february 1991

RePlay

window on the world of coin-op entertainment



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HOT OFF THE PRESS!

LOU DUNIS PASSES ON — After battling diabetes and related kidney problems for so long, **Lou Dunis** died at 12:30AM, Jan. 22 at St. Vincent's hospital in his home city of Portland, Oregon. The beloved patriarch of the Northwest amusement machine business was in his early 80s. In recent times he'd been taking dialysis treatments three times a week. He was too weak for that in the end. Poignantly, Lou was to be honored by the AAMCF at the upcoming ACME show in Las Vegas, along with his partner **Ray Galante.** Now Ray will have to stand alone, but Lou's spirit will be there beside him.

Lou Dunis entered the industry in 1928, founding Superior Mfg. which later became Portland Amusement. His business continued to grow and to include Northwest Background Music, Auto Photo of Oregon and Dunis Distributing Co. Galante joined up in 1952 and they ultimately formed Music-Vend, officially merging the dealerships in 1984. Lou's wife Helen predeceased him by 15 years, so he is survived by daughters Nancy, Elaine and Paula, son Stuart and two grandchildren. **Hank Tronick,** who knew Lou since 1946 and considered him one of his best friends, couldn't make the funeral due to a hip transplant but said: "He lived a full life. All we can do now is ask God's blessings on Lou and his family."

VOICE OF JAPAN — Don't put too much stock in recent reports out of the East that Japanese manufacturers "don't care about parallels" or think that parallels are solely a matter of "internal U.S. marketing." *RePlay* expects an **official** statement to emerge soon from a top Japanese leader. Hint: Japan does care deeply about parallels (and about the possibility of illegal copies), but anyone expecting a knee-jerk, one-sided stance is going to be very surprised. Japan's coin-op leadership is both farsighted and practical. . . so keep an open mind and we'll report full details ASAP.

'MAD DOG' MAKES BACON — Betson's ***Mad Dog McCree*** western shootout attraction is shipping in both 50" and 33" monitor sizes (prices vary accordingly). Over 100 units are in the U.S. right now, which means the window's wide open for operators. Collections are running between $100 and $200 a day, according to **Peter Betti.** European tests show top earnings there, too; production units hit that market in early March via Atari. This live-action adventure is so strong, one Los Angeles arcade operator mounted an extra monitor atop his *Mad Dog* to let kibbitzers view the action without pushing the player through the console.

SEEBURG UPDATE — A Japanese offer to acquire controlling interest in Seeburg is all worked out, but yet to be finalized. Seeburg chief **Nick Hindman** is hopeful it will go to term, but until the deal is completed won't release the name of the "suitor." PS: Seeburg's not the only Japanese buy-in story cooking right now.

NINTENDO'S HOT IRON — When we asked **Al Stone** if Nintendo was working up a 16-bit *PlayChoice* system, he smiled and replied: "There's credence to that rumor, but please don't press me for details right now." This advanced system could seriously boost their coin-op program. In VS. system news, their *Dr. Mario* sold several thousand cartridges, are collecting decently and many are still on sale (though they don't plan to make any more). The home cartridge of this game, by the way, sold over 7 million on the retail market in just two months (at the rate of almost one cartridge per retail second!). It's a "lesser" game than its coin-op VS. cousin, says Al.

VIDEOBOX SOFTWARE — Pioneer now makes **music videos** on laserdiscs for operators of Videobox Networks vidjukes. Shipping now, the software is distributed in the USA exclusively by L.A. East in Hatfield, Penn. (the firm's **Emery Kertesz** and **Steve Devlin** write our "Jukebox 2001" column). Selections basically duplicate Pioneer's own videodiscs. A $139.95 per-disc rental fee covers a 60-day period.

BRITISH SHOW STANDS TALL — Correspondent **Marty Dempsey** told us attendance at the January ATEI London show hit a record 18,300 (including people from the developing East Euro markets). That's much higher than AMOA does at its show.

RePlay

the Players' Choice

FEBRUARY 1991

TOP GAMES NOW IN OPERATION, BASED ON EARNINGS-OPINION POLL OF OPERATORS

upright videos

		MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
■	1	**RACE DRIVIN' (Atari) (4)**	**9.63**	**33%**
■	2	SPACE GUN (Taito) (2)	9.31	11%
	3	PIT-FIGHTER (Atari) (5)	8.70	66%
	4	HARD DRIVIN' (Atari) (23)	8.52	41%
	5	G-LOC (Sega) (8)	8.49	30%
	6	GALAXY FORCE (Sega) (9)	8.29	15%
	7	TMNT (TURTLES) (Konami) (14)	8.16	97%
	8	FINAL LAP (Atari) (27)	7.89	23%
	9	CYBERBALL 2072+ (Atari) (12)	7.81	36%
	10	2-DUDE OFF-ROAD (Leland) (9)	7.57	20%
■	11	HIT THE ICE (Williams) (2)	7.42	10%
	12	SMASH TV (Williams) (8)	7.38	54%
	13	TEAM QUARTERBACK (Leland) (21)	7.33	45%
	14	OFF ROAD (Leland) (23)	7.22	66%
	15	CHASE H.Q. (Taito) (26)	7.05	53%
	16	OPERATION THUNDERBOLT (Taito) (21)	7.00	50%
	17	S.C.I. (Taito) (13)	7.00	27%
	18	TURBO OUT RUN+ (Sega) (19)	6.98	49%
	19	OUT RUN (Sega) (49)	6.96	63%
	20	BEAST BUSTERS (SNK) (13)	6.95	16%

+ indicates game was produced in both dedicated & software forms

flippers

■	1	**FUNHOUSE (Williams) (2)**	**9.40**	**42%**
■	2	THE SIMPSONS (Data East) (3)	8.56	50%
■	3	BUGS BUNNY (Midway) (1)	8.31	12%
	4	DR. DUDE (Midway) (4)	8.08	44%
	5	DINER (Williams) (6)	8.02	46%
	6	WHIRLWIND (Williams) (12)	7.84	64%
	7	EARTHSHAKER (Williams) (22)	7.84	54%
	8	RIVERBOAT GAMBLER (Williams) (3)	7.68	23%
	9	ELVIRA (Midway) (16)	7.53	53%
	10	POLICE FORCE (Williams) (15)	7.37	47%

best software

		MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
■	1	**HIGH IMPACT [H] (Williams) (1)**	**9.32**	**19%**
■	2	BLOOD BROS. [H] (Fabtek) (2)	8.36	10%
■	3	FINAL FIGHT [H] (Capcom) (12)	8.14	84%
■	4	NINJA COMBAT [S] (SNK) (4)	8.10	37%
■	5	STRATA BOWLING [V] (Strata) (4)	7.67	8%
■	6	RAIDEN [V] (Fabtek) (6)	7.61	24%
■	7	MAGIC SWORD [H] (Capcom) (5)	7.54	63%
	8	VIOLENCE FIGHT [H] (Taito) (11)	7.45	17%
■	9	CYBERLIP [S] (SNK) (2)	7.38	14%
■	10	OFF ROAD TRAK PAK [R] (Leland) (9)	7.32	32%
■	11	SUPER SPY [S] (SNK) (2)	7.32	19%
■	12	CARRIER AIR WING [H] (Capcom) (2)	7.20	9%
	13	WWF SUPERSTARS [H] (Technos) (19)	7.14	80%
■	14	HAMMERIN' HARRY [H] (Irem) (1)	6.78	8%
■	15	ATAXX [H] (Leland) (3)	6.77	37%
■	16	RIDING HERO [S] (SNK) (2)	6.75	7%
	17	TETRIS [H] (Atari) (18)	6.70	66%
■	18	BASEBALL STARS [S] (SNK) (4)	6.70	29%
	19	PIGSKIN [H] (Midway) (6)	6.67	21%
	20	VS. CYBERBALL [S] (Atari) (2)	6.63	17%
	21	GOLDEN AXE [H] (Sega) (20)	6.57	70%
	22	ROADBLASTERS [S] (Atari) (38)	6.56	61%
■	23	META FOX [V] (I-Vics) (4)	6.50	9%
	24	50 CALIBER [V] (Romstar) (8)	6.48	18%
	25	MVP [H] (Sega) (9)	6.45	25%

[H] horizontal [V] vertical [S] system [R] retrofit

best new videos

■	1	MAD DOG [LD console] (Betson/Icat)
■	2	GP RIDER [u/r+s/d] (Sega)
■	3	CISCO HEAT [u/r+s/d] (Jaleco)
■	4	F-15 [u/r+s/d] (Microprose)

■ *available brand new at certain distributors; number following brand shows months on chart including this one.*

RATING: *Operators were mailed "ballot sheets" listing games in active operation in U.S. locations and game centers and asked to "rate" the earning performance of each on the "1 to 10" measure: 10 for "power-house earnings," 9 for "excellent," 8 for "very good game," 7 for "good game," 6 for "decent game," 5 for "just average," 4 for "below average," etc. The written votes were tallied up and divided by the actual number of times the specific game was rated. Hence, the decimal points.*

DIST.: *The percentage of the surveyed arcade and street location operators who have the item on location. No upright videos rated by less than 10% of these operators appear on the Upright Videos chart, but promising new items appear under Best New Videos.*

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



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— Steve Epstein, Broadway Arcade
New York.



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

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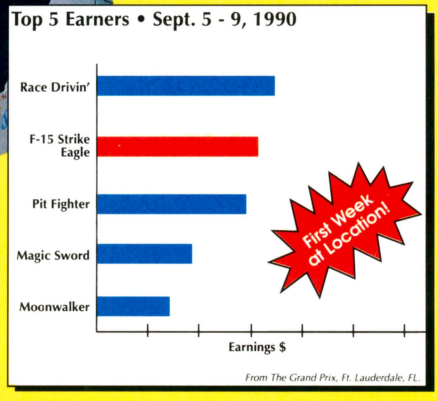

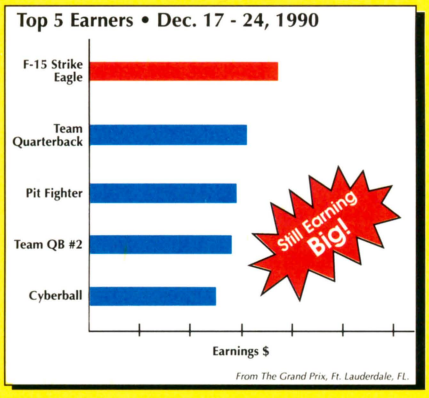

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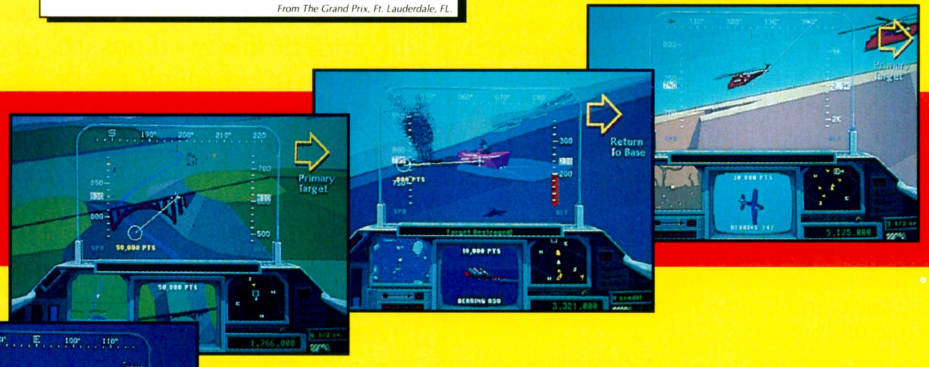

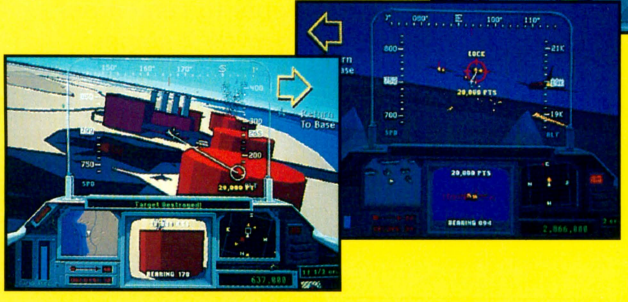

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COVER

If you think that's Mr. T and Hannibal Smith from TV's 'A-Team,' put your glasses back on. It's Mr. G (Jerry Gordon) and Hannibal Friedman (Joel) adding an extra splash of fun to their 'LaserStar' CD-100A and CD-51 jukeboxes. You don't need glasses to see the machines, however. Both are visually outstanding and if you peek at the technical points, both are quality performers in that vein as well.

