck find his «alphabet pets» by touching the corresponding letter, your children will become familiar with the computer keyboard. The humorous antics of these ainimals make children laugh as they learn.
SUITABLE FOR AGES 2-5



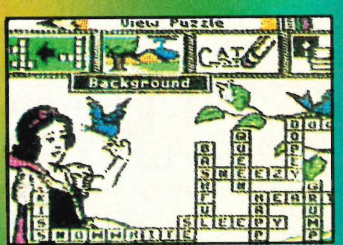
MICKEY'S RUNAWAY ZOO

Whilst helping Mickey and Goofy find the animals lost from the zoo, your children will learn basic numbers.
In a colourful and musical environment, children help Mickey and Goofy catch the runaways by pressing the keyboard numbers which correspond to their hiding places.
SUITABLE FOR AGES 2-5



GOOFY'S RAILWAY EXPRESS.

Your children are invited on board Goofy's railway express to learn about shapes and colours.
During a wonderful trip developing skills of observation and interaction, children will help Goofy toots his magic train whilst turning coloured shapes into entertaining animated objects.
SUITABLE FOR AGES 2-5



MICKEY'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE MAKER

With charming DISNEY backgrounds your children can create, play and print crosswords. Children build vocabulary and reading skills as they match wits with Mickey and his friends. A flexible tool for creating and printing out crosswords and a motivating game for practicing essential language skills.
SUITABLE FOR AGES 5-8

These games are available in the following formats:

IBM PC and compatibles, Atari ST, Amiga, Spectrum, Amstrad CPC and Commodore 64

Distributed by:

NATHAN SOFTWARE

For more information
please call 0268 541 212

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CD

HERE IT C

Multimedia, has at last passed the stage of a seedling commercial product. Will mighty acorns grow from these nursery days? Rik Haynes - PC Leisure's man with the green fingers - takes a safari through the growing jungle of laser-guided software for your PC...

Ever wondered what the outer moons of Jupiter look like? Can you recount the second act of Shakespeare's Twelfth Night? Have you heard the cry of a Killer Whale?

All these sights, sounds and information could be at your fingertips today. All you need is a CD-ROM drive, costing between £300 and £500, and some special software which comes on compact disc rather than floppy disk. A single CD-ROM disc holds nearly 600Mb of audio, video and various forms of computer data. That's the equivalent of over 400 high density floppy disks or 200,000 sheets of A4 paper.

No wonder every household name, from Sony to Time Magazine, is busy developing products for this remarkable medium. Multimedia is the blueprint for mass entertainment in the nineties. Everybody is now begining taking their first tentative steps into this brave new world.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT

Based in the small town of Farnham in Surrey, Optech was one of the first European companies to specialise in selling CD-ROM hardware and software. "We do nothing else but that," confirms Managing Director Ewen Mcgregor. "I saw the first CD-ROM drive about four years ago and was fascinated by what they were and what you could do with them. I made it my business to find out a bit more about it and decided it was a technology that was going to fly so I decided to set up my own company."

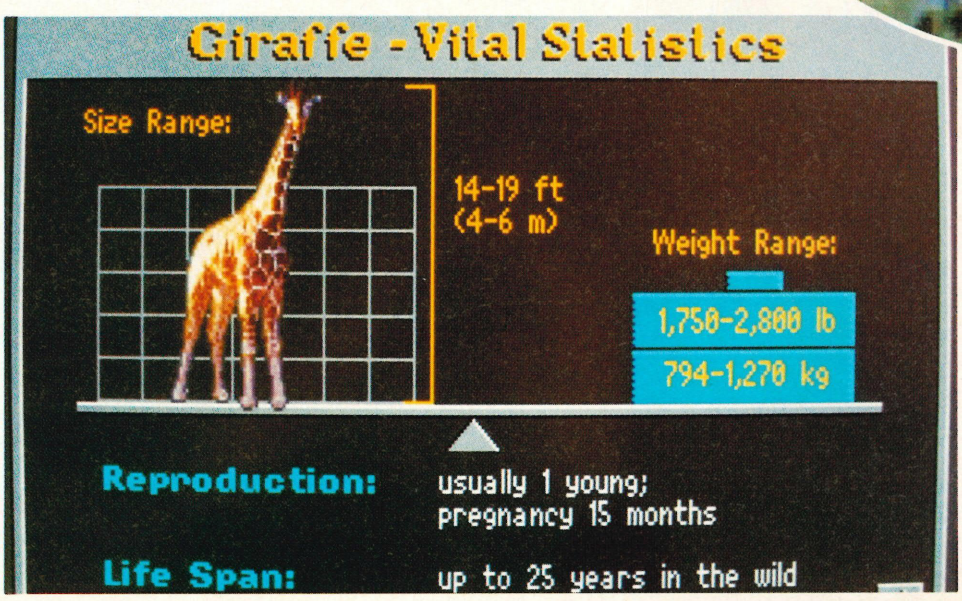
Mcgregor estimates the current user-base of PC CD-ROM stands at around 30,000 for most European countries and over 300,000 in the USA. That's probably why most of Optech's software is sourced from America at the moment.

Sizing up a Giraffe using Mammals on CD-ROM from the National Geographic Society. This extraordinary multimedia encyclopedia includes over 400 mammals complete with pictures, sound and film clips. It should take you quite a while to go through the 700 full-screen pics, 150 range maps, 150 fact screens, 150 vital statistics, 155 authentic 'vocalisations' and 600 pages of text! For single purchases contact Optech (0252 714340) or for bigger orders call Mindscape (0444 831545).

Games companies such as Sierra On-Line, Origin and Lucasfilm Games are working on CD-ROM adaptions of King's Quest, Wing Commander and Loom. So far, the only major difference between the floppy disk and CD versions of these games is improved audio. A CD-ROM drive can playback ordinary audio-CD tracks. Future titles will be made with the vast data-storage capabilities of CD in mind from the very start of development. Some could even be written to work solely on CD-ROM systems, taking full advantage of their superior capabilities.

Japanese programmers are more involved in producing titles for domestic CD-ROM systems like the Fujitsu FM Towns and NEC PC Engine. Luckily, all is not lost. We Europeans still have the time to catchup and possibly lead the way. Liverpool-based Psygnosis, the British company behind Shadow of the Beast and Lemmings, is devising one of the best examples of next generation CD-ROM gaming (see box).





PC

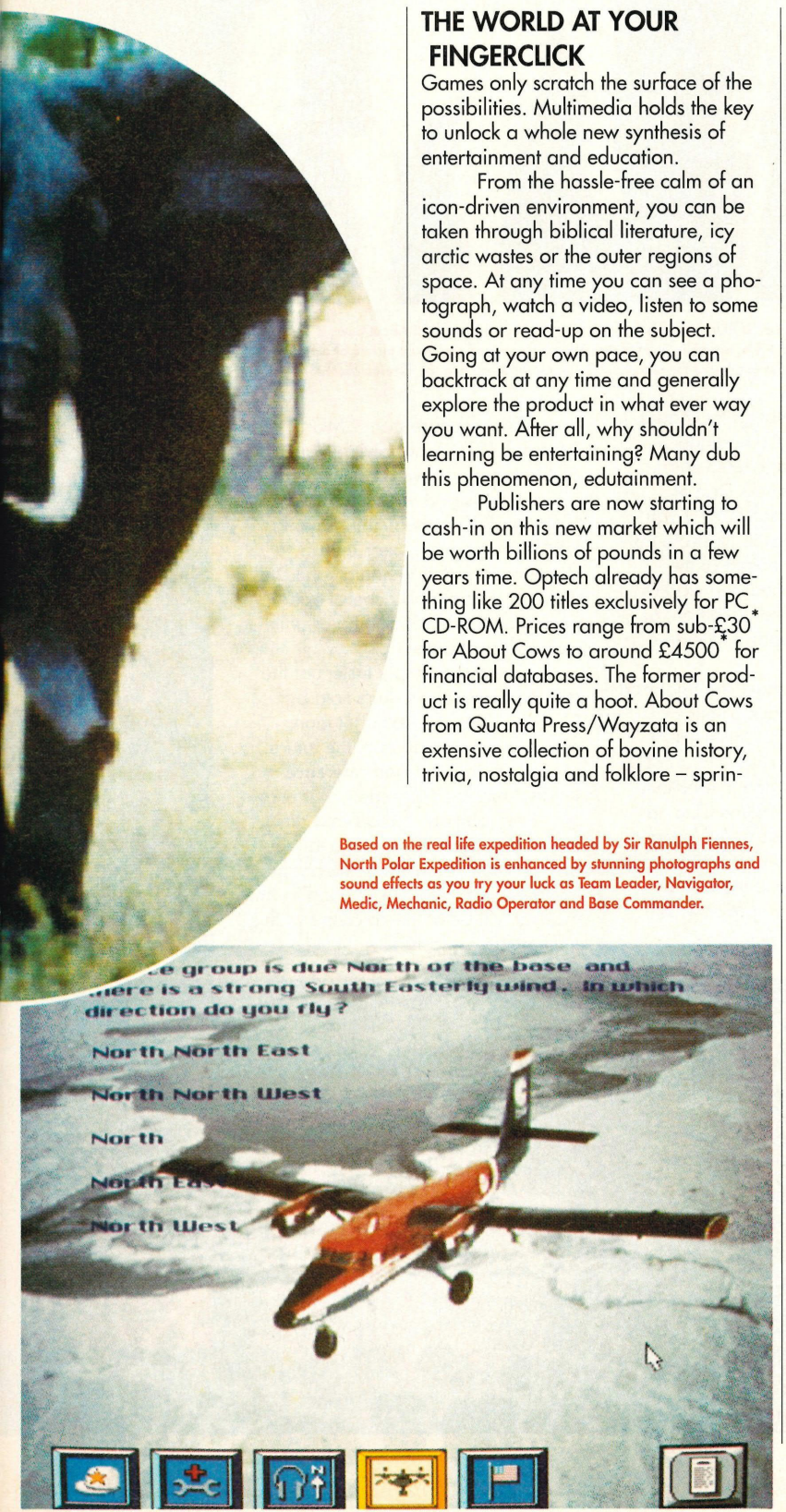
OMES

THE WORLD AT YOUR FINGERCLICK

Games only scratch the surface of the possibilities. Multimedia holds the key to unlock a whole new synthesis of entertainment and education.

From the hassle-free calm of an icon-driven environment, you can be taken through biblical literature, icy arctic wastes or the outer regions of space. At any time you can see a photograph, watch a video, listen to some sounds or read-up on the subject. Going at your own pace, you can backtrack at any time and generally explore the product in what ever way you want. After all, why shouldn't learning be entertaining? Many dub this phenomenon, edutainment.

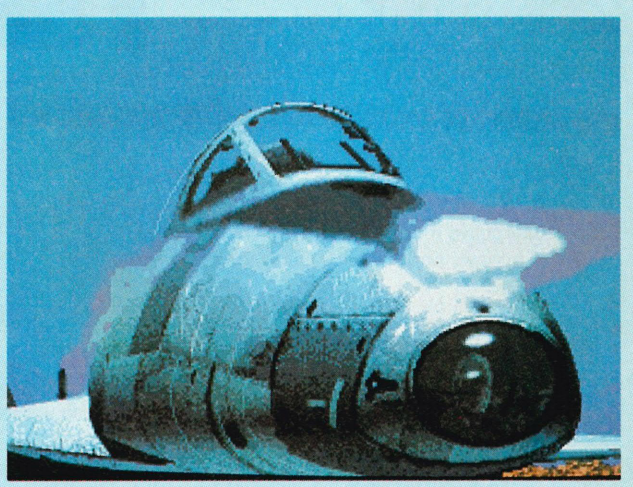
Publishers are now starting to cash-in on this new market which will be worth billions of pounds in a few years time. Optech already has something like 200 titles exclusively for PC CD-ROM. Prices range from sub-£30* for About Cows to around £4500* for financial databases. The former product is really quite a hoot. About Cows from Quanta Press/Wayzata is an extensive collection of bovine history, trivia, nostalgia and folklore – sprin-



Based on the real life expedition headed by Sir Ranulph Fiennes, North Polar Expedition is enhanced by stunning photographs and sound effects as you try your luck as Team Leader, Navigator, Medic, Mechanic, Radio Operator and Base Commander.

INTERACTIVE MOVIES

Games that look like they're films are no longer restricted to dreams and demos. Psygnosis, better known for beat'em-up games like Shadow of the Beast and Barbarian,are now developing custom-designed CD-ROM software which could be mistaken as the visual special effects for a new Star Trek or Top Gun movie. "We're more likely to make a good interactive product than say Warner Bros or Columbia Pictures," says Psygnosis co-founder Ian Hetherington. Psygnosis currently has three games in production. Each title is a cross between a game and film, that's why some people call them 'interactive movies'. One of the games is set inside the human body and is due for release in early 1992. Inner Explorer (working title) is a Fantastic Voyage-type game where you fly around the body in a series of miniature ships. Each craft is especially suited to one particular job like tearing through muscular tissue or fighting rogue viruses. "We're doing fractalised blood vessels. It's all very abstract," indicates Hetherington. "Everything we do now will be window-based - if the processing power is not available the window shrinks in size. Our investment in CD-ROM is massive. Each game will have set pieces of interactivity, though we're trying for free-format gameplay wherever possible."



Planetside is the first PC CD-ROM game from the company made famous by Shadow of the Beast and Lemmings. Psygnosis is planning another two titles, including one based around the cult sci-fi movie from the sixties, Fantastic Voyage. With Inner Explorer you'll be able to sort out a body's plumbing works. Doesn't that sound cute?



Just one of the exciting sequences from Planetside. Here your fighter is chasing after an enemy missile speeding its way towards one of your bases on the planet's surface. The realistic mountainous backdrops are created using special mathematical formulas originally invented by a clever scientist at IBM. Fractals were even used in the Star Trek II!

kled with anecdotes from farmers, cheesemakers and veterinarians.

"The quality of CD-ROM software is constantly improving," comments Mcgregor, "Some of the older titles were just compilations of old games put on a CD just to see how it would go. They sold really well. Some companies are grasping the nettle and understanding that there's so much more space to store sounds and animation that they can put out far superior products if they use CD-ROM as the platform rather than floppy disk."

Do you want to hear the inaugural speech of President John F Kennedy? Or discover the sad history of the North American Indian? Compton's Multimedia Encyclopaedia (£499*) carries the nine-million word encyclopaedia published by Britannica. One disc contains 15,000 illustrations and 60 minutes of sound. The product is filled with maps, charts, music, pictures, text, sound, graphics and speeches. A five hundered-year timeline lets you choose any point in American history – click right into important events, see summaries, entire articles, even hear special speeches.

Meanwhile, the ever popular 1990 CIA Factbook (£75*) is now in its third edition. New sections include interactive maps, extended economic overviews and full information of illicit drugs.

The Plant Doctor (£75*) is an image and text database compiled by the University of Wisconsin Extension Service. This comprehensive reference covers the evaluation, diagnosis, treatment and care of flowers, shrubs, turf/grasses/home gardens and other plantings. Ocean Imagery (£59*) is a collection of Ocean and scenic landscape colour and B&W photographs perfect for Desktop Publishing applications. Subjects range from surfers to starfish. North Polar Expedition from Virgin New Media (£99*) is based on the real-life expedition headed by Sir Randolph Fiennes. This is group activity – split between the Leader, Mechanic/Medic, Navigator/Radio Operator and Base Commander – designed to encourage team spirit.



If you do decide to invest in a CD-ROM drive for your PC, you must buy this product! About Cows is an extensive collection of bovine history, trivia, nostalgia and folklore. Where else would you find a picture of a cow wearing sunglasses? By the way, have you heard the one about the Devonshire cow and the cheesemaker...

With the Guinness Disc of Records from Mirrorsoft (£99*) you can watch animations to illustrate how fast a jet flies or the height of the world's tallest man, hear the world's fastest backward talker in action, or see colour photographs of a man eating a bike!

Space is no longer the final frontier, thanks to the Space Science CD-ROM discs from LASP University of Colorado. These ten discs are a collection of photographs from the NASA space programme. Volume One has 800 images of Uranus from Voyager 2. Volume Two contains 1400 datafiles of the Earth and Space including images of Voyager and Viking. The complete set costs £90*.

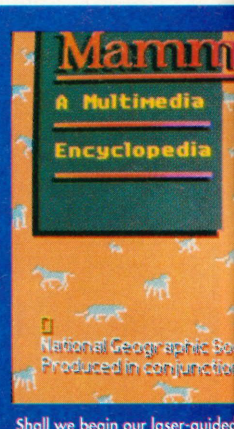
Shakespeare from CMC Research (£70*) includes the full text of all Shakespeare's works, including plays, poems and sonnets. And Vietnam (£70*), the first in Quanta's USA Wars series, covers the US involvement in the Vietnam conflict. It includes special and general operations orders, histories of major units and orders of battle.

These are simply tasters of the diverse range of products sold by Optech. "There will be a lot more entertainment products in the future, along with training and reference works," expects Mcgregor. "For example, every edition of The Times newspaper during 1990 is now available on a single CD-ROM disc. A boon for libraries and of course, a boon for the PC as it will be at the epicentre of this multimedia explosion."



MULTIMEDIA MAMMALS

Try this product if you don't know your Aardvark from a Zorrilla. Mammals: A Multimedia Encyclopaedia (£99*) from the National Geographic Society was originally a two-volume book, now updated to the latest in multimedia mayhem. Mammals leap, dive, burrow, climb and fly. They even roar and bray and scream. This Multimedia Encyclopaedia has over 400 mammals, 700 full-screen photos, 150 range maps, 150 fact screens, 150 vital statistics screens, 155 authentic vocalisations, essays equivalent to more than 600 pages of text and 45 full-motion movie clips from award-winning TV documentaries. Icons point the way to major features and hypertext leads you to pronunciations and cross-referenced information. With the click of a mouse, you can find out the size of an African Elephant, hear the roar of a Lion or see a bunch of Chimps moving around in their natural habitat. There is also a voice-over Getting Started trainer, mammal classification game and pop-up glossary. "Mammals is definitely the best CD-ROM product I've seen so far," says Optech MD Ewen Mcgregor. With the possible demise of London Zoo, this CD-ROM, and others like it, may be the perfect alternative.



Shall we begin our laser-guided

JUST LIKE WATCHING TV

Software doesn't hold a monopoly on innovation. Hardware manufactures are continually pushing the envelope of CD-based systems.

The stumbling block has been full-screen full-motion video – recording ordinary television-quality pictures and sound onto a compact disc and reading them back so you don't notice the difference. Video is very data-intensive, one frame needs 750k. Full-motion requires 25-30 frames per second (FPS). So, one second requires 750kx30FPS=22.5Mb. The trouble is, CD-ROM has a data-transfer rate of only 150k/bits per second. That's somewhere between the speed of the fastest floppy drive and the slowest hard disk. It would therefore take a CD-ROM drive over one hour to replay 29 seconds of video!

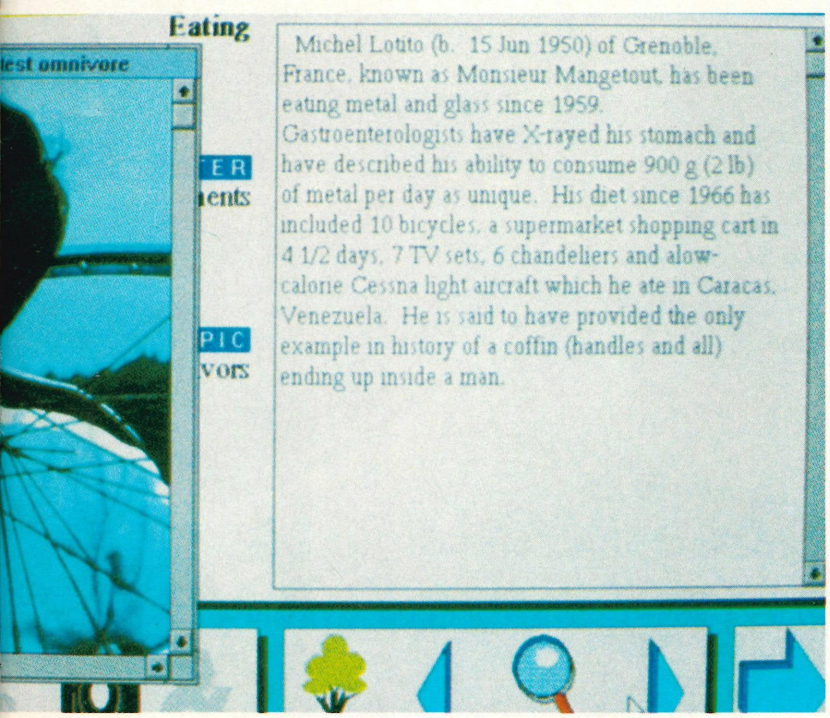
Various solutions have been introduced – ranging from small windows (quarter-screen full-motion) to slow playback speeds (8-12 frames per second). The most advanced technique currently in use is DVI (Digital Video Interactive). This video processing chipset from Intel uses a data compression rate of 160-1 and can store over one hour of full-screen motion video on a single CD.

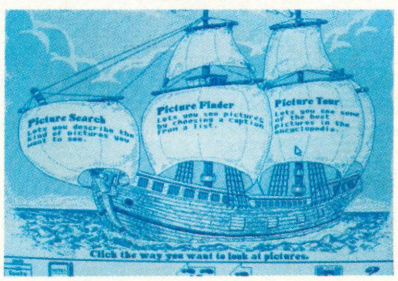
At a recent CD-ROM Conference in California, Sony showed a Technology Demonstration with DVI-like full-screen full-motion running off three boards connected to a PC. On a more economic note, Tandy displayed a new CD-ROM drive for less than $400 (approximately £230).

In an effort to stop the confusion caused by this multitude of machines, a new Multimedia PC (MPC) standard has been organised by such companies as Microsoft, NEC, Philips, Tandy and Olivetti. All MPC-compatible software will run on any PC equipped with a 286/386/486 CPU (10Mhz or faster), at least 2Mb of RAM, 30Mb or larger hard disk, VGA graphics card, digital audio subsystem, CD-ROM drive and Microsoft Windows. A whole MPC system could cost just under £1500 and upgrade kits will be available for existing PC users.

"I think the next generation of PC machines will come with CD-ROM as standard," predicts Mcgregor. "CD-ROM has been a long time in coming. People have been waiting for good software to play with. Publishers have only just taken to this media. We've gone through the chicken and egg situation, it's now worthwhile buying a CD-ROM drive."

One thing is for sure, the PC will remain at the centre of multimedia applications right into the next century. The hardware and software projects mentioned in this article are just a few examples of the exciting products that are currently available or being developed on CD-ROM. The fun, as they say, has only just begun.





Compton's Multimedia Encyclopedia is a true multimedia product with text, graphics, audio, animation and lots to look out for. VGA graphics are required.

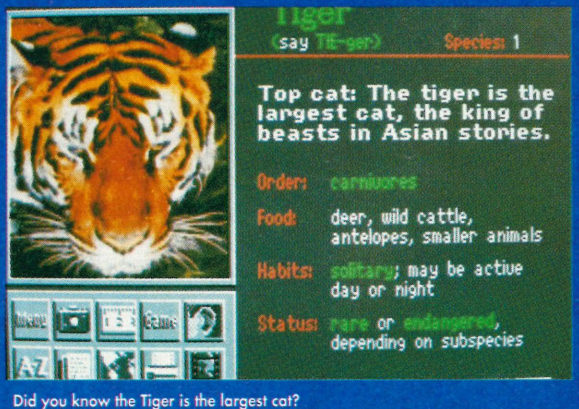
GETTING STARTED

Optech is offering an introductory package to the miracle of multimedia. The World of CD-ROM costs £459* and includes a CD-ROM drive, interface card and four valuable databases (World Atlas, The Complete Works of Shakespeare, The Complete Works of Sherlock Holmes, Multimedia Birds of America). The latter is based on the book by Audubon and comes with colour plates, full text and bird calls. Call Optech on (0252 714340) and tell them PC LEISURE sent you. Optech operates a discount service for bona-fide education customers

NB: All prices are exclusive of VAT and carriage.



afari?

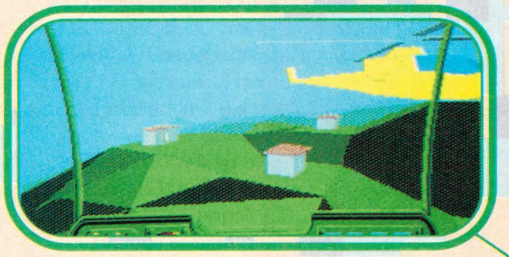


Did you know the Tiger is the largest cat?



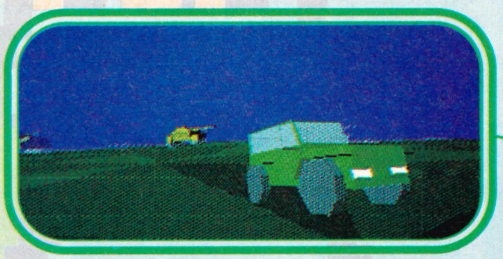
Do you want to listen to a roar or see a Tiger swimming?

FLAMES OF



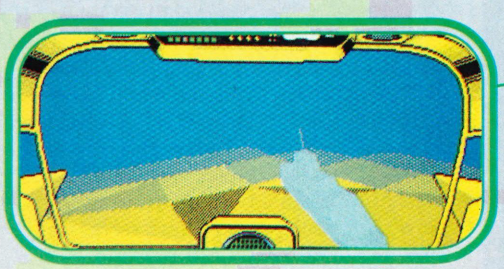
Dogfight with opponents over villages for command of the skies, or attack ground targets which serve the enemy's cause.

Flames of Freedom, the new blockbuster from the creators of Midwinter, offers you total freedom. Freedom of choice, Freedom of action, Freedom of movement.

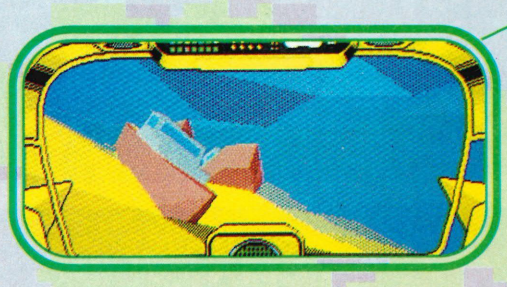


Night time sequences afford excellent cover for secret movement and actions, illuminated by the glare of your jeep's headlights.





The playing area of three million cubic miles is not restricted solely to areas above ground. You have full freedom of movement underwater, and three types of 'submarine' in which to achieve it.



Seek out and destroy enemy shipping units, condemning them to a watery grave on the sea bed, from where the ocean's surface is clearly visible above.

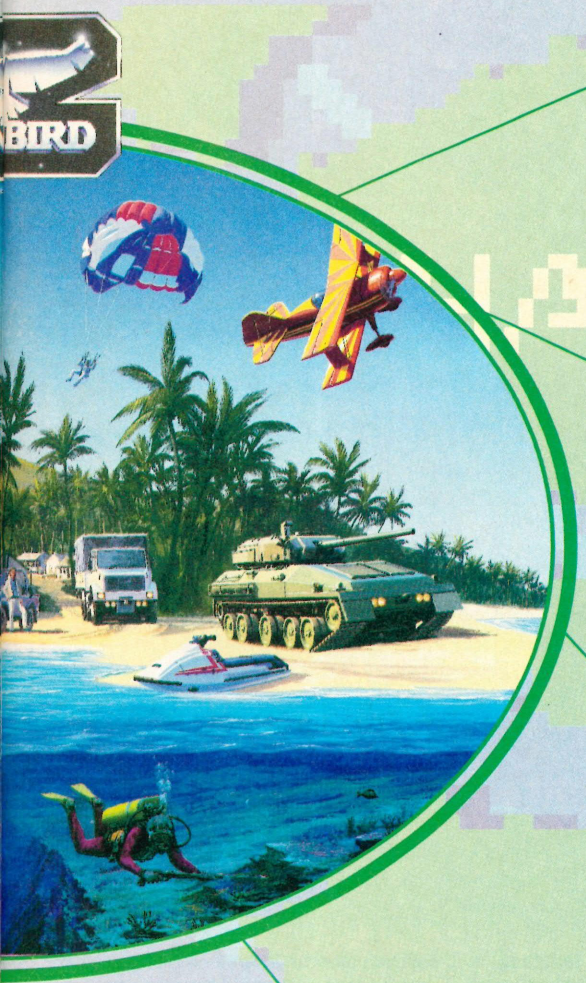
Screen shots shown are taken from the Atari ST versions. Actual sceens may vary by format

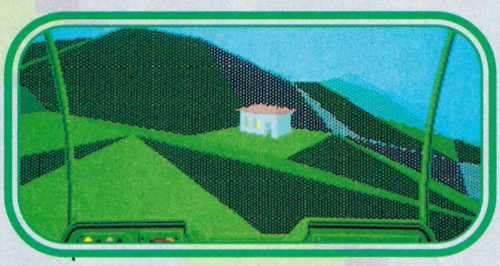
TOTAL FREEDOM- FROM RAI

(1,000 miles long X 1,000 miles wide X 15,000 feet high.) + (4,000 characters X 22 modes

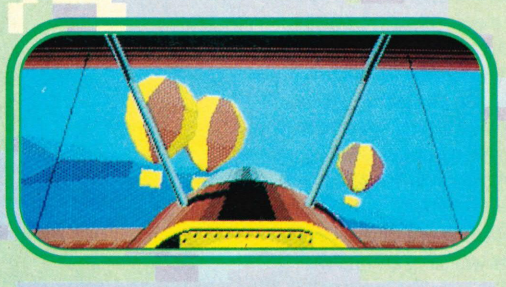
FREEDOM

A three dimensional environment packed with action, adventure and strategy. Entering it is easy.....breaking free is what's hard !

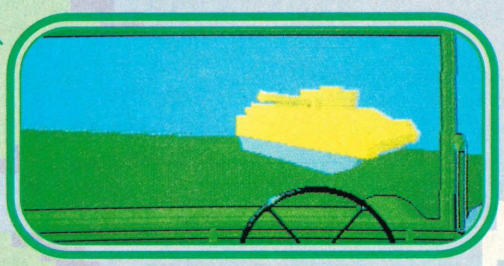




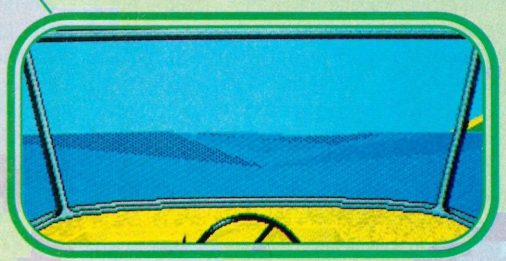
A million square miles of accurately mapped 3-D terrain, generated by fractal techniques, and fully light sourced throughout, provides a playing arena far superior to even its predecessor, Midwinter I.



Fly the skies above the forty-one islands by helicopter, zeppelin, parachute, rocket pack, or, as seen here, biplane and balloon, all offering superb views of the land and of the other aircraft.



The enemy have a vast array for firepower aimed at you, on land, in the air, and across the sea, and react quickly and intelligently to your actions.



The sea surface is generated by constantly moving fractal points, causing you to bob up and down as you swim or sail across it.

Flames of Freedom will be available shortly for your Commodore Amiga, Atari ST and IBM PC compatibles.

BIRD MASTERS OF STRATEGY

f transprt X 1,000s of buildings) = 3,000,000 cubic miles of Action, Adventure and Strategy.

MONEY FOR NOTHING?

Close your eyes and think of the typical software house. The programmers – hip guys dashing around in Ferraris, occasionally swanning into a swanky office to knock out an award winning bit of code. The office, a plush well appointed business addresses with Miss World as a receptionist, where you have to wade through the thick shagpile carpet to get through to the hi-tech offices, networked mainframes on every desk and robots whizzing around the warehouse to the sound of Pavaroti.

Fronting it all, some fat cat sitting at a large shiny mahogany desk, with nothing but a Mickey Mouse telephone sitting on it, turning towards you in a swivel leather chair, tapping out the cigar ash and saying, "Great game idea, son – pick up your 100 grand at the desk on the way out."

If that's your idea of a software company then, should you ever be unfortunate enough to enter those portals, you're in for something of a let down.

The programmers are the badly dressed guys with a haunted look in their eyes that means their current game is two months behind schedule. The offices, fairly Spartan places, which seem in a constant state of organised – sometimes not so organised – chaos. The Managing Director,a guy with an ulcer, a portable telephone and more often than not, an overdraft. But how come, eh? I mean, at twenty-odd pounds for a computer game, they must be making millions! Making out like bandits! Taking six month holidays in the Bahamas! If popstars can make a fortune selling CD's and albums at half the price, then the software industry must be making two fortunes!

Well, it's not quite like that, as it happens. Although you personally pay a fair whack for a game, surprisingly little gets to be profit, as you can see in our example, and that's for a number of reasons. Let's examine the production process to see where all the money goes.



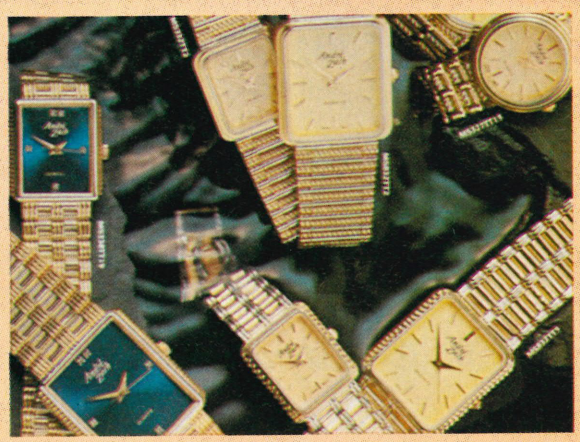
Twenty-five quid minimum for a computer game! Software houses must be making money like bandits, just lounging around on the bonnet of their company Lamborghinis. PC Leisure sent our spies into the very bowels of leading software houses and soon came up with some very different images indeed!

1) Programming

Yes, someone, somewhere has spent a significant portion of their life coming up with an idea, inventing code, designing sprites and then debugging and rewriting, in order to come up with, THE GAME! More often or not, this will not really be one person, but a team of people; programmers, artists, designers and musicians.

They won't only be working on the PC, but usually for a whole range, of machines, using tools called cross assemblers, which allow you to develop code on another machine, usually a fast 386, and then load it into your target machine, another PC, an Amiga or even a Spectrum.

The time taken to develop a game varies enormously – a simple budget game compiled of standard routines could be knocked out in a month or so. A complex original game may take a year to eighteen months. There's no average price paid – but a good original game from a known developer could be expected to get £10,000 or so as advance payments for a single machine version, plus a royalty on each game sold of 75p to £2.00p. While the very best can name their own price, a budget game or conversion programmer might get no royalty, but a one off payment.





The glamour, the money, the world of money, power and high fashion. Popular belief held by everyone outside the computer games industry but recent times have seen many old, established firms like Activsion and Hewson run into financial trouble. Where does the money go? Well it certainly isn't spent on the latest fashions - that's for sure!

2) Licenses

If a game has got a theme taken from a Film or TV Series, or if it's based on a coin-op, then you can be sure that the software house has paid handsomely for it and is also paying a royalty to whoever owns the original rights, say 50-60p. This usually means that the programmers get less of a cut in cases like this!

Even so, the overall royalties bill is usually higher on a licensed product – but the software houses take them on in the hope that a 'name' behind the game will ensure that it sells.

3) The Product

So, what do you take out of the shop when you pay over your money? A box, which is surprisingly pricey to make, a manual, maybe some freebie bits like stickers and the discs – a lot of them usually. A glossy expensive package can cost well over £3.00 for the software house to manufacture, duplicate and pay the little old ladies (yes, really) to put all the bits in the box, though in the case of a premium product like SimEath, that hardly covers the manual price alone!

The whole thing can be done a lot cheaper, 'though. Bung a disc in a small CD box and print the manual on the inlay and you could get away with 45-50p. That's how the budget houses do it.

4) Middle Men & Shopkeepers

Wholesalers, called Distributors (Middle Men to you and me), buy most of the games off the software houses, placing large orders. They get a discount of around 45% of the retail prices, less VAT, the European Community sales tax, which with the latest increase has been set at 17.5%. Yes, with each purchase of a game, you are paying your very own little bit of Poll Tax and buying very own little bit of a Butter Mountain! These Distributors sell on the games to the actual shops you buy from – taking their little bit of profit. Shops sell it to you, taking a bit more. 45% might seem a bit steep to satisfy the Middle Men, but you'd be amazed at the difference between the cost price and the actual selling price of most things. 45% is almost reasonable!

5) Marketing and Advertising.

Posters. Funny dangly things that hang up in shops. Competitions for both the wholesalers and the consumers. Freebies for the journalists! (What dey? –Ed) They cost money. Big money! Indirectly, you pay for this, of course, but there is a plus side. If it wasn't for adverts that the software houses pay for the privilege of putting in this very mag, then the cover price would be double what it is now. A high ad spend would be 15% of revenue, low would be 5%. Oooerrr! So read those ads carefully, OK!

6) Overheads

Finally, there are offices to run, rent to pay, bills to avoid paying and wages to cough up with at the end of every month. Not just programmers,

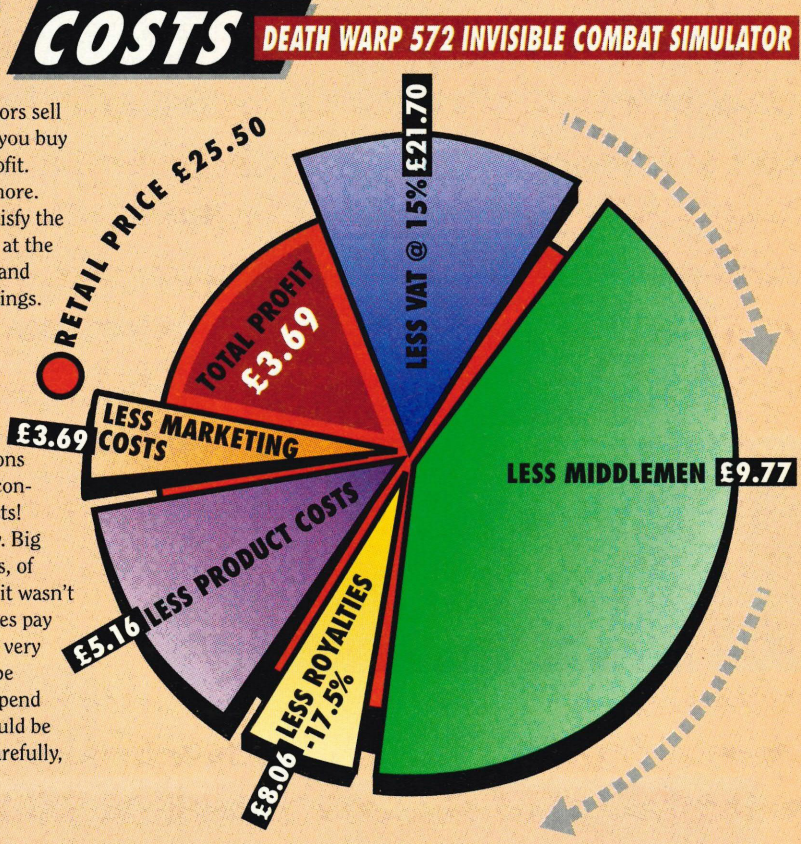
if they work in-house. Receptionists, accounting people, project management people, salesmen, marketing and public relations people, operations people. Wages alone for a small staff 15? Let's say you wouldn't get much change out of £250,000 per year. That's a lot, which hopefully gets paid out of.....

Profit

In our example that's £3.69 per game, to pay all the overheads and then make a return on all the money you've had to borrow in the first place to put the thing together. Say you pay £5,000 for a license, £10,000 for the development, then make 10,000 product units and spend £12,000 on Marketing.

Using our example, that's going to be £56,000 out of the bank before you start to sell, not including staff wages, etc. Working on that profit, they have to sell around 15,000 before they even break even, not including overheads.

Undoubtedly, you can make a fortune if you have a megahit – Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles reputedly has sold around 500,000 games, but you can bet it was one expensive game to produce. But for the middle order and low rank titles – it's certainly not Money for Nothing.



DOUBLE VALUE

TWO DISKS FOR THE PRICE OF ONE

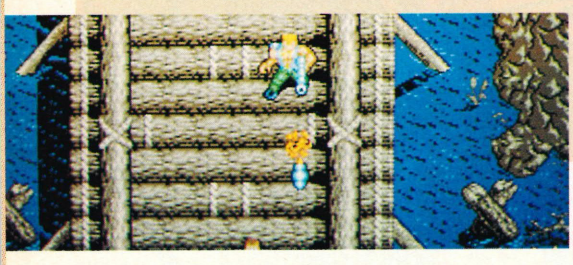
That's right. At no extra cost, the June issue of CU AMIGA will boast not one but TWO action-packed disks of white-hot AMIGA entertainment. Unlike other Amiga magazines, who put up their prices whenever they include an extra disk, there WILL BE NO PRICE INCREASE WHATSOEVER. Two disks for only £2.95!

But that's not all. Our June issue will be every games player's dream. Weighing in at a massive 180-pages, the mag will be packed with all the usual top-quality news, in-depth previews, exclusive reviews and as many hints and tips as we can cram in.

FREE FULL AMIGA GAME
THE MIIRRORSOFT BLOCKBUSTER GRAVITY

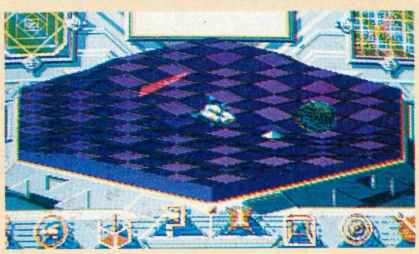
We'll also be ADDING to the magazine by bringing you a whole wealth of entertaining articles that tell you exactly how to get the very best from your computer. And that's not even counting a special 24-page supplement that takes a close up look at the world's best home computer.

Remember: Double the value, double the coverage, and at no extra cost to the readers.



PARTY TIME

To help celebrate the changes happening to CU we've lined up a double disk of the best in Amiga entertainment, utilities and programs. For starters we've got A WHOLE GAME. Not just any game, mind you. Those lovely people at Mirrorsoft have given us GRAVITY, a smash hit and one of the best sci-fi arcade strategy games ever. Believe us, you ain't seen nothing yet! What's more we've also lined up a playable level of Core's brand new Ikari Warriors-type blaster, Warzone – a game that'll literally blow you away. On top of all that, we've also got lots of brill utilities that'll let you get the most out of



your Amiga. Learn how to program, create graphics and sample sounds – we'll help you unleash the power in your Amiga!!