These zany A-Teamsters are serious jukebox businessmen and they give readers a good eyeful on what's doing in CD music in our Cover Story interview. It's an area of prime interest for music operators in today's perplexing market (especially with the continuing paucity in 45 vinyl manufacture in the picture).

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EDITORIAL

The majority of RePlay's *subscriptions go out to small operating businesses, many of which are your classic "mom & pop" family-owned companies whose "universe" probably exists within a 50-mile radius, whose big adventure is going to a national coin machine show and whose principle interest is the company's bottom line.*

When collections get slimmer, they don't fire the help like an IBM might. They pay the help (which so often includes people who've been with the operation more years than they care to count), pay the truck costs, the mortgage on the shop and the utilities. And when things get tight, the last thing many of them spend money on is new equipment.

Cash flow to them is what water is to the farmer. When the flow is rich, they'll spend. When it dries up, they circle their wagons around "our own," and then recycle equipment all over the route, preferring to put the back into the job rather than the cash that might be left over after the collections are counted.

Sure, we have some big route operations that run by the book of debit and credits, use computers and do things "the accountant's way." But a lot more do things more basic: first the good machine, then the income, then the money going back into more machines (probably the same model). And that's a pretty fair way to judge the way things have been going these many months.

Some super-educated economists recommend meeting a recession head on by taking advantage of your competitor's weaknesses. In our business, that translates into location soliciting, putting brand new things out in existing locations, and taking advantage of every deal that comes along in a depressed market. There's wisdom in that (hey, some say we could all make a bundle in the stock market if we bought depressed stocks right now).

But let's face it. There's no way to turn a man's thinking around overnight. Each to his own method of doing business, we say. We only ask people to remember we're in the entertainment business. Hard as it sometimes is, operators have to "change the channel" with their attractions. If that means gulping a little in order to buy some new things, well, that's what it means. If it also means rotating your brains out, go for it as well. Just keep the attraction level up high as you can.

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INSIDE

FEBRUARY 1991

SPECIAL ARTICLES

AHEAD: ACME

If it seems that most of our industry's major trade shows have taken place in Nevada lately, that's because they have. Next month's ACME runs March 22-24 at the Sands Expo & Convention Center in Las Vegas . . . . . pg. 31

CRAVENS & CAPCOM

One of the industry's most successful salesmen, Bill Cravens, has taken his leave from one of the industry's most successful kit makers, Capcom. Big Bill is now running his own marketing firm called Leprechaun . . . . . pg. 36

HOME GAME CHECKUP

For the third year, this winter's Consumer Electronics Show didn't deliver a single "buzz" product, but Nintendo took up its own structure the size of a football field and their coming 16-bit system may bring the firm's U.S. revenues to about $4 billion this year . . . pg. 41

VIDEO LOTTERY UPDATE

Several states are talking very optimistically about their chances of passing video lottery this year. On the other hand, some insiders (at all three levels of the industry) advise that tradesters contain their euphoria and dig in for a "five- to ten-year program" . . . pg. 50

WHITHER THE 45?

We chatted with some one-stops and with AMOA's jukebox promo chief about the availability of 45s vs. CDs. (There's also an interview with Rowe execs on page 65 and a feature story on Music Operators Service on page 128.) The consensus from the one-stops is that you can get most hits on vinyl if you order early, but the trade needs to keep communicating with the labels . . . . pg. 76

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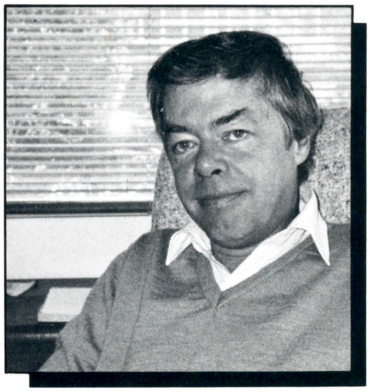

The "balloon" went up in the Persian Gulf. Though it's a serious development, life goes on in this economically-driven world we live in. The amusement industry has its own "balloon" that hasn't gone up yet, but could unless people remember the sordid history following the video collapse of 1982. I'm talking about slow-pay or no-pay at distributorships and lending institutions. Anyone around during the early '80s "troubles" remembers that the biggest trouble was the massive debt in equipment that went unpaid on the battlefield of bankruptcies and business-quitters. You'd have thought history would have provided its own lesson. Yet, I hear of similar troubles that might be brewing here and there today. The magnitude of 1982's debacle won't happen this time, however, because people on all levels of the industry are older and wiser.

*But, it's important to mention these things anyway, because common sense and attention to debt can save the industry and its members from a load of harm down the line. Yes, the Fed has allowed more money into the banking/lending portfolio . . . **but** commercial lenders are tightening up credit and zeroing in on good guys, not flakes, when they say "yes." A number of financial companies are struggling today and are not about to get in any deeper with anyone who, put most simply, doesn't pay his bills!*

Industry people singularly and in general have to keep their relations with distributors and financial institutions in order. Lending money to buy coin-op equipment is not always a "glamour issue." A good payment history makes it more glamourous, so I only hope people now in (shall we say) a bit of debt get their acts together and prevent this business from getting tarred by lenders.

This brief statement has been brought to you by somebody who remembers when certain new "operators" thought their bills belonged to "somebody else" (i.e. their corporations) and who missed class the day the phrase "debt of honor" was discussed. That lesson was — you buy it, you pay for it; you borrow it, you pay it back! If that's too complicated for some people, go work for the post office or take a weekly salary at a grocery store.

Ed Adlum

If you're a ghost, it might be wise to begin looking for some new haunting grounds. LASER GHOST™, Sega's ultimate ghost eliminator has arrived. With its extraordinarily realistic crimson red laser beam, LASER GHOST can zap, fry, and annihilate all ghost and ghost-like creatures instantly.

ZAP!

LASER GHOST is going to be equally effective in heating up player enthusiasm. Its high-action story line sends players against invading legions of ghastly ghosts. The game offers continuous play through multiple stages and equips players with a combination of powerful laser beams and high explosive missiles! New players can join the action at any point.

The LASER GHOST cabinet is as innovative as the game itself. It features sit-down laser gun stations for two players, and a standing station for a third. From a player's vantage, the laser gun's line of fire appears to be dozens of feet in depth, but in reality the cabinet, including seats is less than 63 inches deep.

For more information about LASER GHOST, contact your Sega Distributor.

Sega Enterprises, Inc., 2149 Paragon Drive,
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San Jose, CA 95161–0550
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SEGA

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LASER GHOST™



Installation Dimensions: 72.0"(H), 57.2" (W), 62.2" (D)

VIEWPOINTS

CIGARETTE PRICE HIKES

Dear RePlay,

We have recently examined the increases in our cost of cigarettes in 1990 against the promotional money we received. Our increases were split 50/50 between cost hikes from the tobacco manufacturers and the State of Florida cigarette tax increase of 9.9¢ which brought the total increase in our costs to $40,064.00. As for promotional monies received from the five leading tobacco companies (which came to a combined amount of $19,296.60), we are still left with a net loss of $20,767.40. On top of this, on Jan. 1, 1990, the Federal Government added an additional 4¢ per-pack tax and there is a proposed tax of $1,000.00 per year, per machine!

The market can no longer support these rapid and totally unjustified price increases. I would suggest that all cigarette companies decrease prices or rebate to vending operators all additional money charged for cigarettes in the future, unless their master plan is to make us scape goats to appease the present political mood in Congress.

Rather than be priced and/or taxed out of business, if the tobacco companies or the government would really want to do the right thing, they would get together and pay me "X" amount of dollars so that I would voluntarily quit the business and take all my machines to the local dump.

What is so ironic about this whole situation is if they succeed in putting us out of business, the cigarette companies will still sell the same amount of cigarettes and the government will still collect the same amount of taxes due to the fact that people will buy from alternative outlets. Once again we are being blatantly discriminated against.

Yours Truly,
Dean Young
President
Keys Vending, Inc.
Marathon, Florida

BE POSITIVE!

Dear RePlay,

If there was ever a time for positive thinking in our industry, this is it. Tough times? Sure. But also days of opportunity for anybody who's willing to work hard, learn new things and make improvements.

I recently attended two big trade shows in two major cities, the AMOA in New Orleans and the IAAPA in Washington, D.C. The same economic slowdown is affecting business in all three markets (street operators, arcades and amusement parks). But what a contrast in attitudes was displayed at these shows!

Many tradesters didn't even bother attending AMOA. Those who did seemed to spend half their time crying the blues, saying "there's nothing to buy, business is terrible" and so on. Doom and gloom! (As it happens Century saw and bought several worthwhile pieces in New Orleans. But then, we didn't come to the show blinded by negative attitude.) I guarantee the complainers won't find conditions improved any time soon, only because they're not doing anything to **make** business get better.

The IAAPA "park" show offered a refreshing change. Record attendance! Positive attitude! Brisk sales! Yes, amusement parks are facing hard times, too. Most report low earnings and poor attendance across the U.S. But the park people aren't just moping. Instead, they're saying, "Let's learn how to improve our business. Let's make sure we attract more people and more profit next season."

A positive attitude is what separates the winners from the losers. How can you move into the

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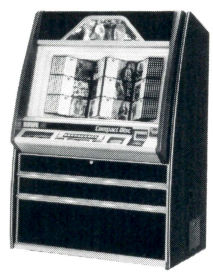

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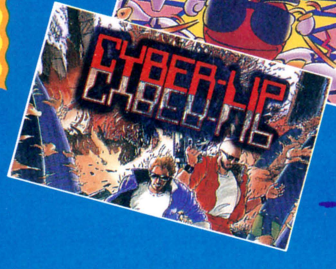

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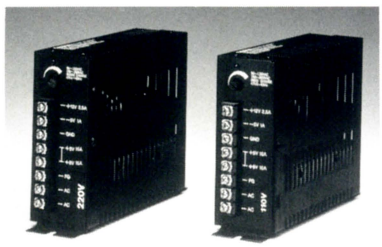

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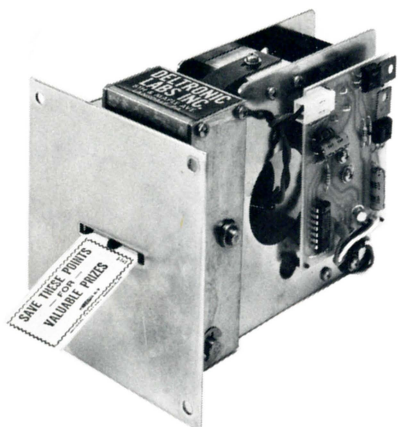

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winners' column? Keep a positive attitude towards our industry. Take time to look back at the good times and build on them. The operator who is motivated and excited about the future can and will make the difference.

Jerry Monday
Century Vending
Gardena, California

PLAYER OPINION

Dear Ed:

The player is the bottom line in video, and what level of the industry is closer to that player than the operators who are in direct contact with them at their various locations?

For several years, operators and distributors have stated that new innovation and direction in coin-op video is a must to recapture player interest and participation. According to operators' reports in the trade publications, players are burned out on karate, driving and shooting games (and some sports video).

My suggestion is that operators actually survey their player clientele to learn their preferences for future games. Let the players submit new titles or ideas to the operator. For example, do they want games themed on rodeo events, ships at sea, parachute courses, on education, on trivia, driving obstacle courses, decathlon events and do they want games in a multi-choice cabinet?

The operator should feed this information to the industry publications and also to the manufacturers. It's an idea worth exploring and would benefit the people in the R&D design shops.

Art Gallagher
Fort Worth, Texas

[Art: When I first read your letter, I said to myself, "no way will an operator mount a full-blown player survey," even though your idea is quite sound. But after reflection, it is a workable idea because the operator needn't go out there with paper and pencil. . . just informally ask players as he runs into them what kind of video games they'd like him to provide, if available. Then, jot them down back at the shop and send them to trade papers like ours. I've personally found that players are eager to talk about the videos. I recently visited an Active West bowling arcade near my house, saw maybe only five young men playing and asked one playing Ataxx if he liked the piece. "The only real game here," he said, adding, "I wonder when they'll have it on a home cartridge?" Well, you don't wanna hear that. But if I'd have drilled this guy (a 22-year-old, by the way) on what he'd like the industry to come up with, I'd bet he'd have given me an earful. Good idea! ed]

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR — *If you have something to say, RePlay has a place for you to say it. . . this "Viewpoints" section. Letters should be mailed to RePlay Magazine at P.O. Box 2550, Woodland Hills, CA 91365. While letters signed "Anonymous" are accepted and printed, please send your name and phone number in case we have any questions. Any questions? Call us at: 818/347-3820.*



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LaserStar Gold, with its handsome black color, twinkling lights and regal gold trim, is destined to become the favorite in any location. It has all the great features — dramatic title display, ease of use — that made our CD-100 such a winner, plus an enhanced CD sound system.

So if you want to be a big winner, go for the gold: LaserStar Gold, from Rowe.

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BEWARE!

THE GALAXY IS BEING INVADED!!
DESTROY THE MONSTERS WITH HIGH-POWERED, PUMP-ACTION MACHINE GUNS!!
RESCUE THE HOSTAGES IMMEDIATELY!



Story

The year is 2039 A.D. When a distant colonized space station experiences strange and unexplained occurrences, the Federation of Earth launches a special off-world unit of commandos to investigate. En route, a distress signal from an Earth-bound cargo ship is intercepted. The crew has been taken hostage by hostile alien life-forms. Tension builds as the commandos search through the ship for survivors, while fending off the brutal, inhuman attackers. It's a fight to the death when the aliens' true course of cold-blooded destruction is discovered . . . Destination: Earth!

How To Play

- This high-powered shooting game is in the first person perspective and can be played by one or two players simultaneously. A second player can join the game at any time.
- The hostages must be rescued while annihilating the alien monsters in seven shocking and horrifying rounds.
- The game is over when the player's LIFE ENERGY has expired, when no hostages have been rescued, or when the seven rounds have been completed. And with Taito's buy-in feature, the player can continue the action!
- A LIFE ENERGY capsule appears periodically to restore life to the player. In addition to the endless supply of bullets, the player can collect special weapons including Freeze, Blade, Fire and Explosive Bombs.

Operation

- The controls include a high-powered, pump-action, fully automatic machine gun and a foot pedal to assist the player in maneuvering through the alien-infested ship.
- The pump-action allows the player to select the special weapon of choice. The player then simply pulls the trigger to unleash total destruction.
- The foot pedal allows the player to reverse his direction of travel. This gives the player additional maneuverability to explore each corridor of the large ship.









TAITO

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NEWS DIGEST

MARCH 15 IS DEADLINE TO LICENSE THOSE JUKEBOXES

Attention, **jukebox operators!** Have any unlicensed jukes out there? If so, then you have until **March 15** to fill out license applications and get them back to the Jukebox Licensing Office.

The license gives you legal authority to play all the copyrighted music that's protected by ASCAP, SESAC and BMI, plus music from over 40 foreign copyright societies. AMOA EVP **John Schumacher** strongly urged operators to comply, saying "You can't afford not to be licensed!"

Important note from the copyright groups: "After March 13, 1991, the Jukebox License Office will no longer accept applications from jukebox operators to license any jukeboxes which have been on location. Following the deadline, ASCAP, SESAC and BMI will each begin licensing the establishments where the unlicensed jukeboxes are located."

As reported earlier, 1991 licenses are $3 less per box than last year (sort of a reward for so many boxes being licensed last year). The 1991 rate schedule charges $272 for the first box; $52 each for the second through tenth boxes; and $45 for jukebox number eleven and up. By the way, future license costs may keep falling, if industry compliance keeps rising. To report unlicensed jukeboxes or get license applications, contact the Jukebox Licensing Office at 800/955-5053.

DESERT SHIELD ENJOYS DONATED WURLITZER JUKEBOX



Here's a heartwarming photo: Brigadier General **Dick Schneider** presents a Dept. of the Army certificate of appreciation to Wurlitzer USA prexy **Joe Tedeschi.** As reported last month, Wurlitzer donated a *Make My Music* jukebox to Operation Desert Shield (back before war broke out and the operations' name became Desert Storm.) The machine was stocked with records from Musicland's Sam Goody store chain and the box was shipped to Saudi Arabia. It's now being rotated among 15 base camps so that U.S. servicemen and women can enjoy the sounds of home. May God bless them all and bring them home safely and soon.

HOME VIDEO BIZ REMAINS HALE DESPITE SOME LICENSEE WOES

Grouping the sales of hardware and software titles under one umbrella, the home video industry did a whopping $4 billion worth of business in 1990, and **Nintendo** and its game licensees accounted for 87% of it. With NES and Game Boy production continuing, and adding in their brand new 16 bit Super Famicon (coming to market this fall), Nintendo expects to hit the $4 billion mark all by themselves in 1991.

On the dark side, all is not glitz in homeland as several licensees (perhaps even more than several) are taking a beating in what's become a buyer's market. Over-ordering on some game paks has resulted in drastic discounting of prices to toy reps and the aggregate financial bath is rumored to run into the tens of millions. But as one licensee said, "It's not all that dreary when you consider how much money we've made in the home market."



So, this larger arm of the video game industry is bullish but cautious these days. However, with over 27 million Nintendo Entertainment Systems (NES) covering around 30% of America's homes, plenty of game paks will still be made and sold to feed that humongous player base. For more news on Home Video 1991, turn to our report on the Winter Consumer Electronics Show on **page 41.**



cartoon courtesy of
NSM
The Performance Machine

AAMA HIRES LIZ POWELL AS PROGRAMS COORDINATOR



AAMA has hired **Liz Powell** as programs coordinator, where she'll oversee AAMA activity at location trade shows, edit internal AAMA publications and handle various PR tasks. She handled similar responsibilities in her previous post as administrative assistant to the United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Assn. Liz replaces **Kerry Sharman,** who left AAMA in late 1990 to pursue a career in broadcast TV production. AAMA EVP **Bob Fay** announced the appointment, saying Liz is "exactly who we were looking for to fill this position. She has all the necessary qualifications as well as a personality that will mesh well with the staff and membership." Welcome to the industry!

Betson Enterprises and Crompton Manufacturing take redemption one step beyond pushers with a player controlled cover the spot game

MAGIC CIRCLE

- Award percentaging is fully operator adjustable
- Player controlled aiming device
- Crompton quality
- Vibrant graphics
- Full tilt alarm
- Fully metered
- Token or ticket payout (Also available with one ticket payout with each coin in feature).



Length: 26″
Depth: 31″
Height: 63″

Also, a three player game combining 2 Crompton coin pushers with 1 Magic Circle or 2 Magic Circles and 1 coin pusher

VARIETY



Length: 74″
Depth: 31″
Height: 86″

More spots means more winners!



...and that makes more players!

Variety is ideal for locations needing both pushers and a cover the spot game.

Redemption games have lasting appeal— so buy products that are built to last

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So fast, NSM jukebox operators get up to
30 minutes MORE worth of plays a day...

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...Yet it never so much as touches the disc.

With jukeboxes, all you're really selling is time. And the NSM line of HyperBeam™ CD Jukeboxes — with their "Quick Change Artist" Changers — give you more of it to sell. A lot more.

By minimizing the delay time between patron selections, our ultra-fast changer increases operator income by an average of 5% over our biggest competitor.

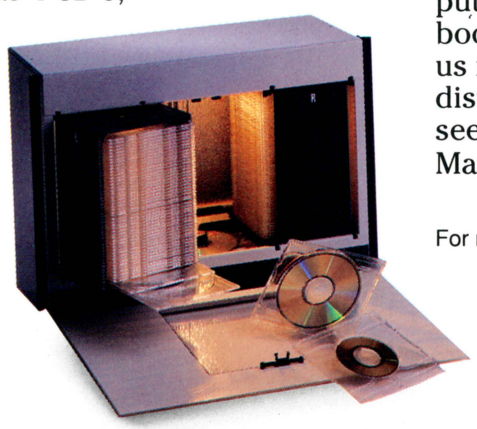
Yet the changer mechanism never even touches the discs... just the trays they're cradled in. So there's no disc breakage. No scratching or damaging of discs. Not even any wear.

The changer isn't the only "Quick Change Artist" in our new CD Jukeboxes. Just push the button on our new Picture Display title strip mechanism.



4 full CD jackets, with their standardized title strips, appear and disappear as fast as the eye can absorb them. It takes less than 90 seconds to speed-view all one hundred. Best of all, titles are positioned and presented so patrons can really see them well.

A 100 CD jukebox that looks full with as few as 4 CD's. You can load an NSM with as few as 4 CD's, as many as 100. Or anything in between. Yet, it always appears full. What's more, the NSM system handles 5"album discs, 3" singles and the new "Maxi Singles."



You name it, the NSM system does it. You need it, the NSM system has it.

Background Music. Single or full album play. Attract Mode. Play length control for fading out excessively long-playing songs. And over 100 other pre-programmed functions to maximize income.





Not to mention the wireless remote ... and the hand held DataPrint 2000™ that prints out collection and popularity information on the spot.

But, with NSM, what you see is only a small part of what you really get.

We fit our equipment with more, larger and better quality speakers. We use longer lasting electronic components. We install loomed & fitted wire harnesses. In short, we speak to literally hundreds of performance and dependability details that most people never notice. But that doesn't make them any less important. Fact is, these "details" are far more important in the long run than alot of what you see. And were the main reason NSM was overwhelmingly voted "Number One Jukebox" by operators at the international trade show in England last year.

But we're not asking you to buy NSM. Just compare. Feature for feature. Fact for fact. And, to help make it easier for you, we've put together an informative, quick-reading booklet: "NSM Presents". Call, write, or FAX us for a free copy. Or stop by your local NSM distributor and pick one up. You'll quickly see why NSM is called..."The Performance Machine."

For more information and the name of the Distributor nearest you:

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Now performing in every NSM HyperBeam CD Jukebox

THE BALLY TURNTABLE

Bally Mfg. Corp., once the mightiest force in the industry and now down to slots and gaming videos as the only coin-op "devices" they make, picked **Dick Gillman** as their new president to succeed the resigned **Robert Keessee.** The latter was generally considered a force behind the "reshaping" of the giant coin machine company into an essentially casino/hotel/health fitness organization.