Still in a party mood, we've also commissioned a 24-page supplement which'll tell you all you need to know about the Amiga. Each page will be crammed with useful information, tips and a run down on which software programs get the CU seal of approval.

WHAT'S NEW?

We aim to be the Ultimate Guide to the Ultimate Computer. We're also going to make computing fun. Each month we'll be taking a look at all the new hardware and software packages in an authoritative and comprehensive manner. We'll guide you through each package, tell you how to use it in easy-to-follow guides, in a manner which will be ideal for the beginner and satisfying for the enthusiast.

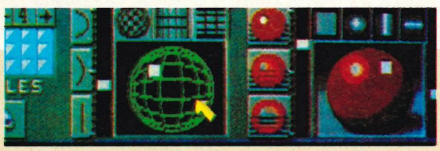
AND DON'T FORGET!

UNLIKE OTHER MAGAZINES WHICH PUT UP THEIR PRICES WHEN THEY INCLUDE AN EXTRA DISK, CU WILL STILL BE ONLY £2.95.

AMOS

AMOS has quickly established itself as the top programming language for the Amiga. We'll be showing you how to get the most out of AMOS and keeping you informed of all new developments and updates. Look out for a special feature on AMOS 3D, soon to be whizzing its way into the softshops.

FOR MONEY



Q&A
Got a problem? Then send your queries into our new Technical Editor who's a dab hand at solving anything from printer problems and virus infections to advice on the best memory expansions or DTP packages.

GRAPHICS
We'll be taking a look at state-of-the-art graphics on the Amiga. We'll show you exactly what your machine is capable of and feature the work of top graphic artists in a fun section which will tell you everything you need to know.



SOUND
Fancy adding a backing track to the game you've created on AMOS? Or sampling bits of music from top albums or CDs? We'll tell you how it's done.

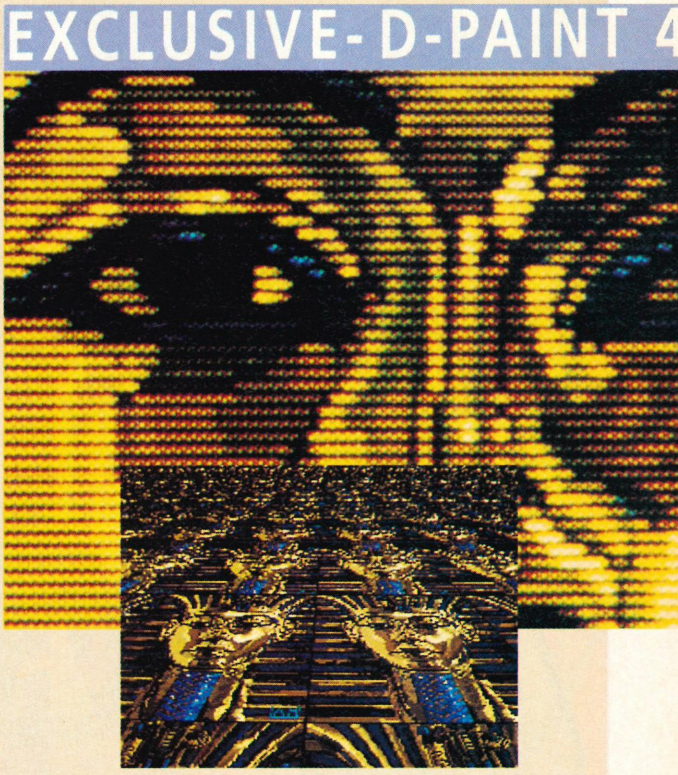
PD
We've already got the best PD section in any mag, but it's just got better. From our next issue we'll also be covering all the best PD utilities – some of which are better than full-price software!

HARDWARE
From memory expansions to colour printers, each month CU will tell you which are the best buys and show you how they work. We'll be sorting out the good from the dross. All of our reviews will make comparisons to similarly priced items, and we'll tell you exactly how useful they are.

CDTV
Set to revolutionise the home computer, Commodore's CDTV will take Amiga owners into the forefront of the computer revolution. Each month we'll show you the latest games, the best software, and keep you up-to-date on just when you can get your hands on the CDTV expansion pack.

EDUCATION
The boom in education software has thrown up an increasing number of education programs. Our new review section will cover all the new releases.

CU Amiga scoops the world with an exclusive in-depth look at Electronic Art's amazing new graphics package – DELUXE PAINT 4.
Stand by to be amazed.



180 PAGES, 2 DISKS,
24 PAGE SUPPLEMENT,
ALL FOR £2.95.
WHAT MORE CAN WE SAY !
ON SALE 26TH MAY

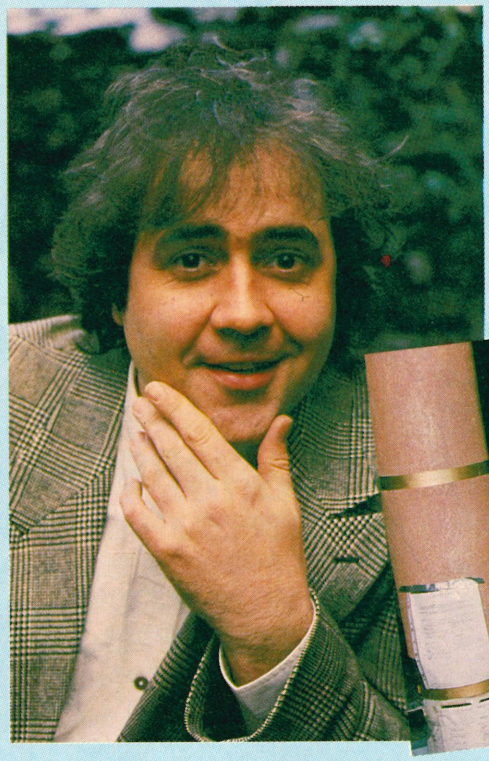
GOLDEN YEARS

THE 1991 GOLDEN JOYSTICK AWARDS

Last month saw the most presdigious event in the software world's diary when on the 4th of April, the EMAP Golden Joystick Awards were within the luxurious surroundings of the Rooftop Gardens in Kensington. The atmosphere was thick with circumstance and an overpowering presence of cheese. Yes, everybody who is anybody in the software world, puts on their sunday best and adopts their 'big cheese' posturing as guests of PC Leisure, ACE, The One, CU Amiga, Computer + Video Games, Sinclair User and Mean Machines.

The once a year event involves large amounts of chit-chatting over chilled white wine and imported lagers before finding your seating for eating and trying the latest dishes in haute cuisine. After a hearty meal, it was on to the show proper - hosted by funny man Danny Baker from London's GLR Radio station.

So without any further pomp, here's how the software houses fared when balloted by the people who buy their games....



Danny Baker, GLR and Radio 5"s jolliest jockey, is also an avid computer games player and seemed to know more about the industry than some of the people that were involved in the industry.



The event wasn't just packed with visiting dignitaries - here's a 'bickering' of EMAP staff in deep discussion about the merits of a free bar. The nose in the background actually belongs to our own dear editor, who's no doubt sniffing out his next drink...



One of the most important sub events at the show is consulting the seating plan to find who you've got to talk to.





Tough at the top. Gary Bracey (centre) of Ocean.



A great day for ex-Microprose boss, Peter Jones. He picked up three prizes, Best PC game, best 16 bit simulation and an 8 bit award, then calmly announced later in the week that he moving to head-up Sierra-On-Line UK's operation.



Best coin-op conversion was won by Golden Axe, picked up by stone faced Andrew Wright of Virgin Games.

BEST GRAPHICS 16 bit

Nominations:
Shadow of the Beast 2
Psygnosis
Powermonger
Electronic Arts
Space Ace
Entertainment Int.
Winner:
SHADOW OF THE BEAST

BEST SOUNDTRACK 16 bit

Nominations:
Speedball II
Mirrorsoft
Toyota Celica GT Rally
Gremlin Graphics
Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge
Gremlin Graphics
Winner:
SPEEDBALL II

BEST SIMULATION 16 bit

Nominations:
F19 Stealth Fighter
Microprose
F29 Retaliator
Ocean
Kick Off 2
Anco
Winner:
F19 STEALTH FIGHTER

BEST COIN OP CONVERSION (all formats)

Nominations:
Golden Axe
Virgin
Off Road Racer
Virgin
Rainbow Islands
Ocean
Winner:
IVAN STEWART'S OFF ROAD RACER

THE GAME OF THE YEAR (all formats)

Nominations:
Powermonger
Electronic Arts
Kick Off 2
Anco
Golden Axe
Virgin
Winner:
KICK OFF 2

SOFTWARE MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

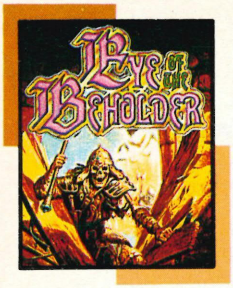
Nominations:
Ocean
Electronic Arts
Microprose
Winner:
OCEAN

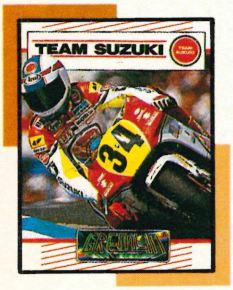
HARDWARE MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR

Nominations:
Commodore Business Machines
Sega
Atari
Nintendo
Winner:
SEGA

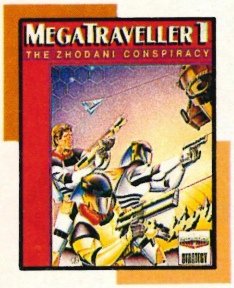
PC GAME OF THE YEAR

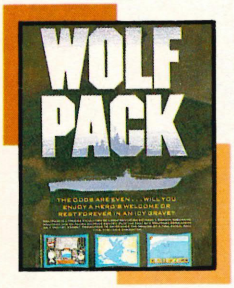
Nominations:
Wing Commander
Mindscape
Rail Road Tycoon
Microprose
LHX Attack Chopper
Electronic Arts
Winner:
RAIL ROAD TYCOON

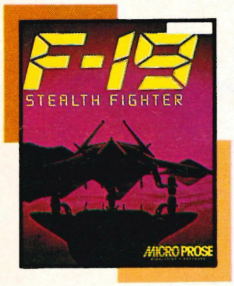


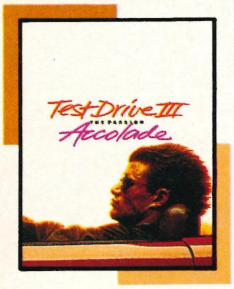












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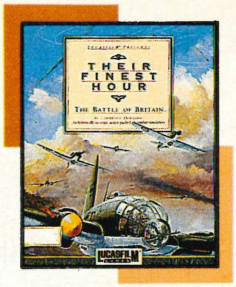
MIRRORSOFT

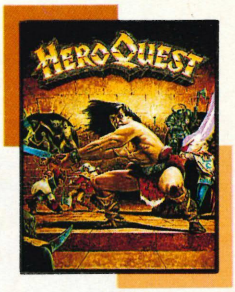
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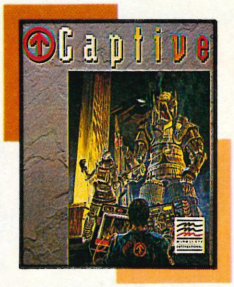
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STRATEGIC SIMULATIONS INC.

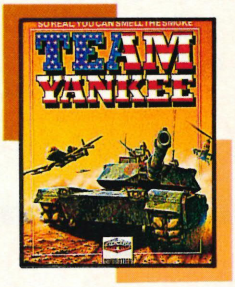
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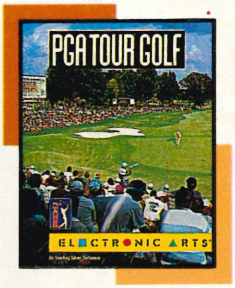
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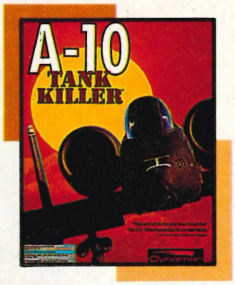


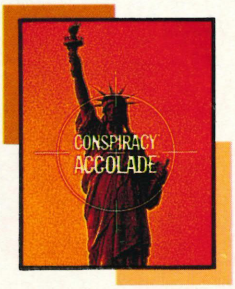












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BUILD YOUR OWN

The PC is a pig from hell. Right, well if that hasn't got your attention put the ruddy magazine down now 'cos you are obviously waiting in the doctors and don't want to be disturbed.

Surprisingly though, a pig from hell is EXACTLY what the PC can be when it comes to the old sound department. And if you have ever heard your PC singing the blues you will know exactly what I mean.

This, can be an advantage - you've heard of making a silk purse from a sow's ear..? What! I hear you shriek. Has the idiot been missing his medication, how can this possibly be an advantage? Well, the answer is no, the medication is fine but it still isn't stopping the headaches. But this naff noise thing IS an advantage (no, really - honest), basically because if you want proper high fidelity sound on your PC you'll have to add the proper equipment to it. This'll make you think about what you want to achieve and thus you can control the kind of sound and facilities you get.

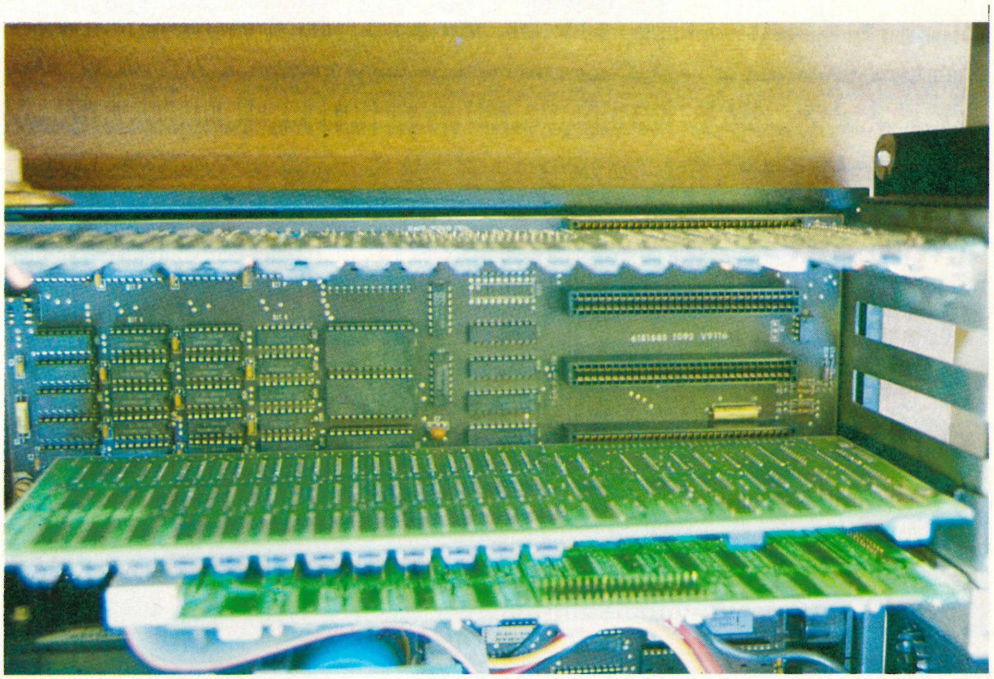
See, simple (ok, so it costs a bit more than the computers that have some sort of average sound system already built in, but think of it as an adventure)!

In this article I shall be explaining as much about sound and affiliated technologies on the PC as space allows; this will include a bit of sound theory (y'know "the music goes in here, goes round and round, and comes out there" kind of stuff) and a brief guide to what's actually happening in the world at the moment like MIDI and multimedia.

Aren't you pleased you aren't in the doctors now?

SOUND AND VISION

Multimedia is going great'guns at the moment. It is, as the pundits like to say, a "happening" technology. Simply put, multimedia is what the more wrinkly types among us will remember as audio visual. The computer sits in the middle of a pile of expensive equipment and allows you to control images and sound and present them in any way you wish.



The major thing it has done for the market is to concentrate manufacturers' minds on a handful of fairly disparate technologies like sound, video and data handling (you know, shoving great wodges of data about the innards of the computer), improve them and then attempt to combine them.

If you want to, for example, you can connect your video recorder to your computer and actually manipulate the images that come from the VCR.

First, let me give you an example of the scale of the things we are talking about. Most of you will be familiar with CDs, and it is likely you will know that the computer equivalent is known as CD ROM. A CD ROM can hold in the region of 600Mb of data that's a hell of a lot of data (and the word "hell" seems to struggling there - insert your own word if necessary).

In our regular series on upgrading your PC to a full-blown games blaster, we look this month at sound boards in the company of our resident Mr Fixit, Chris Long.

A normal CD can have in the region of 75 minutes worth of music on it, that means (very roughly) 600Mb = 75 minutes of music. Now try this, 600Mb = something like 90 seconds of normal video (at 30 frames a second). This gives you an idea of the kind of data throughput (data handling - see I told you) the computer runs into when dealing with sound and pictures.

One way around this is "on the fly compression" but don't worry, we will talk about that later - a lot later. These kind of problems have had the research and development departments of big companies working overtime.

Multimedia will certainly influence the way sound boards will go, and to a certain extent is influencing them now. Manufacturers have to control the bread and butter peripheral equipment of multimedia like video players, tape recorders and the like. What better way than MIDI?

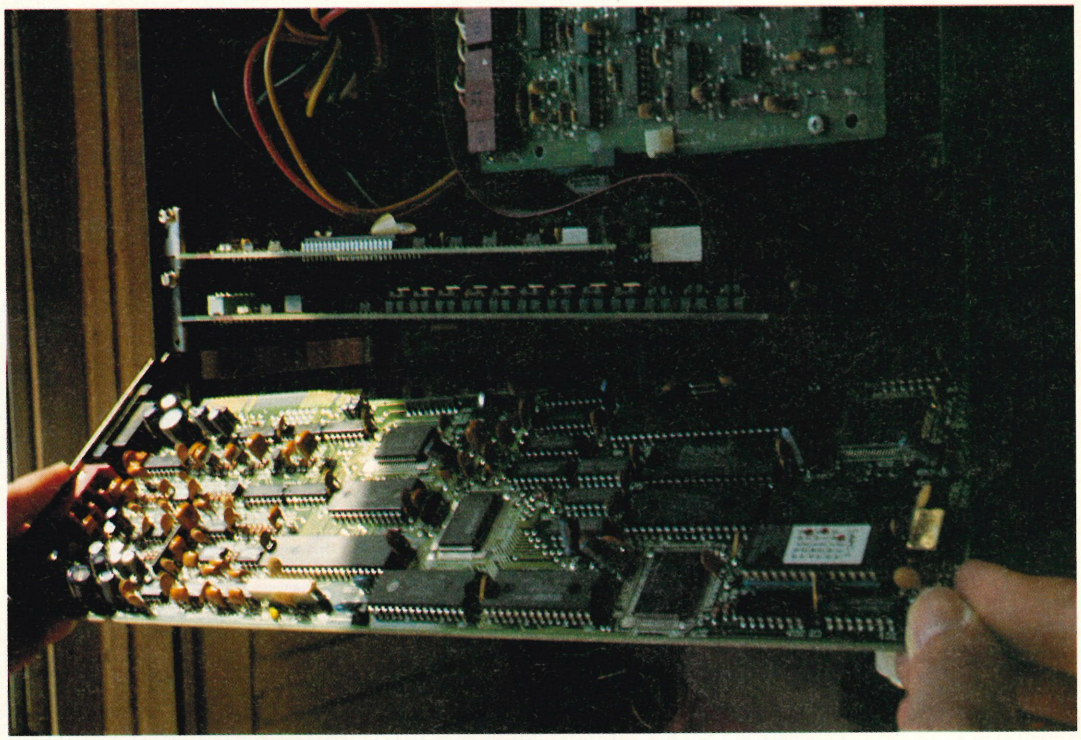
And after that rather neat link let me explain MIDI.

MIDI (or as it is known by its much more interesting(!) full name, Musical Instrument Digital Interface) is simply a way of controlling an audio device to produce a sound or a series of sounds from a simple note on a synthesiser right up to a whole performance. And when it comes to controlling a load of equipment what better device than a computer?

The PC, because of its multiplicity, has its own little industry supporting it in the MIDI world, people like Roland whose MPU-401 has set a standard of sorts.

The advantage of MIDI over the more traditional approach of shouting "NOW" across a studio floor is simply the ease and accuracy of communication between different devices. Originally designed to allow synthesisers to link up to each other and use (abuse?) each others sound units, it quickly developed in to full-blown industry as manufacturers and musicians saw its potential.

The computer sits in the middle, as might a conductor, and, literally, cues different instruments or machines to play or not play at given times. And the beauty of it all is that once the computer has done the performance once it can do it again.



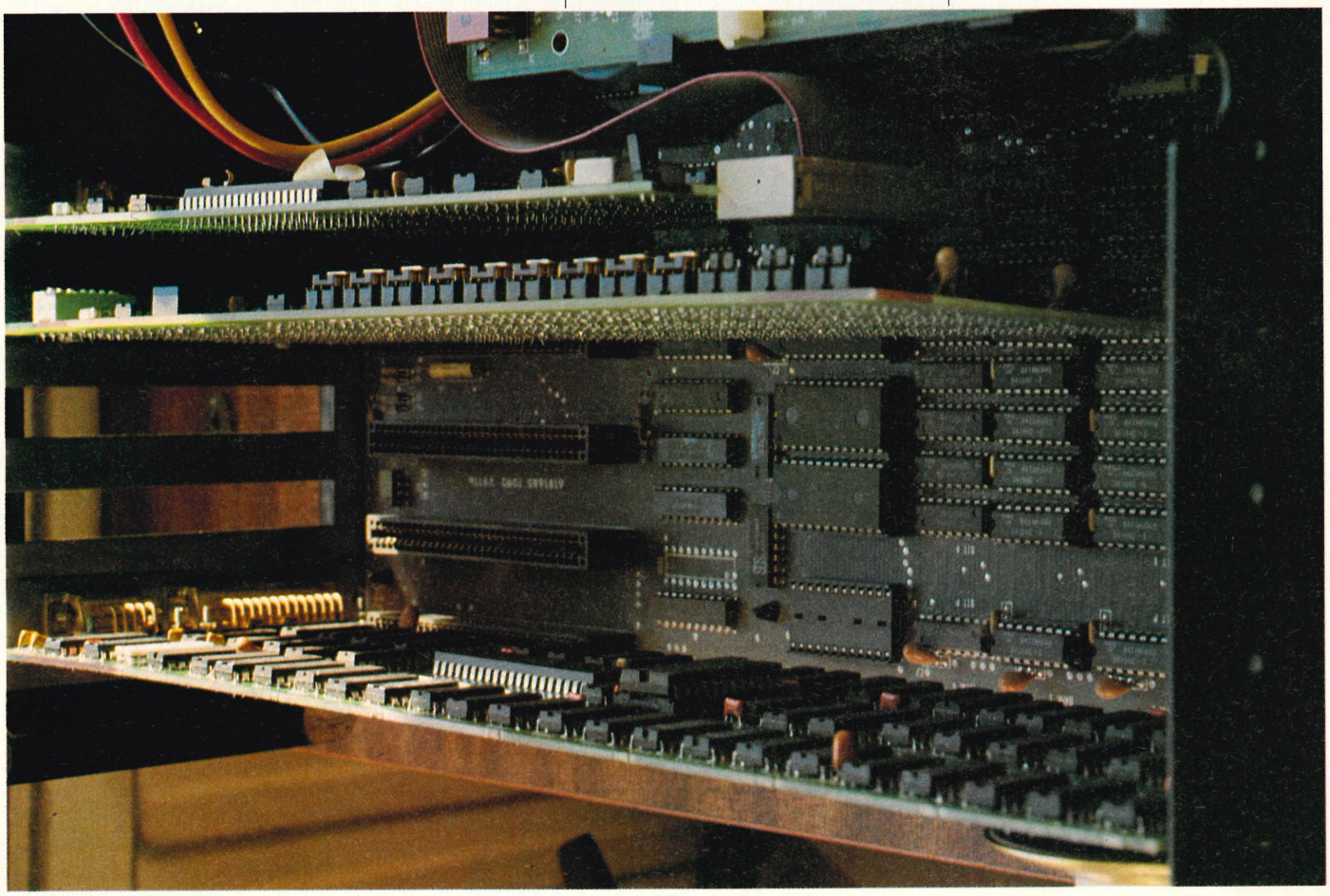
A Roland LAPC1 being introduced to our very poorly IBM. Well, it is an old 'un!

It's easy to fit a board - just remove the casing and plug the suckers in - after having turned off the power of course!

Unless of course you are the kind of person that forgets to save your work.

SETTING UP

For example, If you have a synthesiser, tape recorder with, say, a guitar solo on it and a drum machine you can control them from just one source: the PC. The MIDI system will send the set up details for the synthesiser so that you can get certain sounds and particular tune. When its done that it will set up the drum machine to play at certain rhythm and pattern. And THEN it will set them all off at the same time and when the guitar solo



is due it will switch the tape recorder on to play it.

Magnificent huh? The only down side is that it tends to cost a lot of dosh and (ok, the only TWO down sides) that setting the system up can be rather time consuming at the start. That said, it is massively impressive to watch a trained operator use even a medium blown MIDI system and an awful lot of fun to do it yourself.

The last in the line of sound on your PC are sound boards. These are cards that will enable some sort of sound on your computer on a quality rating ranging from "Wow" to "Hmmm".

Most games software uses sound one way or another, and it is certainly not imperative to have a sound board to play them, but it can add to the games excitement to have the sound effects too. The software has to interface with (talk to) the sound card and though that may sound easy it ain't necessarily so (now, where have you heard that before).

It is imperative that you check that the software is compatible with the sound card you have, it will say so on the box. Failing that call the manufacturers.

The buying criterion should be what do you want the card to do (MIDI, stereo, particular games, etc) THEN price: for gods sake don't buy the cheapest because it's all you can afford if it DOESN'T have the facilities you want.

Believe me it is not worth it.

Here is an outline of what you might find on the market. The Innovation SSI-2001 comes in at the "Hmmm" end, for around ú80 you get a mono output that needs to be fed in to an amp (that is, it's a line out), two (yes, count 'em) joystick (games) ports. The 2001 is for people who want more noise than get from their PC at the moment but aren't all that fussy. Also, though there is software that will run on it, it isn't as widely supported as some.

Ad-Lib card.

We are definitely moving towards "Wow" now; it costs around ú140. It doesn't come with a games port for your joystick (which strikes me as a bit dim actually) neither a MIDI connection, but it IS stereo and comes with a headphones port. But the biggest plus has to be the amount of software written for it. Obviously you need to check your software but the Ad-Lib is widely supported on the software front.

The Sound Blaster Straight from Creative Labs the Sound BLaster costs around ú220 it has a stereo out, an on board (4W) amp, a games port and a MIDI interface and handles sampling and will emulate the Ad-Lib board, thus making it a good buy for the well-off games player.

Roland LAPC-1. Due to the sudden influx of imported boards via Sierra, the cost of the LAPC1 has now dropped from £390 to around £240 - good news for all you sound buffs out there. The LAPC1 doesn't have a games port but it does have an astonishing sound and though not quite as versatile for games software, is well worth the money if you want to take making music on your PC seriously.

So there you have it. If you want to have sound on your PC... LISTEN. You know it makes sense (can you hear me mother?).

SOUNDS LIKE A GOOD IDEA TO ME

It is useful to understand how sound gets on to (and ultimately out of) the PC. It is exactly the same principle as a CD player - and if you're not quite sure on the principle of the CD player don't worry. That's what I'm here for: read on.

If you visualise the sound as a squiggly line that goes up and down according to its volume you end up with a line looking not unlike a mountain range (unless its Deep Purple in which case it is just a very, very high plateau). Now, imagine dots equally spaced along the top of the line following the ups and downs.

If you draw a line down from each dot you have a "slice" of the music, which, not unlike a piece of Brighton rock, is just a snippet but has all the personality of the music in it (ok, ok, so it doesn't have Brighton running through the middle). The computer examines this snippet for loudness and type of sound, then this information is put in to a 16 bit computer word.

So, you now have a 16 bit word that is a slice of the music, remember that you were asked to imagine dots all along the ridge, well, if you have a byte for each dot you will soon have enough slices to put together and make a song with. In fact it will be the song you first thought of (clever huh?).

The problem here is what happens BETWEEN the dots? Well, who knows? The only way around that one is to put the dots close together, very close together. A CD samples (samples = dots along the ridge) at 44.1KHz and what THAT means is 44,100 times a second. That's 44,100 slices a second, each slice with a teeny bit of the sound. It doesn't take a genius to work out that before long you are going to need a fairly hefty storage device to keep all these slices.

You can, if you want, reduce the number of bits that represent the sound. This reduces the quality but makes it easier for you to store the information (and in some cases cuts down on the electronics, and therefore the price).

A WHOLE LOT OF SLOTS

When the PC was originally designed it wasn't considered necessary to build any real sound capability into it. The idea was to put half a dozen (or more) slots in to the box an wait for other manufacturers to build cards to fit in to them. The principal of the slot in a PC is fairly simple. Inside the PC there is a main highway, not unlike a High Street (though don't bother looking for a Woolworth's or Marks and Spencer's on it).

All the signals that operate the computer travel along this main highway. The slots are like openings on the highway, they allow signals to come on to the highway and other signals to come off. So, if you wanted to print to the printer (a logical choice of course) you need some way to get the printer signals to the printer.

The original PC didn't have a printer port, so you needed to put a card in a slot that watched for signals labelled "For The Printer" plucked them off the highway and shoved them out to the printer attached to the card via a printer socket.

Nowadays a lot of manufacturers build this function in to the main circuit board thus freeing up a slot - for a sound board perhaps. In computers the highway is called a bus, this comes from the term omnibus, so if you want to remember what the main highway is called jut think of the number 19 going to Tooting Bec.

The bus is very important to upgraders, it is where you will be placing most of your new found bits (add in cards) and it is worth treating it with care. Also it is worth noting that it comes in two sizes (just to make life easy, you understand) the original PC with an 8088 or 8086 processor has an 8 bit bus, which allows eight bits to travel along it. And AT class PCs with a 286, 386 and (you wish) a 486 all have 16 or more bit wide busses.

It is not useful to go into any more detail at the moment, but what is worth mentioning is that the sound cards you are most likely to buy are 8 bit, that is they have a connector (the bit that sticks out of the bottom of the card with the gold coloured stripes on) that is about three and a bit inches long 16 bit cards have a five and a quarter inch long connector - because of the design of the slots, 16 bit cards have an 8 bit connector and then an extra bit which makes up the 16. Most if not all 16 bit cards work on 8 bit busses, they are called AT style cards, named after the IBM PC-AT which introduced the 16 bit bus standard. It is worth noting that "true" AT cards are taller than the PC box so when buying always check before parting with the folding stuff (and the non folding stuff come to think of it).

We shall be going into card size and layout later on in this series, but for the time being if you have any questions ALWAYS ask your supplier, write to us or contact the manufacturer before buying. If anyone you are buying from is too busy or too bored to help you - go somewhere else.

Next issue we'll be looking at upgrading memory - from inserting a few chips to slotting in whole memory boards - how to do it in easy stages, what type of memory is available and which type you need to use and we'll even be giving you a list of recommended suppliers. Adding memory is a must for most games players so don't forget to get the next installment of Build Your Own.

CALIFORNIA DREAMING PART 2

In the second part of our look behind the scenes at Sierra On-Line, Ciaran Brennan talks to the people behind three of the company's biggest game names - Police Quest, Space Quest and, of course, Leisure Suite Larry.

Although Al Lowe is now considered to be one of the all-time greats of computer game design, his arrival in this field didn't exactly happen as a result of single-minded determination. In fact, the whole thing was almost accidental.

Originally, Lowe's career had a more academic style, as he began his working life as a school music teacher and a musician (although this wasn't as glamourous a life as it sounds, as he was mostly involved with marching bands). As a sideline, Al was also actively involved in staging musical comedy and other theatre and also had a long history of involvement with electronic toys: PA systems, stereos and a lot of other things.



Al Lowe

So how did all of this lead to games designing in general - and Leisure Suit Larry in particular? Well, it's obvious really, or so the man himself seems to think: "What else could a guy with all of those interests end up doing, other than designing 3 games?"

Actually, the decision wasn't as straightforward as all that. To feed his always healthy interest in electronic gadgetry, Lowe acquired an Apple computer in 1981 and, being a fairly lighthearted sort of character, one of his first software purchases was a game ("for my five year-old son, of course"). As fate would have it, that game was Mystery House, the first adventure from a small Californian company On-Line Systems, which was later to become Sierra On-Line.

Lowe enjoyed this first brush with computer gaming so much that it left him wanting more - but he found it difficult to come across any more games software that he actually liked. Lowe was particularly interested in getting his hands on some games with an educational twist, but he couldn't find anything that was both informative and fun. So, in the best of entrepreneurial traditions, he decided to see if he could come up with some himself.

Lowe takes up the story: "I bought a copy of the very first commercially available art package for the Apple and, with the help of a friend, got down to designing. We started in August and did two products in two months and sold them in the third."

The company which Lowe set up to manufacture and distribute these home-grown affairs, Sunny Side Soft, soon began to experience success, both critical and commercial. But Lowe soon discovered that there was a side to software publishing that wasn't much fun: taking and processing orders, duplicating disks, loading boxes and all of the other mundane tasks which are necessary in getting a product out of your head and into the customer's computer.

"I decided at that point that I would much rather create the stuff and let other people take care of the business side," Lowe continues, "so we looked around for publishers. We talked to a lot of people, but Sierra was just at the point where it wanted to get into educational software, so they bought our line of products."

And the rest is almost history. Lowe's involvement with Sierra On-Line has continued right up to the present day and has taken in a whole lot more than just the Larry series. However, that particular character is obviously not so easy to get away from, as Lowe has jut finished Leisure Suit Larry 5 (whatever did happen to number 4?) and is currently in the process of reworking the original to bring it up to date.

The work that Lowe has been involved with when he wasn't engrossed with everyone's favourite computerised voyeur included an early icon-based word processor (once again designed with education in mind), and an involvement with a Disney line which Sierra published in the mid '80s.

However, the product which first caused that spark that resulted in the raging fire that is Leisure Suit Larry came from one of On-Line's earliest text adventures, which was about as far from Disney and education as it's possible to get - that game was Soft Porn. Despite it's rather sleazy title, this was no small-time affair: at the time of this game's release there were roughly 100,000 Apples in the world - Soft Porn sold 25,000 copies. As Lowe points out: "We figured that, with piracy, just about everybody had a copy someplace."

Having just completed Donald Duck's Adventure Playground, Lowe decided that it was time to update this 'classic' and bring it to life with the company's then-new 3D animated adventure interpreter. However, as far as Lowe was concerned, it was more than the graphics and sound which needed updating: "It was a serious product," he points out, "where you were a guy trying to score with three girls - I just couldn't believe that this would sell. So I suggested to Ken Williams [Sierra On-Line's boss] that we remake the game as a parody if itself and inject a little humour."

Williams agreed and Lowe immediately got to work, dropping all of the original game's text (except for one sentence, which has, unfortunately, disappeared into the darkest recesses of the memories of everyone who worked on the project) and adding a character for the player to manipulate - thus was born one of computer gaming's few true stars... Larry Laffer.

But although this was the game which really put Lowe, and to a certain extent Sierra On-Line itself, on the map, he still isn't exactly happy with the end result: "When we were through I was kind of sorry that we hadn't improved the puzzles too - some of them were pretty lame."

It may be difficult to believe now, but when Leisure Suit Larry originally shipped, the game didn't sell for a couple of months. However, word of mouth soon got things moving. Moving a bit too well actually, because along with commercial success, inevitably, came the backlash from that section of the American Moral Majority who weren't overjoyed with the game's overtly sexual content.

Lowe's reaction to the criticisms which

were hurled at his game is surprisingly low-key: "I think that they're missing the joke," he says of his critics, "because it's really meant as a comment on that lifestyle instead of a recommendation of it. When we did the game I felt that it had to reflect a sense of humour and I made it a very strong point that we did not have any off-colour language in the game at all. There's a lot of double entendres, but there's no use of hell or damn or any of those words. While the game understands just about every word that you can type in, it will never say anything really bad in reply. Also, any time that there's sexual activity happening, it always takes place behind a screen, it's hidden behind a shell - it's always by inference rather than being explicitly depicted."

Even so, Leisure Suit Larry 2 was a reaction to that kind of negative feedback. In Larry 2, instead of Larry going out looking for sex, Lowe changed the theme slightly so that his character was looking for love - and the funny thing is that the game didn't sell very well - in fact, in commercial terms, it's the weakest of the whole series.

So, as the games-buying public had voted with their wallets, the third game in the series saw Larry return to his original ways, and brought the would-be Romeo a bigger audience than ever. However, at this time, Lowe was beginning to tire slightly of his diminutive creation. Apparently, upon finishing the third game, Lowe went on the record as saying that he would never do Leisure Suit Larry 4. And that, so the story goes, is why the series has jumped straight ahead to number 5!

However, Lowe himself disputes this version: "I did say that about not doing number 4 one night after about 30 hours straight programming, but I don't think that that's the reason why we've skipped a sequel. The truth is that I was in the middle of designing this current game when I met a friend in the local hardware store and she said to me 'what are you working on now, Larry 4?' and, as usual, I gave her a smartass answer and said 'no, Larry 5!' But then I stopped for a second and said wait a minute, who said that they had to be in order? So, from that quip came the idea that maybe we should skip one and see what happens."

From that germ of an idea came an area in the plot of Larry 5 which describes how the master disks for Larry 4 were stolen and erased by the game's villain - which also neatly explains why, in the current game, Larry has had amnesia for a year: the last thing he knew was that he was at the end of Larry 3 and now he's far away and doesn't know how he got there.

This whole 'missing game' story has now gotten slightly out of hand though, as whole groups of Larry fans - even those as far away as in Holland - are creating an entire cult around the game that never existed. Lowe chuckles as he recalls the



'Good Lord, Biggles...it's a Flying Wing!' 'Correction, Algy, that is a Gotha 229 – I've read the manual, you see...'

dialogue which was passed to him from a recent exchange on a Dutch bulletin board: "If you were to read the messages you would assume that they were actually playing the game, because they were passing hints back and forward and so on."

This cult can hardly be damaged by the fact that Lowe has a whole story worked out for what happened in Larry 4: apparently, Patty did a recording session for some villains who cheated her out of her royalties and... well, why spoil it? And anyhow, knowing the way Lowe works, it wouldn't be at all surprising if the game did eventually make an appearance.

So, having spent so many years involved with the hapless romancer, does Lowe actually like Larry? "Yeah!," he enthuses, "He's the wild side that I never had. I'm a married man - I've been married for 20 years - I don't run around or go to bars or anything like that, so this is the way that I can live that life vicariously."

Rumours have been flying around for some time now that Lowe's alter ego could soon have a chance to make his mark on a far larger audience, as a number of Hollywood studios are reputedly interested in bringing Larry to the silver screen. However, although Lowe would love to see his creation become a film star, he's quite sceptical about the possibilities of there ever being a Larry - The Movie: "What we need is Larry - The Money," he quips.

For the record, Lowe's own choice for the actor to play Larry on screen is Rick Moranis, Hollywood's most famous nerd, best-known for his parts in Ghostbusters and Honey I Shrunk The Kids.

But even amidst all of this talk of movies and so on, Larry fans can rest easy in the knowledge that their hero will probably be making at least one more appearance in his more usual computerised form. And they shouldn't have to wait too long either, for, as Lowe himself puts it: "It's part of my personality that I can't go very long without making a joke..."

COPS AND ROBBERS

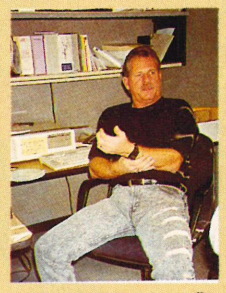
If Al Lowe's path into the world of games design was somewhat unconventional, then Jim Walls' could only be described as bizarre. In fact, before this ex-highway patrolman sat down to create the original Police Quest he didn't even know how to switch a computer on, let alone program a single line of code.

Unlikely as it may seem, Walls' entry into the Sierra On-Line 'family' came about through his wife's hairdressing business - but maybe that's a story best left to the man himself: "I had retired from the highway patrol for medical reasons, and had a year where I more or less sat around doing nothing. Ken Williams used to go to my wife to get his hair cut and they got talking about me one time and my wife said that I was sitting around doing nothing. So he invited me to play racquetball with him and that's how it all got started."

After racquetball, the pair sat down and, among other things, began to talk about Walls' career with what's arguably the world's most famous police force, the California Highway Patrol. During this conversation, Williams put forward the idea that Walls could write a police story based on his own experiences and, to introduce the ex-cop to On-Line's own particular style of computer game, loaned him a computer and a couple of games: Black Cauldron and King's Quest 2.

Walls' was immediately hooked and set about putting a plot together based on 'good police procedures'. This aspect of the program was deemed so important that the package even included a handbook, The Police Officer's Enforcement Guide, to aids the player in making decisions just like a real police officer would.

Police Quest was an immediate and lasting success, with the third game in the series now nearing completion. Fans of the original will be pleased to know that, after Police Quest 2's flirtation with more serious detective work, this third effort is going back to the basics of routine police work that the games' fans seem to enjoy. Walls explains: "The second game in the series didn't sell as well as the first one, and I think that the reason for that was that it was strictly detective work. In Police Quest 3 we're getting back to where we were in the original, because all of the feedback that we got from the fans was that people enjoyed driving around in that marked car stopping people."



Jim Walls

The way the story goes, Sonny Bonds [the hero of all three Police Quests] is promoted to sergeant and returns to the academy for his sergeant's training (this plot appears in the game as an opening cartoon, bringing the player up to date with what's happened so far in the series). Then, when his training's complete, he's temporarily put back into uniform again and assigned to traffic duty.

The plot does thicken quite considerably from here on however, as Sonny soon drops handing out tickets to speeding juveniles to concentrate on hunting down a serial killer - a hunt which leads him into quite a few tricky situations, not least of which is the involvement of a Satanic cult.

There's also a sub-plot involving a bad cop - but that, as they say, is another story...

Many of the characters from the first two games also make a reappearance - for a start, Sonny is now married to Sweet Cheeks Marie, who once again gets right into the thick of the action. But it's not just the good guys who've proved popular with the game's aficionados. Walls expands: "Remember at the end of Police Quest 2 where you killed the Death Angel? Well, we got so many letters from people who wanted him back in there, that I had no choice but to come up with some way that he could make his return." This dilemma was solved when Walls eventually came up with the idea of bringing the villain back in the shape of his vengeance-seeking brother.