Under **Bob Mullane** (who resigned before Keessee did), the firm owned Bally Midway, Aladdin's Castle (the giant arcade chain) and the biggest string of factory-owned distribution offices in the nation. All that's been either sold or closed. New President Gillman, who formerly ran their casino division, is a sharp fellow and well he should be: according to *Gaming & Wagering Business* magazine, the company has been $1.8 billion in debt.

Besides Gillman, Bally also has the considerable talents of their newish Chairman **Arthur Goldberg,** described by G&WB as "having a reputation as an aggressive reform-minded investor" who can hopefully turn things around.

PS: **Bill Malloy,** former VP of Bally Distributing who piloted the closing of those offices, has been named prexy of their Scientific Games lottery ticket division out of Norcross, Georgia.

VIDEO LOTTERY: MIXED PICTURE FOR MORE LEGAL STATES IN 91

State operator associations say their phones are ringing several times a day with questions about **video lottery:** Will it be legalized in our state? How soon? What kind of political challenges will it face? Some insiders say **West Virginia** will probably be the first — and perhaps the only — new state to legalize payoff video poker this year. But other tradesters in Texas, Wisconsin, New Jersey and elsewhere take a more optimistic stance. We provide a spot-check of legalization effort in major states on **page 50.**



Seen here is ***Player's Touch,*** a new video lottery terminal system from SMS, featuring advanced touch-screen technology. It offers a variety of games in a single, casino-style steel cabinet. Distributed to the legal Canadian market by Laniel Automatic (Montreal), the first version of the game features three poker variations plus keno, and has been approved by the Atlantic Lottery Corp.

Also in video lottery news, IGT (International Game Technology) has cancelled their intended acquisition of Video Lottery Consultants.



Wisconsin's Viking Vending recently held their first open house Dec. 5, hosting seminars on video lotteries for their customers. Branch Manager Jim Groeschel, Salesman Dave Gabrielli and prexy Steve Lieberman greeted the guests and provided a catered lunch. SMS's Jimmy Pietrangelo and Merit's David Rubenstein discussed the technical and operational aspects of the lotteries while Lieberman Music Co. gaming rep Paul Riffel gave an account of video gaming from an operator's perspective. Also on hand were other factory reps from such firms as Dynamo, Leland, NSM, Valley and Williams/Bally-Midway. According to the distributorship, the open house/seminar combination was a huge success.



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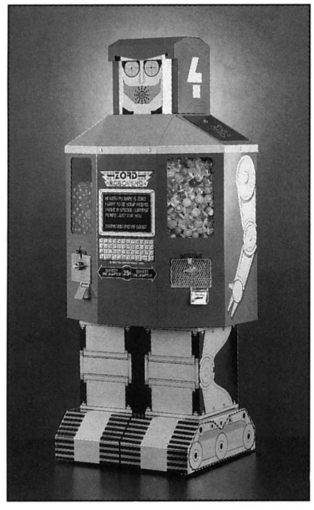

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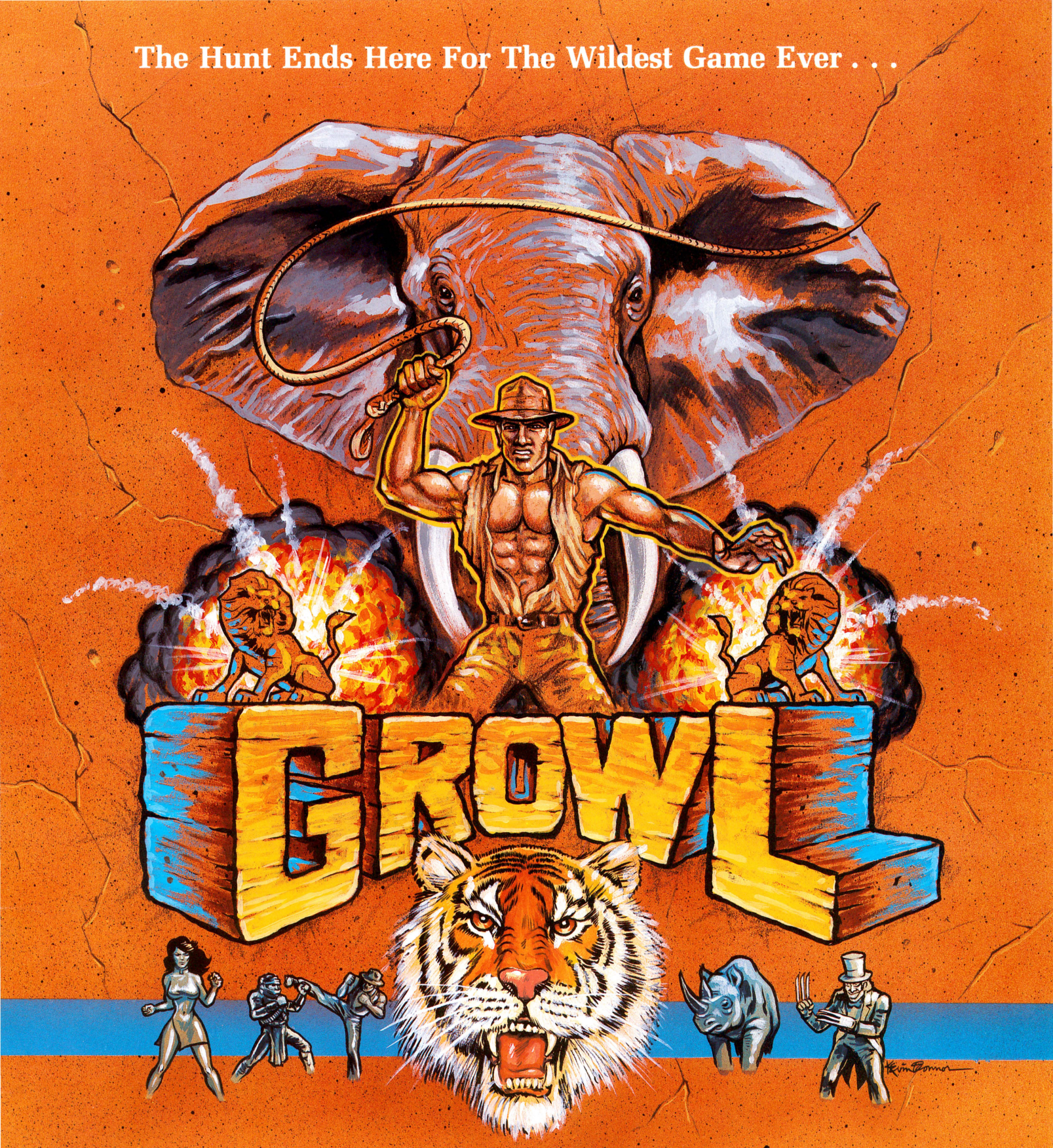
The Hunt Ends Here For The Wildest Game Ever . . .



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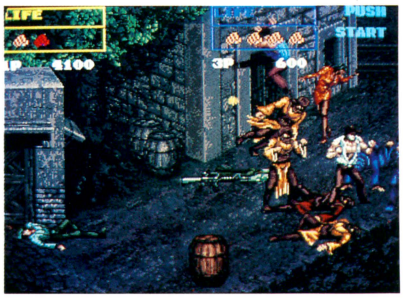
You must battle a band of beastly game poachers in your fearless fight to save the animals! It's your job to bring justice back to the jungle, in this challenging, new adventure from the innovators at Taito.

TAITO™

In the heart of the jungle lurks a greedy, evil gang of animal poachers who are bent on destroying precious animal species. The player must fight off the poachers to save the animals in danger, but be careful - the enemy is both elusive and strong!!







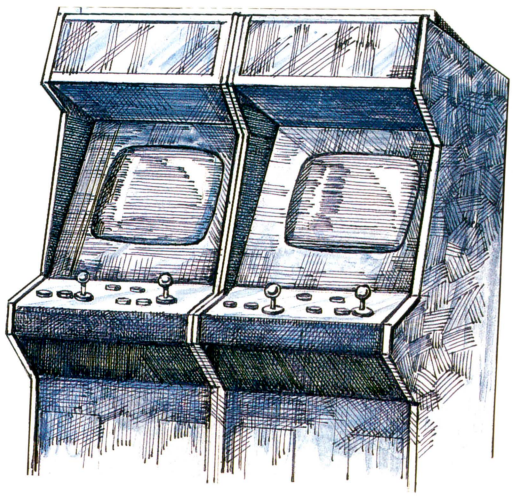
The 8-way joystick and 2 action buttons arm you with 8 deadly options, which include deadly kicks and punches, ability to throw crates and barrels, and firepower with your assault rocket. The attack and jump buttons used together, give the player the ultimate advantage. Change weapons by using the joystick in the down position. Victory or defeat depend on the speed and variety of your assaults.

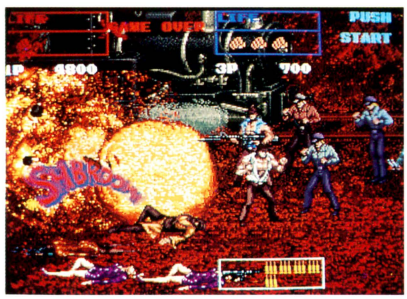
There are 7 rounds in all - each round with varying stages of challenging enemies which take you through the city, the jungle, a cave and finally the enemy's hide-out! Each time the player successfully clears a round, a variety of enemies appear. Keep an eye on their weapons for once you reach the final round, you will face a beast of a boss - one on one! Taito's Buy-In and Continue Play features keep the action going!

This versatile horizontal kit enables the operator to install the kit in many configurations which include:

- Standard 2 player cabinets
- Any 4 player cabinet
- V.S. cabinets
- Special kit available to link two standard 2-player cabinets to make a 4 player game. - NO ADDITIONAL BOARD NEEDED.

In addition, there is a dip switch setting to adjust to any coin door configuration!







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KAWASAKI PUTS COIN-OP FIRST IN NEW NEO•GEO SCHEME

SNK's Japanese supremo **Kawasaki** has announced that beginning February, all new games will be brought to their coin-op Neo•Geo system before they're released to their home system division and further that a space of six months time will divide one from the other, enabling operators to get first dubs on public play. Neo•Geo's also granted development licenses to four outside companies interested in supplying software to their system, including the Alpha Denshi (which designed *Ninja Combat),* to increase their software game bank for operators.

Neo•Geo's home system made its Consumer Electronics Show debut Jan. 10 in Las Vegas and sports *Ninja Combat* and the other



games that have been out on coin-op SNK units. But beginning February, new titles like *Ghost Pilots, Burning Fight, King of the Monsters* and *Sengoku* will be brought to coin-op six months before they go to the home market. Now, that's quite a testimony to the amusement machine business, considering how much bigger the home market is today.

T-T-THAT'S ALL, FOLKS: HOT PRODUCT AT WMS

The latest pin from Midway is called *Bugs Bunny's Birthday Ball* and to help promote it, the firm is offering Warner Bros. merchandise to operators at specially discounted prices. Midway's sister company, Williams Electronics, is grinning these days with the success of ***High Impact,*** their four-player football-themed video (available kit or dedicated in a universal cabinet). Also, Williams' super pin ***Fun House*** is now shipping to the U.S. market after a fine European sales run. In all, Williams/Bally-Midway is doing its best to stay attuned to the market . . . and the market is rewarding them for their efforts. Full story follows on **page 103.**

U.K.'S DEITH LEISURE PLC ACQUIRED BY NAMCO & SEGA

On Dec. 20, the **Sega Enterprises & Namco Ltd.** jointly entered into a contract to acquire **Deith Leisure,** one of the U.K.'s leading amusement game distributors and manufacturers (Deith had previously been part of the bankrupt Corton Beach PLC group). This rare blending of Japanese investment will provide "all necessary support and assistance to maintain and expand Deith Leisure's business," said a press fax.

"In addition, we take this opportunity to confirm that our good relationships with other manufacturers and distributors will not be affected by this acquisition," it added. Stay tuned for other developments, clearly including Sega's possible interest in gaining access to manufacturing facilities here in the States.

PIONEER JUKE TEAM GEARING UP FOR SPRING PUSH

At presstime, **Pioneer's** CD jukebox division was feeling the effects of a slow first quarter, along with everybody else in the industry. "The industry is not doing real well at the moment but I think that's a temporary situation," said Pioneer's marketing chief **Paul Scribner.** "Fortunately, at Pioneer we have the capability to live through those valleys more easily than some others. Many people are asking us to react by cutting prices, but we've decided to be satisfied with lower estimates and produce better products." Bright spots: "Our distributor network is in place and solidly behind us," Scribner smiled. "Dealers like the new operator subscription program system for our CD compilation discs. Our sales and marketing team is also in place and working well; and our market research efforts are on track." Scribner said Pioneer was in a "coasting mode" through April 1 when they'll get dealer contracts in synch with Pioneer's fiscal year. Overall, he said, Pioneer's first full year in coin-op music found success in putting their laserdisc product on the map, getting name recognition from operators and respect from the trade in general. Look for more news to start popping from this Japanese giant in the spring.

CIG DOMINOS CONTINUE FALLING

One Jan. 11, Los Angeles City Councilman **Marv Braude** proposed a citywide ban on cigarette vending machines. His proposal obviously has to go through the legislative wirework and is sure to meet lobbying resistance from venders and tobacco people. His intent is to keep cigarettes out of the hands of youngsters, the same reason New York City banned the machines from any location except bars that fulfilled draconian standards like placing the machine no closer than 50 feet from the nearest door.

Way over in Sweden, pictures of skulls and stories of smokers who died will be printed on cigarette cartons next year, according to an item in the *L.A. Times.* The paper quoted an official of their National Health Board saying, "It's difficult to transform medical science to intelligible language to make people understand the health hazards of tobacco."

THE "SKINNY" ON *GALS PANIC*

Marty Glazman of **Kaneko** is shipping a new video kit called ***Gals Panic*** that may have some operators scratching their heads whether or not to buy. Why? The game is an authentic skill game on one hand, but one of the rewards is to see a girl stripped all the way down to the cantalopes. But Marty says it's hardly pornographic, "more like a 1950s Playboy," adding that it's good, clean fun for adult stops.

Kaneko's already sold over 10,000 kits world-wide, Marty advises, with 3,500 going into Japan and 4,000 into Europe alone. It's a 2-player simultaneous-play item and it has a dip switch the operator can hit if he doesn't want people to see the "dealie on the tip of the cantalope." We're talking in code here, but you get the message. Just please put it in the right location if you buy it.

'SIMPSONS' VIDEO & 'TMNT' SEQUEL IN KONAMI'S FUTURE



Pictured above, a screen shot from Konami's new Roller Games *kit.*

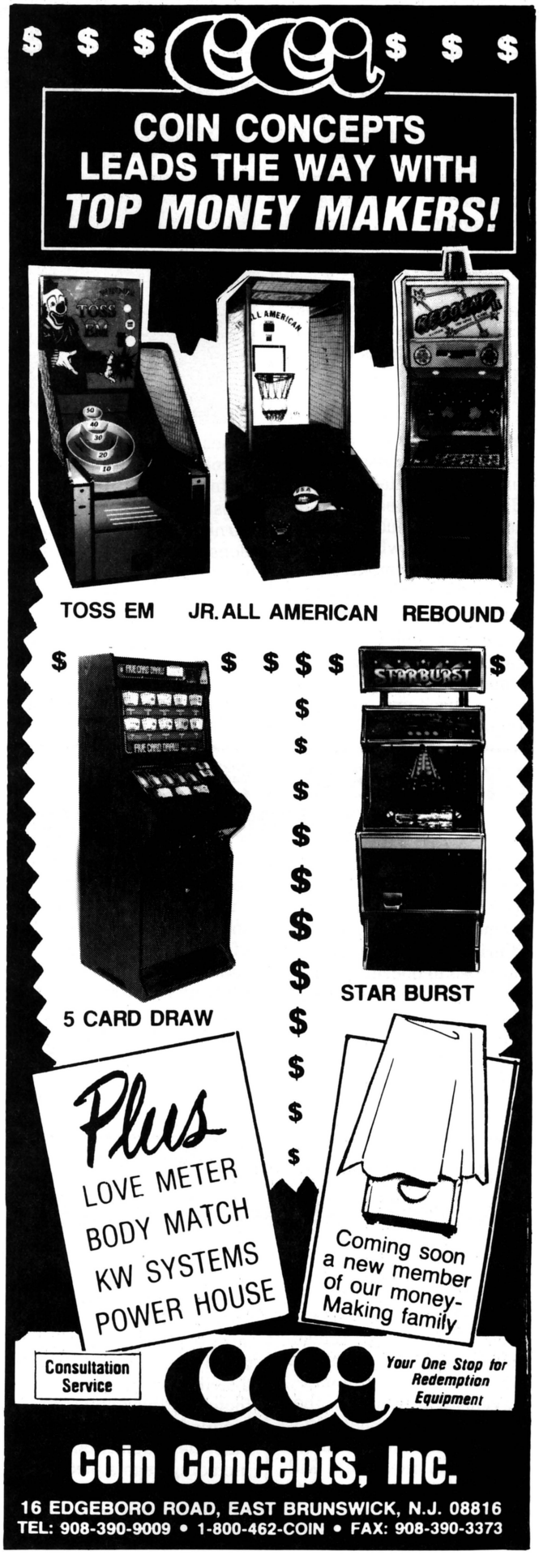
It's confirmed. Konami's ***Simpsons*** video game will debut at the ACME show in Las Vegas next month; shipments should start in April. Asked about the Acclaim home game shown under that title at the recent Consumer Electronics Show, Konami's U.S. chief **Steve Kaufman** said "That game has absolutely nothing to do with ours. All I can tell operators is that our coin-op is a powerhouse and I predict it will be 'the hit' at ACME."

If this turns out to be true, it'll be fascinating since the *Simpsons* pin from Data East was the hit at the New Orleans AMOA. Regarding that "other" video predicted to come from Konami, Kaufman revealed that the follow-up to *Turtles* will be done and available this fall. "The sequel is not a chip change, but a whole new game with these turtle characters," Steve advised. "And it won't be called *Turtles II,* but something like *TMNT Time Travelers."* Konami has a home cartridge called *Turtles II,* by the way, which the firm describes as "pretty much our original coin-op *Turtles* made for home software." So, Konami coin-op remains ahead of the home biz. Cowabunga!

Shipping mid-February from Konami is ***Roller Games,*** a two-player interactive kit for horizontal videos. Based on the TV show of the same name, the game features combative rink skating (men's and women's teams alternate in different stages of the game). Battle skills and skating jumps highlight the action, and character humor lightens the mood between rounds. Visit your authorized dealer for more info.

WORRY WART OR SOOTHSAYER?

The battle by the seven "baby bell" telephone companies on Capitol Hill to gain access to home video cable delivery (that's commercial programming, not games) has caught the keen interest of operator **Bill Stone** (Tullahoma, Tenn.). Even though the "telcos" have a mighty uphill climb before they ever get such access, Stone hypothesizes on the possibility of video game programs eventually being dialed up by folks at the location. It's one thing if the operator's involved somehow, but if not? Pause, gulp!



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HOMELESS KIDS PLAY GAMES DONATED BY 4 AAMA MEMBERS



Four AAMA members recently donated coin-op equipment to a San Diego, Calif. center for the homeless (including 140 kids). Fabtek, Dynamo, Leland and C.A. Robinson (who also donated tokens) were the generous contributors; their games went to the St. Vincent dePaul/Joan Kroc Shelter. Seen here, Leland's **Debbie Austin** makes the official presentation to the center's **Harvey Mandel.** Debbie explained that the shelter's **Father Joe Carroll** was the sparkplug who got this shelter established in the first place; he'll reward the kids for good grades and responsible behavior by giving them tokens which can be used to play the games. "Everyone I spoke with was eager to give the games to the shelter and to have them delivered as soon as possible," smiled AAMA's EVP **Bob Fay.** "It was very exciting to see the enthusiasm!"

TOP TV TALK SHOW PLUGS ARCADE GAMES FOR HOME USE

Five million TV viewers saw a couple of fine coin-op games getting plugged for home rec rooms on the Dec. 14 broadcast of 'Regis & Kathy Lee,' North America's top syndicated talk show. On view were Adastra's nifty fold-up basketball toss game *Hoops* (the show pointed out that a cheaper home version was available) and two classics from I.C.E. — *Putting Challenge* and *Super Chexx.* Hosts Regis Philbin and Kathy Lee Gifford had a great time playing the games (Kathy Lee managed to score a goal against Regis on the I.C.E. hockey game). Naturally, both game factories were tickled pink at the publicity. All of this came about because a program regular, consumer electronics expert Dr. Frank Viggiano, devoted his monthly appearance to "Adult Toys for Christmas." (How did he learn about the games? Hey, he's a *RePlay* subscriber!) Viewers also had a chance to receive Dr. Viggiano's newsletter; the edition following his Dec. 14 appearance gave more information on all three games. Nice going, all!

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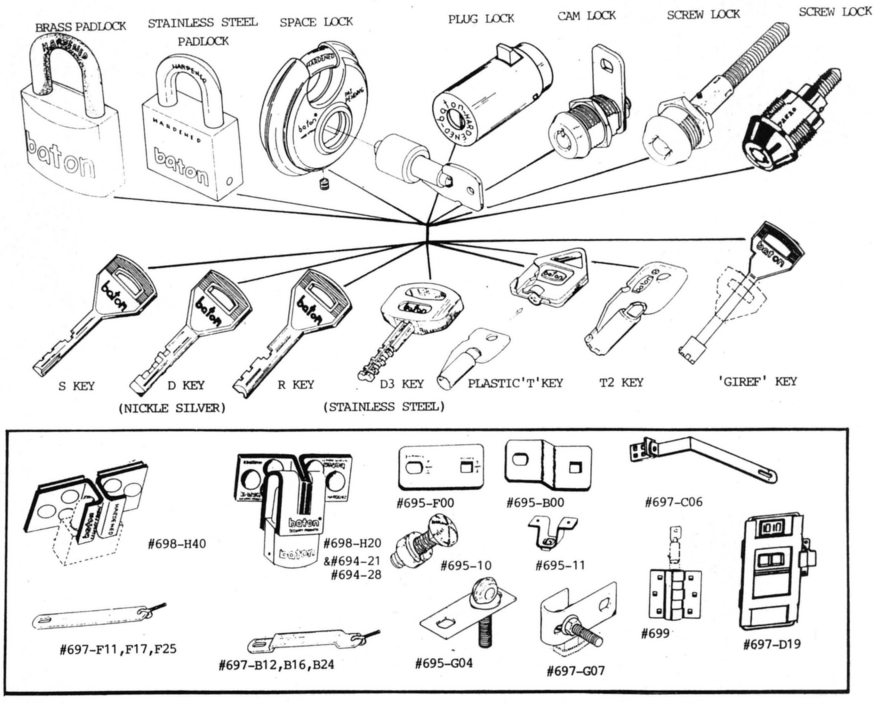

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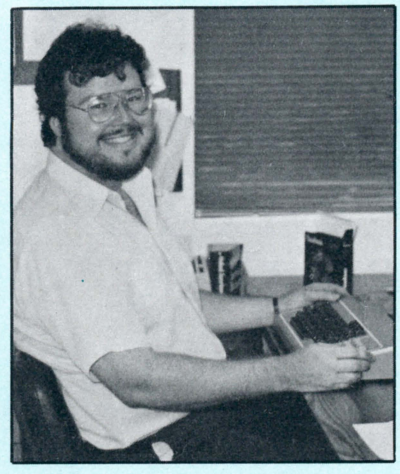

Okay, it's official. Even President Bush has admitted we're in a recession. A recent cover of Newsweek *showed a family in a small boat about to go over the falls. Headline: "Riding Out the Recession."*

Getting through tough times is on the minds of many operators these days. Some operators are taking the hit syndrome to new heights: they're having second thoughts about buying even the hit games! Others are waiting for closeouts, and there are some.