Although the game itself is very much in the usual Police Quest style, one thing which has changed is the presentation. That's been completely overhauled using On-Line's new SCA development system, which allows the use of more sophisticated graphics and sound (the look of the game is in good hands, as its being looked after by a team of five artists headed up by Space Quest's Mark Crowe) than before as well as completely doing away with the player's need to type in commands form the keyboard.

Walls is a big fan of the new system, pointing out that removing the keyboard actually adds to the game's reality: "I've played with a couple of the games which are parserless," he explains, "and to me it just gives a greater feel for the game because you don't have to sit there and worry about 'what do I need to type in here?' You become part of the game at a deeper level."

But despite Walls' recommendation of the new system, its appearance did mean a whole lot more work, as the decision to use it wasn't made until after development of the game had already begun. In fact, Walls had already completely designed Police Quest 3 to support the keyboard and had to go back and rethink everything to support the mouse.

Walls' game designing career hasn't been exclusively devoted to Police Quest - he took some time out after completing the second game to create Sierra On-Line's move into the world of espionage. Code-name: Iceman - however it's a fair bet that the story of the Bonds dynasty will continue. And why is Walls so sure of this? "Well there's a good reason," he explains, "at the end of this one, Marie's pregnant, so..."

REACH FOR THE STARS

Next to Roberta Williams and Al Lowe, Sierra On-Line's biggest name developers have got the be the 'Boys From Andromeda', the wacky duo behind that classic of goofball science fiction adventuring, the Space Quest series (check out page 60 for a review of the latest in the series, Space Quest IV, Roger Wilco And The Time Rippers).



Space QuestIV

Behind the off the wall 'nose and glasses' disguise are two of Sierra On-Line's longest serving employees, programmer Scott Murphy and artist Mark Crowe. And although neither of this duo have a rags to riches story to rival that of Al Lowe or Jim Walls, their respective roads to computer gaming heaven were far from straight either.

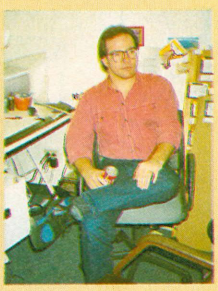
Murphy in particular had an unconventional route to his current position. Having moved to the Sierra mountains in the early '80s to indulge in a little back-packing in the Yosemite valley (a beautiful national park close to On-Line's headquarters), Murphy took part-time work to support himself. However, this hippy lifestyle was all to change when a friend of his wife's got a job as a disk duplicator with the newly founded On-Line Entertainment. Through this connection, Murphy saw his first adventure game (either Soft Porn, The Wizard and The Princess or Mystery House, it's been such a long time that even Murphy can't remember) and in his own words became: "Quite fascinated with the whole thing."



Scott Murphy

Murphy began to hang around the games developer's plant "bugging them until they gave me a job." His wish was finally granted when a vacancy opened up in the dealer returns support department...

Crowe also joined Sierra about eight years ago, once again by a circuitous route. Having worked as a graphic designer for the company which manufactured, among other things, Sierra On-Line's disk labels, Crowe eventually joined the games company's art department. His first involvement with games came when he joined the first Disney software project, Winnie The Pooh, which was headed up by a certain Al Lowe.



Mark Crowe

Crowe and Murphy teamed up for the first time on the Black Cauldron game (Murphy had by now left the customer support department behind and was making his first inroads into design and programming) and soon discovered mutual interests in science fiction and comedy.

When the Disney game was eventually complete, the duo decided to work on a game of their own, and combining their interests, came up with Roger Wilco, the bumbling but loveable futuristic anti-hero. Ken Williams immediately saw the potential and the development team that would become famous behind piggy glasses and shades hasn't looked back since.

"We wanted to do something that parodied the movies - in fact we wanted to parody everything!" Explains Crowe, continuing: "Most of all though, we wanted to take a normal person to an extraordinary place and see what he could do - but Roger was sub-normal I guess"

The latest in the series uses a few new ideas that haven't been incorporated into Sierra games in the past, including multiple sounds, stereo panning and colour cycling. The story too takes a few unexpected twists, with Roger jumping forward to Space Quest 12 and back to Space Quest 10 and so on...

Crowe explains where this element of time travelling came from: "Well the company was taking hits from the public for this whole sequel thing. Just like in the movie industry, people were calling for us to be original and come up with something different, so we tried to have fun with that and parody the whole sequel aspect of these products."

"It's not just a matter of taking advantage of a successful title though," Murphy continues, "a week after the release of Space Quest 3 we had people on the phone asking when Space Quest 4 was coming out - they want them!"

To give the people what they want, the pair collaborate on the concept and storyline before splitting up to continue work in their own specialist departments: Crowe comes up with the game's 'look and the feel', while Murphy takes over the programming and writing.

This system has proved remarkably effective so far, with the Space Quest series being the most consistent of all Sierra On-Lines many genres. However, Murphy and Crowe now feel that they'd like to try their hands at something a little different. Murphy takes up the story: "We won't be doing another Space Quest - that's not to say that there won't be another game in the series, it's just that we won't be doing it. Although we've no solid ideas of what type of game we'd like to do next, we've lived with Roger Wilco a long time now, and though we like him a lot, we're ready for a break now."

The pair aren't even sure what type of game they'd like to produce next. "Maybe something serious," says Crowe, "or even something humourous again - but this time in a completely different vein." "But we're more thinking about taking a vacation," Murphy pipes up. But if they do get their wish, let's hope that it's not too long before the Boys From Andromeda get their feet back on the ground and continue to produce games as strong as they've done for Roger Wilco. Over and out.

Ciaran Brennen

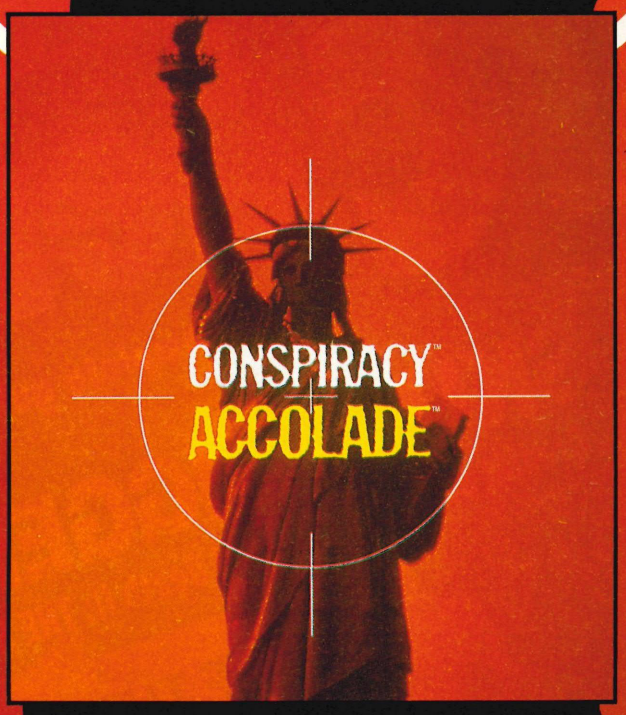
THERE IS A CONSPIRACY

AND LIBERTY IS AT STAKE

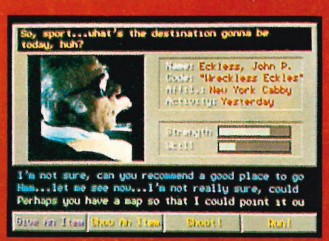
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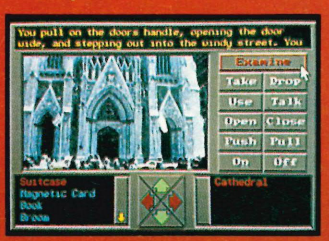
You have only 24 hours to find the Deadlock Files - the key to proving your innocence and exposing the conspiracy.

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Can you save the nation?



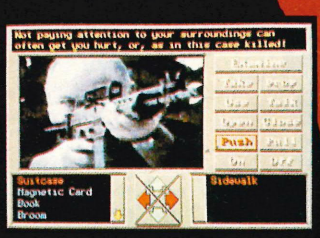
- *Fully digitised adventure game.*
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- *Challenging puzzles.*
- *Easy to play (no typing).*
- *Over 350 digitised images of New York.*
- *Novel-like plot with digitised sound effects.*
- *Complete musical soundtrack.*

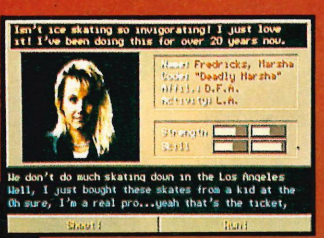












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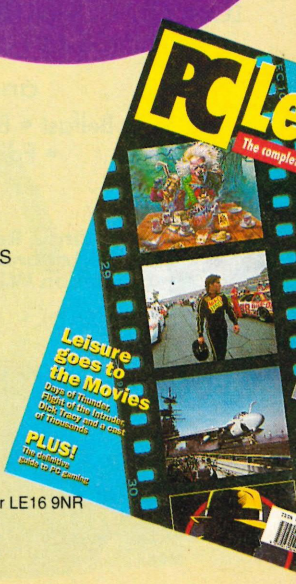
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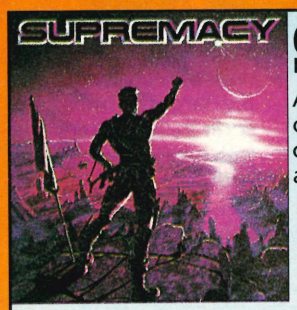
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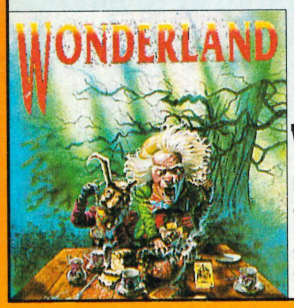


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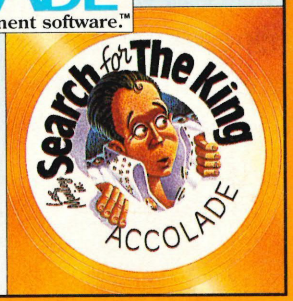
Tackle ghouls and goblins through a demon-filled castle with Elvira, world-famous mistress of the dark. More grizzly, more ghostly than any late-night horror film you've ever watched!

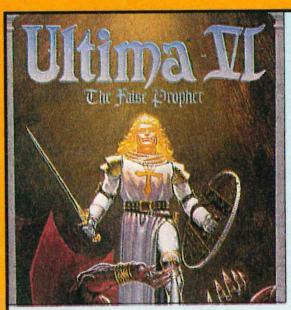


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LES MANLEY: Search for the King

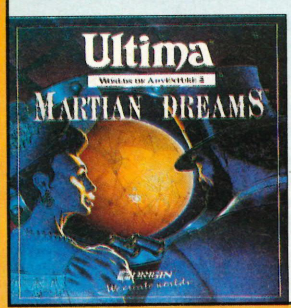
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REVIEW

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO MS-DOS GAMING

Ole! PC Leisure takes great pleasure in introducing its new rating system for PC software. We reckon it's not only the best PC games rating system around, but the best in any of today's games magazines. You can check out the new features on the right – and here's why we think they're so special.

I They give you instant feedback not only on how good a game is, but *what sort of game it is*. No other reviewing system does this. In the centre of the panel are two colour-coded bars that tell you how much 'brainpower' and what degree of arcade skills the game will demand from you. the more intense the colour, the hotter the pace...

I They give you the low-down on hardware requirements for PCs (other magazines always forget that we PC owners are all different) and they deliver a proper verdict, including telling you at a glance what the lasting interest value of the game is

I And, of course, they give you an overall star rating and separate ratings for graphics and sound...

Welcome to the PC Pleisure dome, where those in the know get the knowledge!

THE PCL VERDICT BOX

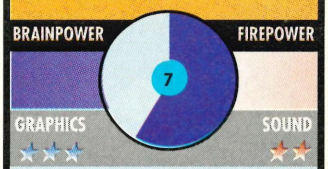
Here's what you get. At the top of the panel on the right, you've got the OVERALL VERDICT COMMENT. Jump to this for a short summary of the game.

In the centre, you've got the LASTING INTEREST DIAL, which rates a game from 1 to 12 depending onhow long it will keep you coming back for more. 12 is a blockbuster, 1 is bin fodder. You've also got here the BRAINPOWER and FIREPOWER indicators: the more intense the colour, the higher the skills required. GRAPHICS and SOUND are rated out of 5.

Finally, you've got two panels – a HARDWARE comment and the PCL STAR VERDICT. Five stars: essential, one star: yuk. Five star games get the PCL Award...

PCL VERDICT

Those that love such system simulators will find something to further satisfy their megalomania here – but be warned that you'll have to wade through some pretty awful documentation and put up with some very idosyncratic programming



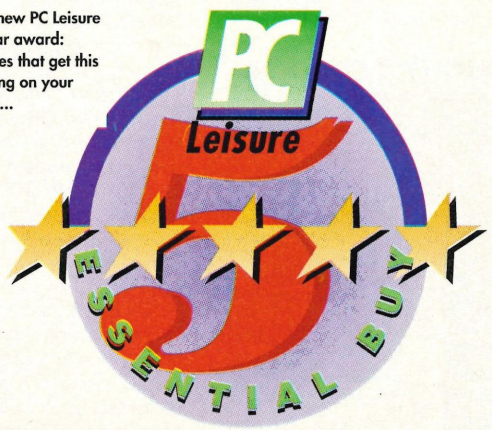
OK for the patient, but I wouldn't like to play this game on anything other than a very fast 386. I've got a mega fast jobbie with 4 Meg of extended memory and when my colonies got to a reasonable size, the game was running so slowly that keyboard entry became very erratic





Apart from two super flight-fights Jet Fighter II and F29 Retaliator, Dungeon delving Eye of the Beholder also receives its PCL 5 Star award this month. See page 68

The new PC Leisure 5 Star award: games that get this belong on your shelf...



IN THIS ISSUE

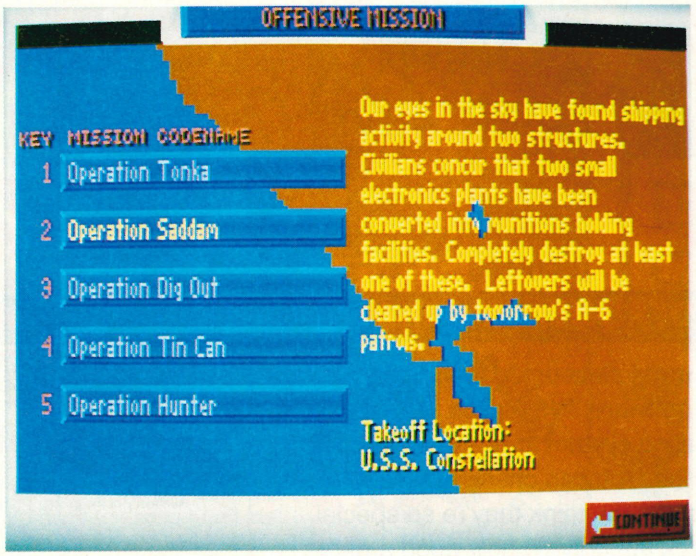
Jet Fighter II 48
Origin/US Gold
Medieval Lords 50
SSI/US Gold
Command HQ 51
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JET FIGHTER II

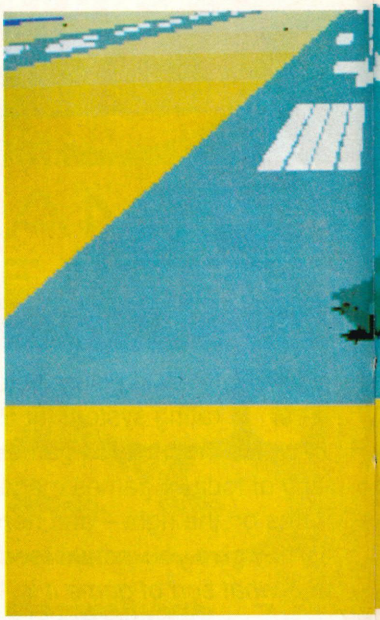
Velocity/US Gold
(021) 625 3388

£34.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✗
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✗	Hercules	✗
Mouse	✓	Joystick	✓
Roland	✗	AdLib	✓



With a game THIS topical how can you go wrong? Operation Get Saddam is one mission that is less than subtle - but is useful as an exercise that can be related to events in living memory?



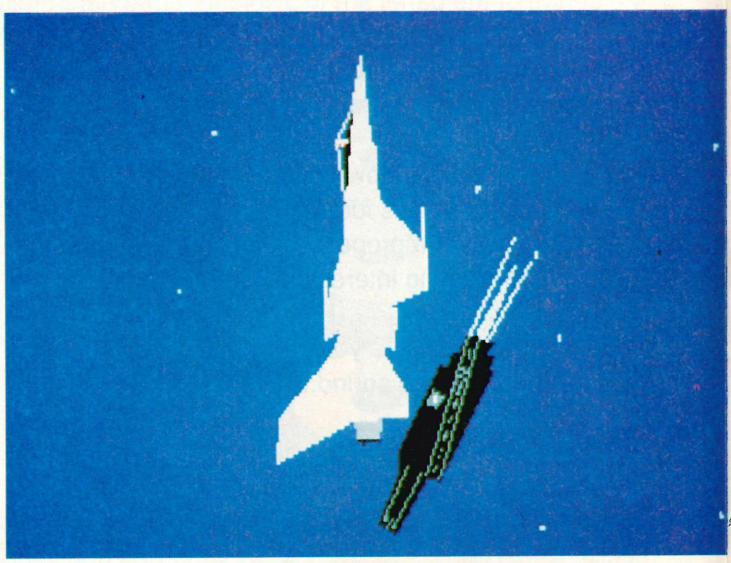
Back in 1988 Bob Dinnerman finished programming Interceptor, an Amiga game which was one of the first fun air combat simulations - not so many dials to monitor, just lots of launching Sidewinders and watching enemy planes plummet into the San Francisco landscape (which was where it was set). It was also one of the first flight sims to give the pilot a view of the action from outside the aircraft, and thus created quite a stir with it's spectacular graphics.

It wasn't until last year that Interceptor, renamed Jet Fighter, finally came out on the PC. It was reviewed favourably in issue one of PC Leisure but at the time it was only available as a US import from the likes of Software Circus for around £40.00. US Gold have signed the European distribution deal for the sequel, though, so this should be a lot easier to get hold of.

As in the original, the action in Jet Fighter II is set in the skies over San Francisco - still an unusual location, but as the accompanying novella explains, most of California has been overrun by a surprise (!) invasion by Latino revolutionaries, and it's up to you to recapture it, and save millions of beach bums from a, like, totally, gnarly fate man.

There are over 100 air and bombing strike missions in this sequel being played separately for practice or in sequence in the Adventure mode, in which you start on an aircraft carrier and gradually advance across the coast recapturing territory Pilots playing the Adventure have their progress during the campaign automatically saved to disk.

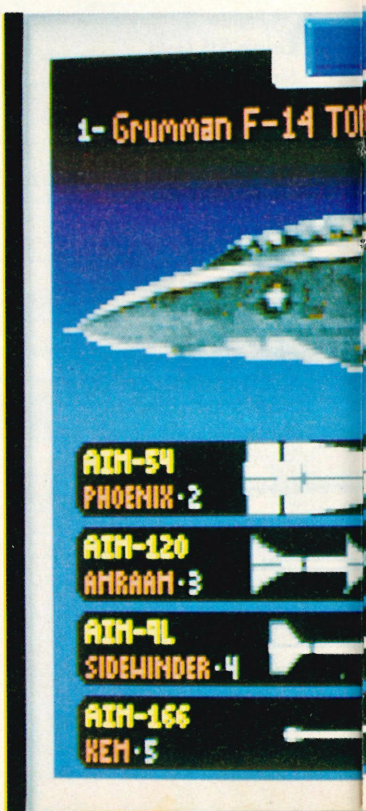
Jet Fighter II lets you take to the skies in any of four different fighter aircraft. The F-14 Tomcat (complete with swing-wings), the General Dynamics F-16 Falcon, and the F/A-18 Hornet which have all featured in flight sims before, but the star of this game is the Northrop F-23 Black Widow, the latest multi-role warplane with stealth capabilities. It's an impressive beast too - in fact it's so much better than the other planes that I can't help wondering why anyone would choose to fly anything else.



With superbly detailed graphics and sound, it's too tempting not to take an outside view of your plane. Here we see the carrier dropping away from the F23 as it climbs near vertically away.

Once you've chosen a mission, and an aircraft to fly on it, it's time to arm up. The W key flips between varying sets of ordnance, labelled according to the mission they're best suited for. For bombing missions, just select Ground Attack and the plane is armed up with bombs. Choose Short-Range Dogfight, and the weapons pylons are loaded only with air-to-air missiles.

After finally taking off, you usually have a few minutes to enjoy the scenery. The horizon display (if playing with a VGA card) is subtly shaded, and the colours gradually change hue, as





time passes and the sun crosses the sky. At night, the sky is peppered with stars - nice touch.. The Californian landscape is pretty sparse, consisting mainly of pastel–coloured fields, but if your mission takes you over San Francisco you can swoop between a couple of skyscrapers, or even under the Golden Gate Bridge.

But, most of the action is to be found several thousand feet above the ground, up against MiG 29s and Sukhoi SU-25s, and occasionally, cruise missiles for you to shoot down before they cruise into San Francisco.

Combat is as exciting as you could expect, without it getting hideously complicated. The homing missiles are easy to use – just keep the target inside the HUD display while the missile locks on then release it. Bombing is a bit more hit–or–miss, as neither of the two bombs available are guided and the HUD (surprisingly) provides no help as far as a targeting display goes. This isn't too bad for hitting buildings but it makes destroying aircraft on the ground very tricky.

As well as the external views, the game also offers a control tower view, and a missile view. Unfortunately that isn't too useful either, as aircraft can drift off the HUD display and out of range of the tracking computer while you're watching the missile and not controlling the plane.

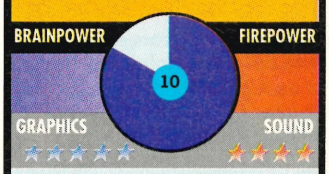
As well as looking good, Jet Fighter II sounds good. With an ADLIB board you get a muffled roar of engines, explosions, warning sirens,a sonic boom and even a whining sound followed by a clunk from the landing gear. Switching to the external view the engines become louder accordingly - a nice touch.

So it looks good and sounds good and although the game has a few tiny flaws I would have to say that it's superb! I'm not that keen on complicated, ultra–realistic flight sims that require intense study of a vast manual before you can start shooting, and Jet Fighter II plays like a slightly simplified, yet more racy version of F15-II so it's very easy to get into and to get a lot of enjoyment out of. Anyone with a 286 or better is advised to invest their defence budget in a copy very, very soon.

PAUL GLANCEY

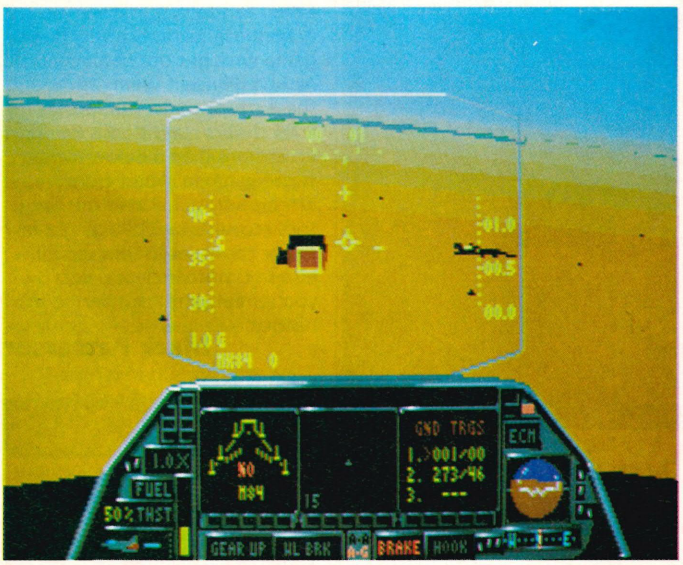
PCL VERDICT

Not the most realistic air combat sim, but Jetfighter II is certainly thrill packed and atmospheric - especially for anyone with the added advantage of a sound board. A must for anyone who wants to be the household Top Gun.



For the best effects you have to play Jetfighter II on a fast 386 with VGA graphics, but slower machines (10 MHz up) can get by very well if you use slightly less complex EGA graphics.

★★★★★



The heart of the F23. It's HUD display and targeting computer. Cockpit instruments are clear and functional leaving you free to concentrate on getting your selected weapon locked on and away.

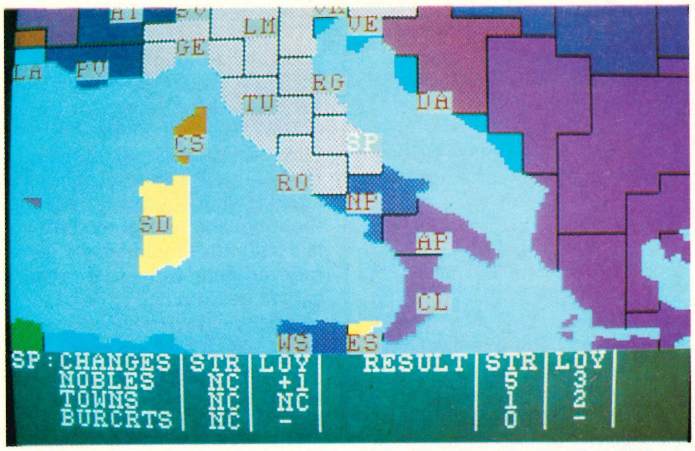


etc... F23 Black Widow

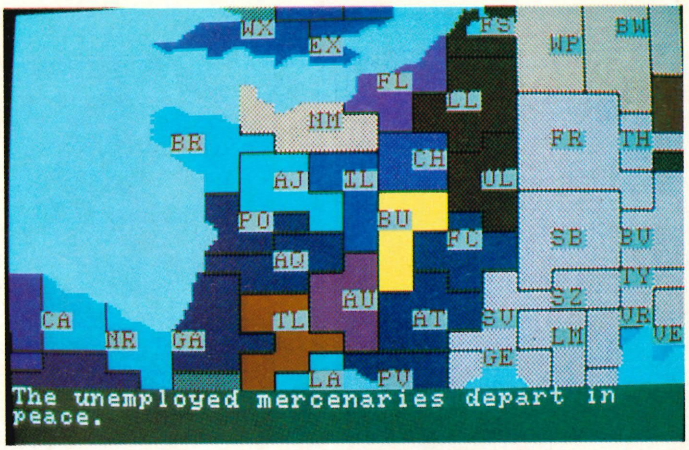
The star of the show in Jetfighter II is the Northrop F-23D Black Widow ATF (Advanced Tactical Fighter), which was developed jointly by Northrop and McDonnell Douglas as a replacement for the F-15 Eagle. Like the other "stealth" aircraft, the B-2 Stealth bomber and the F-117A Stealth fighter, the F-23 is an unusual shape to provide it with the lowest possible RADAR profile, and the materials used in the surfaces also reduce any RADAR reflection.

The extremely powerful engines are equipped with vectored thrust controls, and can power the aircraft through the air at a maximum velocity of 1,964 mph (Mach 2.94) at optimum cruising altitude, with afterburners on. Again, to make the plane more difficult for enemy sensors to detect, the engines have a "supercruise" mode which provides a top speed of 968 mph (Mach 1.34) without having to use afterburners.

To further maintain it's low RADAR profile, the F-29's weapons are mounted inside an internal weapons bay which, unsuprisingly enough, has to be opened before launching. As well as the usual variety of bombs and medium and short range missiles such as the AIM-9 Sidewinder, the plane has been designed to use ordnance that has only just come into production, including kinetic energy missiles (effectively these are bullets which hit their targets at around Mach 4, obliterating them), and smart weapons which designate and hunt down targets on their own!



The holy Roman empire is the most powerful force in the ancient word. Avoid conflict with them



The larger the empire the more unstable it becomes. Troops are the only way of putting down a

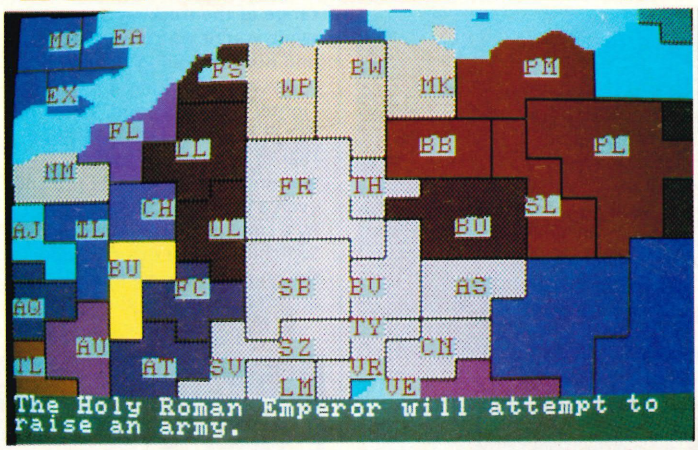
MEDIEVAL LORDS

A thousand years ago European politics was a web of backstabbing, pacts and counter pacts. Although it's not much different nowadays, Medieval Lords takes you back to those heady days in the role of a kings right hand man.

Even though you only play the part of advisor, you're given pretty much complete control over your lord's province. This means you're in command of the military, all finances and diplomatic relations with other countries.

The game always starts with your country's finances in disarray. Each province is made up of three kinds of people, Nobles, Bureaucrats and peasants. As the Lord's advisor you can choose to financially support any one class at a time, supporting nobles increases the loyalty of their armies to the King, supporting Bureaucrats helps bring in taxes and giving the peasants money increases population and business which means more taxes in the long term. It doesn't take a financial wizard to understand this section, but they way the commands work and the information offered in the manual is very unhelpful.

When a country is both politically and financially stable, it can turn its attention to its neighbours. Armies can be recruited from the nobility, peasants and wandering bands of mercenaries. The larger the army the more it costs to keep, so it's wise to build an army just when it's needed and not before. Selecting the campaign option instructs the army to go to a designated country and attempt to wipe out the opposing troops. Battles are calculated by the size to the two armies, the number of castles in the invaded territory and the overall quality of troops. There appears to be an overly generous bias in favour of the defending army which makes successful conquests few a far between. As the main lump of the game involves grabbing as many countries as you can things soon become frustrating as defeats mount up and popularity dwindles.



Not even Britain's safe from the rampaging, european despots. Any country with a coastline can

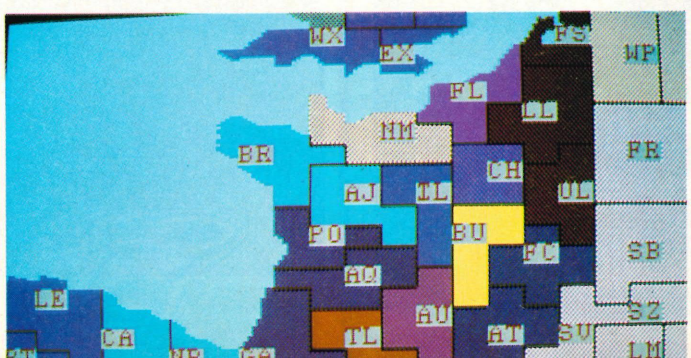
Medieval Lords problems come from its size. The game map is divided into so many individual territories that it's impossible to keep track of what's going on in your own back yard. There is an option which allows the game to be played with just half the standard map which helps make the things a little more digestible.

Up to eight players can go head to head with each other, a feature which is nice in principle but means that each game turn lasts a couple of hours. All other countries in the game are run by computer controlled megalomanics with a lust for territory. The only drawback from the computer countries is that they cannont approach a human player with any sort of diplomatic pact, a feature which severely limits the games playability. They computer characters really should have more intergration with the humans on the other side of the screen. That said they are no push over and a strong country won't take any excursions into its territory lightly.

The graphics are a real minimalist affair. Basically there are no visuals whatsoever apart from a few text only screens and a crude map. Although these serve the game well, a few pics and/or sit-back-and-watch sequences would have improved the presentation ten-fold.

Medieval Lords is a very large game wrought out of a very little. At first glance it seems as though there's a lot to do, but, after only a few hours play, it boils down to little more than a below average strategy game. Apart from attempting to balance the country's accounts and pillaging a few minor countries there's sod all else to do. Steer clear unless you're really into this period in history.

Mark Patterson



PCL VERDICT

Even with a manual jammed with historical information, there's not enough realism to give the game any lasting appeal. One for true wargamers only - and then only at a pinch!



It's difficult to identify different provinces in CGA mode but the game itself runs well even on the slowest PC

SSI/US Gold
(021) 359 3388

£25.53

5¼"	✓	3½"	✗
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✗	Hercules	✗
Mouse	✓	Joystick	✗
Roland	✗	AdLib	✗

COMMAND HQ

Impressions
(0666) 504326

£39.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✓
CGA	✗	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✗
Mouse	✓	Joystick	✓
Roland	✗	AdLib	✗

Ruling the world is something we all dream about, along with dropping bombs on mother-in-laws, bank managers, etc. Command HQ is the game for megalomaniacs as it casts the player as the commander-in-chief of the western forces in wartime. The fate of the world rests upon your shoulders.

The four main scenarios cover the twentieth century and beyond; 1918, 1942, 1986 and 2023. The scenarios increase in complexity as the date progresses, as the 1918 option includes only infantry, cruisers and subs, whereas later on nuclear weapons, satellites and other devices of high tech and mass destruction are available to the commander.

The sides in the conflicts are represented by colours, with the western power shown in blue and the eastern side in the obligatory red (although this includes the Germans in the first two scenarios!). The important point is that the game spans the entire world, not putting undue emphasis on the European theatre as do most games of this type. Each turn is comprised of a number of separate elements, like moving and fighting; however keeping track of all the different areas is quite tricky at first, as it's easy to get bogged down looking and acting in one sphere alone.

The four monitors at the bottom of the screen show oil status, nationality of the area under scrutiny, crises, and terrain type respectively. The message bar will provide vital information throughout the course of the game, detailing the successes (and failures) of your forces' actions as the game progresses. Sea and air forces are crucial to victory (especially in the later scenarios, where nuclear and chemical weapons come in to play). Movement across land is obviously affected by the terrain type, as is usual in wargames.

As each infantry unit represents between 300,000 and 500,000 troops, this game concentrates on a large scale reminiscent of Diplomacy. This means that to win you mustn't get too involved in individual conflicts unless the result is absolutely crucial to victory. This will be a hard lesson for some players to learn!

Economics are the key to the game. If the commander does not control their oil supply, cities, and cash effectively then they are doomed as surely as if they'd lost every battle (as they invariably will once fuel and ammo begin to dry up!). AS each city produces 50 million dollars a year, it's important to conquer as many enemy or neutral cities as possible, thus guaranteeing the financial clout needed in order to win the game.

Command HQ is a simulation that flows well, with the tutorials helping to ease in the neophyte player. As I've mentioned, the hardest thing is to grasp the global nature of the game; I found myself becoming obsessed with one area or another, to the detriment of other parts of the world. But once this is mastered, the game reveals the scope of play it contains. The scenarios increase in complexity in such a way that they always provide a challenge without making the player give up in frustration.

Matt Regan

PCL VERDICT

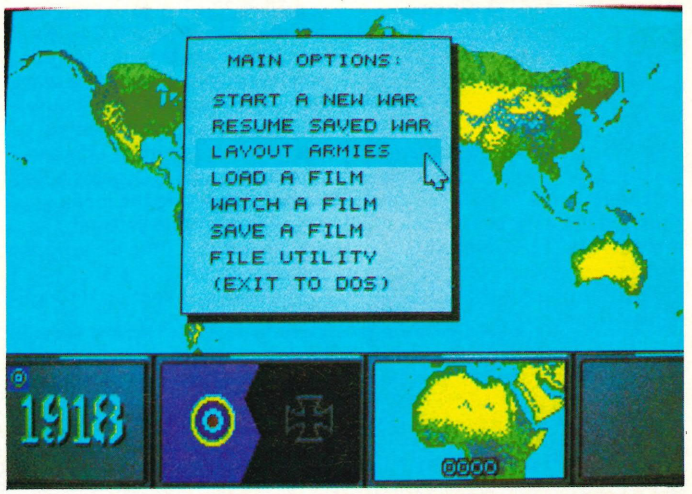
The graphics and sound may be basic, but with fluid gameplay like this you really don't notice. I think that strategy fans will love this, and it is structured in such a way to be of interest to the more disinterested player. Well worth a look at

BRAINPOWER 9 FIREPOWER

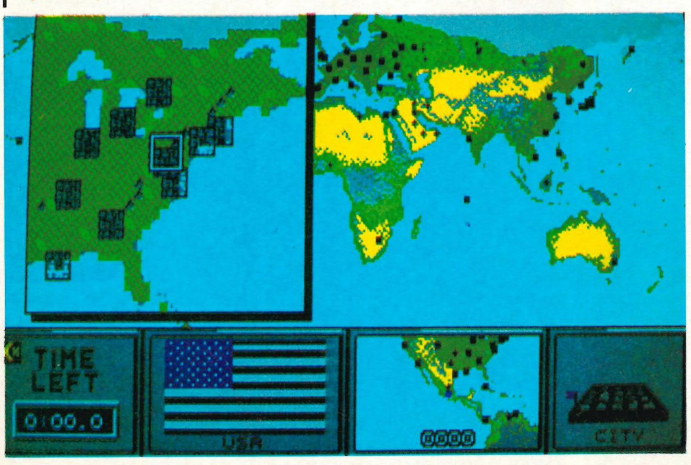
GRAPHICS ★★★★ SOUND ★★★

Speed is not particularly an important factor with this type of game, but you'll save lots of disk swapping if you can install the game onto the hard disk.

★★★★



The world's a big place if you're taking it over. Get too involved in one place and it will undoubtedly lead to your downfall.

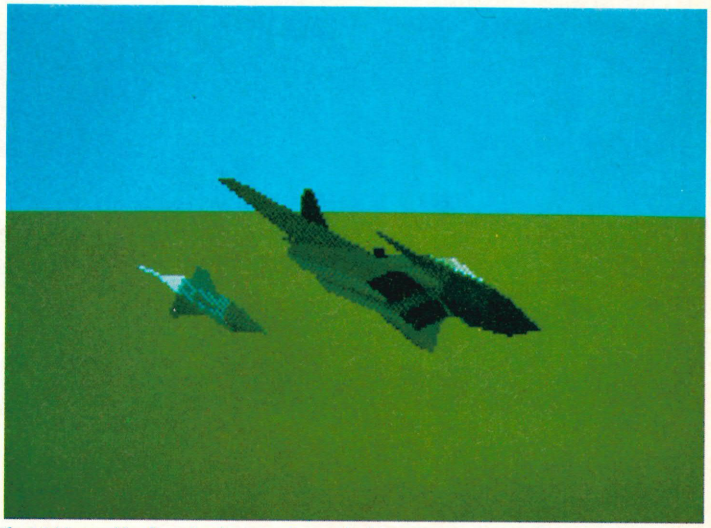


etc... SPARE A THOUGHT

Microprose's Microplay label is the release name for all their thinking person's games and are is one of the best known strategy labels of the PC world. With games like Midwinter, and the upcoming Midwinter II, they've proved that no-one can touch their vision of a tactical challenge. Also, their previous flight sims are just that. Complicated to master, F15 II Strike Eagle and F19 Stealth Fighter come with enormous manuals that must be learnt before you can fly, but give a truly authentic feel of flying a 'real' plane of the modern American air force.



Based on one of the most striking airplanes ever built - the Grumman X-29 - the F-29 Retaliator is most noted for its unusual Forward Swept Wings (FSW), designed to improve maneuverability.



The F-22 is capable of sustained supersonic speeds without the use of an afterburner, radar invisibility and a wider payload of weapons. Everything you could need to blow your enemies apart.

F29 RETA

There is something about a British-made simulator that sets it apart from everything else. Whilst your average American package will offer the most realistic simulation of a modern fighter aircraft (along with the most realistic amount of controls needed to keep it up in the air), home-grown programs are usually a great deal more stylish, elegant and playable.

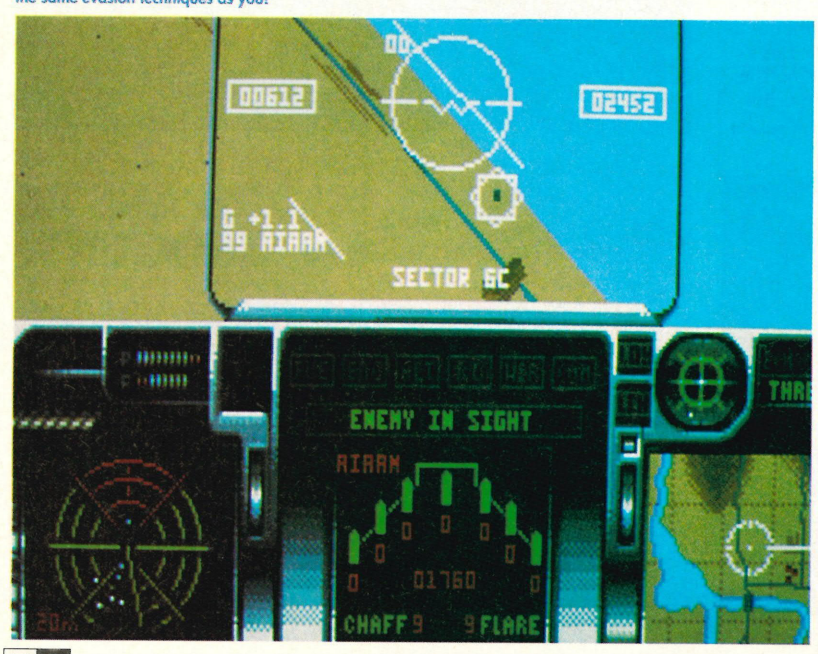
Realtime's Carrier Command and Vektor Grafix's Fighter Bomber are good examples of this stylish quality, as is F-29 Retaliator. In fact it's extremely good. Its strongest point is in its ease of use, although being based on two planes that are still in the development stages it can probably afford to have controls that are simplified. There are no thrust-to-altitude ratios or low-level turbulence to have to worry about, the only dangers come from stalling, blackouts due to high-g turns, enemy weapons and the hitting the ground. One of the other impressive aspects about F-29 is the graphical quality of your environment. It's all very well for other simulations to use filled-3D squares to represent the shape of an object, Ocean's war zone looks far more realistic and moves with a smoothness that would put Bob Monkhouse to shame. Once again shading has been used to great effect (previously seen in Dynamix's Red Baron), enhancing the look of everything around you and adding just that little bit extra to the atmosphere.

The realism is kept up throughout the whole game, especially in the menu stages. Each of the four wars is separated into stages with a number of missions to be completed before the war progresses.