Maybe the smartest guys are the ones who are investing early and heavily in the best of the new equipment, knowing that their "competitors" are too scared to really compete. Now is the time to take that choice location away from the other operator in town... not by claim-jumping or dirty tricks, but by good, clean competition. Offer a better product; that's what free enterprise is all about!

Good operators are also keeping an eagle eye on the bottom line, and adjusting the kind of equipment they buy accordingly. "The kind of equipment that looks good to us in 1991 is totally different from what looked good to us five years ago," said one sharp operator (he monitors his income trends on a computer). "We're investing where the earnings line is heading north, and we're giving up where the earnings line is heading south."

This operator added that redemption is only a small percentage of his route at present, but it's going to grow because "those earnings are up by about 135% over last year." Remember, your players are also having tough times, and the prospect of winning a prize (in addition to enjoying the game) adds "perceived value" to your entertainment product.

Good operators are also using the recession as an opportunity to renegotiate commission splits. They're showing location owners the cold facts and figures about game costs, overhead and income. If you've got a "loser" location that refuses to take a smaller piece of the pie, do yourself a favor: give it to the competition. Let another operator go broke with it while you concentrate on the real money-makers.

Some tradesters like to recall how coin-op flourished during the Great Depression of the 1930s. They claim we will prevail again (in this far less severe downturn) because we provide cheap entertainment. That's probably true for taverns and classic grown-up diversions such as pool, darts and music. Indeed, these equipment categories have been reported "up" by many tradesters for some while. So if you're not into leagues, now is the time! If you're not into CD, now is the time!

Last summer a famous businessman was asked if the U.S. would have a recession in 1991. His answer: "I don't know, but it doesn't matter. Good companies are planning for the long term and will do fine either way." How true! Don't surrender to panic. Franklin Roosevelt was right: the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.



photo courtesy of the Las Vegas News Bureau

ACME '91 ON TAP

Writing Big Letters in the Sands

ACME, the "spring national show," returns to Nevada for the fourth time. Taking place March 22-24 (Friday through Sunday) at the Sands Expo & Convention Center, the spring outing is building nicely . . . so nicely, it had to move from the original Bally's Grand into the Sands to accommodate additional exhibitors.

Sponsored jointly by AAMA and *Play Meter* magazine, the ACME is the calendar's "other end" to the fall show. Like AMOA, it brings exhibitors of equipment, parts & services into exhibit booths for buyers and distributors to inspect. It also holds educational seminars. And like the last AMOA show, it takes place in one of America's fun cities (the 1990 AMOA took place in New Orleans.)

ACME held forth in Reno in both 1988 and 1989 (their 1990 show took place at Chicago's Hyatt Regency, AMOA's old home). This year's show is their first in Las Vegas (AMOA did it once, in 1989). So, Nevada is sort of becoming the "capital city" for national coin shows, and a lot of people seem to like that.

Already by January 8, ACME show producers Glasgow, Inc. had sold 524 booths to 117 different exhibitors (this figure has no doubt grown by this printing). For those who compare things, AMOA's New Orleans show had 163 exhibitors. Even at this late date, it's probable that late-comer exhibitors might be able to get into the ACME show, but there's no guarantee (call Glasgow, Inc. at 708/333-9292 or fax them at 708/333-4086 and find out).

Clearly, there'll be a wealth of new products on stage at the Sands, itself a new convention theater. Hotel rooms have been reserved at the Bally's Grand (about six blocks away from the Sands) at the rate of $109 for single/double occupancy. You can either walk from the hotel to the Sands, cab it or take the complimentary shuttle bus service ACME will provide.

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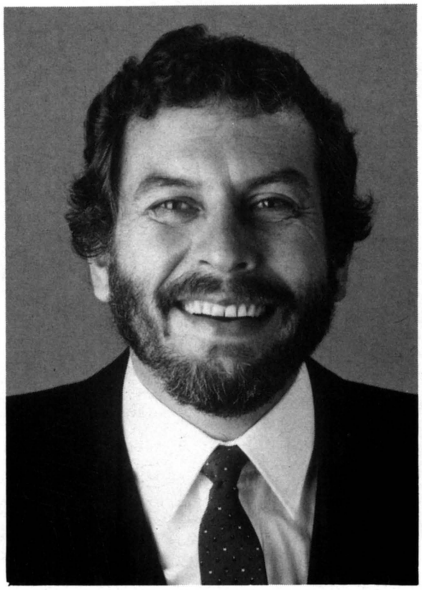

ACME keynote speaker Nolan Bushnell

try finds itself in, show producers hope a load of people will show up to do some serious business, or at the very least, some serious examination of the wares on display. A full set of seminars is also on tap, including the standard Manufacturers' Firing Line, free cocktail party and the keynote address on "The Future of Coin-Op" by trade legend Nolan Bushnell. It will be fascinating to learn what "The Bush" has to say about future direction; his fertile mind and his articulate syntax always make for thoughtful listening.

Important note: all seminars will take place at the Sands where the exhibition will be held; the free cocktail party on Saturday night (where AAMA's awards will be presented) will take place there as well. So the idea is to sleep at Bally's and do business and such at the Sands. Okey dokey!

While Las Vegas is one of America's funnest cities (no description is needed), the irony is that the coin amusement business doesn't see a great deal of fun on its plate at present times. Video game sales and collections have not been robust in all quarters for at least one and a half years by now, and ACME's timing could either be great or terrible, depending upon the individual operator's attitude.

Then there's the traveling distance from the East to consider (although Las Vegas is far more of a first-class stop than Reno in terms of airline efficiency). West Coast people can (and often will) elect to drive into Las Vegas (as many midwesterners do when shows are held in Chicago). But the majority will take planes (believe us, Vegas is a comfortable place to take a plane to).

Since the AMOA association is presently at a bit of a loggerhead with the ACME-sponsoring AAMA over the parallel PC board importation law, it's speculative as to how many AMOA members will make the trip out. Hopefully, the "maturity" of individual operators won't get in the way of common sense here and everyone will recognize the worth of the industry's one and only national "spring show" and come by to visit the Sands's "big showroom." (By the way, show rules explicitly prohibit display of parallel boards.)

Besides the show itself, its seminars and the always-present cocktail parties thrown by individual ex-

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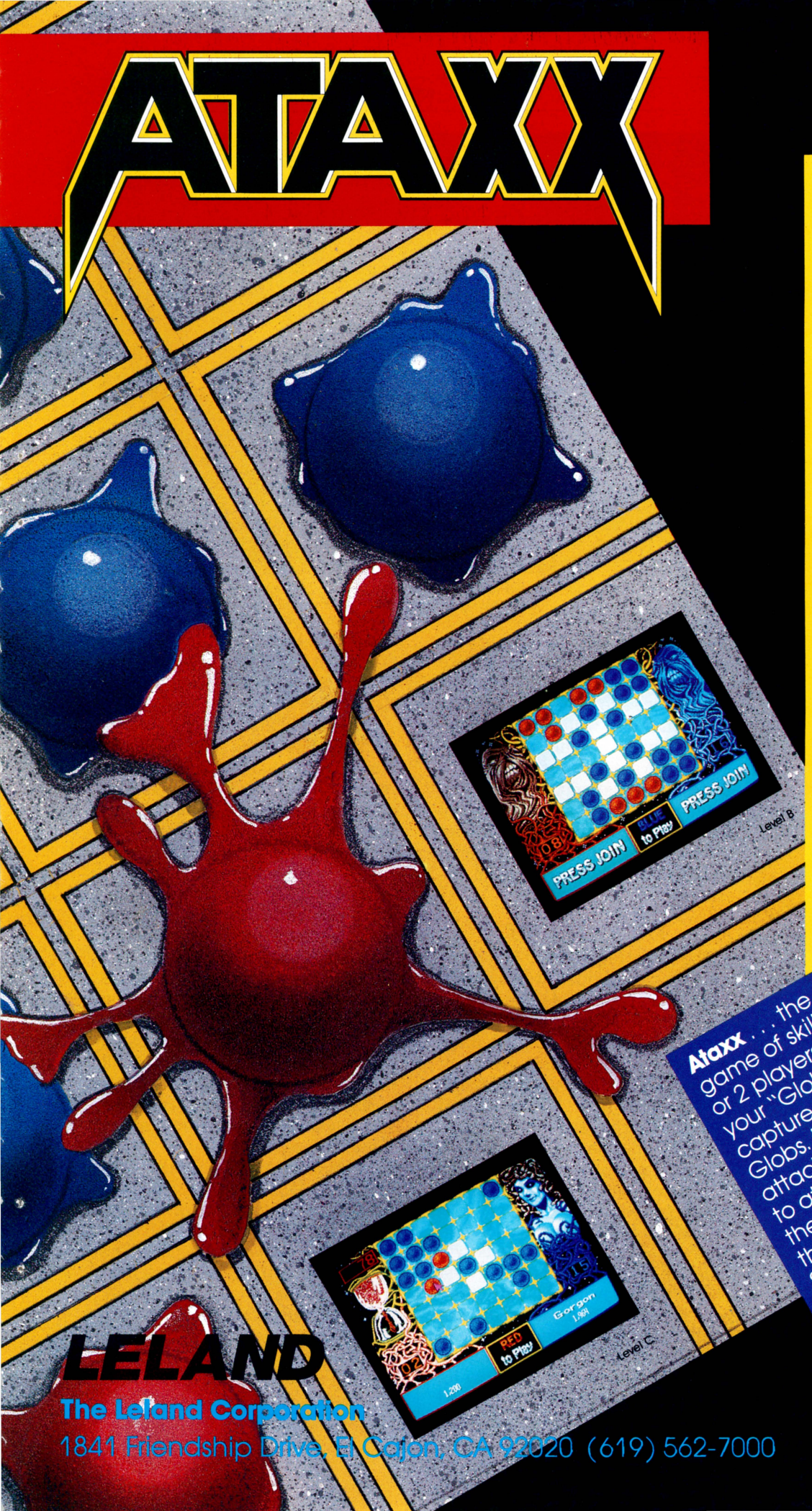



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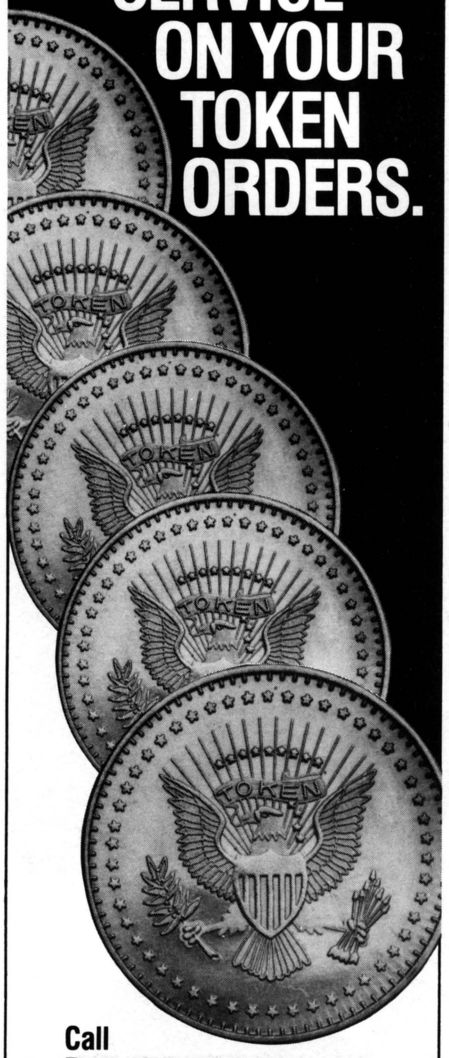

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photo courtesy of the Las Vegas News Bureau

In addition to all the trade-oriented activities, there's lots to do in Las Vegas from eating great-priced buffets to seeing terrific shows to having fun (and winning money?) playing such games as craps.

hibitors, there are other reasons for operators to make the show, like "getting warm!" Okay, more to the point, there are innumerable lounges in that city where wise operators will make contact with others from different parts of the country simply to compare notes on the state of the trade. In other words, while some are playing blackjack, others will be plotting their futures based upon shared advice from other operators in "the same fix."

THE BANQUET

The social highlight of ACME '91 will take place Friday evening when the AAMA Charitable Foundation honors Ray Galante (Music-Vend) and Lou Dunis (Dunis Distributing) in its first dual-honoree banquet. These two northwestern distributors deserve their honors and it would (will?) be grand if trade people from other parts of the country join with northwest tradesters to say "nice going" to two special industry people.

Cost of a banquet ticket is $125 a seat. After-expense proceeds will go to the Galante-Dunis Northwest Children's Endowment Fund (a pretty good reason to buy a ticket). But apart from that, banquet-goers will get a good meal and best of all, entertainment from (and dancing to) the Endless Summer Beach Band featuring Dean of Jan & Dean fame. Remember how great the band was at the Bert Betti affair? For advance tickets, call Joyce Weller at 703/494-0756.

AAMA will also put up a charity raffle and as in the past, no doubt provide a striking first prize (last year, a Lincoln Town Car was won by Mark Hammond of American Eagle in Waukesha, Wisc.). This year's topper might be a classic '60s auto, but we're not certain yet. Proceeds from the raffle also go to the Galante/Dunis charity. You win either way when you buy a ticket or tickets.

ACME '91 is a first-class industry event, any way you view it. Glasgow does it right (as anyone who's been to a previous ACME knows). Food and refreshment will be available right on the show floor. Shuttles will run on time. Bill Glasgow and his people are pros to the fingernails, and it shows with each and every show they put on.

Next year's ACME will take place March 15-17 in San Antonio and then it will be back to Nevada for their 5th in the gaming state. It must be a good convention spot. Find out for yourself by coming to next month's Vegas outing, March 22-24; and bring the spouse and some employees. They deserve a break and a bite out of a national show themselves. For room reservations, travel assistance, etc. call Glasgow, Inc. at 708/333-9292.

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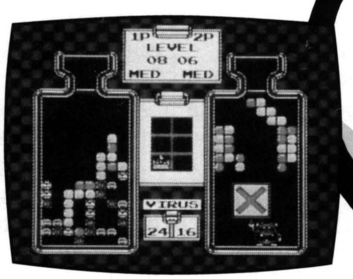

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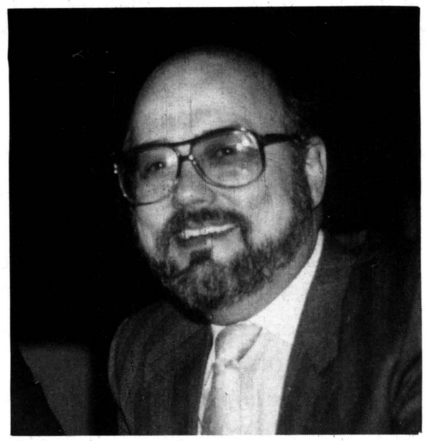
Cravens Exits Capcom to Form Leprechaun, Inc.; Walker Now Tops Capcom Sales, Sets Dealer Meet

Bill Cravens, one of the best-known figures in the amusement industry, officially resigned his post as Capcom USA's VP of Sales & Marketing Jan. 15 after an "amicable meeting" with the firm's chairman Kenzo Tsujimoto. Jointly, Cravens announced his formation of Leprechaun, Inc. as a marketing rep for amusement manufacturers.

Cravens' exit, which occurred exactly 4½ years since he joined Capcom, effectively moved their national sales manager Jeff Walker into the number one sales spot. Walker and his regional reps Paul Wiederaenders, Brian Duke, Pat Walton and Jolly Backer (formerly with Data East and now Capcom's eastern regional manager) will host a Feb. 2 distributor conference at the Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. Marriott Harbor during which they'll introduce their new CPS kit *Street Fighter II* (also available in universal kit form).

Despite rumors of a political nature being behind Cravens' decision to leave Capcom, the core reason was his desire to go into business for himself (something he hasn't done since his operating days in Colorado and Southern California over 15 years ago). Between those times and today, the man (who is usually celebrated as being among the best equipment salesmen in the industry) worked for Nintendo, Universal, Pacific Novelty, Vectorbeam, Cinematronics and Meadows Games, as well as for distributorships Portale Automatic and Weymouth in Los Angeles. Prior to operating, he worked for American Wurlitzer as a sales representative.

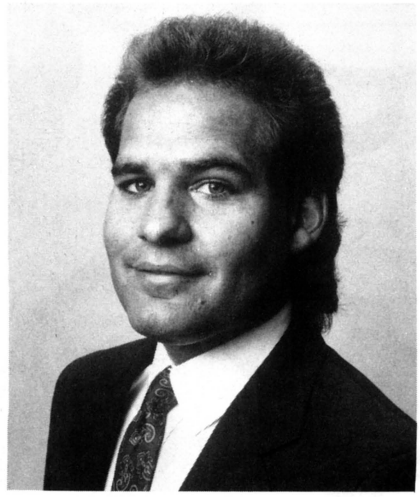
Leprechaun (his newly-formed sales rep agency) has already established offices at 40 Lake Bellevue, Suite 100, Bellevue, WA 98005. Their phone is 206/454-4052. Cravens told *RePlay* that as word filtered out about his new company, he enjoyed receiving "quite a few calls from people, including four Japanese game developers, interested in having us market their products here."



Leprechaun President Bill Cravens



Capcom Chairman Kenzo Tsujimoto



Capcom sales topper Jeff Walker

The very first product Leprechaun has taken on looks quite good and fits into Leprechaun's business philosophy of selling "lower-priced product for street operators that makes big money." Called *Bowl-O-Rama*, it's a retro kit for *Capcom Bowling* which comes under the "Exit" brand of products from the Pellegrini Group out of Chicago. Carrying a suggested operator retail price of $545, the kit package consists of two chips, a plug-on subboard and cabinet graphics.

This *Capcom Bowling* enhancement kit brings two additional games to players (regulation bowling remains). One's called Flash-O-Matic (sort of like the flash game on shuffle alleys) and the other is a "21"-type of thing. It also brings new screen graphics reminiscent of 1950s artwork and new music. Eddie Pellegrini told *RePlay* the retro kit on test has often "doubled" the previous collections on *Capcom Bowling* (itself one of the all-round top tavern videos in years). Reports are that nearly 12,000 *Capcom Bowling* games could still be operating in the field, so Leprechaun has quite a large market base to attend to.

Bowl-O-Rama will also be available as a universal kit to change other games over, according to Pellegrini. Meantime, the retro kit is one the market and Cravens has already lined up distributor orders. "It's so easy to convert, the operator can do it in his sleep," said Cravens. "Change the art, plug in the chips and the piggyback board, button it up and let it do its good stuff," he added.

Cravens says Leprechaun will concentrate solely on products that offer sensible R.O.I. to the operator.



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"They're not really looking for parallels," he stated. "They're looking for less expensive product that makes money, period!" He did advise that he might also represent products in the pricey range, provided they have the legs to stand the test of time. "I'm talking with Dick Simon at Imagination Leisure about handling his *Super Bowl* big ball bowler," he revealed. "This is a good street piece you put into the location and let it make its money for years and years. I know. . . I used to operate ball bowlers."

Cravens insisted, however, that Leprechaun will only represent a "few good games" in any given year (he's especially interested in inexpensive enhancement kits). "I feel fortunate to have *Bowl-O-Rama* to start out with," he said. "and if you want to know something interesting, I may even help Capcom out from time to time if there's mutual interest in that for both parties."

Capcom, whose parent company went public on the Japanese Exchange last October, is presently marketing a full plate of its own video games in the States, including their hits *Final Fight* and *Magic Sword* which they still had on sale at this writing (they produced more *Final Fights* to answer distributor demand). Other kits available include *Super Buster Bros., Mega Twins* and *Carrier Air Wing.* At their Ft. Lauderdale conference, they'll introduce *Final Fight II,* a horizontal game using six buttons and a joystick, which their former sales topper Cravens dubbed "one of their very best games."

Finally, the rumor that Cravens was personally involved in a project to bring amusements and gambling equipment into Hungary was confirmed. He is "a small part" of a group of investors which has sanction from the Hungarian government to open up routes and slot/pusher rooms there and their first "little casino" was set to open on Jan. 18. "We'll be importing product into Hungary, putting some more rooms together, getting some amusements into the street and feeling our way along," he advised. "I'll be heading over there maybe once a month to help out," he added.



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HOME VIDEO 1991

with over 27 million N.E.S. systems in American homes
Super Famicom coming, future looks bright for Nintendo

Once again, the home video industry maintained a mega-exhibit at the Winter Consumer Electronics Show, displaying its playing systems and software games for many thousands of conventioneers who traveled to Las Vegas from just about every country that has electricity.

And despite dark rumblings beneath the glitz about unsold game cartridges backing up in the marketing pipe all the way to some video licensees' swollen warehouses, the consumer side of the video game industry put on a happy face before the picky toy reps who have shared in the fortunes of this maturing business.

Home video programs come in several modes (e.g. floppy discs for computers). But the clear leader is the cartridge ("pak") and the overwhelming leader of the pak in that humongous business remains Nintendo, claiming a mind-boggling 87% market share, counting in systems and software programs sold.

While some of their licensees (the design companies that buy cartridges of their games from Nintendo for resale to retail owners of their NES and Game Boy players) will "take a financial bath" (cumulately amounting in the tens of millions of dollars) in unsold and discounted cartridges, Nintendo's sales projections remain bullish (projected by them to reach the $4 billion mark in 1991).

Peter Main, Nintendo's home division Marketing VP, said 1990 sales for itself and its licensees increased 27% over 1989. "We had another record-breaking year in 1990, with sales of $3.4 billion against $4 billion for the industry," he stated at a press conference. That figure is comprised of 7.2 million NES home machines and 60 million NES game paks, plus 3.2 million hand-held Game Boys and 9 million units of Game Boy software. Main also announced that Nintendo's NES is now in more than 38% of American homes (27 million units).



Nintendo occupied an entire pavilion at the C.E.S. Las Vegas show, which was actually a huge quonset hut erected (but one day to be torn down) by the Convention Center. Here we see a portion of a side wall along which Nintendo's various game licensees touted their cartridges to toy reps.

Well over 90% of those homes have children (from tots to teenagers) so there's little talk any longer (even among licensees who also make coin-op games) that home video hasn't taken its toll on the national video game cash box. At one time, proponents of home video would say that their products stimulated coin drop; you don't hear much of this any longer. The home genie is long out of the bottle.

HUGE DISPLAY OF GOODS

Nintendo and many of its 61 licensees occupied an entire pavilion all by themselves at the Las Vegas Convention Center (where the Winter C.E.S. ran Jan. 10-13). Sega, NEC (TurboGrafx), Atari's Tengen division, the new home player maker SNK (Neo•Geo) and the others who play this craft shared two other pavilions. In all, it was an impressive display of hardware and software. But Nintendo's "third shoe" didn't drop.