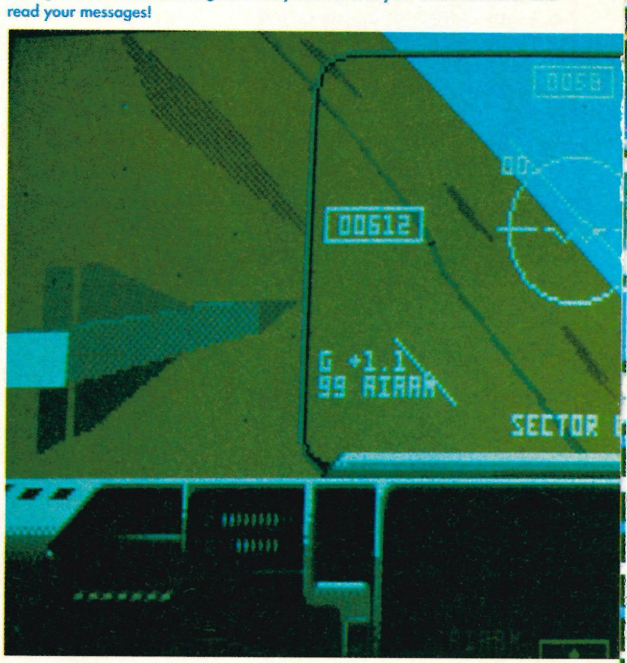
Thanks to the fact that most of the missions are described in the manual, you can see how structured each war is. The nice thing is that the top-level mission, the ones towards the close of the war, are kept classified giving that incentive to keep on playing in order to see the final outcome. This is unfortunately where one of the few problems F-29 has turns up. To end a mission not only requires the successful completion of your objectives but a safe landing as well. Nothing wrong there you might think until you try to land one of these state-of-the-art babies. It's nigh on impossible to judge the speed with the distance, due mainly to the short size of the runways and the lack of a decent thrust level indicator.

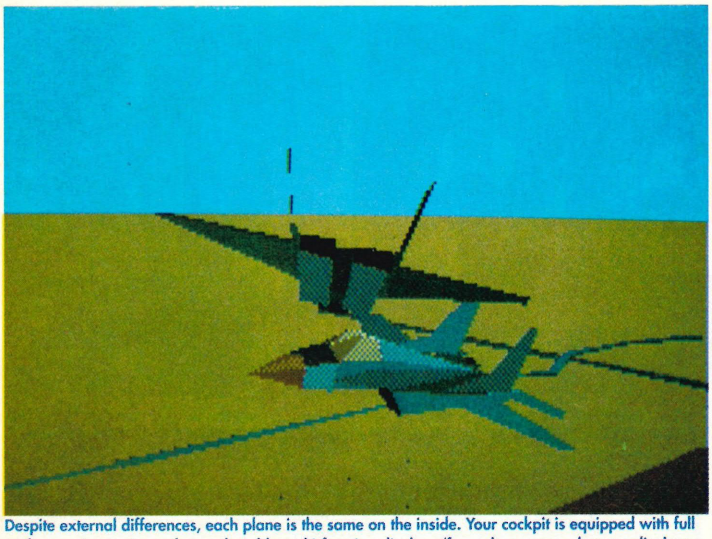
All I can say is thank god there are no carrier landings required or you'd really be up a certain creek without a paddle. Strangely though, this doesn't take too

Get a lock on, get a blow out! This is not quite the case however as most of the planes that you're up against use the same evasion techniques as you!

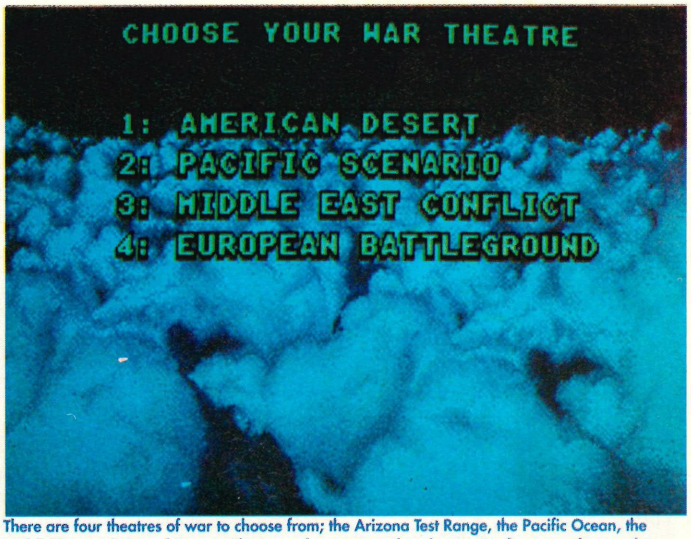


Hitting land or sea based targets is tricky stuff. Watch your threat indicator and read your messages!





Despite external differences, each plane is the same on the inside. Your cockpit is equipped with full early-warning systems, three selectable multi-function displays (for radars, maps, damage displays etc.) and all the usual HUD features.



There are four theatres of war to choose from; the Arizona Test Range, the Pacific Ocean, the Middle East and Central Europe. The type of enemy matches the terrain, for example over the Pacific you'll not only encounter enemy planes but warships and submarines too.

ALIATOR

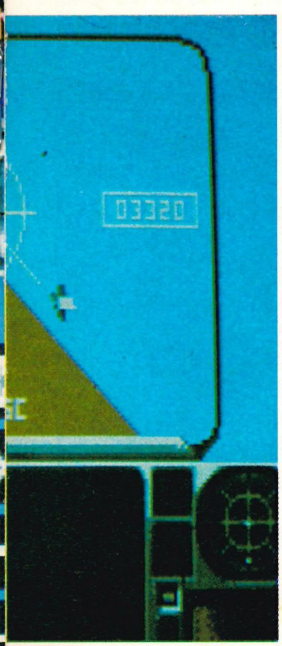
much away from the overall game and perseverance will eventually result in landings being easier and careers becoming longer (eject unnecessarily more than once and you get court martialed). What keeps you playing is just the sheer beauty of the flight.

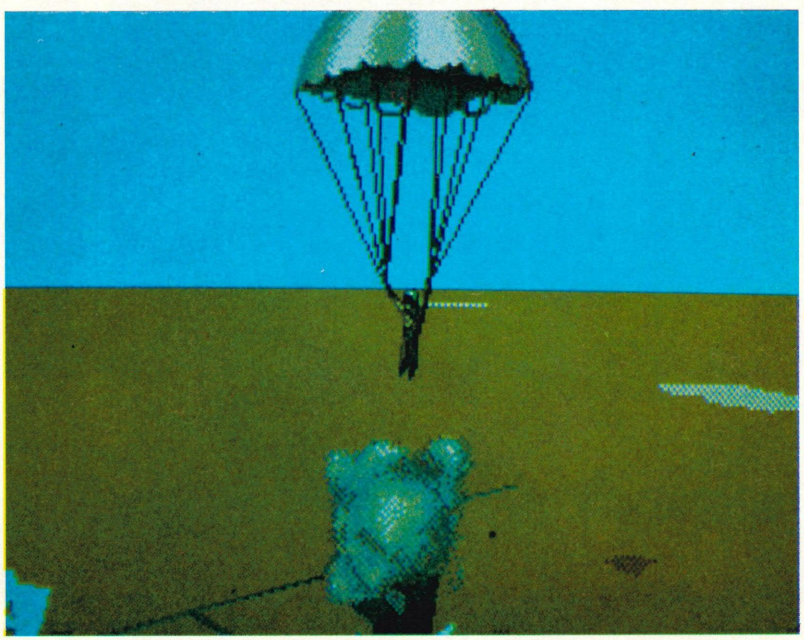
With the possible exception of JetFighter, controls have never been easier to use and it makes the whole experience great fun. Swooping in and out of trees, around office blocks and through the middle of a bridge (tricky, but you've got to try it), you never get tired of just flying with the freedom of a bird, not having to worry about all the things more 'realistic' simulators would force you to endure.

The other thing that is often missing from many flight simulators is an option to play head-to-head with another human through the use of a modem. Now while this kind of thing is very popular in America, modems are still in a minority over here but if you have a friend with either a portable computer or a modem and a copy of the game you can link up and fly against each other. One player controls the F-22 and the other the F-29 in a race to complete each mission. Of course it's simply amazing to be able to go up against more fun to find and shoot each other (and more likely).

F-29 delivers everything a good flight simulator should; easy controls that are not over-simplified, excellent use of graphics and an entertaining feeling of flight. Overcome the one problem of landing and you've got a game that will fly high in honour lists of great

Paul Presley



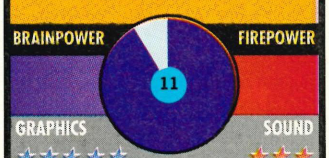


If the going gets tough, the tough get out before the plane blows up - but eject twice before you need to and it's a courtmartial!



PCL VERDICT

A remarkable flight sim that dispenses with all the razz amatazz of its American counterparts and is only slightly let down by the tricky landing controls. But thanks to some of the best graphics you're likely to see short of a virtual



F29's beautifully smooth graphics suffer little in the hands of slower (12Mhz) processors but you'll need an EGA card or above to be able to participate.

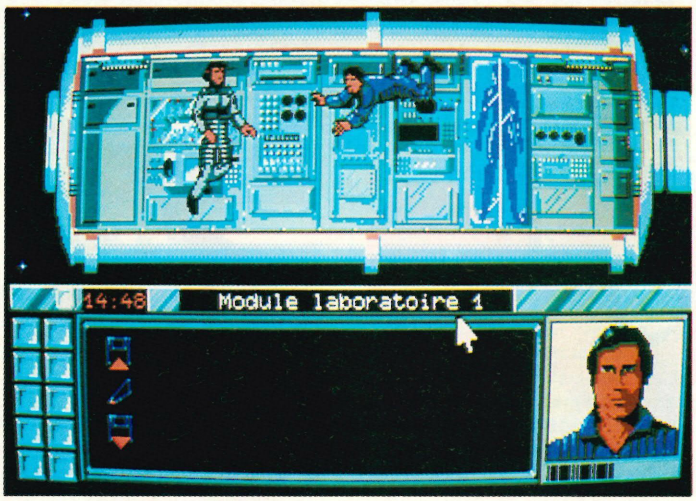
★★★★★

Ocean
(061) 832 6633

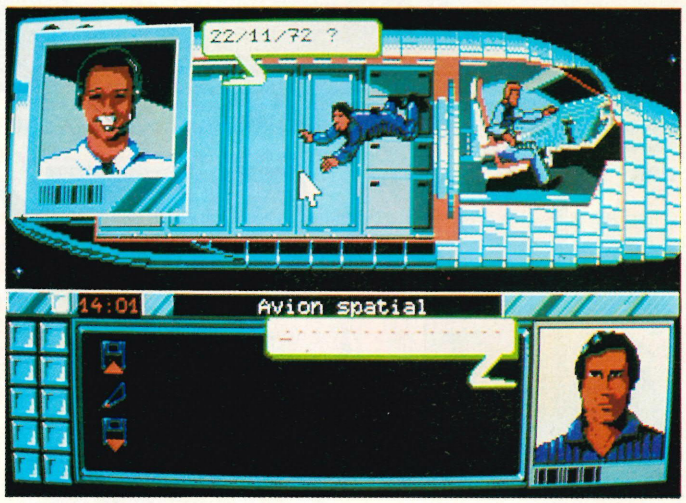
£34.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✓
CGA	✗	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✗
Mouse	✓	Joystick	✓
Roland	✓	AdLib	✓

MURDERS IN SPACE



Sacre Blu! Ici, il n'est pas de gravity. And whilst you may think this makes your task harder, just try having a floating converstaion with some of the crew.. we should have chosen the U.K. option.



Eventually, after many loitering around waiting for someone to 'help you with your enquiries, contact is made. and you can choose from alist of possible actions or dialogues....

There's trouble brewing in outer space. An attempt has been made on the life of Philippe Amiot, Commander of the Space Station Pegasus, and the culprit (unidentified) has to be on board. For technical reasons and due to the sensitivity of the current world situation you, working undercover as Dick Anderson, have exactly 24 hours (condensed, of course) to question the international crew and bring the villain to book.

What follows is an incognito murder investigation (one of a series of Infogrames whodunnits) which involves a thorough search of Pegasus' labs, quarters and command modules. The log book provided in the packaging provides a useful space station map plus detailed representations of the evidence, such as petitions and internal memos, which may be found en route.

It's crucial to engage reluctant crew in interactive conversation and thoroughly comb the station but there's also a plethora of other information sources. Your personal COPS terminal allows you to send direct messages to ground control and gives entry to the crew's Mailbox System – all you have to do is crack each member's individual access code...

Using on-board equipment via several sub–scenes is all part of the experience. You're qualified to experiment with real and simulated MMUs (Manned Manoeuvring Units), the Yakoto Manipulating Arm, a solar telescope and the CLISS module, a cryogenic life–support system. What's unusual about this is that the action commands aren't selected from a pre-set list as, say, in a Lucasfilm adventure, but are suggested in response to specific situations. Clicking on the hero's forehead or mouth allows you to select one of a series of possible actions or speeches conveyed via a speech bubble. The big advantage of all this is that it makes it almost impossible to get completely stuck: even if you run out of clever ideas, Dick may not. In case of emergency, there's even a 30–part questionnaire (compiled by ground control) designed to get you thinking along the right lines.

Kati Hamza

Infogames
(071) 738 8199

£30.64

5¼"	✓	3½"	✓
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✗	Hercules	✓
Mouse	✓	Joystick	✗
Roland	✗	AdLib	✓

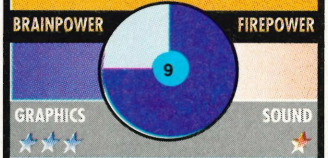
etc...

WE HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY

The Pegasus Space Station isn't all science fiction - the basic technology is already science fact. The first genuine space station, Salyut 1, was launched by the Soviets as far back as 1971, but the three-man crew died on the return journey when their ferry craft depressurised. Salyut 2 broke up in orbit before occupation so it wasn't until 1974 that the first successful Soviet space station mission was completed on Salyut 3. Meanwhile, NASA astronauts had already spent 84 days on Salyut's equivalent - Skylab. The American space station finally fell to Earth on 11 July 1979 but in 1987, the Soviet successor to Salyut - Mir - became the first permanently manned space station. It still orbits the Earth today.

PCL VERDICT

The combination of restricted playing area plus stiff time limit ensures that there's plenty to do: eight characters with secrets, four sub–games and a series of potential murder victims guarantee that, for serious adventurers, those vital 24



Limited animation means speed doesn't provide too hefty a problem .In Hercules and CGA ithe difficulty to distinguish some of the on-board is an inconvenience rather than a disadvantage.

★★★

HORROR ZOMBIES

"SEE! the blood. FEEL! the terror. HEAR! the screams." Or that's what the ad claims anyway - and one look at the cover artwork is enough to see Horror Zombies firmly pigeonholed. Clearly it's aimed at the ardent follower of bad acting, crummy effects and unoriginal plot lines - the B-movie fan.

For a while it looks promising. The intro sequence - played out in an appropriately tacky movie house - has all the right ingredients: churchyard, screaming bimbo, not to mention a slimy green hand thrusting up from the grave.

The story is corny but no cornier than most. Count Valdemar (handsome, tall and stupid) insists on exploring the depths of Gory Manor at night and entirely alone. Six levels, dozens of slavering spooks and one or two magic items lie between him and success. If he makes it through the night, he's a hero - if he gets caught, his head explodes (literally).

It's when you actually step into the mansion that it all starts to go downhill. The horror zombies turn out to be a group of green-headed munchkins, jerking up and down a crypt that's no more chilling than the average backdrop to EastEnders.

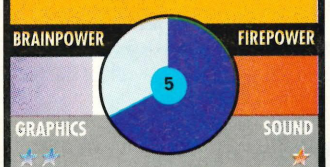
Zombies (of a sort) there may be, but horror there isn't. Valdemar's exploits entail shuffling along the corridor, jumping over zombies or stabbing them to death.

Occasionally he may come across a weapon, a jewel, keys or one of several magic artefacts. These come in useful when the weapons (two types of throwing sword) prove ineffective: boots enable you to tiptoe past the baddies, potions make you indistinguishable (and therefore safe) from the undead, and crawl power comes in handy for avoiding flying monsters.

That there's nothing particularly new about any of this wouldn't be a problem if the gameplay itself was fun. In fact, the action is repetitive, the sound virtually non-existent and the scrolling far from smooth. To top it all, ropey collision detection (you can actually get zapped without touching the enemy) makes the experience so frustrating that most will be tempted to give up long before they need the passwords to Levels 3 and 4. **■Kati Hamza**

PCL VERDICT

There's nothing really in the gameplay to keep you playing this for long. Collision detection is not accurate - you can get hit by monsters that aren't that close. The graphics add very little to the overall feel and perhpas black and white may



The EGA colours do no favours to the graphics but at least the option is there. Although a minimum of 640K is required, running isn't a great problem as disk access is only between levels.

★★

Millenium
(0223) 421526

£29.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✓
CGA	✗	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✗
Mouse	✗	Joystick	✓
Roland	✗	AdLib	✗

etc...

I WALKED WITH A...

Next time you get asked, "So where do zombies come from?" prepare to stun your listener with a few well-chosen facts. They actually originate from Haitian legend and are generally recognised as people brought back from the dead by voodoo. According to folklore, zombies can see in the dark, never move faster than a slow shambling walk and have to return to their graves before dawn. If a zombie comes across salt it will realise that it should be dead, return to its grave and never respond to resurrection attempts again. Memorable zombie movies include White Zombie (1932), Plague Of The Zombies (1965), and George Romero's infamous Night Of The Living Dead (1969). Zombie is also the name of a strong rum punch.

The title screen



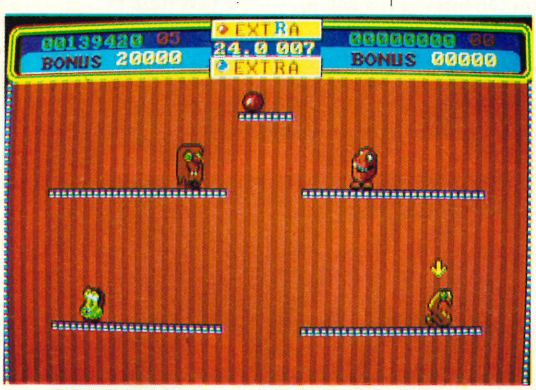
HELTER SKELTER



Some levels wrap-around vertically and horizontally, which makes things very confusing.

Eight years ago Britain's arcades were infected with a wave of mindlessly simple, ridiculously addictive, money sucking coin-ops. Fortunately for those who were starting to become light in the pocket this strain of machine died out several years ago, although now its ghost is coming back to haunt your PC.

Helter Skelter's game-play is almost overly simple. The object is to bounce a ball around single screen levels splatting dopey looking monsters. Just to make things slightly challenging the monsters have to be destroyed in a designated order, which is shown by an arrow which points out the next victim. If the ball hits a monster that wasn't targeted for the knackers yard the creature splits into two, slightly cuter versions of its former self. The only threat to the ball comes from the thirty second time limit, which claims one of the balls life should it be allowed to expire. Bonus icons flit onto the screen now and then and when collect give extra time or freeze all the monsters.



Collect the letters e, x, t, r and a to earn an extra life, not easy when you've only got 30 seconds to complete a level.

In theory controlling the ball should be easy. Tapping up on the joystick or shift on the keyboard starts the ball bouncing, or, if it's already bouncing make it slow down or speed up. Left and right steer the ball, and if the controls are left alone it stops. Sounds easy doesn't it. Unfortunately reality is a different packet of marbles. Once the ball is moving at any decent speed all it needs to do is scrape the corner of a platform and it shoots off at a stupid angle leaving you with only one course of action, panic. There is no sane way of recovering control. Thrashing about with joystick very rarely works, and leaving it alone wastes precious time.

The monsters themselves look like rejects from Captain Beaky's marching band, milling about with a forlorn 'squash me' look on their faces. This sort of game really warrants a higher standard of bad guys, with better animation and more than a half-baked attempt at humour.

The graphics are nice, bright and occasionally vilely coloured. Apart from the back drops there are no real variations in style and I can't help but think that a few levels based on a certain theme would have made the game far more playable. The major problem with the backdrops is that every three or four levels they do a very good job of camouflaging the monsters which is highly irritating.

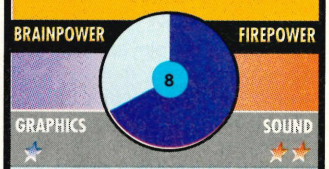
A level designer is included, just in case the game's eighty stages aren't enough. It's easy enough to use and allows you to make your levels even more garish than those of the programmers.

This is one of those games that rapidly becomes addictive, either that or you'll hate it from the off. If you like a game which requires more than a minimal amount of brainwork forget this. On the other hand, if you want to bring a few hours silliness into your normal daily routine give this a look in.

Mark Patterson

PCL VERDICT

Apart from being very playable and addictive, this is also very easy to get into. Although it's definitely a game that warrants kicking back and getting hooked on.



Owing to the primitive nature of this game it runs well on almost every type of PC. Hercules users might have some trouble distinguishing the monsters from the backgrounds.

★★★

Audiogenic
(081) 861 1166

£20.50

5¼"	✗	3½"	✓
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✗	Hercules	✓
Mouse	✗	Joystick	✓
Roland	✗	AdLib	✗

etc...

STOP ALL THIS SILLINESS.

Face it, arcade games were never meant to be serious. One man against all the odds, only you can save the planet... It's hard to take the plots seriously, let alone the games. The silliest period in computer games history hit the UK in the early eighties. Games required you to paint gorillas into corners, run round mazes eating pills which make you move faster (decidedly dodgy that one), one Commodore 64 game even had the player trying to rescue alien bog roll from a horde of curry-heavy humans.

Although we in Europe have matured slightly when it comes to computer gaming, our half brothers and financial backers in America are still turning out silly software. For example Sierra based the whole Leisure Suit Larry series around one guy who wants to get his rocks off with every woman he meets, that's three games with a fourth now in production. And we won't even mention the Japanese...

UPDATES

SIM CITY - ARCHITECTURE DISKS

Infogrames
(071-738 8199)
£14.99 each (The original Sim City program is required).

Are your Sims getting tired of their environment? Do they need a new lease of life? In that case you'll probably want to take a look at the latest add-ons for Maxis' original simulator. Two Architecture disks: Future Cities and Ancient Cities between them provide a range of six alternative graphics sets.

Ancient Cities contains sets for Ancient Asia, Medieval Times, and Wild West, while Future Cities has USA 2055, EEC 2055, and Moon Base. What you get for your money is a set of completely new background graphics and animated elements, which have been changed to suit the period. In Ancient Asia, for instance, you get waterways instead of power lines, and Medieval Times has jousting instead of a football stadium.

The disasters have also been updated accordingly. So you can be thrilled by the sight of your Wild West cities being threatened by a giant tumbleweed (the mind boggles even as you scream)!

Essentially though the gameplay remains the same, so if you are bored by the basic development of Sim Cities these disks are unlikely to revive your interest that much.

LAURENCE SCOTFORD





LINKS - COURSE DISKS

£15.99 each (the original Links game is required)
Access Software/US Gold
021 356 3388

Links - The Challenge of Golf is well-known as golf simulator and for all golf crazy people already on the fairway, there is now something more useful than a pair of plus fours - a plus-two set.

The original game is a 3-D terrain, affair making very good use of VGA colour and using 'RealSound' sound effects which will now play through most sound boards including, AdLib, Sound Blaster and the IBM Speech adaptor so that the level of realism remains quite high.

The two course disks are Firestone Country Club (south course) and Bountiful Golf course; both American courses are reproduced in all their beauty (and annoying fairway traits) to give existing Links players the chance to tackle two new courses.

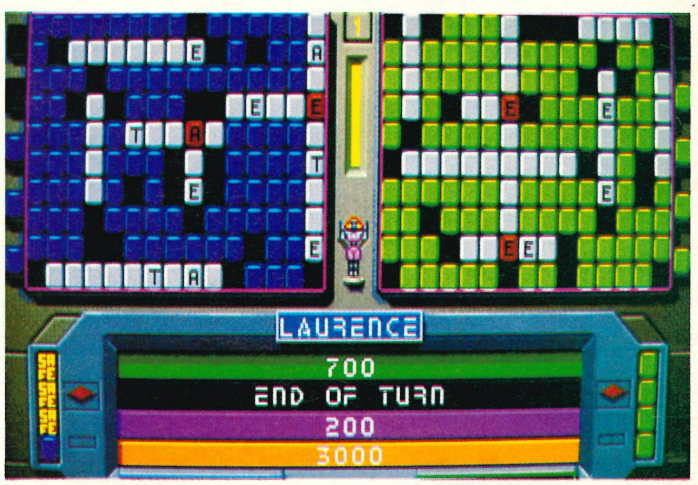
With many games, additional 'scenery' disks can add very little, but the two courses are quite different to the existing game and whilst the original program was an excellent golf simulation, the effect of the game can wear off once you've got used to each of the holes and their particular characteristics.

Weighing in at £15.99 for each of the two disks, Firestone and Bountiful could be said to be good value - but only if you are one of those people who have got the bug and are determined to play away - straight down the middle.

LEXI - CROSS



Wow! Choose your own looks in the presence of the lovely Pristine Mint. This is me by the way...



It's nail biting stuff when that drum starts rolling. Will you get a 1200 point letter or will you go bankrupt?

Here's a formula for coming up with a quick computer game: make up a word game based on a scrabble grid, transpose it into a futuristic game-show environment, add a few pretty graphics and some animation, pack it into a box and bingo - there you have it. Unfortunately American publisher Interplay would have beaten you to it because this is exactly what they've done with Lexi-Cross. Lexi-Cross is a Holovision show taking place in the year 2091 (and celebrating its first decade on the air). It's the sort of time when all those old science fiction cliches have come true: Interplanetary travel is a reality, intelligent alien species exist and sport names like Babrazoids, and people get useful robotic bolt-on bits when their real fleshy bits get worn out and drop off. But, in gameshow-presenter-speak, moving quickly onto the game itself - Lexi-Cross is played by two people (or robots, or a combination of the two), and involves turning tiles on a large grid to reveal the position of letters (although not what the letters are, that comes later). Some of the tiles reveal tokens which do a number of things from adding a bonus to a players score to making them lose a turn. Players continue turning tiles until they hit either a bad token or an empty space, then play transfers to the opposing player. Once the positions of enough letters have been revealed a player can try Picking A Letter. This involves spinning a drum to reveal what score will be received for each letter found (although occasionally the drum will make a player lose a turn or even go bankrupt). Then the player chooses a letter and all the revealed tiles containing that letter are shown. This goes on until a number of words are revealed. The idea is to discover the word that connects all the words on the grid. The first player to guess it wins the game.

This jolly breeze is livened up by the antics of Robanna (a robotic equivalent of Carol Vorderman), and Chip (the twenty-first century counterpart of Leslie Crowther). There's also a nice little sequence conducted by the backstage assistant Pristine Mint in which you can select your planet of origin, name, age, and even appearance. All these little extras, however, do not manage to disguise the fact that Lexi-Cross is essentially a fairly limited puzzle game. It's supposed to be the most popular program of the twenty-first century. If that's the case all I can say is God help my great, great grandchildren!

Laurence Scotford

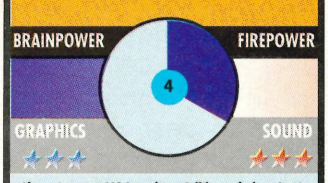
Electronic Arts
(0753) 49442

£29.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✓
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✗
Mouse	✓	Joystick	✓
Roland	✗	AdLib	✓

PCL VERDICT

Lexi-Cross has been very nicely presented, even down to the manual being written as a sort of Holovision TV Times. It will certainly appeal to the sort of people who enjoy doing crosswords or playing scrabble, but even they will find that



If you've got VGA and an Adlib card then Lexi-Cross looks and sounds quite pretty, but you don't really need these trappings to enjoy the game. Even slower machines don't suffer much.

★★

etc... TV GAMES

ETC Box clever Love them or hate them television game shows are more important than you may realise in keeping the wheels of television rolling. Much of the revenue that independent television production companies make (even those that currently have one of the ITV regional franchises) comes from making and selling game shows to the rest of the network. Not only are they the most successful and popular form of television entertainment, but you can fit them into almost any time slot, and work them around any theme. Here are a few examples:

Dating - BLIND DATE (Prime Time) Pub Quizzes - QUIZ NIGHT (Night Time) Married Life - MR AND MRS (Daytime) The Cost Of Living(!) - COME ON DOWN (Prime Time) Gambling - YOU BET (Prime Time) People's Jobs - WHAT'S MY LINE? (Daytime) People's Jobs - BUSMAN'S HOLIDAY (Daytime) Other People's Jobs - THE GENERATION GAME (Prime Time)

ACTION STATIONS

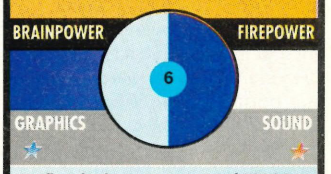
Adventure on the high seas comes in all shapes and sizes, and with the latest wargame it comes with a 100+ page manual! Covering the period 1922 to 1945, Action Stations is a realistic simulation of naval combat with most of the major conflicts represented on its three scenario disks. Control is via the mouse or keyboard, although the latter is much easier to handle. A manual-based security program is rather awkward, but once past this it's straight into the game. Either side in each conflict is selectable, so having the Germans win the battle of River Plate becomes a tempting option. Once the game's loaded and the scenario selected, menus allow the player to zoom in or out of the main map, change the direction and speed of the fleet. Once the enemy is in range, the gun batteries can be instructed to fire guns or torpedoes at the coordinates. The game takes into account a host of factors to decide speed, manoeuvrability, etc; the relative calmness of the water, the weather and the amount of daylight. As with all wargames, Action Stations is best played against a human. However the computer opponent has seven ability levels, so those finding the game too easy or ridiculously hard can alter it to their heart's content. Another useful feature is the scenario builder where all the variables found in the main scenarios can be selected to create a new challenge, based on historical events or not. Graphically this is nothing special with screens moving towards being downright basic. All the screens feature either menus or maps, with no pictures except the garish loading screen. Sound is also disappointing with nothing more than the barest minimum being used. This, coupled with the basic graphics, means the game has little more atmosphere than the moon and is nowhere as near as visually inspiring. Take these factors into consideration and you're left with a game where the capabilities of the PC have been overlooked and the immense processing power of the computer has been used as a number cruncher.

Action Stations is certainly an involved and intriguing game, and was obviously a labour of love for the programmers. The notes and appendices in the rulebook show that no corners were cut while researching it, and a bibliography gives hints for further reading on the subject. I feel this accuracy is the game's best element, along with the number of scenarios included. Unfortunately, the more casual player who is not an outright strategist will feel intimidated by the plethora of detail and the number of different factors that have to be taken into account when playing it. I'm sure that committed wargamers will absolutely love this game, but other players might do well to choose something a little less involved and something easier to get straight to grips with. The price alone will be enough to deter most others.

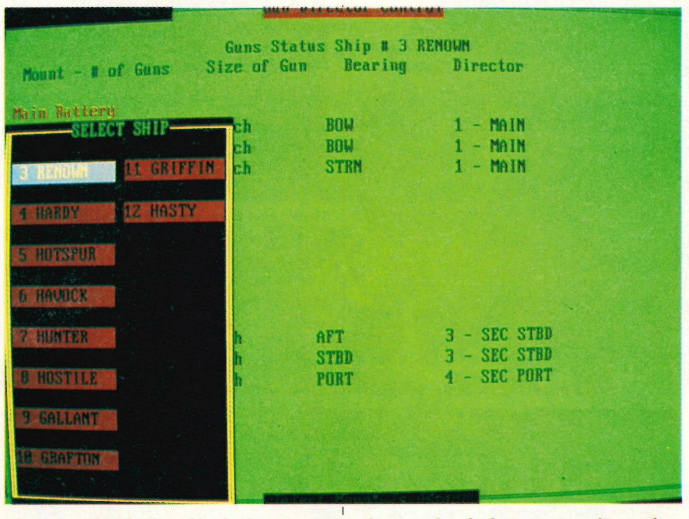
Matt Regan

PCL VERDICT

This type of game will only appeal to real strategists who are at home with SSI type board games as the use of the PC's graphics and sound is minimal. If you expect a games program on your PC to do more than just a number crunch,



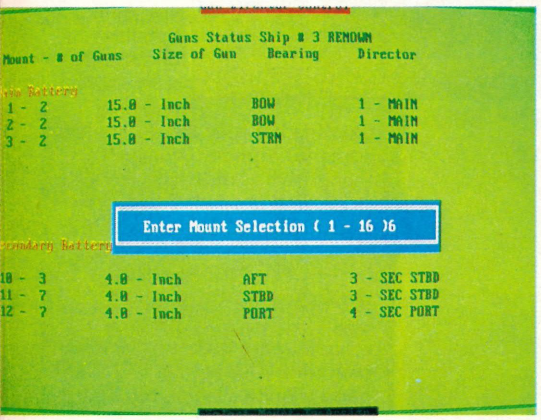
You'll need to be running a version of DOS 2.1 or above to play this on your PC but any speed machine will run the game, but 286's or above will avoid interminable delays between screens.

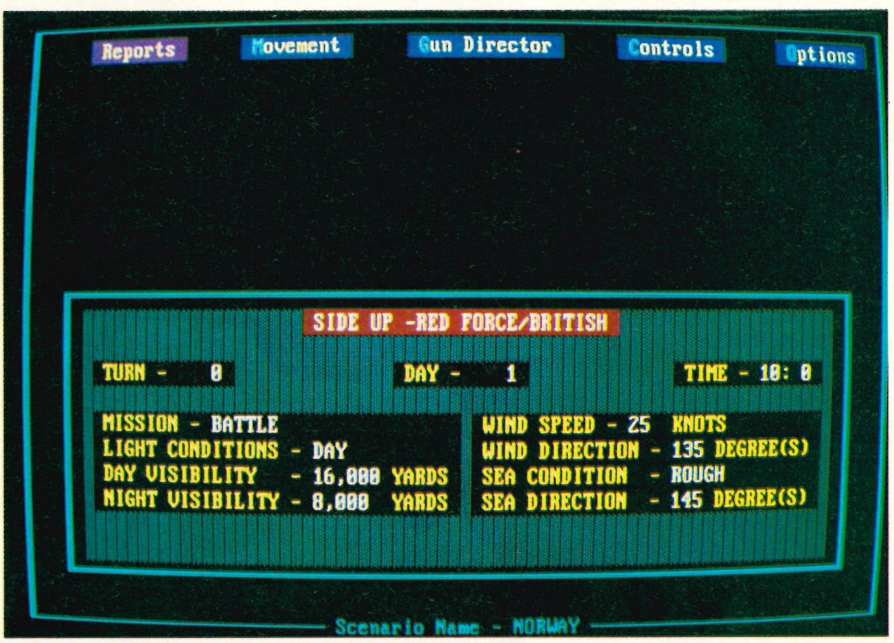


There are a lot of screens like this because you need to see a lot of information in order to rule the world. Well, you didn't expect taking over the world to be without sacrifices did you?

Storm Computers
(081) 870 4941
£39.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✓
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✗
Mouse	✓	Joystick	✓
Roland	✗	AdLib	✗





It's battle time and also time to start making all those decisions that will haunt you in the future..

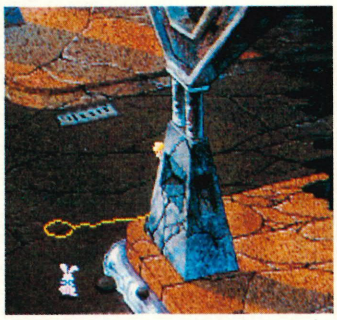
SPACE QUEST IV

The hero who started his adventures in a broom closet is back!After saving the secret of the Star Generator from the Sariens in Space Quest I, Roger Wilco (Janitor First Class) went on to destroy Vohaul and his plans to infiltrate the galaxy with genetically-engineered life insurance salesmen in Space Quest II.

His exploits continued in the appropriately-named Space Quest III, in which he was compelled to rescue The Two Guys From Andromeda, who, inexplicably, turned out to be the Space Quest game designers.

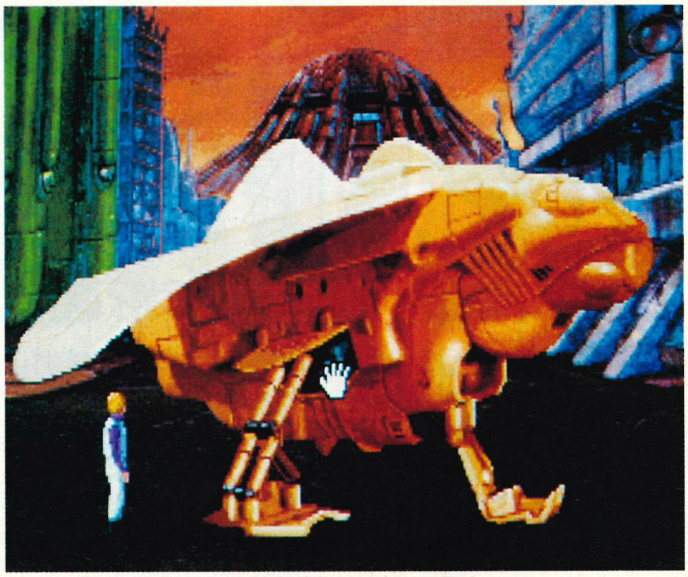
Now all this is obviously a lot of work for someone who is only paid to mop floors, so Roger reckons it's about time he had some well-deserved R and R back on his home planet of Xenon.

On arrival, though, he finds he has somehow landed in the scenario for Space Quest XII - Vohaul's Revenge II! Xenon is in ruins, and the only things wandering the streets are a quivering cyborg and the mechanical drummer-bunny from the Energizer battery commercials. Armed Sarien guards (who shoot first and say "Halt" later) are being shuttled from the city to a large alien structure in the distance. If Roger could just get up there, maybe he could find out-what's going on and use his hero skills to sort these guys out. But it's not that easy, as Roger discovers when he hops a ride in a Timebuster pod to Space Quest X - Latex Babes of Estros. It seems the Sequel Police think Roger'sadventures have gone on long enough, and they're following him through time, space and Space Quest scenarios to make sure that he never gets to star in Space Quest V!





Is this the future of the Sellafield Skateboarders who disappeared under mysterious circumstances in 1993?



Here's how to do your bit by keeping the bunny explosion down. Just find the rope, lay it out in the path of a bunny and wait until the little vermin pops his feet into the noose and then give the rope a good yank! The should upset his battery levels!

As you can see though, the graphics for Space Quest are superb - the costs is the slow update time when even working from hard disk. And f you've a sound-card on board your PC you're in for a major t reat!

Sierra On Line
(0734) 303322

£34.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✓
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✖
Mouse	✓	Joystick	✓
Roland	✓	AdLib	✓

The predicaments Roger gets himself into are no easier than in any of the other Space Quest games, except in one respect. Sierra have recently improved the look and feelof their games to make them a lot more attractive to play for mainstream gamesplayer who perhaps wouldn't have considered playing adventures before.

The most obvious difference has to be the use of digitised artwork for the game's scenery, and more realistic-looking characters and sprites which are all a great improvement over the chunky look of the original Space Quest games.The only problem is, the graphics take up so much memory that Space Quest IV will only run from a hard drive - our review copy was installed from six High Density disks and took up Megabytes!

The other improvement is the use of Sierra's new command interface, which does away with all text input, replacing it with icons.

As ever, moving around is just a matter of pointing with your mouse/joystick/keyboard pointer and clicking. Other commands are accessed by selecting an icon from the panel of nine at the top of the screen. This changes the pointer into a representation of that icon,and you then just have to click on the object in the inventory window or in the scenery that you want to pick up, smell or whatever. Whilst it's a good system, I found it not quite as flexible or obvious as the one used by Lucasfilm's Indiana Jones and Monkey Island.



As well as being attractive to novice adventurers, SQ4,like its predecessors, will undoubtedly prove popular among seasoned quest fiends. That's not just because the puzzles are testing, but also because the story - saving Roger by scooting between the different scenarios from future installments in the series - is sufficiently flakey and original to be entertaining in itself. In fact it was the odd-ball puzzles, weirdo scenarios and the one-liners which appear when Roger bites the dust that kept me playing.

Oh, the copy of Space Piston Magazine which comes with the game is quite a laugh, too.



PCL VERDICT

Another credit for Sierra, and one that will particularly appeal to fans of previous SQ games. Despite the age of the series, the latest improvements make it a worthwhile addition to any graphic adventure fan's collection



A hard disk is required. So is a fast machine if you want to get the best out of the game – and despite the low end graphics support, this game really cries out for at least EGA..

★★★★



BUDOKAN

If you're reading this, thinking that this is just another bog-standard beat 'em up, think again - Budokan is a little more complicated than that. Of course, you get to hit people, but unlike practically all other games of this type, you have to think about the player's moves before you make them.

The player takes the role of an aspiring martial artist, training in four forms of combat: Karate, Kendo, Nunchaku, and the Bo staff. Each is chosen by entering the relevant dojo, or school - from there you can either practice your moves, or spar with one of three opponents.

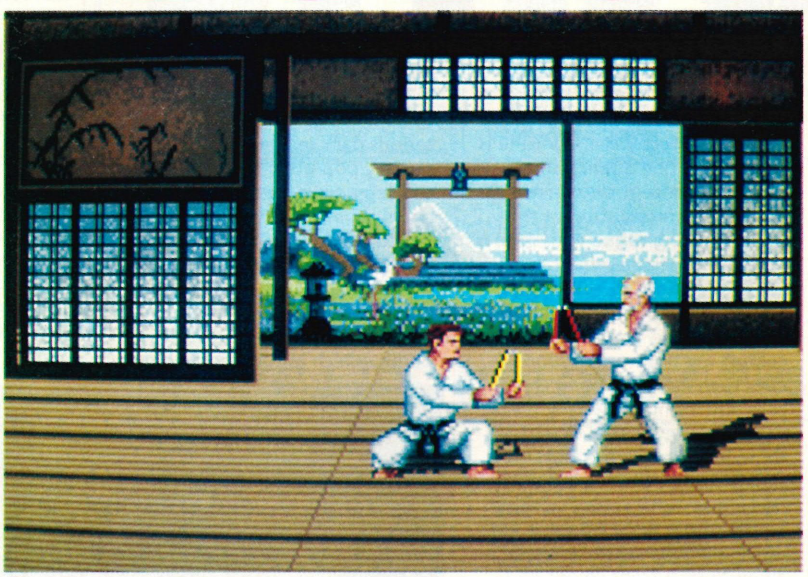
During a fight, you must keep a eye on both the stamina and Ki levels, as these determine your state of health, and the power of your blow - if the Ki level is high, the blow will be that much more powerful. Both levels increase the longer you stay untouched, but fall when you move or get hit. The overall objective is simply to get your opponents levels to zero before yours do.

Once you are prolific in all four martial arts, you can travel to the Budokan, where you'll have to take on a number of like-minded warriors, intent on becoming world champion!

Budokan is what you'd call "a thinking man's beat 'em up" - if you don't practice the moves, or use your Ki to its best, you're likely to get smeared all over the mat. The enormous amount of moves takes time to master, but you really feel as if you've accomplished something when you start to plough your way through opponent after opponent.

Match this with excellent graphics and sound, and a level of depth and excitement rarely seen in such games, and you've got a highly recommended game, ideal for bashing freaks looking for a new challenge.

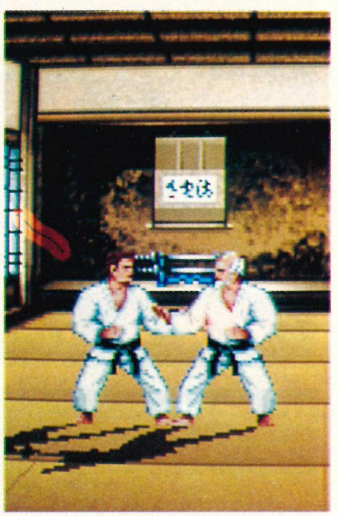
■ **Robert Swan**

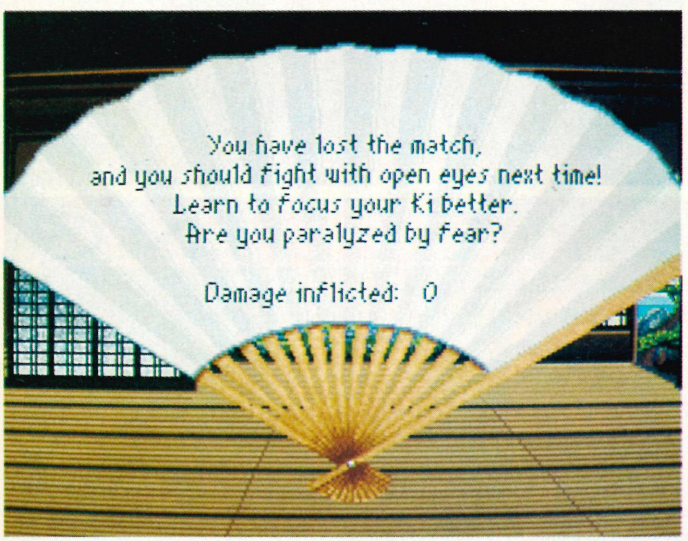


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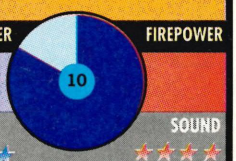
5¼"	✓	3½"	✗
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✓
Mouse	✗	Joystick	✓
Roland	✓	AdLib	✓





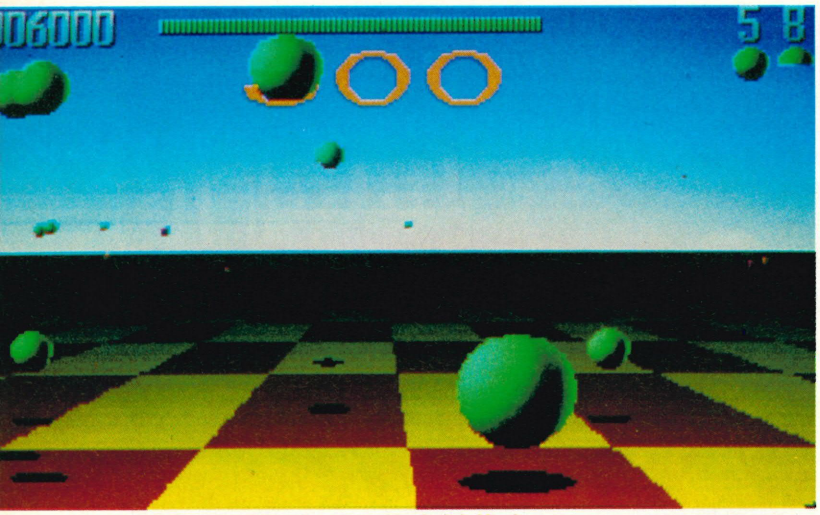
PCL VERDICT

An excellent beat 'em up, with a level of skill and depth that will have any would-be Bruce Lee stuck to his screen for ages.

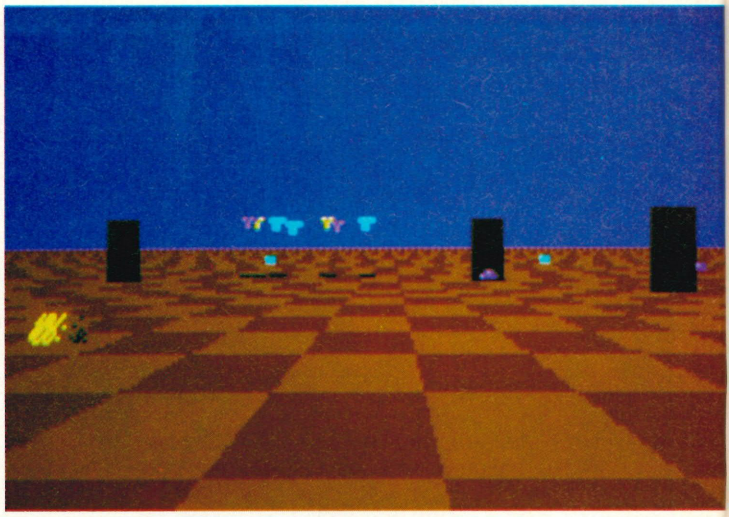


DOS 2.11 or higher required. Although not essential, a hard disk would make matters that much easier. EGA or VGA graphics recommended.

★★★★



Even the CGA graphics are presentable, if a little bland



Vaxine is full of ball-busting action. Honest

VAXINE

Virus alert. Invading bacteria are attacking your innerspace - you now the parts that even cotton buds can't reach. The only way to survive is to go cellular and blast these bugs into anti-matter. Software developer The Assembly Line is making a career out of creating off-beat arcade strategy games for US Gold. E-Motion was the last example, Vaxine is the latest.

To be perfectly frank, Vaxine is little more than a fancy 3D-graphics demo. You roam a very abstract representation of the body shooting rogue virus globes. Total weirdness or what? Your job is to protect your body cells which are half buried in the tissue floor. Virus globes of various colours are bouncing 'round all over the place, attacking these cells and trying to destroy them. When you've spotted one of these infectious infiltrators, you simply cycle through your anti-body 'gun' until you've selected ammo of the same colour. Then move in and blow the suckers away. Your current colour and level of ammo is shown as a bar along the top of the screen. The supply of anti-body balls are limited, so trigger-happy players will soon see the Game Over message. If you're low on stores, look-out for coloured stars circling around in the sky. Hit one of these with the right colour and you'll get resupplied in an instant.

Help can be had in your fight to be healthy. Jump through mysterious dark rectangles that occasionally pop-up in the gamescape or keep an eye-out for the odd visual prompt. These show the direction of the nearest ball to bust. Your most potent ally, though, is a strand of DNA. A quick combination of mouse clicking provides you with anti-bodies which automatically link-up and wait for a suitable target to attack. Unfortunately, the virus cells will also join forces if they bump into each other.

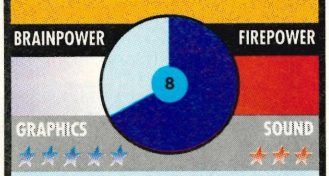
Things can get rather crazy if you just go out blasting everything in sight. Sometimes it's hard to tell a virus from your horde of anti-bodies. Use as much ammo as you like, but to survive, tactics must come into play.

Vaxine is split into 99 levels gradually introducing faster germs with meaner artificial intelligence. The game feels alive thanks to the bright primary colours. Do the graphics symbolise a New Age rebellion in PC games? Is New Age still a viable label? Who cares? Just fine-tune your hand-eye reflexes and be prepared for half an hour of pure bliss as long as you don't mind having to pay the price for your indulgences.

■Rik Haynes

PCL VERDICT

The PC is blessed with precious few quality shoot'em-ups. Vaxine readdresses the balance. It makes a refreshing change to look at surreal sprites instead of Space Invaders. A game you can just pick-up, play and enjoy without the has-



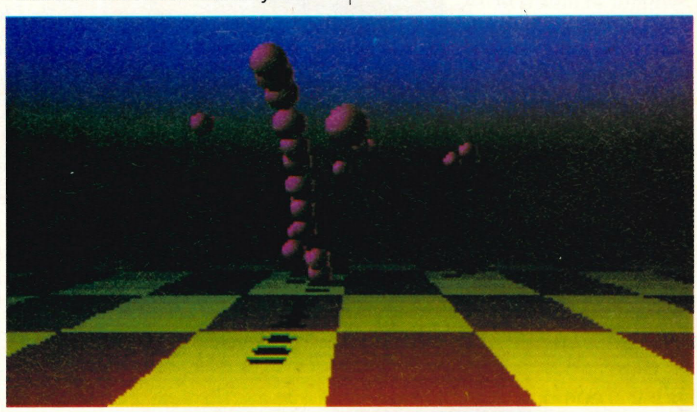
Vaxine runs as smooth as silk on any machine. This virus-Buster supports all major graphics and sound cards and doesn't need a particularly fast PC. The EGA scrolling effects are top league.

★★★★

US Gold
(021) 625 3388

£29.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✓
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✗
Mouse	✓	Joystick	✗
Roland	✓	AdLib	✓



LIGHT SPEEDING

Perhaps US Gold and The Assembly Line should look to Einstein's special theory of relativity for their next ball-breaking game. Two researchers at the Carnegie Mellon University in America have developed a special algorithm to graphical simulate the effects of objects travelling at 99% of the speed of light. The technique would sit very comfortably in Vaxine 2. What do you say guys?



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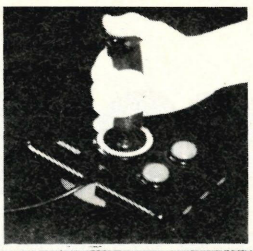
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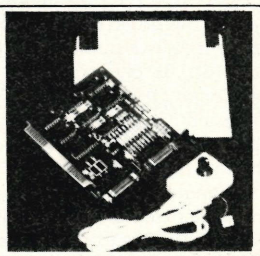
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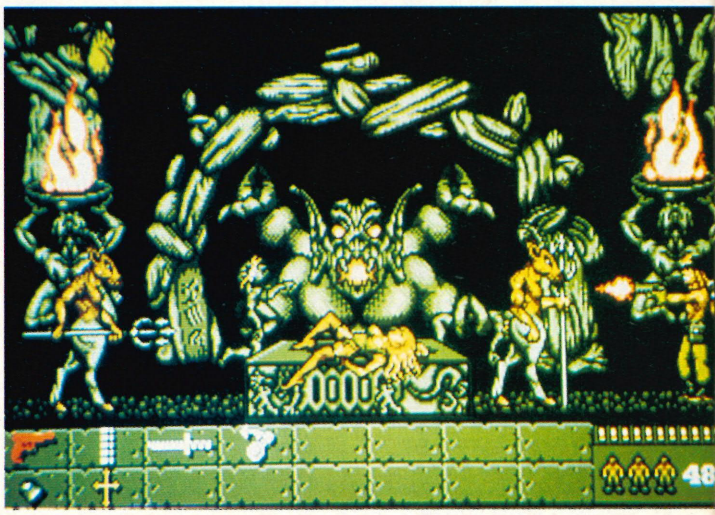
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GOLD OF THE AZTECS



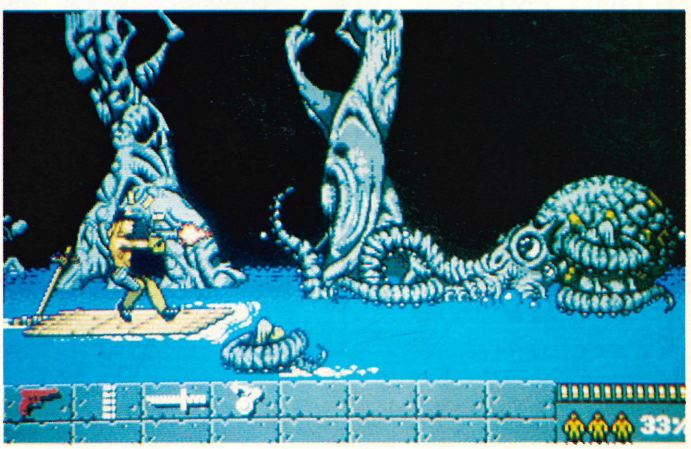
Bret comes up against a stone demon who rips the head off a bimbette and gives chase..

Boasting over 26 megabytes of graphic data alone, Gold Of The Aztecs is a stunning-looking arcade/adventure in the vein of the early Psygnosis romps - hardly surprising really when you consider that the main men behind the project were responsible for the Liverpudlian giants' early hits, Barbarian and Obliterator. Assuming the role of one Bret Conrad, a hard up ex-CIA agent and all-round dimple-chinned hero, the player has been set the unenviable task of locating the titular treasure. Obviously, the present day possessors of these untold riches aren't exactly ecstatic about losing it, so before Bret can lay claim to it he must battle his way through five stages of flick-screen dangers and assorted traps and hazards.

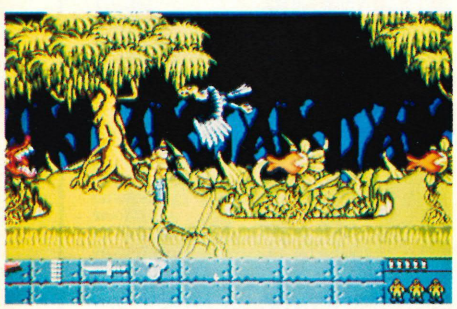
The play area is split into two distinct halves, with the main area displaying the all-important action, whilst a narrow panel below it displays all of Bret's worldly goods, along with room for any he should pick up along the way. Displayed in all his well-animated glory, Bret strides purposely from screen to screen and the usual array of directional controls and presses of the firebutton prompt him to perform stunning somersaults, jump, or draw his trusty gun to protect himself. The enemy come in many shapes and forms, an d no longer has Bret cut himself free from his parachute, then he is in danger of being trampled by an elephant or being culled by pygmies, man-eating fauna or massive stone demons. As mentioned, though, Bret is suitably armed, and can protect himself by either shooting whatever is thrown at him and the people responsible, or by simply leaping over it. However, the main draw back of the system used is that Bret must first draw his gun before firing, and during the interim period he is effectively disabled, and sluggish joystick controls mean that lives are unnecessarily lost.

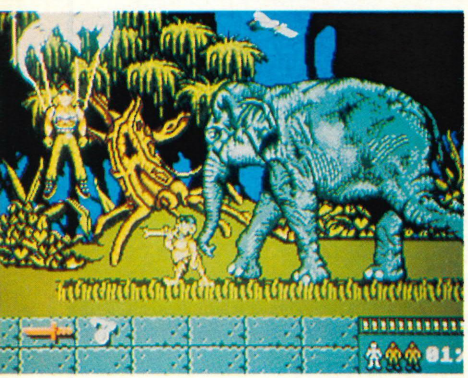
With so much to recommend in Gold Of The Aztecs, it is a major pity that it fails so badly in the control stakes. Graphically, the game is nothing short of excellent and it is obvious that a lot of thought has gone in to each of the game's taxing stages. But while Bret is large and well animated, he responds to the controls with all the enthusiasm of a lethargic sloth. And while it may be forgivable in other games, the whole point of Gold is that the player controls a lithe and acrobatic hero who can perform all manner of somersaults and flips with ease, and, hopefully, without the player having to wrestle the joystick into submissions first. In all, Gold Of The Aztecs is a brave attempt at bridging the gap between the early Psygnosis games and a playable platform romp, but it is ultimately let down by far too many niggles. A missed opportunity.

Steve Merrett



Using a raft to cross a treacherous stretch of water, Bret is attacked by all manner of strange underwater creatures, including this impressive-looking Octopus.





etc... GOLDEN BOYS...

Gold Of The Aztecs represents the first game to appear from Liverpudlian developers, Kinetica. Formed by two ex-Psygnosis bigwigs and backed up by a team of six or seven graphic artists they aim to create original yet playable games which offer the player more than 'bland licenses'. Gold of the Aztecs was in development for over a year, with most of the work concentrated on the game' s incredible graphics and maps. However, the actual coding of the game was made considerably easier thanks to a Mac-based development system, which converts code from one format to another - a system which the guys want to keep close to their chests for obvious reasons.

Looking to the future, the team are currently engrossed in a futuristic space opera, Saragossa, and are also midway through the development of a Gold-style game for EA.

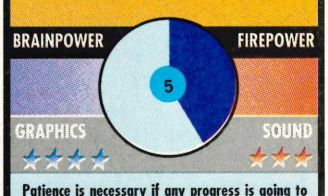
US Gold
(021) 356 3388

£24.95

5¼"	✓	3½"	✓
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✗
Mouse	✗	Joystick	✓
Roland	✓	AdLib	✓

PCL VERDICT

A dream to look at and very clever in principle, Gold of the Aztecs features a very unwieldy control system which kills off any addictivity. If only this had been rectified, then US Gold would have had a massive hit on their hands.



Patience is necessary if any progress is going to be made. Later levels boast some very difficult screens, but what's the point if the average games player won't see them.

★★

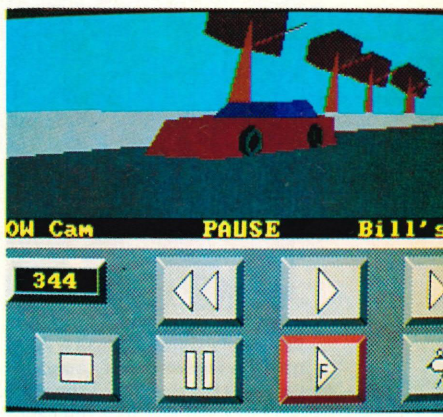
BILL ELLIOT'S NASCAR CHALLENGE

Fancy yourself as Tom Cruise in Days of Thunder? Then no doubt you'll be au fait with the sport of NASCAR racing. This has taken America by storm, featuring souped-up sports cars that the drivers hurl around race tracks. Where this type of racing differs from previous types is that the track curves upwards at the end - so careful control of the car is required to avoid scraping the wheels off along the top edge!

The game itself includes a host of options. Choose a car and track, and whether to run a qualifying race, apractice lap, or go straight into the main challenge. The gear-change ratio, spoiler angle, and tyre stagger are all alterable. Once into the race proper, the display shows a range of gauges; oil pressure, tachometer, damage warning indicator, and fuel light. The gear box shows only when the gears are being changed, but this can be automatic or manual.



The menu screen gets you quickly onto the track. Car ok? Chosen your track? Let's roll.....



The playback option is an added bonus as with NASCAR racing - the next crash is just around the corner...

Konami/US Gold
(021) 356 3388

£30.64

5¼"	✓	3½"	✓
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✓
Mouse	✗	Joystick	✓
Roland	✗	AdLib	✗

Pit stops are essential during a long race. Although they only take an average of 20 seconds, a host of checks and changes are possible. This basically involves refueling, adjusting the spoiler angle, cleaning the windscreen, etc. In the race, damage from minor collisions affects the performance of the car, providing the "Normal Damage" option is engaged; even if it isn't, fatal crashes are still possible!

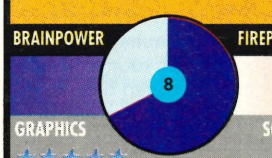
BENC (to use a more wieldy form) certainly offers a fairly accurate simulation of the sport, with its large number of options and courses; unfortunately, there's not much to go on in the first place! By this I mean that NASCAR racing is fundamentally a rather boring sport to transfer to the computer; as there's nothing but left (or, for variety, right) turns, the action gets boring very quickly. No doubt the real thing is extremely thrilling, but without the real danger of violent crashes it fails to excite on the PC. I don't think that even committed fans of motor racing will be too enthusiastic about this, if only because the sport hasn't arrived on our shores - and it's unlikely to happen because of the need for specially-built stadia.

I can't fault this technically, but I do think that there are so many better racing games on the market like Mario Andretti's Racing Challenge, reviewed last issue - but this package really doesn't have enough going for it to make it worth hunting out.

Matt Regan

PCL VERDICT

An interesting game about an obscure sport which fails to grab the imagination. The control method is fairly awkward which adds to the game's lack of immediate grab and is why only real fans of the genre will get any real enjoy-



This needs a fast machine to do the graphics justice, so I'd advise owners of slower machines (under 286/Mhz) to be well aware of the restrications of screen updating before they buy.

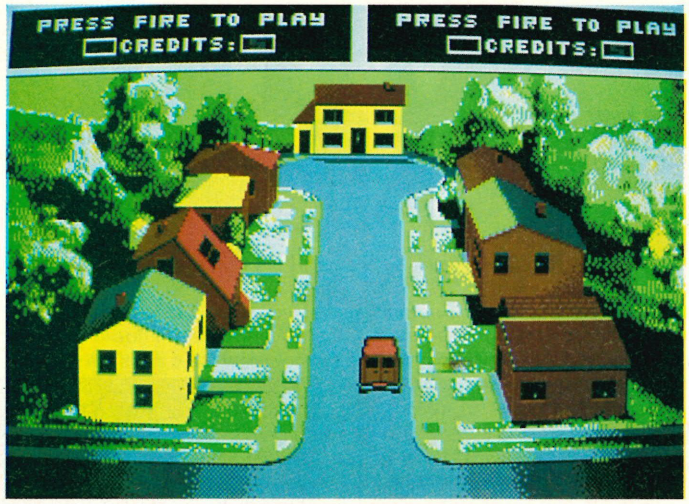
★★★★

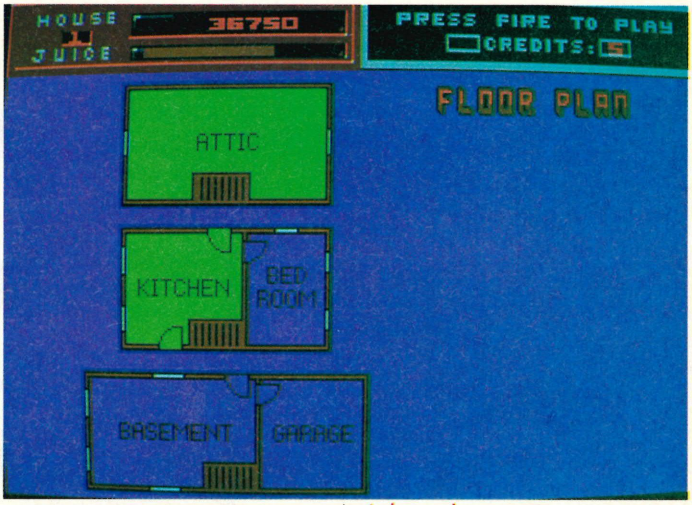


STOCK ANSWERS etc...

NASCAR (or National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing) was the brainchild of William Getty France, a stock car racer from Daytona Beach. He gathered together a group of racers and promoters in 1947 to formalise the sport as it is today. The biggest tournament is the Winston Cup Series, comprising 29 races over 13 states. It has rapidly established itself as a huge favourite with the American public, with prize money reaching the total of $200,000!

Bill Elliot is one of the best known NASCAR racers, having the highest average speed for the Talladega track (186 mph). He's been voted the Most Popular Driver five years in a row, making him the natural choice for endorsement of the computer game.





In the two-player game it is easier to complete a level, bonuses.

EXTERMINATOR

In the weirdness stakes Gottlieb's Exterminator coin-op goes right off the top of the scale. It isn't just the fact that the cabinet sports state-of-the-art graphics processing hardware (Texas Instruments chips capable of generating a stunning 32,000 colours), but its bizarre bug-hunting theme that makes it stand out from the crowd.

The `hero' is a huge hand which is responsible for pest control in a leafy Chicago suburb. It goes from house to house wiping out the pests in each room by shooting, crushing and pounding them.

The floor in each room consists of a series of coloured tiles. Each time a pest is killed over one of the rows of tiles one more tile in that row changes colour. When all of the tiles in a row have been converted the room has been debugged (sic).

The strangeness factor is increased by the nature of some of the pests waiting to be wiped out. As well as a motley collection of flies and rodents, each house is also infested by tin cans, small General Jumbo type tanks, frogs and other bizarre specimens.

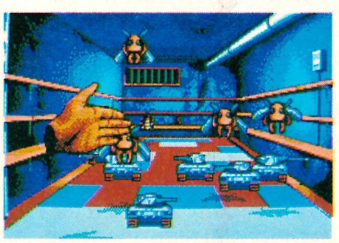
Your hand's efforts are generally hampered by the stings of insects and projectiles fired by objects moving across the floor (the frogs for instance, shoot their tongues at you). Each hit detracts from your juice level, and when that expires you're rendered 'armless as it were. The occasional wasp makes life even harder; it can't be crushed and only frantic waggling of the joystick will shoo it away.

Fortunately there are bonuses to be had in the form of objects which float about waiting to be crushed, although in the two-player game you have to compete for them. If you do manage to finish off all the pests in one house you are treated to a bonus round in which you get to pick off as many defenceless rodents as you can before your time runs out.

The Assembly Line and Blue Turtle have done a superb job with this conversion (even down to including the anti-drugs message and original attract sequence from the coin-op). In fact it plays better than the coin-op largely because of the improved collision detection. Converting graphics from 32,000 to 256 colour formats might be considered an impossible task, but all of the versions are quite clear, and the VGA graphics have retained the digitised look of the original.

Unfortunately the game soon palls because of the lack of variety in the action. Basically the only difference you get between levels is the difficulty factor, selection of pests and background, and that's not enough to give Exterminator long term interest.

Laurence Scotford

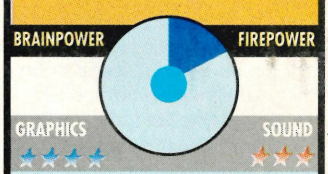


You have to get yourself into a corner before you can start firing, but at least this way you get to wipe out bugs in true Rentokill style.



PCL VERDICT

A brilliant conversion of a flawed game. If you like frantic, colourful action you might get along with it for a while, but you'll soon get bored of this repetitive bug-basher.



Exterminator gets quite frantic at around 16 Mhz, but still plays well down to 12 - lower than that and you may have problems. VGA looks great, while CGA are a bit garish.

★★

Audiogenic
(081) 861 1166

£24.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✓
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✓
Mouse	✗	Joystick	✓
Roland	✓	AdLib	✓

etc... THE VFM FACTOR

PC software is, on average, £5 to £10 more expensive than equivalent titles for other 16-Bit machines. This is generally because a greater development effort is being expended on a smaller market. Whenever you write a game for PC you have to allow for five different graphics formats and three sound formats, thus pushing up the development time.

But even taking into account that extra development cost, the punters who are paying an extra five or ten pounds expect Value For Money. Audiogenic are one of several companies who have fallen into the trap of believing that if the game is ok then the packaging doesn't matter. Exterminator comes with an A4 poster and a scrap of paper with very terse instructions. The impression given upon opening the box is that you've been cheated even before you play the game. A decent manual and a proper insert for the box rather than a cheap plastic bag would have made all the difference...

DAS BOOT

Mindscape/360
(0444) 831761

£TBA

5¼"	✓	3½"	✓
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✓
Mouse	✓	Joystick	✗
Roland	✗	AdLib	✓

For anyone who's ever read Tom Clancy's Red Storm Rising or watched any submarine-based film, you'll know exactly how tense submarine combat can get. For anyone who's missed out on that side of life, I'd recommend you batten down the hatches and dive, dive, dive! It shouldn't take too long to get completely immersed in this highly playable submersible epic.

Sadly, computerised simulations of the underwater life have rarely managed to conjure up the same feelings of excitement and intensity, even the much heralded Silent Service 2 was a little empty in places. Das Boot is a firm step back in the direction of exciting action coupled with a challenging strategic content.

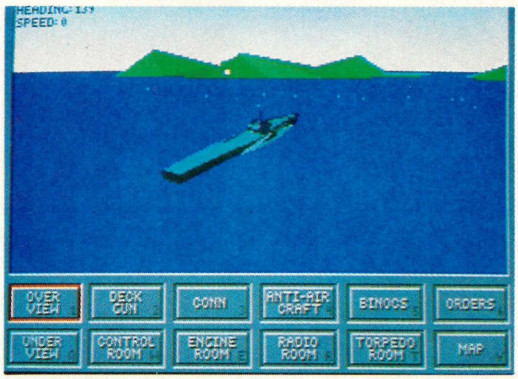
Whereas Microprose's little baby might be accurately detailed right down to the colour of the Commander's buttons, Das Boot offers far more in the way of instant accessibility - always a simulators biggest problem. It's rare these days not to have to sit down and wade through a 400 page booklet before being blown to pieces on your first attempt.

For the action-mongers amongst you, the first step is to throw yourselves into the training missions. A selection of most of the main combat elements are available from torpedo runs to anti-aircraft gunning. It's here that you first notice how smooth everything runs - even on an XT movement fails to be reduced to a jerky mess. The training sections serve two purposes. The first, quite naturally, is to prepare yourself for the real missions. The second is to act as an arcade game for those of you that just want a quick action game. Scores are given and high-score tables are available for each section.

Of course, Das Boot really starts to get moving when you start one of the missions. The setup screens consist of simply choosing the difficulty levels, the type of submarine and how realistic you want the simulation to be.

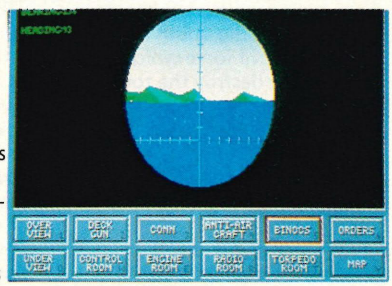
Interesting Facts No. 47: Over half the number of German torpedoes fired during the war were faulty. But what submarine would be complete without them? You have a choice of three types and five tubes. Simply mark the enemy's position, judge his speed and fire. What could be easier?

Difficulty is more important than just determining how hard your opponents are to kill. The thing about WWII German submarines is that when it was under the surface the Commander had to rely on his radar and sonar alone. Underwater minefields were virtually impossible to negotiate. Set your difficulty rating to Realistic and your external views are switched off, putting you in the same boat, so to speak.



Once a submarine had bolted its hatches and prepared to dive dive dive, the crew usually wouldn't see the outside world for a couple of weeks. Thanks to the external camera points, you can view your surroundings in all their glory.

Once out on the open seas you soon get into the swing of things. Rendezvousing with your contacts, plotting your waypoints, sending messages and fighting the enemy, all in a day's work for the average U-Boat Commander. To say that the on-screen presentation works well is like saying Schwarzenegger has got a couple of quid. Everything is clearly laid out, each key is marked and the manual just acts as a back-up guide. The only real problem comes with the crew messages. Every time you are told something it is printed across the bottom of the screen. Unfortunately it stays there far too long, even at the quickest setting, causing a stacking effect that just looks plain ugly and means you have to wait around before you can read the 'urgent' message.

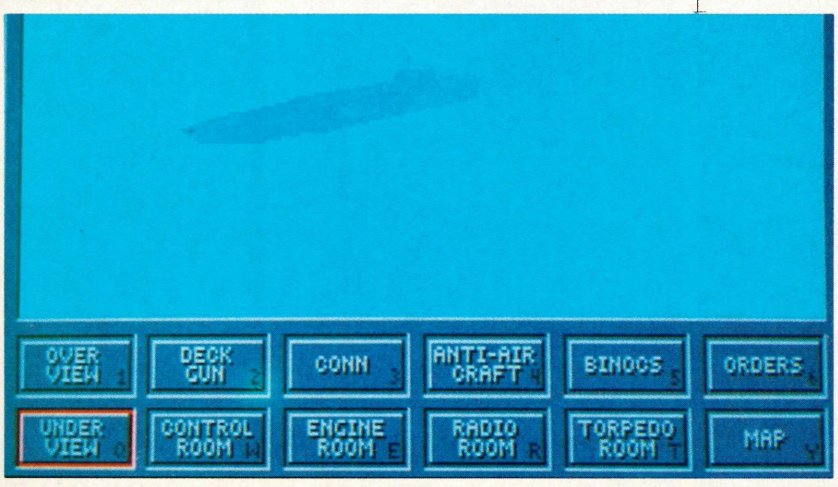


Apart from enemy subs, your main underwater danger comes from mines. A real commander would have had to rely on his underwater sonar to navigate but once again the external camera comes to your rescue as you navigate around the tricky devils.

Das Boot's other main problem is in the lastability stakes. A few of the missions (especially Gibraltar) are on the easy side and can be completed a mite too quickly - there's no sign of any data disks on the horizon either - and a couple of missions look very similar on the surface (sic). To be fair, the difficulty settings make for a varied challenge, but the essence of each mission is still the same.

What is there is entertaining enough, the fjords of Norway provide some real driving skills and the different aspects of each mission give a nice feeling of total involvement and conjure up a great feeling of 'being there' (although considering most people will never have been inside a German U-Boat, you'll just have to take their word for it). Das Boot is easily on a par with Silent Service 2 for entertainment and action and should certainly be considered by anyone with a slight naval bent.

■ **Paul Presley**

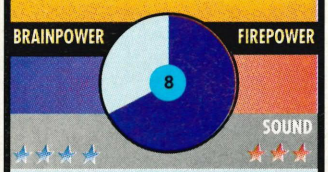


Although you can't pick up Radio Free Germany (92.4 FM), your radio room is fully equipped to send and receive coded messages from both sides. Be careful about sending uncoded messages as it doesn't take long for the enemy to work out your position.



PCL VERDICT

Das Boot is a nice balance between strategy and action. Easy-to-use controls pull you in and impressive graphics ensure that you stay hooked. Some doubt over the lasting appeal but for part-time commanders, Das Boot is all you need.



3D on a Hercules screen! Works fine on all formats, although on-screen text being unreadable in mono. Speed is no problem – WWII submarines weren't noted for massive feats of acceleration.

★★★★

EYE OF THE BEHOLD

While the PC-owning world continues to drum its fingers in anticipation of FTL's Dungeon Master conversion, this superlative Advanced Dungeons and Dragons game has come along to steal its thunder.

Eye of the Beholder is set in Waterdeep, a town with a more than troubled past and an even more troubled future - unless you can do something about it. The indefinable evil force which threatens to destroy the town seems to be emanating from the sewer system, and it's up to your party of four adventurers to descend into this multi-level labyrinth, seek out the source of the malevolence and destroy it.

Before the quest can begin, though, you must first roll up your adventurers, which, if you've ever played a Dungeons and Dragons board game, will be a familiar process. First choose a race for your character (Human, Elf, Dwarf and their associated half-breeds) then his or her profession. Remember, though, that some races are more capable in certain professions - Dwarves, for example, are completely non-magical (so Dwarvish Mages are as much use as a glass sword), but they are highly skilled Fighters.

Next, set the character's attributes, such as Strength, Intelligence and maximum Health Points. You can do this the old-fashioned way, with simulated dice-rolling, or start the game with a strong party by manually bumping up the value of each attribute.

Characters also have a starting level of skill in their profession which increases with experience. For instance, a Cleric who makes good use of his power will gain the ability to cast a wider variety of spells as the game progresses.

With four characters ready, it's time to enter the dungeon, er, sewer. Actually, Eye of the Beholder does borrow a fair bit from Dungeon Master - the simple mouse-driven control system and the adventurer's-eye-view 3D window are both very similar.

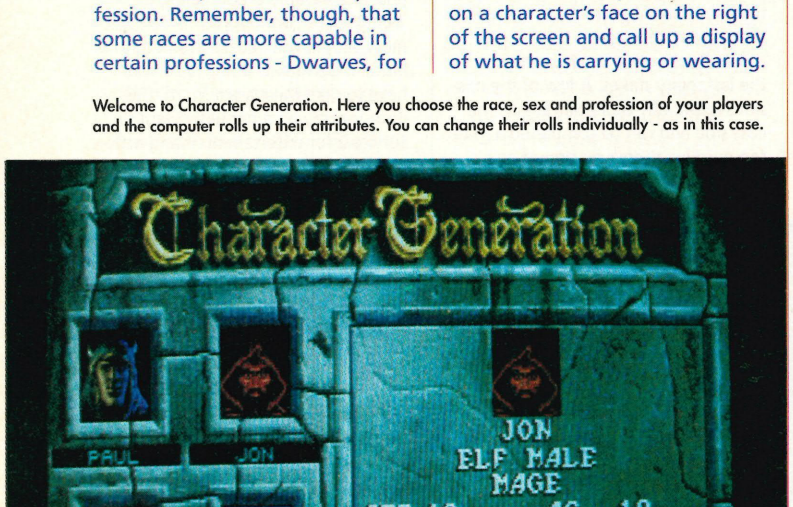
You can use the pointer to click on a character's face on the right of the screen and call up a display of what he is carrying or wearing. Click on a dagger in Trevor the Mage's belt pouch and you can then move it to Simon the Dwarf's inventory screen and put it in his hand, ready for use in combat. Of course, if it wasn't your favourite dagger anyway you can just move it to the 3D window, click again, and it's on the floor in front of you.

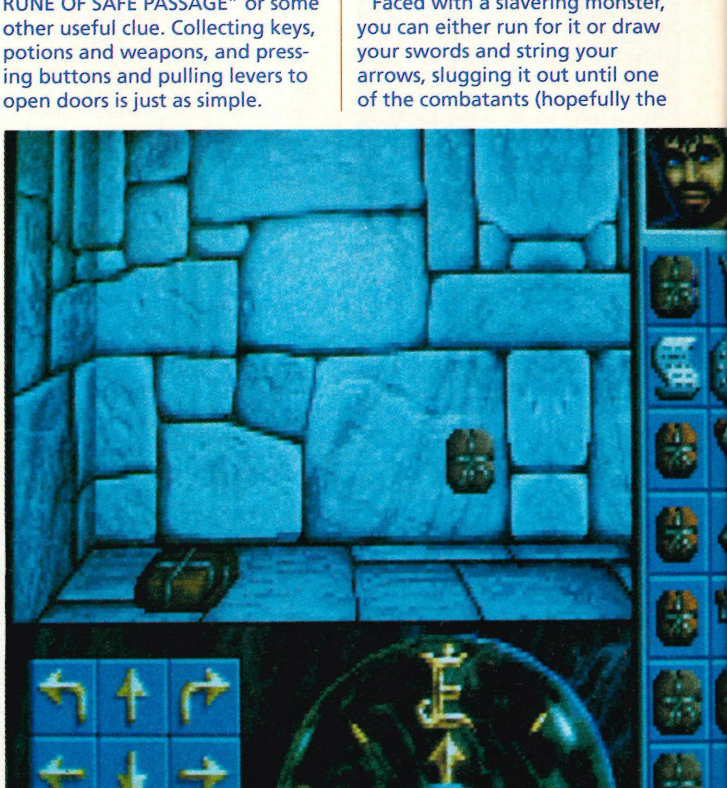
Similarly, if there's something in the 3D display that requires further scrutiny - say, a strange carving on the wall in front of you - just point and click, and the message area at the bottom of the screen will display "DWARVISH RUNE OF SAFE PASSAGE" or some other useful clue. Collecting keys, potions and weapons, and pressing buttons and pulling levers to open doors is just as simple.

Eye of the Beholder's catacombs and vaults are packed with all sorts of unsavoury creatures all of which are portrayed with wonderfully detailed, but simply-animated graphics. In the early levels you'll come across Gnome-hating Kobolds, Giant Leeches and the occasional mace-wielding Flind (a creature with the body of a man and the head of a dog). Level four is a maze of corridors which are cordoned off by spider webs. Needless to say, these spiders are big and poisonous, and they don't like adventurers cutting their webs down!

Faced with a slavering monster, you can either run for it or draw your swords and string your arrows, slugging it out until one of the combatants (hopefully the

Welcome to Character Generation. Here you choose the race, sex and profession of your players and the computer rolls up their attributes. You can change their rolls individually - as in this case.







ER

US Gold/SSI
(021) 625 3388

£29.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✓
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✗
Mouse	✓	Joystick	✗
Roland	✗	AdLib	✓



monster) runs out of health points and croaks. If an adventurer's health points fall to zero or a couple of points below, he is unconscious and will die unless he is healed. Dead adventurers can be resurrected but only by very powerful Clerics.

Not all of the creatures in the sewer are so dangerous, though. Some characters will engage you in conversation, beseeching your help in quests and perhaps rewarding success richly. Your group can comprise up to six members, so if someone asks to join up remember an extra axe is always welcome.

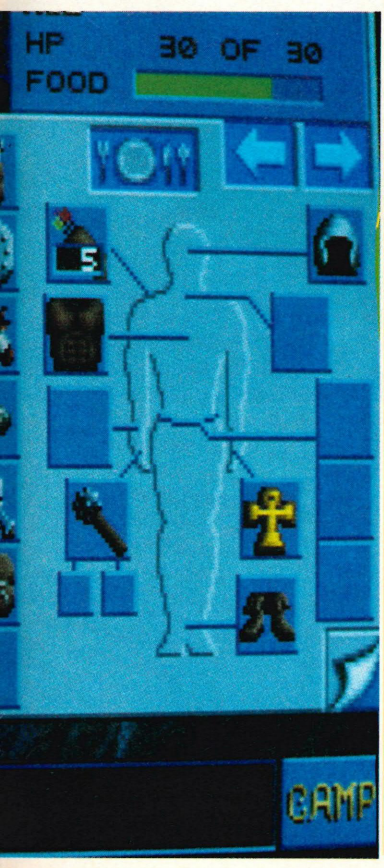
In designing Eye of the Beholder, SSI have tried to marry their standard AD+D role-playing (which I find very dull - combat by numbers and tiny graphics are just so unatmospheric) with attractive presentation and easy handling. What they have come up with is a game that is exciting and instantly engrossing, even to people who would never have touched an RPG before.

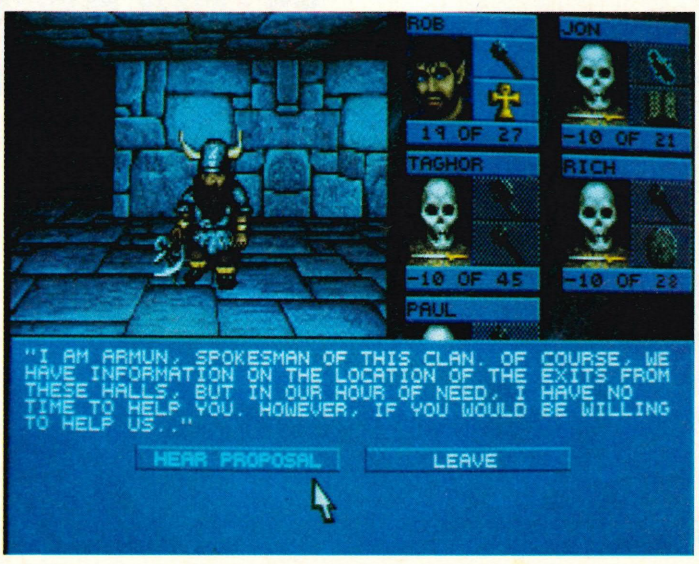
Comparisons with Dungeon Master are inevitable, but I feel that Eye of the Beholder is just as good, if not slightly better than DM. While it doesn't have originality on its side, it has increased character interaction, the added interest of sub-quests, a slightly more flexible control system.

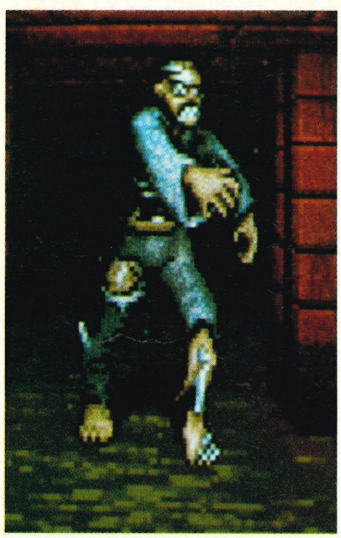
Now all that remains is for FTL to top this, and for purely selfish reasons, I just hope they do...

PAUL GLANCEY

Food is all important in this game. Here's Rob who's already cornered the market in Iron rations.

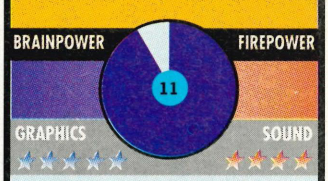






PCL VERDICT

Dungeon Master with extra bits. Superb atmosphere and action make this wonderful role-playing game appealing to anyone, not just adventure lovers.



On a 386 with VGA, ADLIB and hard drive, this is a stunner. A little slow on my Amstrad 2086 and it doesn't detect the Amstrad mouse buttons, forcing you to use unwieldy key controls

★★★★★

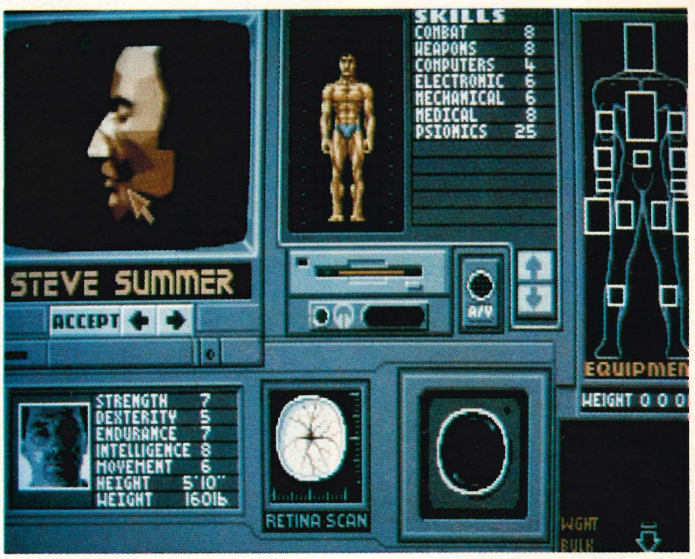
CORPORAT

Core Design`s first PC release as a stand-alone publisher, Corporation is a massive futuristic space opera set within the dark confines of an overrun conglomerate tower. A brave departure for a company who, in the past, had built up a credible reputation for quality and undeniably cute platform romps, such as Rick Dangerous and its sequel, and for similarly cute conversion work as seen in Dynamite Dux and Action Fighter, Corporation takes the player away from such platform-orientated classics and into the dangerous world o f a fast-moving solid 3D play area. Devised and written by programming veterans Kevin Bulmer and Richard Costello whose career can b e traced back to the (then) impressive Gauntlet and Gauntlet II conversions, before taking on the never-released Ramrod for Gremlin, Corporation is twenty-two levels of alien-filled tower-block, and your job is to clear the building of its mutant occupants.

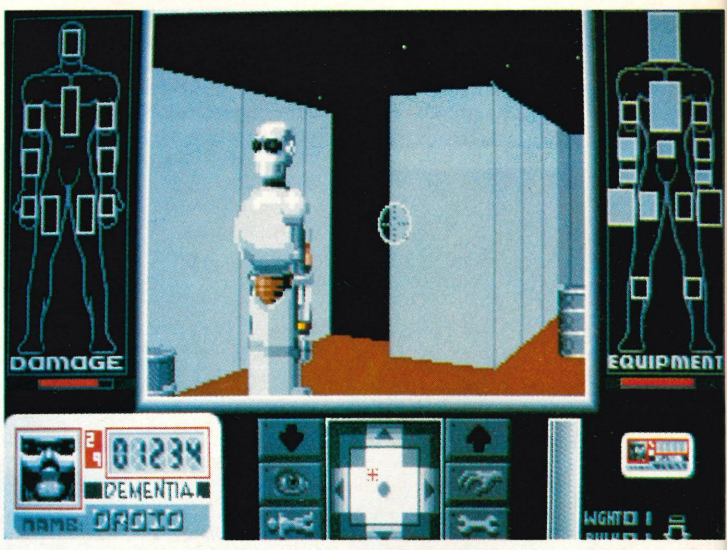
For years, the UCC Corporation had been at the forefront of genetic design and cybernetic testing and had been supplying the military with a series of powerful and practically indestructible creatures for nigh-on twenty years. So it was only natural that, when the normally bustling company went surprisingly quiet, and no word or contact could be found within the building or its surrounding areas, the governing bodies got a little twitchy and sent a team to investigate. This team, known within government circles as the ZODIAC Squad, are a specialist undercover unit who specialise in getting to the bottom of anything - no matter what stones they turn along the way. As can be expected, the player is cast as the lead member of this elite team, and using the technically-stunning equipment that goes with the job, must recce the building and find out what exactly is going on.

On loading the game, a short introductory sequence sets the scene with the ominous UCC tower block lit up by numerous flashes of lightning and suitably spooky thunderclaps. A quick press of the spacebar skips this scene-setter, and the game then begins. Before you can enter the building, one of the ZODIAC members must be selected for duty, and to add a nice personal touch to the proceedings, by sending Core a photo of yourself, they will send back a personalised edition, with you as the central hero - complete with digitised snapshot! Egos aside, though, this is where the real action begins. The game area is located within a central window, and the eerie corridors of the UCC complex are shown in solid 3D with numerous sprite-based objects and devices breaking up the spacious area. In addition, no ZODIAC member is fit for duty unless he is suitably kitted out, and the assorted utilities your suit provides are located in icon form around the perimeter of the screen and can be selected using the mouse whenever required. Likewise, any movements are made from this area, and the agent can be made to run, jump, crawl and sidle along walls via an extremely easy-to-use system.

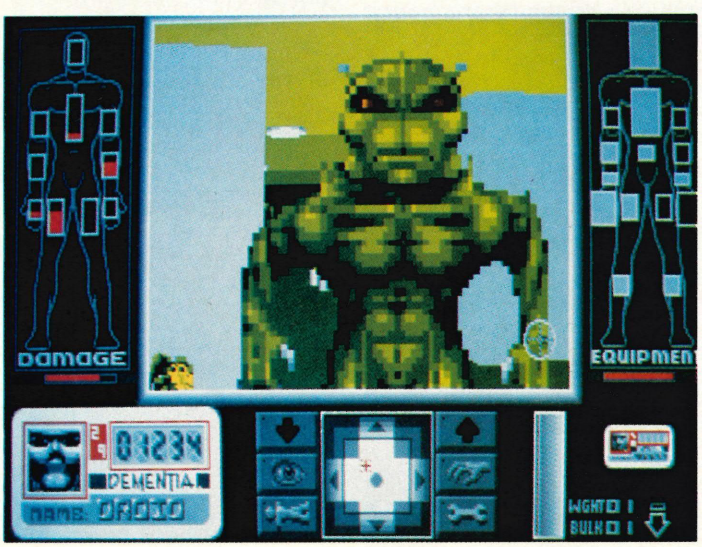
Most of the suit's objects come into play later in the game, and the basic items are a jet-pack, night and infra-red vision, and a series of weapons. This may sound like overkill, but Core have crammed so many traps and creatures in the tower's twenty-two floors, that I guarantee that you'll need every one of them. Among the traps that a good ZODIAC member must avoid are invisible light beam trip switches which set off alarms and bring crab-like robots scuttling towards you when passed through, and assorted repair drones which, if given the opportunity, attach themselves to your face in a manner



The game opens and the player is invited to select his character from the ones on offer. Core are offering a service where, by sending a photo of yourself, the game can be tailored to your individual needs, complete with your own 3D image.

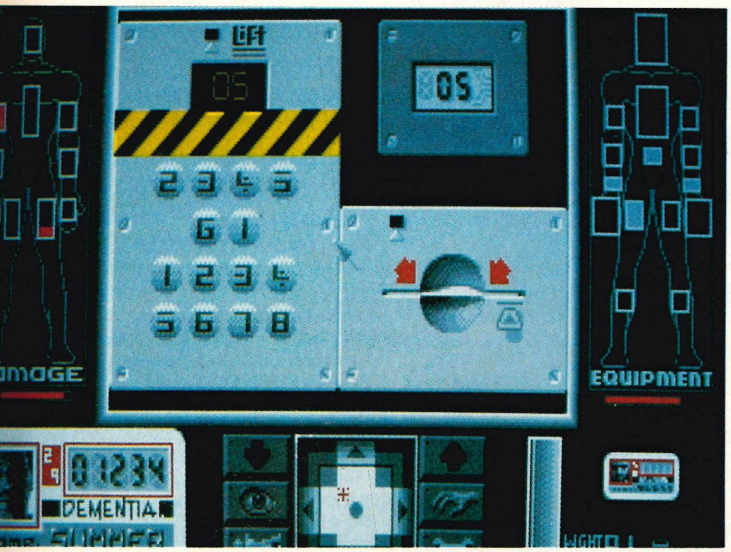


These robots use a punching action as a deterrent, but can be killed using a mat made up of a series of chips and diodes which, when placed on the floor, shorts out the droid's functions and disable it.



The lizards bash away at you repeatedly until shot, and their many hits drain away your character's strength and, unless they are killed, eventually kill them.

TION



Before access to certain levels is granted, a passcode is required. Once the electronic lock-pick has been found this section is a piece of cake, but until that each lock must be worked out using trial and error.

similar to the face hugger parasite from the Alien series s of films. For the most part, these dangers can be taken out with a quick blast from your gun, but should they breach your formidable defences , the chances are you'll end up in prison and will have to trust your lock-picking skills before you are free to roam the building again - and this time, the enemy will be more vigilant.

Corporation's scenario ties in extremely well with the game's atmosphere, and when the game's manual informs you that the robots who have seized control of the building have been doing a few experiments of their own, the dark and claustrophobic atmosphere will have you wondering what lurks around the next corner. Actually, for the most part, the creatures that attack are a fairly wimpy bunch. A few wheel-based droids scoot towards you and pummel away until they are killed and some of the more impressive monsters turn out to be holograms placed there to keep out intruders, but when you do come up against t one of the recently-brewed creatures (which are, in fact, the lizard that adorns the game's box artwork), there is a nice feeling of achievement - which doubles when you finally kill it.

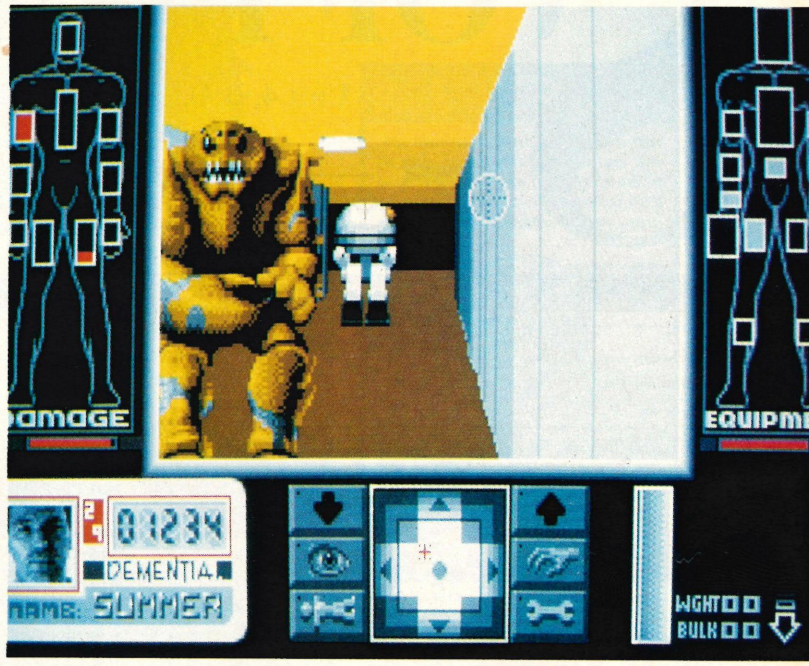
Corporation is a well rounded game which, whilst not all of the twenty-two levels are used, is still sufficiently choc-a-bloc to hold the player's attention. The many options and features contained within its multi-faceted gameplay add to the game's atmosphere immensely, and create a neat futuristic feel. In addition, small features, such as the numeric door locks and the assorted weaponry that can be used to kill off the attacking droids, add even more to the variety, rounding off an excellent product. It doesn't have the longevity of, say, FTL's Dungeon Master of U.S. Gold's Eye Of The Beholder, but Corporation is easy to get into and the perfect entry to the much-touted 3D genre.

■ **Steve Merrett**

Core
(0332) 297797

£29.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✓
CGA	✗	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✗
Mouse	✓	Joystick	✗
Roland	✓	AdLib	✓



That crustacean-like creature is, in fact, a hologram although the droid behind it is real. The hologram's are operated by a small transmitter located within a small alcove, and can be taken out with a shot to their generator, although they are best left alone.



PCL VERDICT

Corporation combines RPG and arcade gameplay perfectly and eases the casual player into its massive 3D play area. The 3D is fast and smooth. It won't last you as long as Eye Of The Beholder, but you'll have fun beating it. Brilliant.



Despite the impressive speed of the 3D, you really ought to see this on a more powerful machine. Hard disk definitely recommended.

etc... Senile Dementia

Dementia comprise of veteran coders, Kevin Bulmer and Richard Costello. whose past hits include the aforementioned conversions of Gauntlet for U.S. Gold and Galaxy Force for Activision. In addition, both Bulmer and Costello were the main men behind Probe's conversion of Golden Axe for Virgin. The PC version of Corporation is considerably faster than that of the Amiga and ST versions and the PC also allowed Dementia to speed up the game's update and incorporate more aliens within a larger area. When compared with its Amiga counterpart, PC Corporation is a much faster game, and benefits immensely from this and, as a result, slightly more playable. Corporation began life as a series of storyboards presented to Core by Kevin and Richard, and the feasibility of the project was worked from there. With the Amiga and ST versions out of the way, work then began on the PC version a machine which Core supremo, Jeremy Smith, admits the game is 'most suited to'. The conversion took roughly four months and the results, as you can see, take the game one logical step further.

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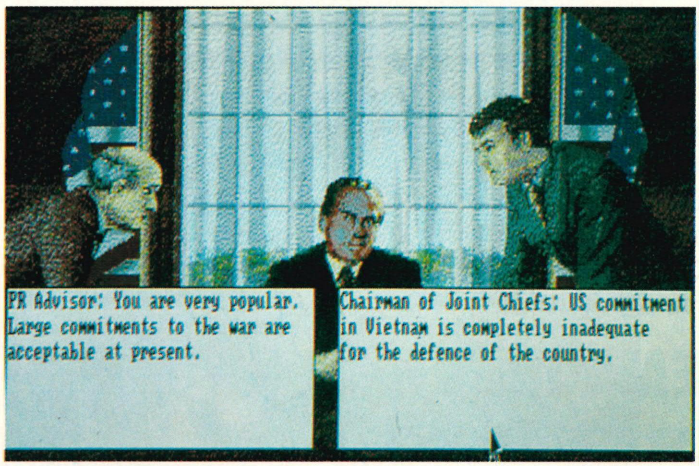
Funny how American games developers tend to avoid the Vietnam War, lucky us Brits are around to remind them. First there was Platoon, then Lost Patrol and now, after four key-tapping years, Imperium author Matthew Stibbe has finally produced 'Nam.

To make this one of the most realistic games available, photographs from the conflict are used and digitised on screen. Photographer Tim Page sustained many serious injuries in his quest to capture poignant images from the Vietnam War. This simulation gives you the opportunity to see some of the results in pixel-form.

'Nam is an historically-accurate strategy wargame with you sitting in the most powerful chair America has to offer. As President of the United States and Commander-in-Chief, you control the course of the conflict from the relative sanctuary of your Oval Office in the White House.

This is not a game that can be played within seconds of loading. First you will have to do some research. Thanks to Domark, all you need is inside the box. The manual is detailed and comprehensive, explaining which tactics should be used, historical background and armed unit information. After a thorough read, it's time to pull the A2 map out of the box and dig-in.

You're sent back in time to the year 1965 to test your political and military skills. Any action you use could alter the course of war or even rewrite the history books. You must choose your tactics – is it going to be the very slow but positive approach or just send the troops in and kick-ass? Whichever you choose you have to remember it's not just a military battle but also a political one. Your two main objectives are to prevent South Vietnam falling to communist power while keeping the polls high back at home, thus remaining President of the United States.



The quality of the digitised graphics leave a lot to be desired.

You can either battle through the war from start to finish or select one of the scenarios. The first is based around the infamous Tet Offensive. In 1968, the Viet Cong (VC) communists started a nationwide revolution. You must stop them holding the towns and change peoples minds about an almost certain failure by US troops. At the turning point of war you have to hold the towns yourself as the communists try to retake the South.

During the next scenario, Khe Sanh is being overrun by the North Vietnamese Army (NVA). It is your task to stop the invasion and wipe-out the communist troops. Last, but not least, is the final push towards Saigon in 1975.

When first starting 'Nam, you're shown a picture of the President. On the left lies a pile of newspapers and on the right a series of reports. You may view the newspapers at will, reading about people views and the war itself. Remember that the papers are often misleading. More usefully, you can study the official reports. These give you useful details including troop commitments, air support, withdrawn troops and maps. The map section displays some information about the state of America's involvement in SE Asia.

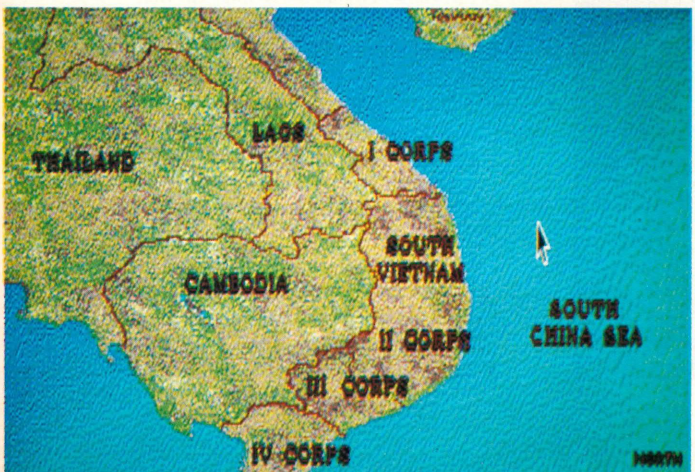
Everything is at your fingertips. If you need to check on the troops in the middle of the battle, you can find complete information on each unit including name, nationality, strength, efficiency and moral of the unit. Control of a platoon is also easy, just select the unit then click on a series of destinations. They will then scout, occupy or attack. On the map report you will see all the troop positions. Just move your units into the desired locations and wait for the results.

'Nam graphics are little more than digitised maps and stats screens. The graphics could have been crisper.

If you like long drawn-out games, 'Nam should fit nicely on your hard disk. I would have preferred to see a few action sequences in there to enliven this 'extremely accurate strategic model'. Goodnight Vietnam.

■ **Rik Haynes**

You have to be a fact freak to get the most out of 'Nam.



Domark
(081) 780 2224

£34.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✓
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✗
Mouse	✓	Joystick	✗
Roland	✗	AdLib	✗

PCL VERDICT

'Nam needs that little something extra to make the grade. Surely Domark could have made 'Nam more fun to play without sacrificing the political and military accuracy of the simulation? You'll have to be a pretty dedicated strategy games-

BRAINPOWER FIREPOWER

6

GRAPHICS SOUND

A 256-colour VGA version would have been nice. The game runs painfully too slowly off floppy disk, so a hard disk is almost essential with EGA/VGA graphics. Mouse recommended.

★★★

WHAT A LOVELY WAR?

- By the end of the 1950s, Vietnam was split into two by a Demilitarised Zone along the 17th Parallel.
- In 1964, the VC communists killed and abducted over 11200 people.
- During 1966, American forces flew 148,000 bombing missions against North Vietnam as part of the 'strategic bombing' campaign Rolling Thunder.
- The Tet Offensive in 1968 saw over 70,000 VC and NVA troops attack 105 of South Vietnam's 292 provincial capitals, district capitals and self-governing cities. The results were horrendous. Nearly 750,000 civilians were made homeless and between 35,000 and 50,000 VC were killed.
- In 1968, the American combat soldier had a 1 in 55 chance of getting killed during his Tour of Duty.
- Napalm, a deadly fuel-air explosive made of a jelly-like petrol substance used by the US Air Force, caused obscene injuries to both VC and Vietnamese civilians alike.
- By 1970, the number of reported drug cases in the US forces had risen to 11,058.
- South Vietnam's government surrenders on April 30, 1975.
- Ten years later, interest in the Vietnam War was rekindled with the release of the '19' single by Paul Hardcastle. A myriad of 'Nam movies followed including Oliver Stone's Platoon and Born on the Fourth of July staring Tom Cruise.
- The war still isn't over for many Vietnam Vets in the USA. The phrase Post Traumatic Stress Disorder was used to describe their difficulties readjusting to civilian life. This often resulted in alcohol abuse, violent crime and even suicide.
- The final legacy of the Vietnam War is the deformed people left over from America's indiscriminate spraying of the Agent Orange defoliant.

QED

Lost in Lemmings? Finding the Savage Empire too wild? Then look no further - within the pages of QED we offer solace for the lost and weary - and you help clue other people in too by sending your cheats, hints, tips and solutions to QED, PC Leisure, Priory Court, 30–32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON EC1R 3AU. The sender of the best bunch of tips will receive £100 worth of PC games. (But please state your hardware requirements)

HELP OFFERED

TURTLE TROUBLE

Here's a few cheats for; Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Licence To Kill and Ultima VI.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

If Rocksteady and April don't appear on your version of this game. Follow and kill the Mousers and you get 5 flies. Kill the bottom 3 flies then walk to the block. One of the flies will then touch a block and return overhead. Wait until it completely goes off the screen then jump over the block and chase the fly, which if it is timed right, the fly will have gone into the Bebop room. There should be no Bebop. Then jump up to the doorway! On the Swimming pool level, if you spin jump into the ceiling , you should be transported from that level to any level from 3-6.

LICENCE to KILL (2nd level)

On foot Lose all your bullets, killing men until one leaves a round of ammunition. When you've lost your bullets, collect the round of ammunition and it shouldn't appear on your status. You should now have unlimited bullets.

ULTIMA VI

First of all talk to LOLO. Type SPAM (enter) 3 times. Then type HUMBUG (enter). You should now be able to change your stats and items!!

Nicholas Grains, Hants SO5 5JJ.

LEMMINGS

I have found the codes for the first three level of the new game called Lemmings. OK.

For level two you need:

OHPVMXDIIR.

To get to level three you need:

LPVMXDGJIO.

To get to level four you need:

PVMXDOLKIX.

John Carter, Soutbourne, Hants PO10 8LT.

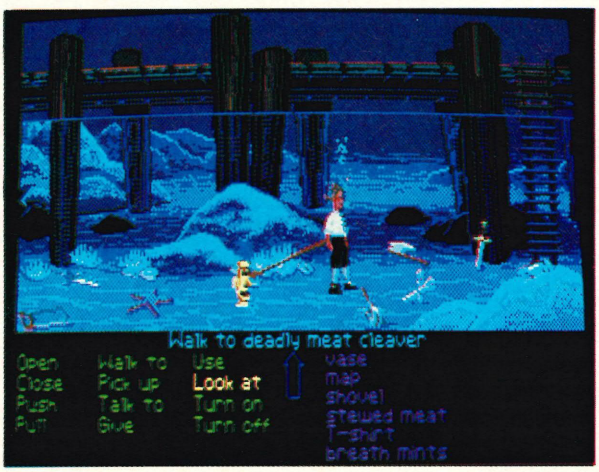
LEISURE SUIT (STRAIGHT IN) LARRY

For the benefit of those people out there who (like myself) get bored stiff answering the questions at the beginning of Sierra's Marvellous Leisure Suit Larry, after typing in your age and your PC sets you your first problem, just hit ALT and then X. You can now start your quest into Sierra's World!

Also, when the game has started, hit ALT and D, the game will give you its version number. Then if you type TP it will ask you what room you like. The highest being 45, there are some Unknown Logics in there which quit the game if you type in their room number, but when you can bypass the questions that doesn't really matter does it?

P.S. Does anyone out there know how to stop Sierra's King Quest 3 from crashing when you cast the sleep spell on the ship?

James Howlett, Chingford, London E4 6PN.



MONKEY ISLAND

It seems from the letters in QED that some people are getting stuck on Monkey Island. I will be able to help them because I've completed it.

To get past the cannibals you need to get all the bananas and give them to the monkey. You need 5 bananas to get him to follow you to the monkeys where you pull the nose on the tottom pole. Then you let go of it and the monkey should pull it letting you go in and get the smallest statue which you give to the cannibals. Then you go in the prison and get the banana pickers and come out.

I can also help with the following games: Space Quests I, II and III, Police Quest I and Leisure Suit Larry I.

Stephen McCarthy, Guildford, Surrey GU2 5QW.

SECRET OF MONKEY ISLANDS

In reply to the people who have asked for help in finding the Sword Master of Melee Island in Lucasfilm's fab game The Secret of Monkey Island all you have to do is go to the clearing, go north to the yellow plants, then go east, east, west then up. Push the sign then go east across the bridge to the Swordmaster. I hope this will help PC Leisure readers who are stuck on this part of the game.

Tom Barnes, Herts.

MONKEY SEE

I'm writing in concerning two letters of help about Monkey Island. The Swordmaster is in the woods near the treasure. If you keep on wandering about, you should find a sign, look at the sign and a bridge will form. Walk over the bridge and she is by her house. To drug the dogs you need the yellow petals, also from the woods, use it with the hunk of meat then give it to the dogs and they will fall asleep. Olly, Bristol BS20 8BG.

I've some help for Omar Nairuddin who wrote in to say he was stuck playing The Secret of Monkey Island in issue 5. Firstly, to find the Swordmaster you must ask the storekeeper to go and get her, then follow-



ing and he will lead you through the forest to her house. Secondly, to get past the poodles you must get the yellow petals which you can easily find in the second room the forest. You rub it on the meat and then give it to the poodles and it drugs them.

Ralph McFadyen, Havant, Hants PO9 2QU.

Here's the best answer to David Kim's letter in issue 6, who asked for some help with the Origin Adventure Savage Empire - From Kjeld Hojmark-jenson, of Denmark who'll be receiving a £100 bundle of software for his efforts.

SAVAGE EMPIRE

This solution only contains the major quests of the game. I suppose you should be able to find or make the necessary objects. Talk to all the chieftain and suggest them to UNITE.

Pindiro Tribe:

No problems, the chieftain agrees immediately.

Disquiqui Tribe:

TALK to Chafblum and get two bags of Plachta and a Bell. USE Plachta on spear. ATTACK T-REX with spear. USE Bell on T-REX.

Jukari Tribe:

USE Fire Extinguisher on lava stream. You don't have to pass more than one to get to the cave where you GET the hide, collect some diamonds and emeralds and return.

Haakur Tribe:

Make torches (two or three) out of branches and tarred cloth strips. Attack web with torch. GET swords and armor from dead warriors lying around hole. GET Krukk's shield and return it to Grugorr.

Yolaru Tribe:

Get ten Nahuatla swords and bring them to the chieftain. After solving the Haakar quest, buy the number of swords you need for three emeralds each. Get emerald by selling parrot-feathers.

Kurak Tribe:

One of the caves eat of Yolaru village, is a tunnel which leads to the place where the Urali Tribe hides. SAVE before you: USE Plachta on spear, ATTACK T-REX with spear, and pass unharmed. Pass ford and follow riverbank until you come to a cave. Enter, rescue Aiela and kill Darden. Aiela has the giant gem which opens the Kotl city. Bring lots of pinde with you.

Urali Tribe:

Go north to another cave, where you find the statue of Fabozz. USE Camera- and the statue moves back to village.

Barrab Tribe:

Climb the mesa of north Barrab, ATTACK tree with Fire Axe and walk over bridge. Kill flower and take root. Bring back to Balakai.

Sakkhra Tribe:

From Sakkhra caves, go north, use the vines to climb up the ledges and walk east until you stand just above the T-REX. USE two Grenades to kill T-REX with boulder.

Barako Tribe:

The idea is to block the waterfall with the boulder, enter the cave which ends on the gorilla ledge, kill the thing and get the girl, Halisa. But how do you get up to the boulder? Equipped with black staff as weapons against the Myrmidex, I used a rope (=vine) to enter the Myrmidex hole on the ledge northwest of pindora village, walked a long walk south and ended in a room under spider's cave. (SAVE at this place!). But when I climbed the rope, I ended in the middle of nowhere: In a green field, covered with trees and bushes etc. I then walked east southeast until I was above a cave entrance, changed to solo mode and walked my hero north, following the river to its abrupt end. Cross the river and walk south and bomb the boulder. I couldn't find my way back, so I let my hero knock down and woke up in Intanya's hut to continue the adventure. If you have solved this quest in another way, I would be glad to learn about it. I can't believe this to be the correct solution - if it is, I've lost much respect in origin.

Nahuatla Tribe:

USE the giant gem on ancient device. That opens the Kotl city entrance, which is to the 8 transportation plates, on the eastern side. USE the Golden Head and Crystal Brain on golden man. Stand next to the control pane on the left side and shoot it with the Modern Rifle - and then you have to get out! Did you get all the necessary stuff from the city? You have to collect 5 black staffs, the device to show where the black stone is and eventually some Myrmidex gas bombs.

Drum Hill, Tuomaxx:

Let Tuomaxx make the biggest drum, and bring him skin from the Sabertoothed tiger .

Black Stone:

Use Device to find the black stone. Kill Myrmidex queen and break stone with sword. Bring lots of pinde with you.

I hope that's enough to help you finish the game.

Kjeld Hojmark-jenson, Denmark.



HELP WANTED

The PC Leisure Help wanted is here to help. If you can help out any of the lost souls below, then drop a line to them, (using their own name and mark your letter QED Distress Line, PC Leisure, Priory Court, 30–32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON, EC1R 3AU) We will forward your replies to the needy, or publish them if we have the room.

If you can help directly with games then you could become a QED Contact - just drop us a line telling us what games you can help with along with a contact telephone number. Then all those needy souls can get in touch!

QUESTIONING QUESTS

I'm stuck on two counts.Kings Quest III and The Adventures of Captain Cosmic. Is there any way at all to skip a bit or somehow get lots of free lives on Captain Cosmic? Is there anybody out there who knows of such a thing? And if that wasn't bad enough , I'm totally lost on KQ 3, all I can do is get to the bottom of the hill and then eventually get robbed by two men. So please help me!! Oh, by the way, is there anyone who has got a PC who has modem and has Microsoft Flight Simulator V40 if there is please say something or write to PC Leisure CONTACTS.

Ewart Scarlett, Halifax, West Yorkshire.

IN THE MIDDLE OF MIDWINTER

I have been playing the Midwinter game since November. Could you give me cheats or tips to help me to complete the game. I can't get PC Leisure in the shops in my area so there's no use in printing the tips or cheats in the next copy of PC Leisure. And is it possible to buy PC Leisure by post? (By subscription you can – see pages 44–45 if you've managed to find a copy we do sell in rather large newsagents - even in Wales..)

Rhodri Llewelyn, Gwynedd LL57 2YG

FIGHTER BOMBER

Having recently acquired Fighter Bomber by Activision I have attempted the first mission. After destroying the target, I returned to base as instructed. What do I do now? Only Shift Esc and Shift E get me out of the plane, but both these cause me to fail the mission.

Andrew Stead, Lancs BLO 9RU.

HELP POLICE!

I'm having trouble with Police Quest 1, the part after the second briefing when you are driving along and a light blue late model Cadillac comes along, dispatches radios to you, and you chase the car. I can make the car pull over but after this I can't get any further, and everytime I try to arrest him, he kills me! What do I do!!!

Salim Vanak, Leictershire, LE3 2GE.

NEVER ENDING STORY

Having bought Bards Tale III and having developed some quite powerful characters, I still have one problem that I think is stopping me accessing the next level. After replying Chaos to the priest in the temple and teleporting past the magic mouth that asks me for the rhyming word, I was presented with this riddle: " I'm nothing. I make nothing. Yet my opposite creates me even as I destroy it. What am I?" Teleporting past this has no result as a large wall is still in the way! Can anybody help with this or any other problem that they may have overcome?

Andrew Armstrong, Scotland IV15 9PE.

QUEST FOR CLUES

I have recently bought the superbly graphical Kings Quest 5 and have so far found it absolutely brilliant, but there is one problem and that is I can't get past the snake and get into the mountains, therefore I have no idea what I need when I arrive there. So far I haven't found a home for the stick, the Golden needle, the coin or the fish, but what else do I need to carry with me to the mountains.

James Phillips, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3AU.

LEGEND OF FEARHILL

I recently bought Legend of Fearghill by Rainbow Arts and on starting the game, headed straight for the Dwarves Mines. I've descended about five levels (I assume I'm supposed to) but have reached a large room where wherever I move to, the party is killed by various traps. I've tried all I can think of but with no joy. Any suggestions?

S.A. Barnard, Stretford, Manchester M32 8PS.

FUTURE 88

8

WARS

AT THE OFFICE

Wait for the introductory sequence to finish. When your boss has finished shouting at you and gone, pick up the empty bucket. Walk to the control box and examine it. You see a red and a green button. Press the red button, and the motor starts and lifts you up to the next floor. Go to the window that your boss didn't close. Open it so that you can climb into the building. Take the plastic bag from the waste basket. Walk around on the carpet until you feel something under your feet then (operate carpet) to get the key. Walk to the toilet and open the cupboard. Get the insecticide out of the cupboard. Open the door to the WC and take the flag on the floor. When you've got the flag, go to the sink and fill the bucket with water. When you have filled the bucket go back into the first room. Put the full bucket on the boss's door. Open the door on your right and the boss will come out just to get the bucket full of water on his head. In the mean time you slip through the door you just opened. Examine the desk drawer and take the paper. On your right and to the left there is a bookcase with 4 cupboards at the bottom and 4 at the top, if you unlock cupboard number 3 from the map you will find a typewriter. Examine the typewriter and you will get a 5 digit code. Write it down because you will need it later. Get the map and examine it. Get a copy of it in the upper left hand corner. Find the little hole in the map. Put the flag you got into the hole. The map on the wall will slide open. Behind it there is a passage. Enter the passage. The roof will move down to crush you like a bug. Now did you write down the 5 digit code? because you need it now. There is one door in the room and to the right there's a keypad. Examine keypad. You can see the keypad on the screen. Operate one (1) digit at a time. If the code is 40315 ...You need to do it like this. Operate 4 on the keypad operate 0 on the keypad operate 3 on the keypad operate 1 on the keypad operate 5 on the keypad OPERATE every time you press a key on the keypad. If you are fast enough the roof will move up and the door will open so you can continue your quest. Walk through the door. Turn right. Enter a room with a big machine in the centre. Examine it. Find out that it is a photocopier. There's an opening in it, if you're smart you will put your paper in the opening and press the green button on the photocopier. Press the red button, if it says 'nothing happened', just press it again and again until you get a document out. The alarm goes off. Get the document and go into the transporter (it has a white circle on the floor.) Watch the guard!

The Swamp & The Village

You are in the middle of a swamp. Walk to the left, but beware if you walk outside the GREEN land. Walk over to the mosquitoes. Stop before you enter the swarm. Use the insecticide and the swarm will disappear. Go to the left and when you are near the tree on the left hand side of the screen, you will see a blink on the ground. Examine the ground. Pick up the pendant. Go left, enter the lakeside. Go right over to the tree in the upper left corner. Examine the tree-foot. Examine the hole. Take the rope. Climb the tree and try to use the rope on the tree branch. Then you will be able to climb the tree, you were about to fall asleep when a guy enters the screen, he takes his clothes off and jumps in the water. Climb down the tree. Pick up his clothes. Put on the clothes. Enter the village. When you enter the village walk to the chickens and then go left. You will enter a clearing in the wood with a tree in the middle of it. Walk over to the tree and shake it (operate tree). A silver coin falls out of the monks habit that is hanging in the tree. Take the silver coin. Walk to the INN. Open the door. Enter. Give the silver coin to the innkeeper. He will give you some food. While you are eating you listen to the conversation on the other table. When you are finished eating, walk to the castle. Show the pendant to the guard. He will take you to his master. When you are on your way out the guard is sleeping at his post. Take his lance and go back into the woods where you got the silver coin. Use the lance to get the monks habit. Run

The solution...

behind a tree and change into the monks habit. Walk back to the village. Go down. Enter the path that leads to the big wolf. Examine the wolf. You see a glint. Examine the glint. You find out that the wolf is mechanical. Destroy electronic wolf by using water.

IT'S THE WU-LF

Run back to the lakeside. Fill the plastic bag with water. Hurry back to the wolf because the plastic bag is leaking. Throw the plastic bag at the wolf. The wolf will disappear in a flash of light. Go to the monastery. Open the door. Enter the monastery. Follow the monks on their route and when you come to the door on the right, open it and enter, it's the supervisor's room and he'll ask you to get him a cup of chikapok. Leave the room and follow the monks on their route to the door on your left. Open the door and enter. Here you will find a cup. Take the cup and leave the room. Walk with the monks until you reach the door in the middle. Open door. Enter. You find a lot of barrels. Examine the barrels. Find one that is full and fill the cup with wine. Leave the room and go to the supervisors room. Give him the cup. He drinks it and says it's not chikapok I'll get my own.....He drops dead drunk. Examine him and you will find a remote device. Use the remote device on the wooden box under the library. The box opens and you find a magnetic card. Take the card. Go back to the wine cellar. Use remote device on the barrel that is on top of the ladder. You discover a passage behind it. Go through the passage. Enter a lab just like the one behind the map in the office. Here is a glass case with a woman inside and a console. Examine the bottom of the glass case and you will find a gas capsule. Take it. Go to the console. Insert the magnetic card in the console. The glass case will open and Lane will be free. The game goes into a long automatic session here. Show her the pendant so she knows that you are a friend etc. Lane begins to type on the console and then she transports you and herself to her father. Again a long auto sequence and a lot of text to read. After you've read all the text you will be transported to the future together with Lane.

The Year 4315.

You stand in the middle of the ruins of a city. Lane is gone so you have to handle this all by yourself. Walk down to the right corner. Examine the rubble and you will get a blow-torch. Go back to the centre of the screen. Go right to the next screen. Continue right until you're stopped by a wall. Then go up then left. Examine the ground. You see two rubles. Go to the smallest one. Examine it again. You find a box of fuses. Take the box of fuses. Go to the other rubble and remove the earth (operate rubble). You find a manhole. Open the manhole. Enter. Inside the towns sewer system you just follow the ledge until you come to a place where you have to turn left. Then turn right on the same screen. You find a tap on the wall. Fill the blowtorch with gas. Continue your quest. Now you come to the room where a creature is about to eat a woman & her child. Burn the creature with the blowtorch. It will go back into the sewage. The woman and the child are safe. They give you the way to the council. She pulls up a remote device. It opens a hole, so you can climb back to the surface. Back on the surface the hole closes. In front of you there is a building with a door with a camera above it. Enter the door. Use the lance to remove the dirt from the camera. The door opens. Go in. Inside go straight for the newspaper machine. Examine the coin collector. You find a coin. Put the coin in the money-slot, but nothing will happen. Examine the coin collector again. You will get the coin back. Put it back in the money-slot. Now it should work. Get the newspaper. Wait for the train to arrive. Enter the train. You will be transported to the shuttle-port. You go over to the desk and talk to the hostess. She will probably say 'just a minute can't you see I am busy'. Keep talking to her. You will get some info about the price and how you can pay for the flight. But you don't have any money so you have to figure out a way to get on the plane without the inspector stopping you. Look around and you see a TV floating in the air. The TV is turned off. Examine TV. You find out that there are no buttons on it. Go down to the toilet. Examine the box on your left. It's a fuse-box. Examine the fuses. One of the fuses is burned out. Replace it with the one you have. Go back up to the hall. The inspector is watching the TV. Go up the stairs. You will be on your way to PARIS IV. If the guards stops you and ask you for your ticket.....Go back to the toilet and take the fuse out of the fuse-box, and then replace it again. Go back up again and try to go up the stairs. If he stops you again.....Go back to the toilet again and do the same as last time. You're on the way up the stairs and enter the plane.

THE PLANE

The plane takes off. Just wait until you get to PARIS IV. The plane gets attacked by the grughons. You pass out and when you wake up you will be in a small room. Examine the room to find out that there is no escape. But wait what is that on the wall?? An air duct!! Use your key to remove the grille from the air duct. Put the gas capsule in the air duct. Then use the newspaper to block the air duct so the gas doesn't enter the room. After a while the door opens and you go into the other room. You killed the Crughons. Suddenly a screen is lowered from the roof. A voice says 'surrender Grughons we have you in our tractor beam' You've been rescued. But you are tried as a Grughon and found guilty. Lo'Ann rescues you and vouches for your good character. There is a lot of text reading again here. When you have control of the game again you will be transported 68 millions years back in time. Cretaceous. Go down to Lo'ann and you will get an air gun. Follow her to the left. You will be on a ledge looking down on a Grughon ship. Too late !! They've already set the bomb to explode. "Earthlings! Earthlings! "Shoot them!! They have seen you. Now you have to shoot the Grughons with the mouse. This is hard!! and you cannot save the game when you have got this far. When you have shot all the Grughons Lo'ann will be shot by a Grughon that has survived. Shoot him with your air gun . Examine Lo'ann. Find out that she's still alive. Examine her. You find a pill and her pendant. Use the pendant to transport Lo'ann back to the year 4315. After you've done that. Go down to the Grughon's ship. Here you are standing in front of the ship with a dead Grughon under the it. Examine him. Get the magnetic card. Enter the ship. You will be in the control room. Look around and you will see a card reader on the wall next to the door. Put the magnetic card in the card reader. The card reader will light up. Get the card back. Go to the case and operate it. It will open. Take the garment that is on the case. Go to the camera. Put the garment over the camera. Go back to the case. Enter it. Operate the case again. The lid will close. The ship takes off and flies back to the Grughon's space station.

Grughon Space Station.

When you land in the Grughon space station walk to the card reader. Eat the pill. Wait for the guards to enter the room. Go out of the door. Leave the ship. On the hanger floor walk down and hide behind the boxes. Do not get too close to the guards because then they will feel you. This is hard!! And then you will be caught and used as a human guinea pig. When you are behind the boxes Walk to the big box. Examine it, it's open. Operate the box. Enter the box. You will find yourself in a storeroom. Suddenly Albert II will talk to you. He says that you have six minutes to reprogram the master computer. Go to the door. Enter a hallway, once again you need to play by yourself. You have to find the master computer room on the last floor. Go to the console. Insert the magnetic card in the console. Albert II will take over. When he's done go out into the hallway again. Find the medical hangar to escape.

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PACKING MORE PLEASURE INTO PC LEISURE!

Welcome back to the back-door pages! Just in case you missed this section in the last issue, Extended Play is the area of the magazine where, every month, we include both regular and irregular features and items of special interest. This month, we're giving you:

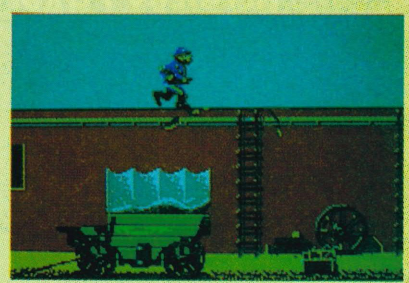
- a selection of budget game reviews. Just how good are the current crop of under-a-tenner titles? Would you be better off buying three budget babies or one big bulldozer of a 3D flight sim? Find out on pages 89 to 90, and we'll be carrying irregular reviews of cheapies in future issues to keep you up to date
- the second part of our series on budget DTP. This month we look at some cheap (well, affordable – no-one likes to be called cheap, eh?) packages for the desktop DIY fan
- a great competition to win a stunning sound system for your PC. We make no apology for running two sound competitions running – good sound makes a critical difference to the enjoyment of games. In fact, scientific research (we kid you not) has determined that, if two people look at the same graphic image and one hears a good soundtrack accompanying it and the other doesn't, the first person will actually perceive the *graphics* (as well as the sound) as being of higher quality. Go VGA, therefore, and be noisy...
- the PC Leisure prize crossword. Win yourself a 5 star game and demonstrate that, when it comes to brains, you're a cut above the average PC Leisure reader – and that's a very deep cut above everyone else!
- our regular look at shareware and public domain software. If you're looking for a game on the cheep cheep cheep, here's your chance to have a flutter
- and, most important of all, the chance to make these pages yours – check out the panel below....

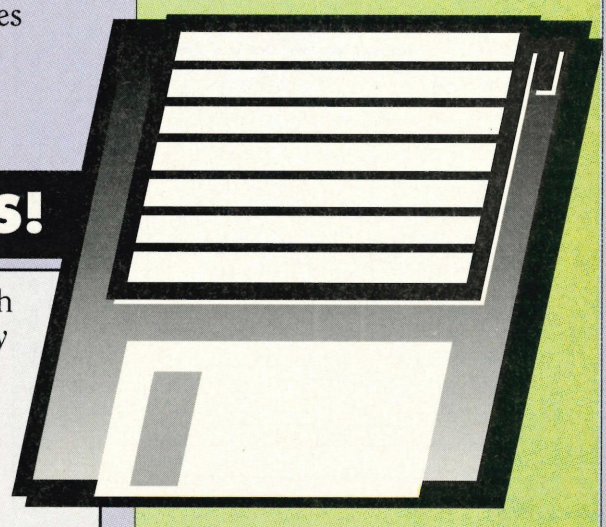
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Right, now we have your undivided attention, let's tell you about the competition. We want to make sure that everyone out there gets the full benefit of our regular column on up–grading your PC so, if you turn back to pages 37–39 and read the article, you should be able to answer the following question.

What speed does a CD sample at?

Armed with this information all you have to do is to phone the number below, and listen to the instructions. Then just tell us the answer to the question (in KHz please) and then leave your name and address. The phone line will be open from the 15th of May for four weeks, after that time, four winners will be chosen and they will receive their sound boards and a free game of their choice from the list published on this page.

If you find that you don't win the competition, then you can always just buy an LPC1 direct from the shops for around £250–260 (inc VAT).

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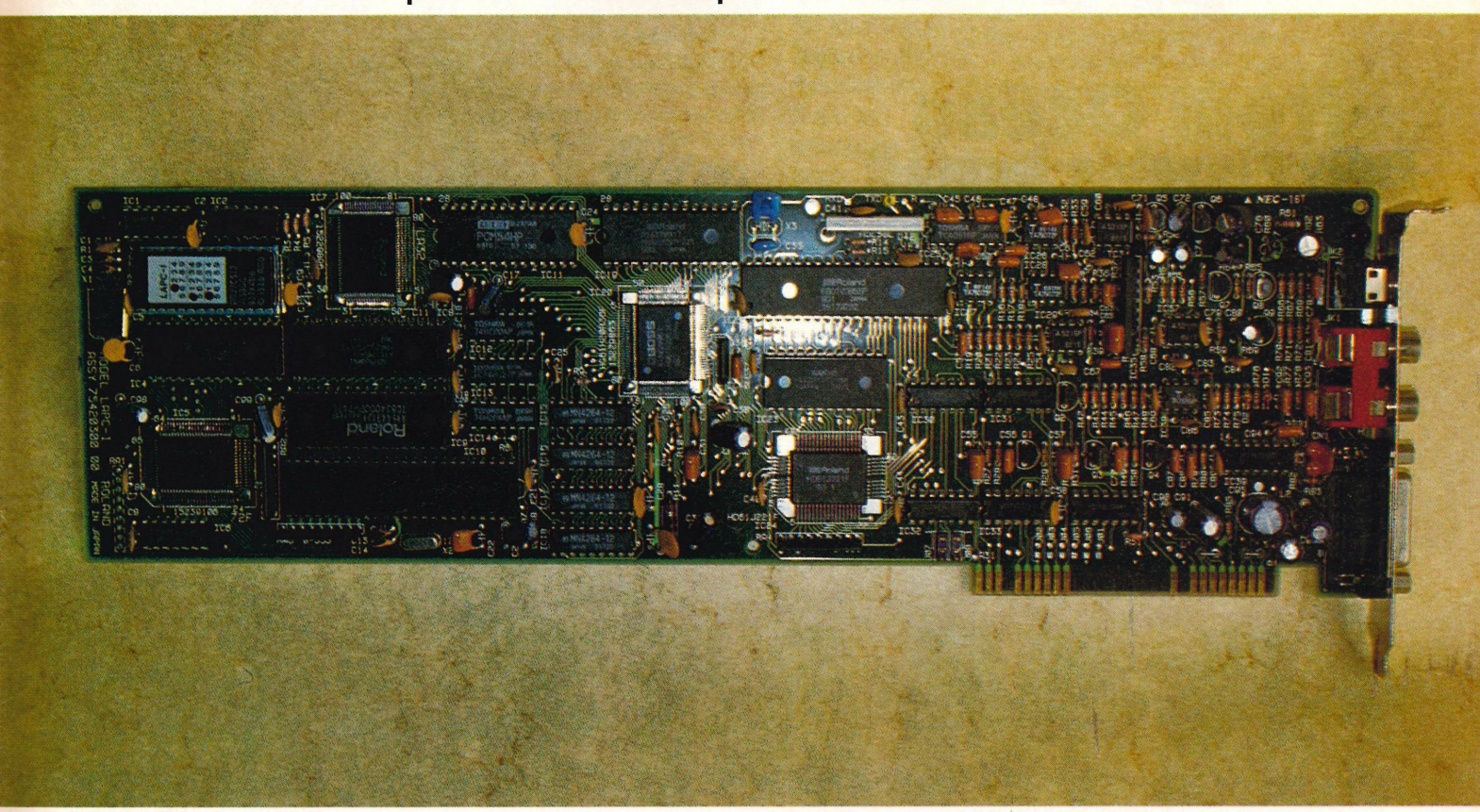
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The winners name will be published in a later issue of PC Leisure. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Employees of EMAP, Sierra UK and their subsidiaries (and friends and relations thereof) are prohibited from entry. Entry into the competition

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First New-Look Issue!

Psygnosis Goes Over The Top With LEMMINGS!



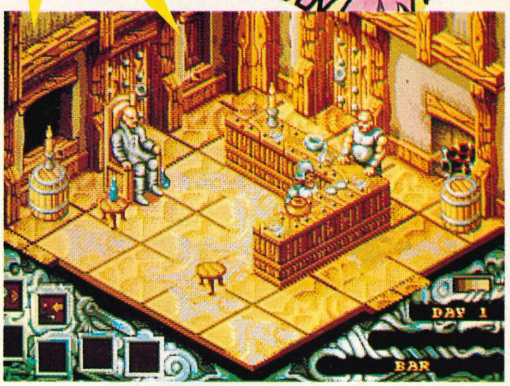
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Fully Playable Demos!

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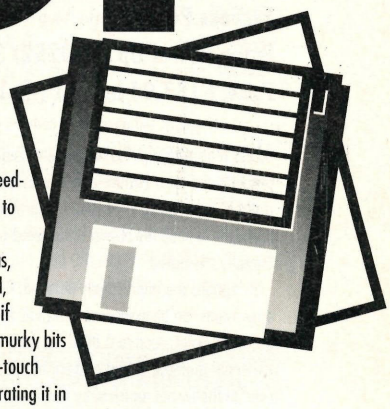
Bulging at the Seams With Fully-Playable Demos of Psygnosis' Lemmings, Core's Chuck Rock, Ocean's Elf and Skull And Crossbones from Domark

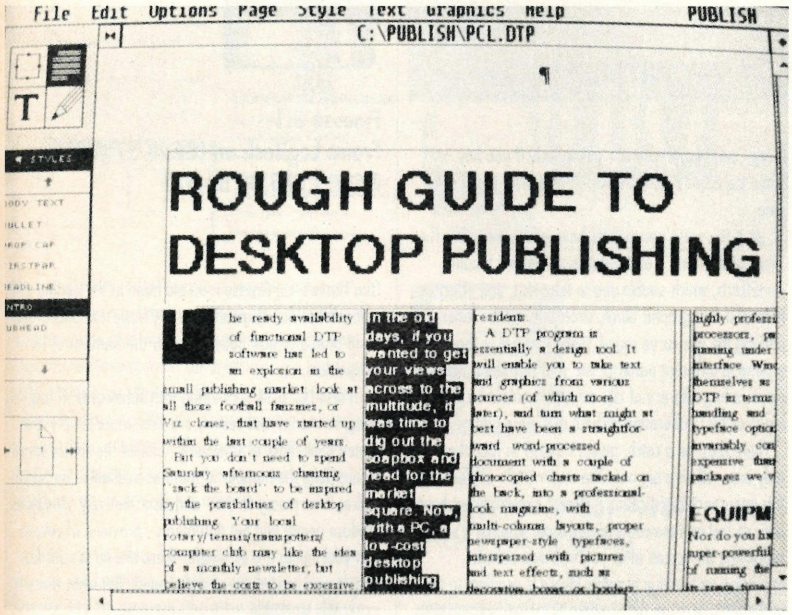
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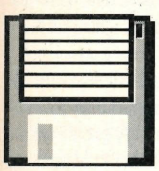
DESKTOP





Timeworks

Last month, we looked at the potential of desktop publishing programs to turn your PC into a productive - and possibly profitable - design and typesetting tool, and promised great things from software packages costing under £160. In this instalment, we look rather more closely at four such programs, chosen for their track record in this field and the features offered for the price.



Timeworks Desktop Publisher
From: GST on (0480) 496789
Price: £131.80 inc VAT (@17.5%)

Timeworks is probably the best known budget DTP program, now selling in version 1.2. It runs under the GEM graphic interface (included with the program), so anyone with an early Amstrad or other PC which comes bundled with GEM should find it intuitively easy to get to grips with.

Once the somewhat convoluted installation process is complete, Timeworks has a pleasing simplicity. Although you only get a couple of typefaces (standard serif and sans serif fonts) in the package, and a not-so-great number of type sizes to choose from as with the others, (unless you have access to a Postscript printer) this is probably all to the good when you're starting out.

The most convincing DTP'd copy is normally fairly restrained when it comes to mixing and matching different typestyles. Manipulating and enhancing your text is done in similar fashion to the PC heavyweight package Ventura. You need to set up paragraph, headline and sub-headline styles to define the look and layout of text; this procedure makes it easy to produce an ordered, unified layout, since it means you can define your style and simply click on all the relevant areas to see it take effect. Timeworks is also comparatively fast. The screen redraws promptly, making it a reasonably painless process to go back over your work to make small or experimental changes.

Your graphics can be brought into the program from most of the popular PC packages around, and GEM's own art tools - although unfortunately, there's no clip-art supplied with it (clip-art libraries are however, available from GST). You can also create your own simple line art (steady hand needed) within Timeworks.

Once you have your graphic on-screen, it can be sized to fit the space needed, or cropped to get rid of any unwanted areas, and also edited, pixel by pixel, if there are any murky bits you want to re-touch before incorporating it in your text

.

THE LAST WORD

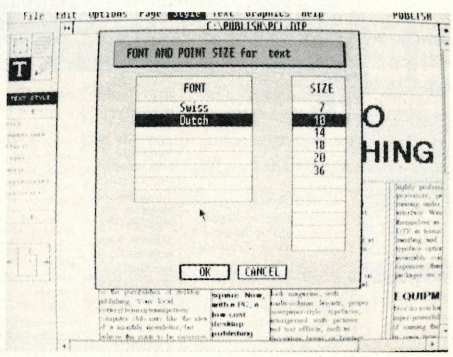
Timeworks is an excellent entry-level program. Interestingly, there is an even more basic version, Timeworks Lite, available from GST for just £50, and a more 'serious' package, DeskPress at £280. Having looked at both, I'd say Timeworks Publisher strikes the best balance between price, performance and ease of use. Finally, Timeworks has a big advantage over the other packages in this review, in that it will run on more lowly-configured PCs - 512K and two floppies. With all the attendant disk-swapping and loss of speed, this configuration is hardly to be recommended, but if you have no choice, this is the one to go for.

Letters or reports on a regular basis (where its style sheets would make the layout of each edition progressively simpler and therefore speedier to implement).

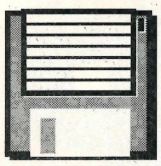
Good for: 'standard' letters and newsletters - you can import images from a variety of well-known picture files and them store them on pre-formatted pages.

Not suitable for: wacky text effects, creating logos or eye-catching fly-sheets. There is a limit on font sizes for 640K machines.

Timeworks



DILEMMA

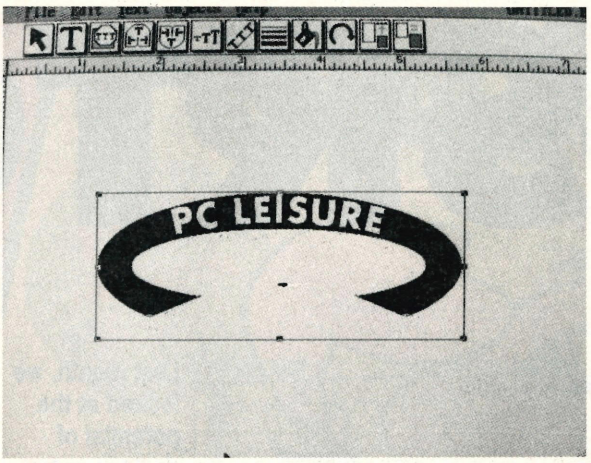


Express Publisher
From: Power Up on (0252) 376000
Price: £187.94 inc VAT (@ 17.5%)

Of the four programs looked at here, Express Publisher is probably the most feature-rich. It uses many of the principles of much more expensive DTP products, and also manages to keep the screen uncluttered and the menus logically structured.

Its options are impressively detailed. Page and column dimensions can be measured in inches, millimetres or picas and points, and to 0.0001 accuracy in each - a precision not matched in any of the other programs here (and probably not matched by the operator or the output on paper either, come to think of it).

It is compatible with more word processor formats than the others, will also take ASCII, boasts a wealth of graphic file formats and has more font and size options, using Compugraphic fonts - particularly if you buy it while the display-fonts-thrown-in-free offer is still running.



Express Publisher

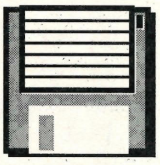
As if this wasn't enough to have you redesigning The Times at a stroke, it also includes a separate module, TextEffects, which enable you to take text, and effectively treat it as a graphic block, stretching out the letters, making the line curve round, highlighting it or the background in different patterns, etc. And with the program comes a large library of clip-art, so you could be producing your first publication without any more outlay.

There must be a catch, mustn't there? In fact, there's only one - albeit a big one. The major trade-off for all this apparent sophistication is speed. Express is nowhere near as fast as Timeworks in any area, whether it's redrawing the screen after you've made changes, importing and editing graphics (there is needless to say, an impressive range of cropping, sizing and editing tools for graphics), printing the thing at the end, or even simply calling up options from the menus.

Of course, if you have a Compaq 33MHz PC, this won't be a problem, but those of us with less powerful systems can alleviate the tedium by compiling text, graphics, headlines, captions and so on, in separate files, getting the size and appearance right in smaller chunks (less processing each time the program recalculates) before pasting into the final document.

Good for: producing a variety of different types of publications - from text-based reports to graphic-based posters or logos. If you think you might eventually want to take DTP quite seriously, it would be no bad program to start off with to give you a feel for DTP capabilities.

Not suitable for: people with a fairly basic (slow) PC; you might in the long term be better off with one of the faster GEM-based packages.



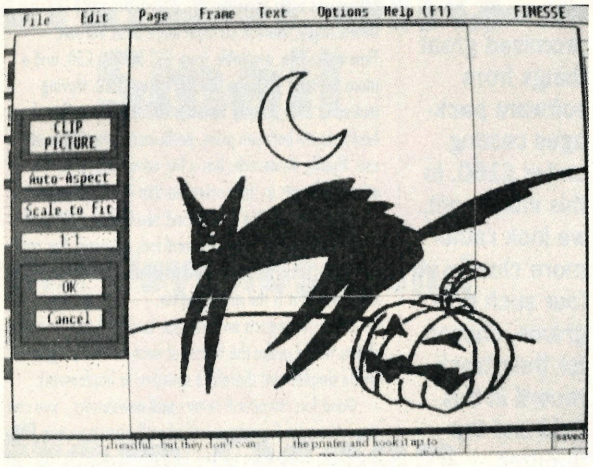
Finesse 3.1
From: Logitech on (0753 37222)
Price: £175.08 inc VAT

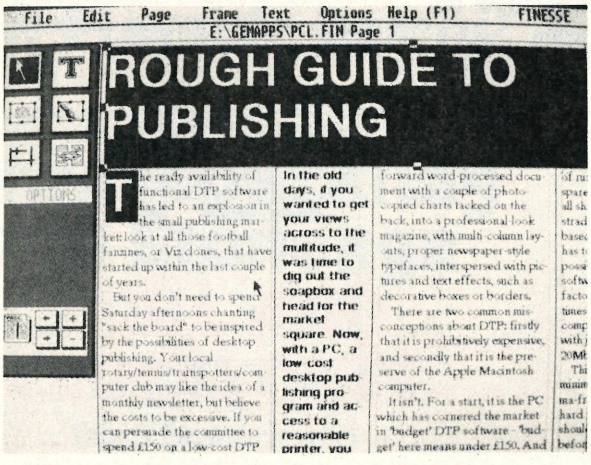
Like Timeworks, Finesse is an old hand at the budget DTP game. What was originally a pretty basic text plus graphics co-ordinator now boasts most of the features of its competitors.

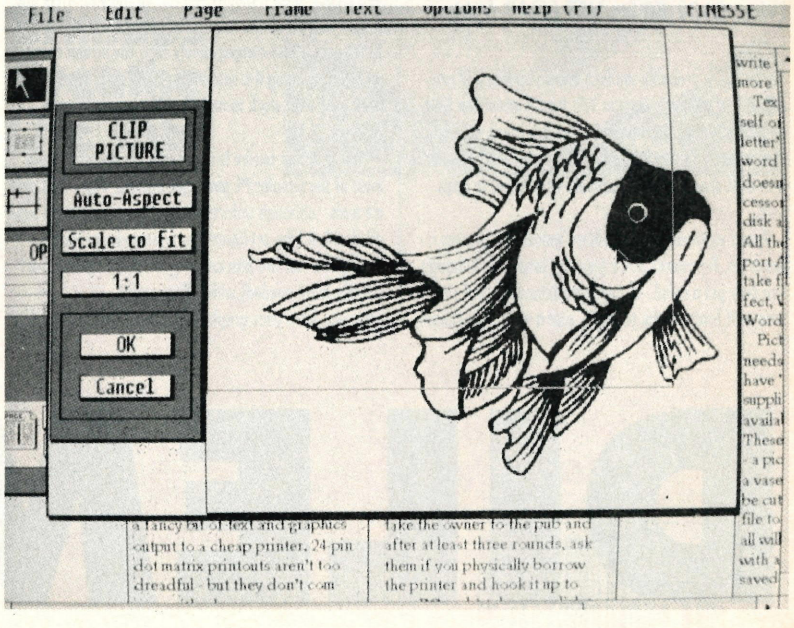
It also has GEM in common with Timeworks. If anything, its menus and options are even more simply presented than those of Timeworks; indeed the rather spare menus belie the number of features available. Simplicity makes it very easy to use - and also relatively speedy to produce neatly laid out documents - provided of course that your needs are as simple. There are no special text effects, and limited use of style sheets. But what there is extremely workable.

New users might find the font manipulation puzzling. As a default, you'll find the two basic faces (serif and sans serif - virtually identical to the Timeworks offerings) in six basic sizes between 7pt and 36pt. Other faces and sizes are available with the standard program, but they must be installed separately, outside the program itself. To install a single font in three sizes - say, 48pt, 60pt and 72pt, if you want to use headlines - will occupy your PC for about an hour, while it painstakingly goes through the bitmapping procedure needed to scale and define each character, and each of these font files will take up about 30K on your hard disk.

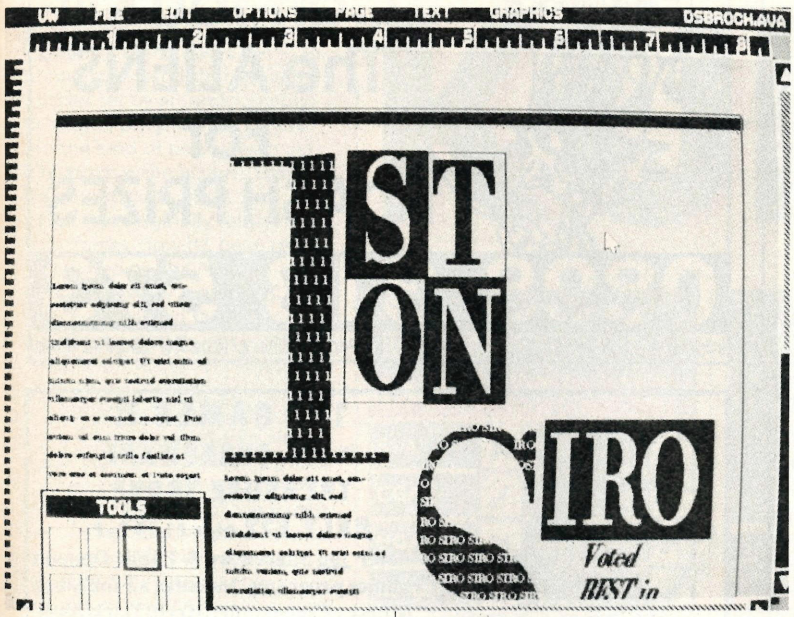
This means that you do need to have a pretty exact







(top) Curvy text in Express Publisher (middle) Whacky graphics in Finesse (bottom) Finesse laying out last month's article (right) Importing and modifing graphics in Finesse



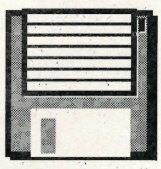
Avagio

idea of which typesizes you need for your document before you plunge into it, since you can't play around with typesizes until you get exactly the one you want. Experienced layout artists can measure up a text frame and calculate exactly which font size will fit; but then, people who buy budget DTP programs aren't expected to be experienced layout artists. However, the manual (which by the way, Logitech, has a god-awful index) explains very clearly what is needed.

What Finesse does have that the others don't is that you can use Logitech's ScanMan scanner to scan images directly into the program (the other programs will of course take scanned images if they are saved in a compatible graphics format). Indeed, Finesse would like you to do this since it saves its best graphics editing features, such as retouching and rotating images, for use with the scanner.

Good for: simple layouts, using a select number of different typestyles. It's fast enough to cope with long articles without the screen refresh becoming boringly slow.

Not suited for: more complex layouts requiring lots of special effects.

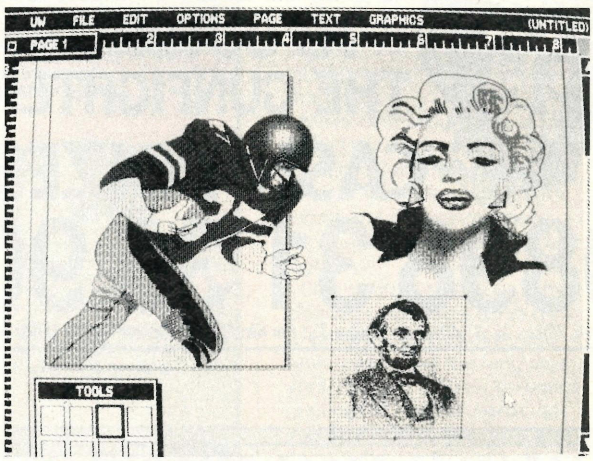


Avagio
From: LST on (0386) 792617
Price: £140.94 inc VAT

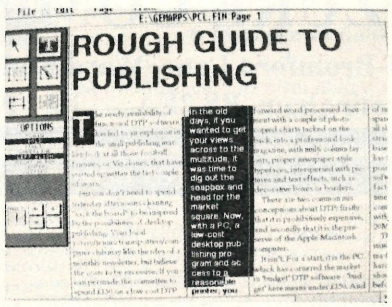
Avagio is positively overloaded with features, with text manipulation and font effects tools would put many a program at four times the price to shame. These font effects come under the merry moniker of 'Mingle'. Basically they enable you to use Avagio's 26 different fill patterns not only in boxes, but in text: just about anywhere within individual characters. Then you can mix and match, bring one set of effects forward to overlay another, crop here, stretch the shape of a character there, constrict it in another place.

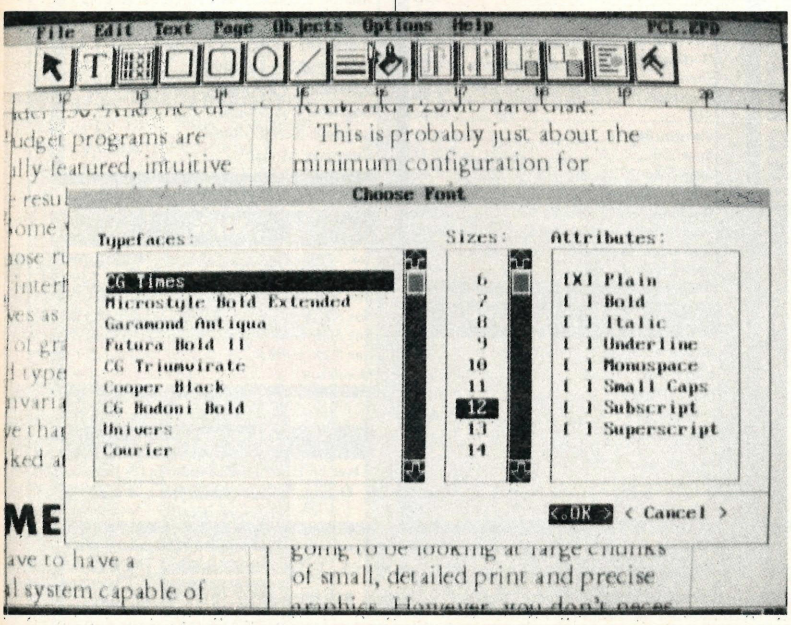
It's an amazingly powerful tool. In fact, it's overpowering. First you need to understand the terms outline, background, fill pattern, etc, as Avagio uses them. Then you need to get to grips with selecting whether particular areas should be "clear", "inverse", "black" or "white", and what effect this will have on your work. And unlike Express Publisher, where the TextEffects are kept away from the main menus, Mingle tools are slap-bang in the middle of font dialogue boxes, making it easy to get trapped into Mingling without realising it.

Leaving aside Mingle, the basic text permutations are excellent. There's a good set of four fonts supplied with the program (three serif, one sans serif), each available in any size up to 500pts - unrivalled by any of the others. The clip-art library supplied is also the best of the lot, with some detailed pictures rather than just basic logo-style images. Furthermore, the output generated is of a distinctly higher quality than any of the others; on a dot matrix printer, it makes more passes of the print-head per line for greater pixel definition. However, be warned that Avagio files are heavy on disk space: a two A4 page document containing headline, text and three pictures took up over 200K.



(above) Avagio (right) applying type style options in Finesse





Avagio has one crippling drawback. It's slow. It's so slow, it makes Express Publisher look like Ben Johnson. This is what comes of offering so many font sizes built into the program and rescaling each character precisely every time you make a change. Inserting a comma at the beginning of a 1,000 word article can tie up the machine for nearly a minute, if it then requires a wholesale screen redraw.

Good for: short documents, logos, breezy flysheets, anything needing special effects.

Not suited for: use on anything less than a 286; long reports or text-heavy newsletters.

In our next issue, we'll look at the practicalities of working with these packages - using each one to design a newsletter.

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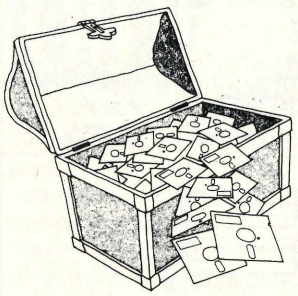
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KULT

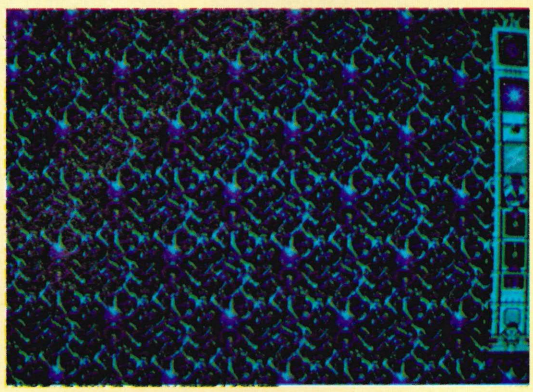


If your idea of a good time is to spend hours trying to unravel the fiendish traps and puzzles set by an(undoubtedly) deranged programmer, or you are the kind of person who gets a buzz from the bizarre, then watch out.Kult's back!

Kult was originally released by Infogrames, now it's been re-incarnated on the Action Sixteen budget label for a miserly £7.99 The plot is all too familiar, avenge a death, by entering the maze and overcoming awesome odds.

Despite this less than inspiring start, the game is actually very good. All commands are issued via various icons arrayed down the right hand side of the screen. At it's simplest, the game consists of locating different objects, which may be found lying around, or may be bartered from other characters in the game

Once obtained,the objects simply have to be taken to the correct puzzle room and used in the correct manner. Mind you, that simplification forgets to take account of the fact that the other characters in the game may choose to attack you,especially if provoked.



Star Performers
[0753] 49442

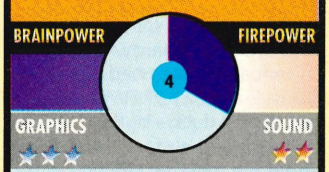
£10.99

5¼"	✗	3½"	✓
CGA	✓	EGA	✗
VGA	✗	Hercules	✓
Mouse	✓	Joystick	✓
Roland	✗	AdLib	✗



PCL VERDICT

A very entertaining game that is all the sweeter because of its budget price-tag.



Running on a 16MHz 286, Kult is fast enough and there can't be anyone running anything faster will want a Hercules/CGA only game cluttering up their equipment. Or can there?

★★★

In your defence, you have available an intriguing selection of Psi powers, ranging from brainwarp, which temporarily stupifies your opponent, to the innocently named E.V which actually stands for Extreme Violence. When extreme violence has been invoked, you become a formidable warrior, and find that you can make mincemeat out of many lesser characters.

Movement around the maze (called the Temple of Flying Saucers!), can often be a rather confusing business, what with rooms and circular corridors, none of which seem to link up logically.

Communication is via a stilted language that takes some time to understand. However, you soon realise that the language used, is based entirely on weird spellings of normal words, qat instead of cat for example.and doesn't detract from an otherwise great game.

■ **Matt Broomfield**

SHERMAN M4

When it was originally released in January '90, Sherman M4 received more than its fair share of accolades. Since then Microprose's M1 Tank Platoon and Empire's Team Yankee have stormed Britain leaving Sherman pretty much trampled under foot. Now, Sherman makes its budget comeback.

M4's first and most significant fault occurs before the disk reaches the drive. A none too informative sheet of green paper is all you're given to prepare yourself for commanding a tank. There are one line explanations for each feature on the game's start-up menu, a brief summery of the keys used and some advice from 'Sergeant Buck', whoever he's supposed to be.

There are three other tanks and two jeeps in your platoon. These can be sent to any location on the game map, and by sending them ahead to get shot at you can get a pretty good idea of where the Germans are, and what they're up to.

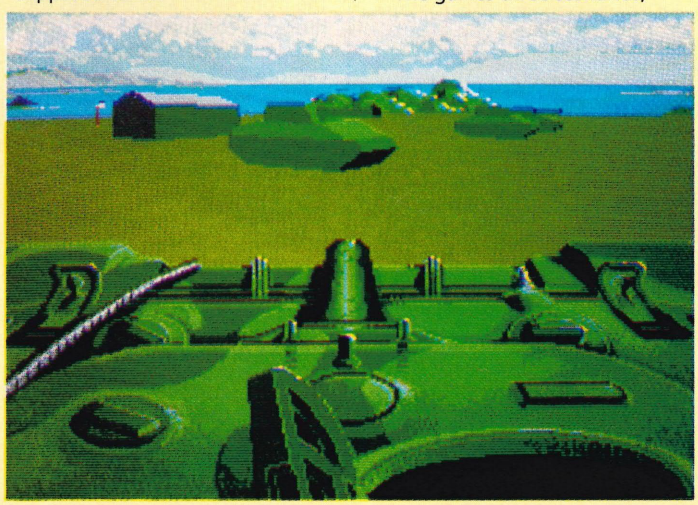
The games three scenarios, Normandy - set just after D-day, Ardennes - pits you against a German counter attack, and Desert where you retreat from Rommel's advancing army. Each campaign has five missions - tasks include capturing villages, ambushing enemy convoys. The variety of missions is enough to keep the game interesting, but no matter what the task is it always ends up with a tank battle.

■ **Mark Patterson**

Action Sixteen
[0753] 49442

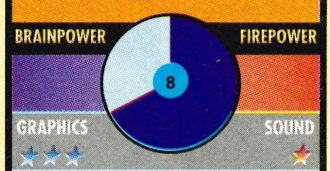
£7.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✓
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✗
Mouse	✓	Joystick	✓
Roland	✗	AdLib	✗



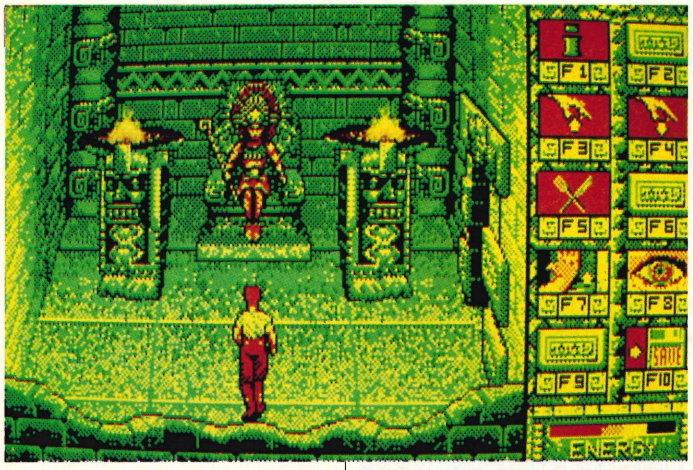
PCL VERDICT

Sherman M4 is more of a thinking person's arcade game than a simulation. But there's a lot to do and it's very easy to get into. Definitely worth checking out.



Even on a low grade PC, Sherman handles admirably and the polygons used for vehicles, buildings and trees, whilst not detailed do move pretty fast, even when the screen's crowded.

★★★★



MAYA

As soon as Michael Fairbanks heard about the mysterious death of his former archaeology teacher Edward Halifax, he dropped everything and journeyed to the Yucatan jungle to investigate. Along the way he discovered Doctor Olrik Karloff, Halifax's biggest rival (next to the TSB), had recently disappeared. Strange things are afoot.

This is not a good game, by any standards. For starters, the supplied instructions make very little sense and offer nothing in the way of game objectives which leads to the question, why bother playing a game if you don't know what you are supposed to be doing. Even the simplest of platform games have some point to them.

The graphics are nice, but that's hardly a saving grace as there appears to be no spirit in any part of the proceedings, nothing to get you going, nothing that says "Come on, play me". It doesn't even reach those so-bad-you-have-to-play-it levels. A game without spirit is like Laurel without Hardy.

Combat is just as bad. You have a dazzling array of TWO moves – punch and duck – both of which only work if you face sideways. There is a glimmer of hope with the driving section and it does offer a nice if somewhat basic feeling of speed, but the glimmer soon fades when you realise that it doesn't take a great deal of skill to master and the only danger comes from falling asleep at the wheel.

Action Sixteen
(071) 371 9191

£7.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✗
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✗
Mouse	✗	Joystick	✗
Roland	✗	AdLib	✗

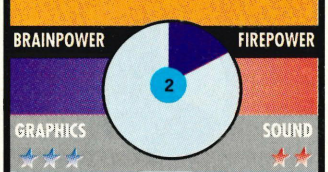
Complete a journey and you'll find yourself at one of the many temples in the game. Each of these contains some sort of puzzle that has to be solved, without incurring the wrath of the local natives. Beware though, each temple is inhabited by ferocious creatures (cobras, for example, that either move like they just emerged from a bad Frogger conversion or at three times your speed, making avoiding them particularly difficult).

Given the current social status and implementing the trendiest of buzz-words, the only way to truly describe Maya is: Very Pooer.

■ **Paul Presley**

PCL VERDICT

With games like this, who needs enemies? Initial reactions are "This looks quite nice" but after two minutes of playing you are reaching for the Valium. Indiana Jones has got nothing to worry about.



A bad game can only get worse apparently. Slow speeds mean you have to be especially skillful on the driving sections as there is a new element involved - jerkiness.

FERRARI FO

Before Xenon II there was Space Invaders; before Rick Dangerous there was Manic Miner and before Indianapolis 500 there was Ferrari Formula One.And now it's back.

The thing about budget re-releases is that when umpteen similar games have come along since, all improving things along the way, it's very hard to recommend the initial title. Ferrari Formula One manages to keep up this tradition nicely.

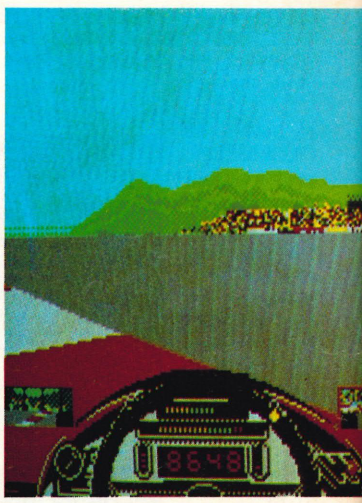
As soon as the tyres hit the asphalt it becomes easy to see Indy 500's ancestry A similar layout (but with much cruder graphics) and a nice feeling of speed all betray it's successor's origins. Unfortunately there is one major problem with the control method that unless you're prepared for it, makes life very strange indeed.

As soon as you turn the steering wheel your head moves with it. This causes your viewpoint to shift either left or right while the car stays pointing forward. At first you think it must surely be a bug but no, you soon realise it was meant to be and why it was never included in later games. You can get used to it and it does add a perverse sort of challenge, but as everybody knows, you shouldn't have to fight the sys-

Star Performers
(0753) 49442

£10.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✗
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✗	Hercules	✓
Mouse	✗	Joystick	✓
Roland	✗	AdLib	✗

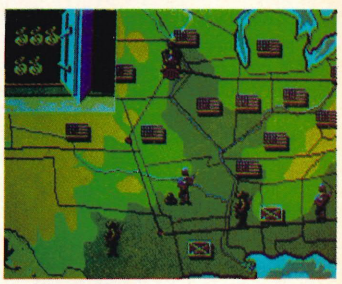


NORTH AN

A game that will have you humming good ole southern tunes like 'Deep in the Heart of Texas', North and South gives you a great opportunity to recreate the Confederates battling against those damn Yankees. You can learn about the Civil War too as changing the date on the front menu also changes the historical conditions.

The object of the game is to capture all the states on the map or kill all the enemy soldiers. The focus of North and South is a map of the USA depicting the positions of the Confederates and Unionists. Moving into enemy territory means war! The battle scenes are an excellent feature of the game, as you can opt to play in either arcade mode (where you control your troops) and strategy style where the computer determines the outcome of conflicts.

There are shades of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid in the train robbery sequence. Sprint along the horizontally



Action Sixteen
(071) 371 9191

£7.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✗
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✗	Hercules	✗
Mouse	✗	Joystick	✗
Roland	✓	AdLib	✓

RMULA ONE

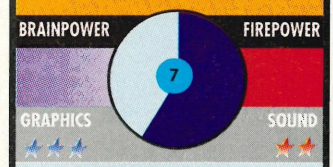
tem to play a game.

There are plenty of good points to FF1, the amount of tracks, the technical stages (putting your car in the wind tunnel, adjusting the shock absorbers etc.) but everything boils down to the driving section and its strange control method. At the budget price FF1 makes for an interesting purchase. The kind of game that you'd have on your shelf for people to notice but one that you hardly ever actually use.

■ **Matt Broomfield**

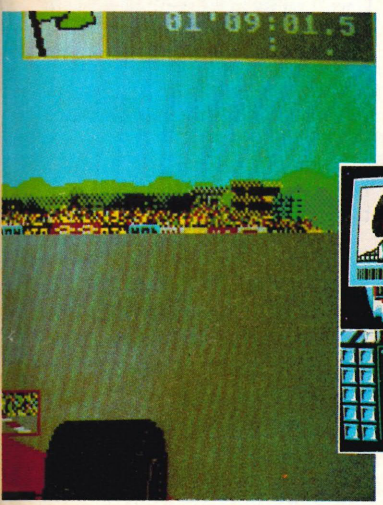
PCL VERDICT

These days it's like putting up a Morris Minor up against - well a Ferrari. The strange viewpoint only manages to put you off and the extremely basic graphics are nearly laughable when you put them next to it's 'older brother' Indy 500.



As with all games centered around speed, a slow machine will cause problems. Graphics below EGA don't affect things too much but don't expect to be driven to new heights (sorry).

★★★





D SOUTH

scrolling screen, leaping along the train and kicking troublesome guards out of the way. There is more filthy lucre to be had by acquiring territories. If the states between two stations on the railway line are captured,then the gold on the train is yours for the taking. With the spoils, buy new armies to replace old ones.

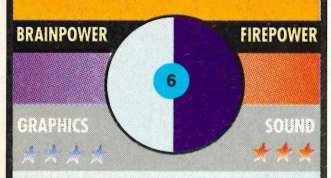
There is humour aplenty, perhaps best exemplified by the Mexican sequence. The sombrero-clad revolutionary chucks bombs when awoken from his siesta. It doesn't matter which side gets annihilated; he is against them both. Watch out for the Indians who get mighty defensive when you invade their territory. A hatchet comes flying in your direction!

North and South is a very enjoyable game with high quality graphics and sound. There are many features which keep the game from getting tedious and dull. However, it is quite easy to win victory after victory when playing the computer on lower levels. That said, the game will have some appeal to those who would like to say with conviction, 'I remember the Alamo'.

■ **Fiona Keating**

PCL VERDICT

Well rounded strategy game with arcade elements. Accurate historical detail put together with humour. Cartoon style graphics and colours make this a light hearted look at important events in American history



No particular need here for a powerful machine, but it's worth spicing up the game with a soundboard. Note that the game also supports MCGA

★★★



COLORADO

There's gold in them thar hills. At least according to the last gasps of an old Indian there is. Whilst out on a good old beaver hunt (there's nothing like coming across a bit of old beaver whilst out on the hunt) you find the dying native who offers you an old treasure map leading to the secret horde of his tribe, all in return for burying him like a warrior. How could you refuse?

The action starts with you on the shore next to your trusty canoe and it's here that you have to decide between a first-perspective white water ride or a horizontally scrolling beat 'em up. Of the two, the canoe ride is easily superior thanks to the sheer speed and excitement that comes with smacking a Red Indian in the face with an oar causing him to smash into a large rock.

On foot you have a choice of three weapons, a hunting knife, an axe or Betty or your trusty rifle. Enemies come in the shape of Indian Pawnees armed with various weapons from bows and arrows to spears. Fight scenes are not incredibly impressive, the variety of weaponry being the best part. The ability to walk into and out of the screen is a nice touch, adding to the maze-type feel of the whole section, but the whole section is nothing short of average.

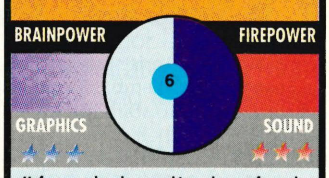
Colorado has all the hallmarks, atmosphere and playability of a typical budget game, which makes me wonder how it was received at full price. The different sections work nicely together but as with Maya (see review earlier) there is nothing to really get you going

■ **Paul Presley**



PCL VERDICT

A typically average game that fits nicely into the budget genre. The two different styles of game lend themselves well to the wild west scenario but the whole thing never leaves the realms of ordinary-ness.



Unfortunately, slow machines detract from the pace of the canoe section and make timing a tad difficult in the beat 'em up. On the up side, no real need for flashy graphics cards

★★★

Action Sixteen
(071) 371 9191

£7.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✖
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✓	Hercules	✖
Mouse	✖	Joystick	✓
Roland	✖	AdLib	✖

CAVEMAN UGH-LYMPICS

Contrary to popular belief, the Olympic Games didn't begin in Ancient Greece. Anyone who knows about these things will tell you that as soon as we stopped trailing our knuckles along the ground, mankind decided that competitive sport was the path to civilisation.

As you'd expect, these early contests weren't quite the refined events you find today. Mate-tossing, for example, involves picking up your partner by the hair and giving her the best lob in your repertoire; the sabre-race is altogether more serious – fail to flee the pursuing tiger and you'll end up as supper. Fire-making involves stick-rubbing a-plenty in order to cast sparks on a pile of logs, followed by hard blowing for ignition.

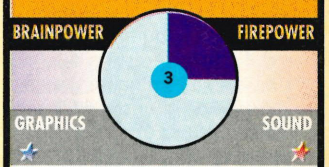


Clubbing is a simple beat-'em-over-the-head affair that true Neanderthals will love, whereas the dino race is an old-fashioned chase over obstacles, with turbo charged mounts to boot. Finally, there is the obligatory joystick-waggler, the dino vault - a prehistoric pole-vault where the price of failure is more than a sore backside.

■ Gordon Houghton

PCL VERDICT

Originally released over two years ago, and - particularly in the graphics department – it's beginning to show. However, it doesn't rely too heavily on pics, and there are plenty of neat touches to keep you hooked.



Reduced speed doesn't affect the action overmuch, and the pics aren't of an immensely high quality anyway, so this doesn't impair your enjoyment. A hard disk is advisable, however.

★★★★

Star Performers
[0753] 49442

£10.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✗
CGA	✓	EGA	✓
VGA	✗	Hercules	✓
Mouse	✗	Joystick	✓
Roland	✗	AdLib	✗

etc... IT'S TAKING PART THAT COUNTS

Bizarre events aren't confined to prehistory. Off-the-wall contemporary sports include haggis-hurling, rattlesnake-sacking and blind golf. Just as strange are Indian kickball - the course is up to 40 miles long, and each team has to kick a ball for the whole length - and buzkashi, an Afghan game where players mounted on horses whip each other and try to hit a ball made from a goatskin filled with sand.

HOSTAGES

A group of terrorists have taken over the local embassy and are threatening to start killing hostages unless their demands are met. (presumably they want use of the swivel chair and the keys to the executive bog.) When playing for stakes like this, there's only one course of action available - the Terrorist Intervention Combat Team. They'll storm the building and kill the bad guys. SAS simulator perhaps? No. It's Hostages (in a French accent plaze) from Infogrames, in all its CGA glory.

It just goes to show how old this little gem is on the PC when CGA is the top choice of graphic ability, but before you turn away in disgust, put the disk in the drive, boot her up and just take the time to absorb how enjoyable this French offering is. For the budget price, you should certainly look twice if you have CGA or lower.

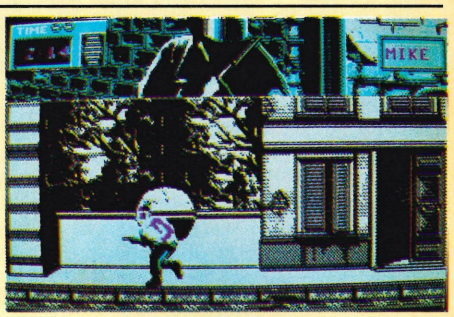
The first step in rescuing the innocents requires you to set up a team of three marksmen in the buildings around the embassy. This takes the form of a highly amusing horizontally scrolling dodge 'em up, using commando rolls, jumps and crawls to avoid detection by the terrorists' searchlights. Taking cover in doorways, behind hedges and beneath windows, you are required to make your way to the selected sniper points with as many of your team members alive as possible. Get one killed and he sprouts little wings and flies to the big shooting range in the sky.

Succeed in this task and it's on to the roof. A helicopter (unfortunately not displayed but that's CGA for you) descends over the building and your second team starts to abseil down the walls and in through the windows. You control the soldier's descent and smash in feet-first through one of the windows.

The nice part about this section (and to some extent the first) is the ability to switch between team members at will. If you spot a terrorist entering a room with one of your soldiers, simply switch to a marksman and calmly pop him off before you enter.

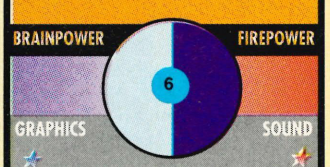
The biggest drawback to the whole package is the lack of VGA support. Imagine how much nicer it would all be with a couple greens, oranges and reds thrown in. Still, Hostages is a great little game for the money and well worth playing for an hour or two at a time

■ Paul Presley



PCL VERDICT

Unless you're so heavily into state-of-the-art gaming that anything less than EGA is sacrilege, you are bound to prise some enjoyment out of this. Tremendous presentation, original ideas, loads of fun – what more could you want from



The CGA-only graphics and sparse sound do little to deter from a highly enjoyable game. Speed doesn't make the slightest bit of difference, except for first level movement

★★★

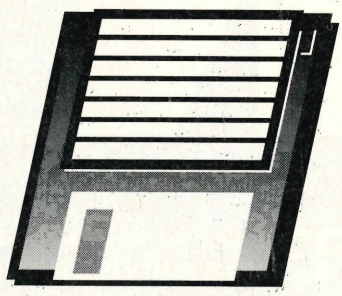
Action Sixteen
(071) 371 9191

£7.99

5¼"	✓	3½"	✗
CGA	✓	EGA	✗
VGA	✗	Hercules	✓
Mouse	✗	Joystick	✓
Roland	✗	AdLib	✗

GAMES TO SHARE

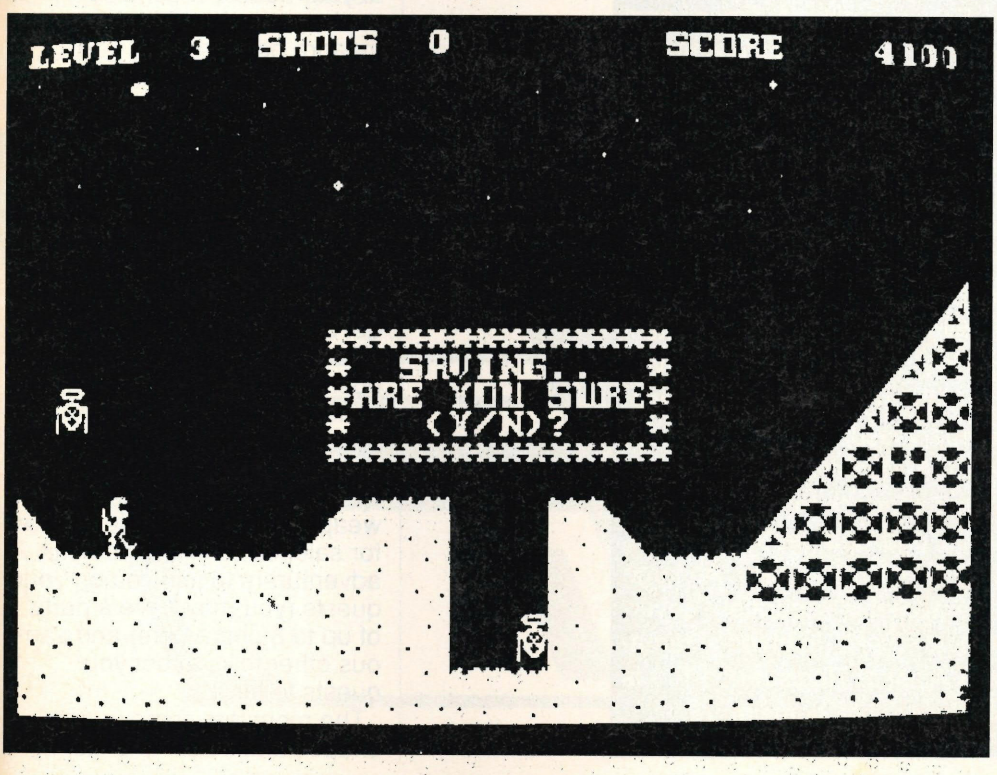
PC LEISURE SHAREWARE COLUMN by Neil Blaber



GRAPHICS ADVENTURE GAME BUILDER

The good thing about Shareware is that it allows people who have written a piece of software that's a little out of the ordinary, a chance to make some money out of it. Often these days you see new games released which are just variations on the same hackneyed themes, such is the pressure on software houses to produce top-selling titles. However, Shareware authors still seem to be able to introduce their new ideas without the threat of bankruptcy if their latest program doesn't catch on. One such innovative program just released is The Graphics Adventure Game Builder, a tool that will allow you to create graphic adventure games with a minimum effort and time. You can create fantasy scenarios (worlds, cities, castles, dungeons,etc), and populate them with monsters, merchants, and all kinds of beings as well as a wide variety of objects like weapons, armour, shields, amulets, potions, treasures, and vehicles. Each adventure can consist of up to 1000 settings, each of them having over up to 500 objects and monsters. The program consists of two parts; the BUILDER module and the PLAY module. Adventures you have written using the Builder can be distributed with just the Play program, making it impossible for someone to cheat unless they've got a copy of the Builder somewhere!

Software for PCs is more expensive than for any other computer because of the high cost of developing sophisicated and high quality product. But the PC also has the largest pool of free and low-cost software of any machine Shareware and Public Domain.



The adventures created can be run on any colour graphics system, be it CGA, EGA, or VGA resolution. The Shareware version comes with CGA support only, but the registered version will automatically run at the highest resolution and use the maximum number of colours available for some impressive graphics. I felt this restriction was a pity, as CGA graphics don't exactly fill me with awe and detract overall from the quality of the program; this is a prime example of a restriction put on the Shareware version of a program by an author in order to get more registrations which will probably lead to him getting less.

I decided to leap right into the sort of thing that could be produced with the Builder by playing the example adventure supplied. You are initially presented with a "character design" screen in order to choose your adventurer's name, type (choices are Human, Dwarf, Elf, Wizard, Archer or Fighter) and you have 25 points to allocate to various abilities - strength, speed, aim, dexterity, intelligence, hit points (health), and magical power points. After a couple of screens explaining the very brief plotline, I plunged into the game itself.

The CGA resolution graphics were as bad as I'd feared (remember that awful cyan and magenta used on Pool of

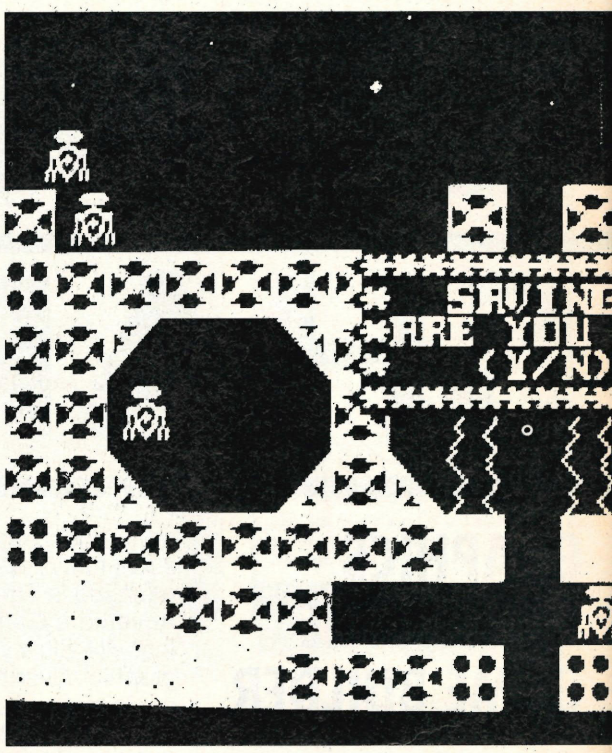
NEWS

Here's the very latesty in news happening on the Public Domain/Shareware front. Brought to you by our very own something for nothing - Neil Blaber.

The sequel to the successful EGA graphics adventure **HUGO'S HOUSE OF HORRORS** is now available. **HUGO II, WHODUNNIT?** is in a similar vein and features Hugo and his girlfriend Penelope, this time caught up in a sinister murder mystery. En route to solving the mystery they must negotiate a revolving bookcase, a saucy French maid and (of course) the evil murderer! Registration is $20 which includes a free copy of the original Hugo game.

MoraffWare have announced the release of **MORAFF'S SUPER BLAST,** said to be the ultimate Breakout and has many of the features of the arcade machine Arkanoid. It contains 34 screens, up to 17 simultaneous balls and features special bricks that move, multiply, eat balls, and explode into 8 balls. Also included are one-way bricks, tunnels, and paddle expansion and contraction bricks. Moraff's Super Blast will run on Hercules mono, CGA, EGA and VGA (800x600 in 16 colours).

Also released is **MORAFF'S ENTRAP**, the first ever 1024x768 SuperVGA game.Entrap is a three-dimensional strategy game played on a huge 16 or256-colour maze-like playing field, in which you must avoid enemy robots which are programmed to capture you. Your only weapon is the ability to knock holes in the floor, trapping the robots if you've managed to out-smart them. As you progress up the field the robots get more intelligent,requiring every ounce of mental skill to ensure your survival. The Beginner's version is distributed as Shareware, with the Advanced version available on registration. For a registration fee of £35, Moraffware will send you the latest registered versions of ALL their games. Finally, for those of you enquiring about an EGA version of Mahjongg after the review of Mahjongg VGA in the January/February issue, good news - the latest version of Nels Anderson's EGA Mahjongg is now available, featuring an arguably better user interface than its VGA Counterpart, mouse support, timed and competition modes, hints mode and the option to use alternative tile sets. All large number of these alternative sets are available separately, covering such diverse subjects as medieval shields, orchids, internation marine flags and scenes from Alaska! Registration fee is $20 (about £12). Alternative tile sets are public domain.



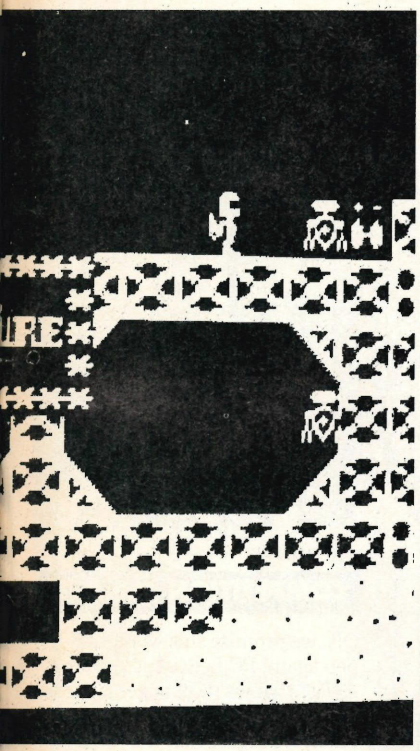
The free PD game on the disk this month - Monuments of Mars, the first part of a trilogy of games in which you search the planet in search for a missing survey team. The save option should be used beofre you die and end up having to utter those immortal gamers' lines. "I was just about to save that too!"

Radiance CGA mode ? This is the same...), but remembering that better graphics were an added incentive to the registration of the program.

I ignored the display as best I could and concentrated on the game. Initial impressions reminded me of the early Ultima games where you start at your house, which you explore in order to find your meagre possessions. The house is a nicely defined 11x7 area containing a bed, chairs, pot plants and other household items. On leaving your house you are presented with the main game map which shows the surrounding terrain, houses, towns, cities and other places of interest to visit and get beaten up in.

Each symbol on the map can open into a screen (as in a house) or a series of screens (a city or dungeon) when entered. Cities can contain shops offering armour, weapons and other useful gear for sale, citizens to give hints, adventurers to join you on your quests (you may have a party of up to 8 characters) and various other folks to set you quests to fulfill.

The monsters come in man shapes and sizes, and can be

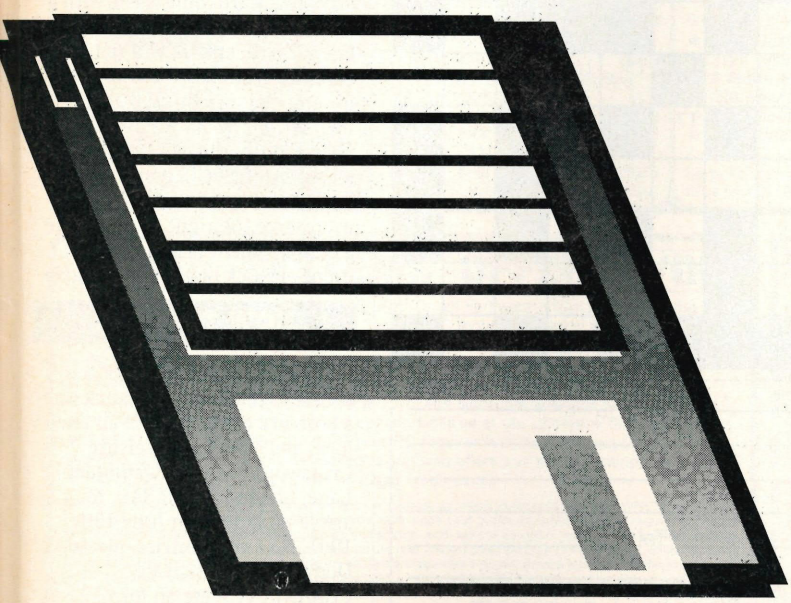


randomly encountered or have set positions in cities and dungeons. I was impressed with the range of options available to me within what was admittedly a very small example adventure - if someone sat down and took some time writing a good storyline, this system could produce something very good indeed and easily up to commercial stantards.

Finally, to see exactly what you had to play with if you were actually designing a game using the Builder, I had a good look through the Reference Manual (supplied on disk with the programs). In fact, the example game had only used a small portion of the possible features - options were available for other types of citizen who could train you in skills, beggars who could give pieces of information or steal from you, healers who could cure disease, resurrect dead past members and remove cursed items, guards who would not let you into a particular location unless they were killed, bribed or given a secret password and a number of others. It is also possible to design your own items, giving them whatever attributes you like within the context of the types of item available (weapons, armour, shields, ammunition, amulets, rings, potions, scrolls, staffs, keys, gems, books, signs and even vehicles).

Given the time and effort, it would be possible to design a game using this system that would be the equal of many available for the PC in the "Role Playing Adventures" genre selling for twenty or thirty pounds. It's just a pity the author didn't include the better graphics options so we could see what could be produced with the registered version...

Registration for the Graphics Adventure Game Builder is $40 (about £22).



ABOUT PD & SHAREWARE

Public Domain and Shareware software can be freely copied and passed on to others. It can be obtained by download from bulletin boards, or by mail order from disk libraries in exchange for a nominal copying fee (pay no more than £5 inclusive for a disk). Public Domain software can be used privately with no further payment requested by the author.

Shareware is supplied on a "try before you buy" basis and if found useful you are expected to register with the author. This is an honesty-based system; if authors receive lots of registrations they will continue to produce high-quality, low cost software. If you have a problem with registering an American shareware program after obtaining it from a disk library, call them for advice.

Any library carrying the "Association of Shareware Professionals" approved logo should be able to help.

TOP 10 PD & SHAREWARE ADVENTURE GAMES FOR MAY 1991

This Month	Last Month	
1	1	* NetHack
2	4	Jacaranda Jim
3	10	Wizard's Lair
4	2	Kairn
5	3	* Moria
6	NE	* Vampyr (EGA)
7	9	* Rogue
8	NE	Graphics Adventure Game Builder
9	7	MUG
10	5	Beyond the Titanic

(* = public domain)

THE PC LEISURE CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

5 Vi is about to get on tele! (6)
7 Game in which miler runs around head first (2,4)
8 Sher's quote about game from Sierra (5,5)
9 Come to grief in Simulcra's hectic play (5)
10 Software house contributing partly to *Gryzor* technology (7)
13 Software house responsible for *Dragonflight* and *Hailstorm!* (7)
15 Employing characters from G.nius (5)
18 Plot to get game from Accolade (10)
20 Old missiles hidden in narrow strip of land (6)
21 In Borneo Geoff found Ninja Combat game (3,3)

CLUES DOWN

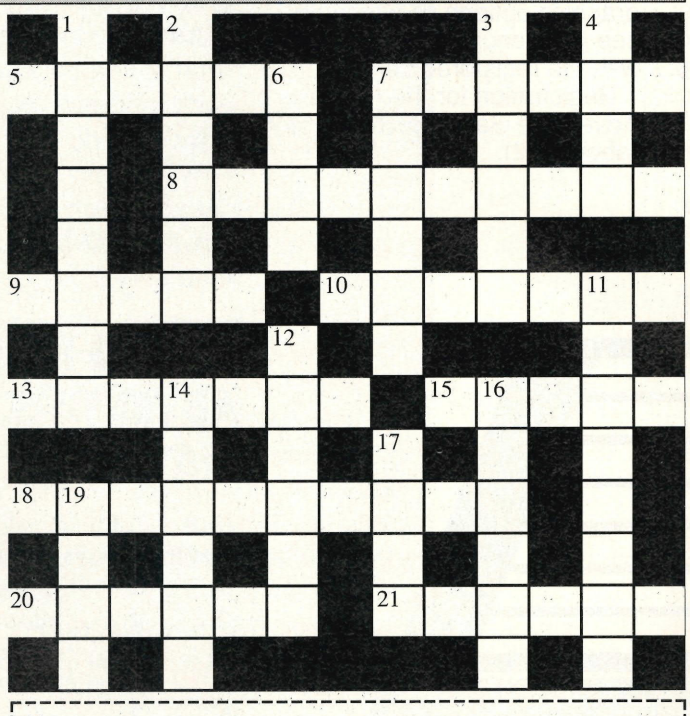
1 The arms I utilise in Ocean game (8)
2 Ship ox from Electronic Zoo (6)
3 The big push from Firebird (6)
4 Additional sign (4)
6 Game found in many an arcade (4)
7 Talisman developed by mother north of the border (6)
11 Scored in play, it makes you think about it (8)
12 Krisalis game emerging from robotic science (6)
14 One's taught to change the order around no less (6)
16 Electronic Arts buried in dusky foxhole (6)
17 I get taken in by man from Ocean (4)
19 Gore spilt in game from Origin Systems (4)

Isn't it about time you treated yourself to a new game? Even better, isn't it about time you treated to yourself to a FREE new game?!

If that's the case, we have a a few gentle words of advice:

Buck up! Pull yourself together! Shiver your timbers! Act like a man! Or a woman! Be your age! Show a little initiative! Stop fuffing around! Stiffen up! Toss those toys out of the pram! Eat steel! Kick a gorilla! Strut your stuff! Act like you mean it! Grow up! Pull your shoulders back! Atten...shun! Don't be a wimp! Walk like a Pharaoh! Cut the mustard! Tackle Tyson! Swallow Gloucestershire! Go kiss a shark! Arduus ad solem! Stifle a tiger! Knock down Everest! Fondle a rhino! Pump iron! Smother a volcano! Take a rabid dog for walkies!

...Or, if you really think you've got what it take, complete the PC Leisure crossword. If you get it ALL right, and if you're the first out of the bag, we just might pop a rather special little package in the post to you...



Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

_____ Tel: _____

System details: _____

Preferred disk size: 5¼ ☐ 3½ ☐

COMPETITION RESULTS

OK, we promise this won't happen again! PC Leisure is growing so fast that we've now got a whole new editorial team – and as a result we regret that the results of the last two issues' competitions will have to be announced in the next edition of PC Leisure.

Don't miss the next issue – and don't forget that if you entered both compos, there's a statistically higher likelihood of the next PCL having good news for you!

THE RULES

The rules are extremely simple. First, you must enter before the deadline of June 30th 1991. Second, if you work for either Accolade, EMAP, or any of their associated companies, you cannot enter. Third, the lucky winner will be chosen at random using the close-eyes-stick-hand-in-hat-and-jiggle-around method. Fourth, sealed entries will not be accepted. Fifth, only those with at least one shoulder are eligible for entry. Sixth, entries will not be accepted from anyone who votes for any major political party. (*Oh, alright then...Scrub rule six. Ed.*). Eighth, the prize will be a 5 star rated (by PCL) game released during the last six months, but we reserve the right to substitute a cash payment of £25 in the event of stock not being available.

HOW TO ENTER

Cut out or photocopy your completed puzzle and form, stick onto a postcard or the back of an envelope, and send to PC Leisure Crossword 6, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU, to arrive no later than June 15th 1991. No sealed entries, please. Don't forget to indicate CGA/EGA/VGA etc on form...

CITIZEN PRINTERS



Silica presents some great offers on the award winning range of high quality dot matrix printers from Citizen. Each Citizen printer is built in the UK to exacting standards, ensuring superb reliability and a very high quality of output. Our confidence in the quality of Citizen printers is such that we are pleased to offer a unique two year guarantee with every printer. Plus, if you purchase your Citizen printer from us, we will give you a Silica Printer Starter Kit (worth £29.95), *FREE OF CHARGE!*

FREE DELIVERY
Next Day - Anywhere in the UK mainland

FREE STARTER KIT
Worth £29.95 - With every Citizen printer from Silica.

FREE COLOUR KIT
Worth £39.95 - With Swift 9 and Swift 24 printers.

2 YEAR WARRANTY
Silica offer a 2 year warranty (including the printer head) with every Citizen printer purchased from Silica.

WINDOWS 3.0
Free Windows 3.0 driver - In the Silica Starter Kit.

FREE HELPLINE
Technical support helpline open during office hours.

MADE IN THE UK
Citizen printers are manufactured to high standards.

144 CPS DRAFT 9 PIN



CITIZEN 120D+

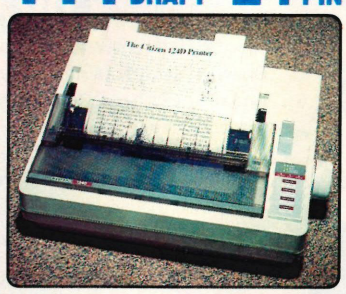
The Citizen 120D+ is one of the UK's best selling printers. It has a stylish appearance and excellent features and performance for such an inexpensive printer. The 120D+ is available with either a serial or parallel interface and is an ideal first printer.

- *9-pin Printhead*
- *Print Speed 144cps Draft*
- *30cps NLQ*
- *Epson & IBM Graphics Emulation*
- *Pull Tractor & Bottom Feed*
- *Superior Graphics - 240x216dpi*
- *FREE Starter Kit*

RRP £233.83
STARTER KIT £29.95
TOTAL RRP: £263.78
SAVING: £112.20
SILICA PRICE: **£151.58**

£129 +VAT = £151.58

144 CPS DRAFT 24 PIN



CITIZEN 124D

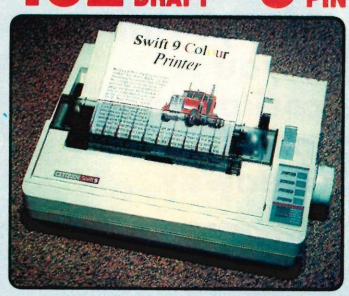
The award winning Citizen 124D brings high quality 24-pin dot matrix printing within every computer users reach. It is the ideal choice where high quality printing is required at a budget price.

- *24-pin Impact Printer*
- *Print Speed 144cps Draft*
- *2 LQ Fonts (48cps)*
- *8K Buffer*
- *Epson, IBM & NEC P6+ Emulation*
- *Advanced Paper Parking*
- *Superior Graphics - 360x360dpi*
- *FREE Starter Kit*

RRP £292.58
STARTER KIT £29.95
TOTAL RRP: £322.53
SAVING: £112.20
SILICA PRICE: **£210.33**

£179 +VAT = £210.33

192 CPS DRAFT 9 PIN



SWIFT 9 - COLOUR!

The Citizen Swift 9 is perfect for those who require high quality dot matrix black or colour printing at a budget price. The print quality of Swift 9 rivals that of other manufacturer's 24-pin models.

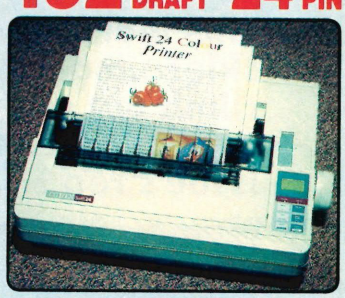
- *9-pin Impact Printer*
- *Print Speed 192cps Draft*
- *3 NLQ Fonts (48cps)*
- *8K Buffer*
- *Epson & IBM Graphics Emulation*
- *Advanced Paper Parking*
- *FREE Starter Kit*
- *FREE Colour Kit*

FREE! COLOUR KIT

RRP £280.83
STARTER KIT £29.95
COLOUR KIT £44.65
TOTAL RRP: £355.43
SAVING: £133.35
SILICA PRICE: **£222.08**

£189 +VAT = £222.08

192 CPS DRAFT 24 PIN



SWIFT 24 - COLOUR!

The Citizen Swift 24 is one of Europe's best selling printers and has won awards including Printer Of The Year 1990. Its rapid print speed, quality and black or colour options, make it a natural choice.

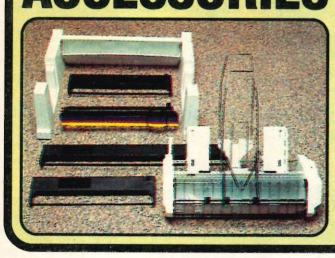
- *24-pin Impact Printer*
- *Print Speed 192cps Draft*
- *4 NLQ Fonts (64cps)*
- *8K Buffer*
- *Epson, IBM & NEC P6+ Emulation*
- *Advanced Paper Parking*
- *FREE Starter Kit*
- *FREE Colour Kit*

FREE! COLOUR KIT

RRP £428.88
STARTER KIT £29.95
COLOUR KIT £44.65
TOTAL RRP: £503.48
SAVING: £199.15
SILICA PRICE: **£304.33**

£259 +VAT=£304.33

PRINTER ACCESSORIES



SHEET FEEDERS
PRA 1200 120D £71.38
PRA 1215 124D/Swift 9/24 ..... £88.70
PRA 1228 124D/Swift 9/24 ..... £42.00

SERIAL INTERFACES
PRA 1189 120D+ £56.45
PRA 1209 Swift 9/124D £32.25
PRA 1709 Swift 24 ..... £26.38

PRINTER STAND
PRA 1242 124D/Swift 9/24 ..... £24.03

ORIGINAL RIBBONS
RIB 3520 120D/Swift 9 Black £4.11
RIB 3924 124D/Swift 24 Black £4.70
RIB 3936 Swift 9/24 Colour £15.63

COLOUR KITS
PRA 1236 Swift 9/24 ..... £39.65

All prices include VAT and Free delivery.

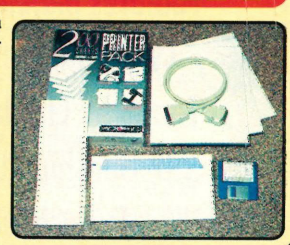
FREE! STARTER KIT

Every Citizen printer from Silica, comes complete with the Silica Printer Starter Kit, including everything you need to get up and running with your new printer immediately, FREE OF CHARGE!

- *3½" Dual Format Disk with Amiga & ST Printer Drivers*
- *3½" Disk with Drivers for Microsoft Windows 3*
- *2 Metre Parallel Printer Cable*
- *200 Sheets of High Quality Continuous Paper*
- *200 Continuous Address Labels on Tractor Feed*
- *5 Continuous Envelopes on Tractor Feed*

If you already own a printer, and would like a Silica Printer Starter Kit, you may order one (ref: KIT 5000) for the special Silica price of £24.95 - £5 off RRP!

NORMAL RRP **£29.95**



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- ***FREE CATALOGUES:*** Will be mailed to you with offers and software/peripheral details.
- ***PAYMENT:*** By cash, cheque and all major credit cards.

Before you decide when to buy your new printer, we suggest you think very carefully about WHERE you buy it. Consider what it will be like a few months after you have made your purchase, when you may require additional peripherals or software, or some technical help and advice. And, will the company you buy from contact you with details of new products? At Silica Systems, we ensure that you will have nothing to worry about. Silica Systems is one of the UKs leading independent computer dealers and provides a quality service to users at home, in education and in business throughout the nation. Silica have been established for over 12 years, and have an annual turnover of £13 million. With our unrivalled experience and expertise, we can now claim to meet our customers requirements with an understanding which is second to none. But don't just take our word for it. Complete and return the coupon now, for our latest Free literature on the Citizen printer range and begin to experience the "Silica Systems Service".

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Opening Hours:	Mon-Sat 9.30am-6.00pm	No Late Night Opening	Fax No: 071-323 4737
LONDON SHOP:	Selfridges (1st Floor), Oxford Street, London, W1A 1AB		**Tel: 071-629 1234**
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Opening Hours:	Mon-Sat 9.00am-5.30pm	Late Night: Friday until 7pm	Fax No: 081-309 0017

To Silica Systems: Dept PCL06/91, 1-4 The Mews, Hatherley Rd, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4DX

PLEASE SEND CITIZEN PRINTER INFORMATION

Mr/Mrs/Ms: ..... Initials: ..... Surname: .....

Address: .....

..... Postcode: .....

Tel (Home): ..... Tel (Work): .....

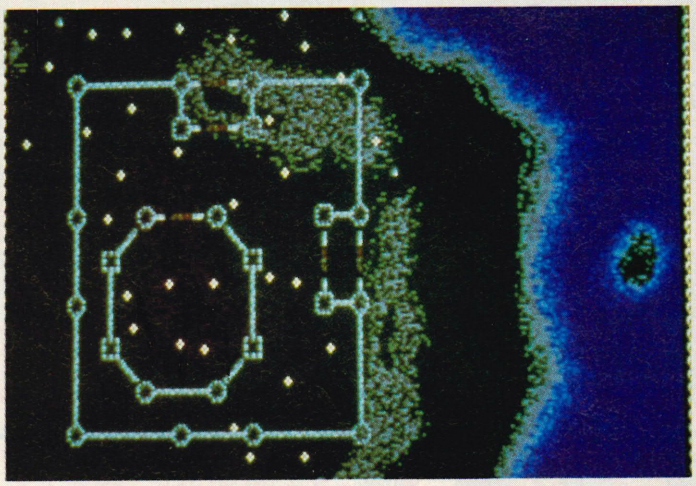
Company Name (if applicable): .....

Which computer(s), if any, do you own? .....

PC NEXT ISSUE

The PC Leisure Cover Disk #5

This month we gave you the skies...make sure you climb out of the cockpit in time to catch the next issue's red hot giveaway...



Features planned for the next issue include:

- 1991 Battle of the Giants: Which Game Will Triumph? Check out details of Civilisation, Falcon 3.0, Gunship 2000, Wing Commander II, and Ultima VII... Exclusive to PC Leisure!! Yay!
- Portable game power – lap*tops*...or just lap*dogs*?
- Expanding your memory for bigger, better gaming
- Reviews of all the latest red hot releases
- More suprise competitions and giveaways...

All of this and more in the July/August 1991 Issue of PC Leisure - On Sale July 1st

THE FINAL WORD

What with the change of editor, the phenomenon that software houses euphemistically term 'slippage' and deadline pressure, we were well and truly scuppered this month when it came to bringing you the features we had hoped to include in this issue. However, we managed to squeeze some coverage of Chris Crawford's Game Design conference into the news pages, together with the latest gen on Spectrum Holobytes' Electronic Battlefield. Next month we'll be back on course again with the new team...

*

Remember our piece last issue on Virtual Reality? We lead the field, as usual, because now the whole topic has really taken off here in the UK, having festered on the West Coast of America for the past two years. First, there's a Virtual Reality conference in June in London (071 931 8908), with another one planned for September (no contact details as yet). Horizon did a program on the subject, which included coverage of Sense8's PC based system, and W Industries finally had the official launch of their Virtuality Arcade System at Wembley.

You might wonder how a company that hasn't sold any product, has invested a fortune in fancy injection-moulded designs, and is working in a field where absolutely no-one is making any cash, managed to hold their PR conference at Wembley! Answer: W Industries are part financed by the same company that operates the complex, prompting some interesting speculation as to what on earth Wembley is doing getting involved in VR. There is apparently absolutely no truth in the rumour that Tina Turner has agreed to appear in VR at the Arena, to be pawed by digital hands and gaped at by polygonal punters...

*

Mention of the VR conference prompts us to make a few acid remarks about the cost of attending these functions. Chris Crawford, for example, managed to stage his conference for $350 ($150 if you booked in advance), which seems a little expensive, but positively generous compared to, say, the Microsoft CD ROM conference that also took place in San Jose a few days later – charging entrants the princely sum of $1100 to pass through the doors. The VR conference in the UK isn't exactly pitching itself cheap at £450 (unless you booked before 10th May, inwhich case you could have got away with, gosh, £350). Not exactly a virtual admission fee, eh?

*

Here at EMAP Towers, it's not often that us games-hardened journos go ape over a game, and certainly not over one that hasn't even been released yet, but there are two titles that are currently topping the interest charts...

The first is already available, but us PC players won't get much joy from it. It's Super Mario World on the Nintendo Super Famicom. Our sister magazine ACE got so excited about it that they actually managed to persuade their publisher that they should spend a whole month playing the game to write a feature about its gob-smacking brilliance. An interesting tactic...

The second title, however, is of rather more interest to you and me and is just another example of why any gamester with half a brain chooses a PC these days. The game in question is Sid Meier's Civilisation, which we'll be seeing soon on our next visit to the States. If you saw what Sid did with Railroad Tycoon, the prospect of his version of the history of the world is pretty mind boggling.

*

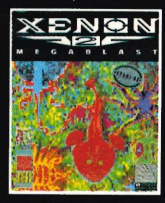
Finally, a big, big thank you to all our readers who've written in since the last issue to say how much they enjoyed the new look, the features, and the new ratings system. With your help and feedback, we'll continue to improve the magazine with each issue. See you in July...

NRG CYBERZINE

XS NRG

Special Reserve

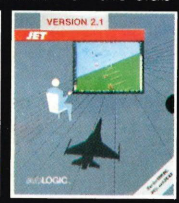
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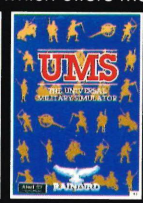
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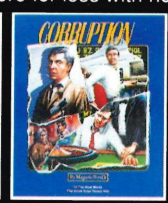
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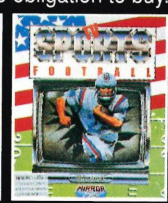
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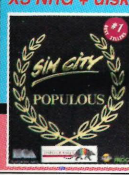
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PCLSR 11

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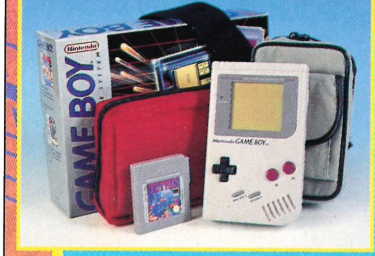
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