While others like Sega and NEC already have 16 bit home systems on the market, Nintendo decided to withhold U.S. release of theirs until the fall (when the toy business begins cranking up for the holidays). They released it in Japan this past November and claim they already have 1.6 million committed orders (they plan to build 800,000 units a month in 1991).

Like the other 16 bit systems (the hardware throw weight of many coin-op games), Nintendo's Super Famicom will be a quantum leap forward in terms of screen graphics and game play (what's conventionally called "arcade quality"). Although this new home system won't



Sega's coming Game Gear portable boasts the largest color screen of all. This hand-held player got a good inspection from the electronics salesmen (many came to the Winter Consumer Electronics Show from foreign countries, clearly including a huge contingent from Japan).

be coming to the retail market until fall, Nintendo has already begun shipping "development systems" to its licensees (at a reported $15,000 apiece) which provide parameters to be followed by licensees when they develop games for Super Famicom.

The Nintendo people we spoke to inferred that both the 8 bit NES and the coming 16 bit unit will be manufactured simultaneously (they still have plenty of orders to fill on the NES). However, as with the evolution of vinyl to CD recordings, it appears that the improved system may one day take over from the former, although 8 bit NES software will clearly continue to be produced to feed its gigantic player base.

There are presently 61 licensees making game paks for the NES. With the toy market apparently bloated with cartridges, conventional wisdom at the C.E.S. predicted that fewer of them would be around come the C.E.S. June show. Of these licensees, 14 also make coin-op games and of them, at least four are

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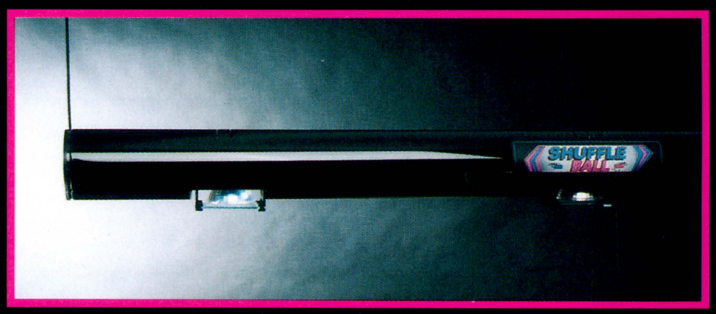

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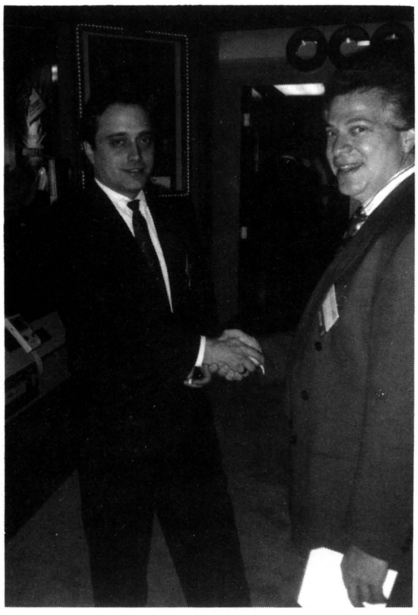
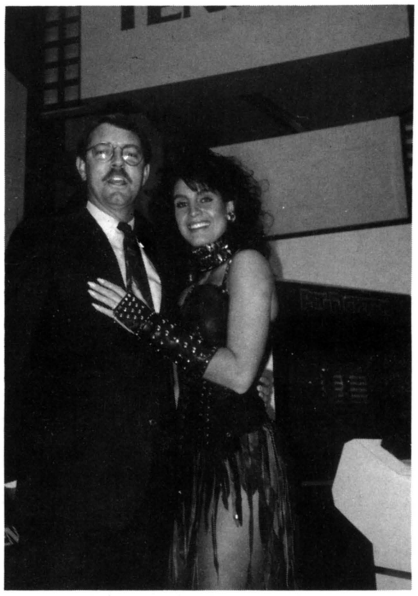


Two coin guys involved in the home video biz are (left to right) Ray Musci (Ocean) and Marty Glazman (Kaneko). Ray's done okay in the home biz thus far; Marty's got DJ Boy on the Sega system, plus a couple more to come.



NEC may have had a false start in coin-op but they're big stuff in the home market with their 16 bit TurboGrafx. Here showgoers check out their roster of games at the Winter C.E.S.



Tengen is Atari coin's home software division and its sales topper Mike Taylor poses with a model by Pit Fighter, coming to Nintendo & Sega systems. Their suit with Nintendo is still not settled regarding Atari's claim to be able to make cartridges themselves for NES.

mentioned in private as having difficulty moving large inventories of cartridges unless discounted, often below the price Nintendo originally charged to make them (Nintendo gets paid for these in front).

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But even though a financial reckoning is already here for some, one tradester (who makes both coin-op and home games) said: "It's not as dreary as you'd think. After all, we've made a pile of money with the home market for quite some time." When asked if the coming Super Famicom will hurt the coin operator's video revenues further than many think the NES already has, he replied: "How can it? The damage to coin-op has already been done."

SAME SPORT, BUT DIFFERENT SCORES

Clearly, the financial spectrum between the two video game industries is so wide as to be laughable (unless you're an operator who doesn't find home video competition one bit funny). A "decent" coin-op video kit may sell 1,500 pieces in today's lethargic marketplace, while even a home video "dog" can do at least 10,000 pieces. One licensee explained it this way:

"A decent home game can make 100,000 to 150,000 sales but the sky's the limit on a great game. The trick is to measure the game's appeal, order accordingly and don't get killed. Some people got greedy and that's why they're stuck in the hole." (Nintendo only allows its li-

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censees five games per year for NES, but no longer constrains the actual number of paks made per game as they did in the past when there was a chip shortage.)

The problem for home cartridge makers is simply that they've flooded the market with titles. Like real estate, it's a buyer's market right now. With around 250 different game cartridges available but shelf space at many stores only able to hold 60, you've got a problem. Therefore, discounting has resulted for some of those titles and monetary losses are surfacing. The giddy (or greedy) have gotten hurt; still the dream of a million or more sales remains the temptation, and that figure has been reached more than once.

Most of the titles available on the home market have never been made as coin machines. And for those operators who worried about "spacing" between the time a coin-op game was released and when it "came home" in the past, this is largely a moot point today. Coin-op is so quiet that few hot titles exist there. One of them, Atari's *Pit Fighter*, will be brought out on both Nintendo and Sega cartridges, but later on in the year. Another, the *F-15 Strike Eagle* from MicroProse, will be available for Nintendo NES owners but in a totally different version. About the only similarity between it and its coin-op is the game's name . . . sort of like Porky Pig starring in *Ben Hur* instead of Charlton Heston. Chart-topping software in the coin-op business like *Final Fight, Raiden* and *Magic Sword* are not yet available on home paks.

SNK's Neo•Geo is now available in a home system (they maintained an impressive exhibit at C.E.S.). And while their existing cartridges for coin-op are available for the home system, their President Kawasaki passed a startling announcement through to the C.E.S. showgoers: beginning with their February 1991 game releases, there will be a statutory six-month retard from the time any game is released to coin before it's released to the home. We expect this comes from Kawaskaki's allegiance to the coin machine business and thank him for it. *Ninja Combat*, a top earning cartridge in their coin-op system, is already available on their home system . . . but the future will be different.

We will not go through a laundry list of games on sale at C.E.S. for home system buyers. The list is dizzying and full of titles we never heard of. It's not important any more. The quantum leaps in technology (e.g. Sega's Game Gear portable, coming this spring, will sport a color picture that's reportedly bigger than the other portables like Game Boy and NEC's Turbo Express). Then you have interactive Nintendo things like InfoGenius' dictionary and spell checker, THQ's Video Arts that lets kids "draw" on the video screen and the piano teaching program for NES from Software Toolworks called Miracle. (Data East USA's former chief Bob



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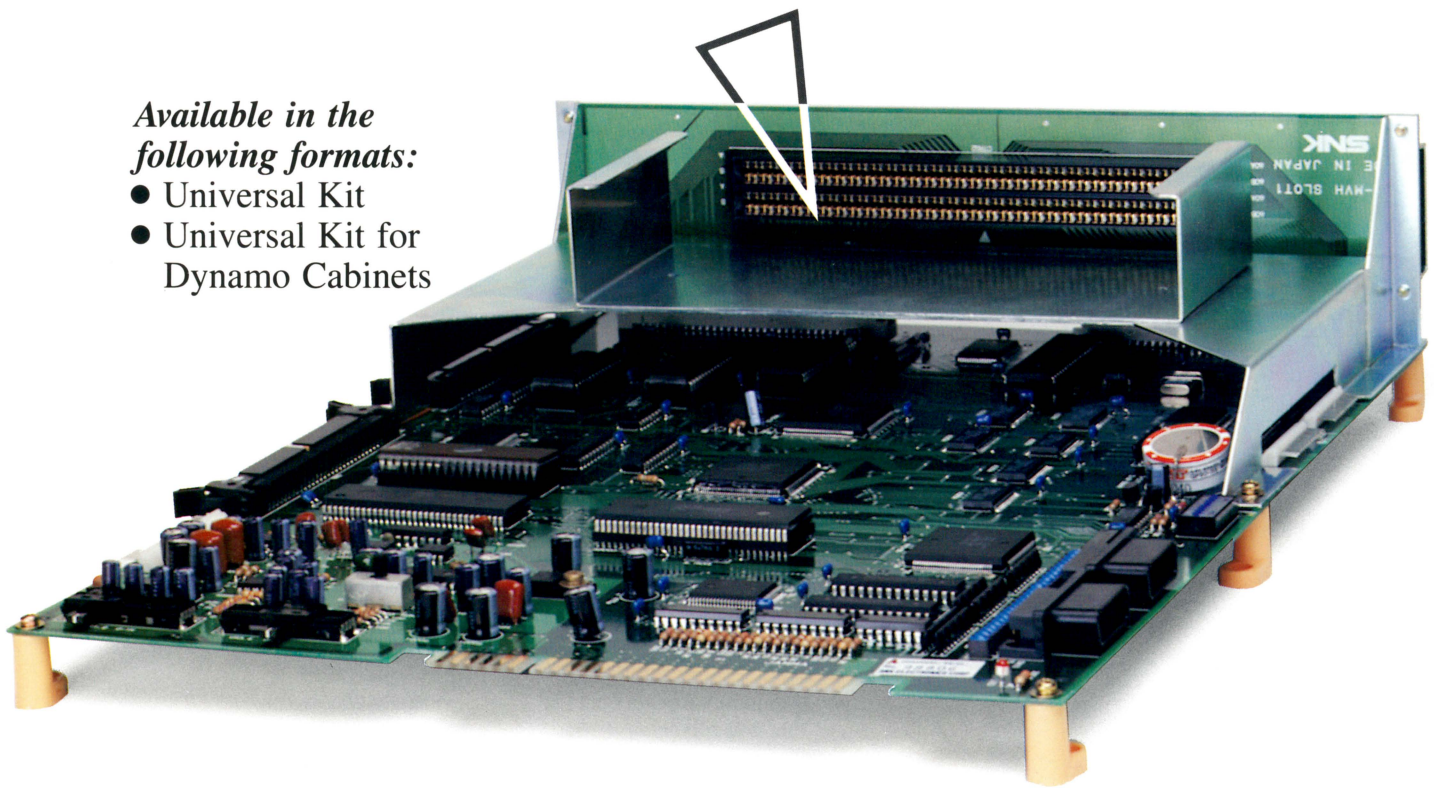

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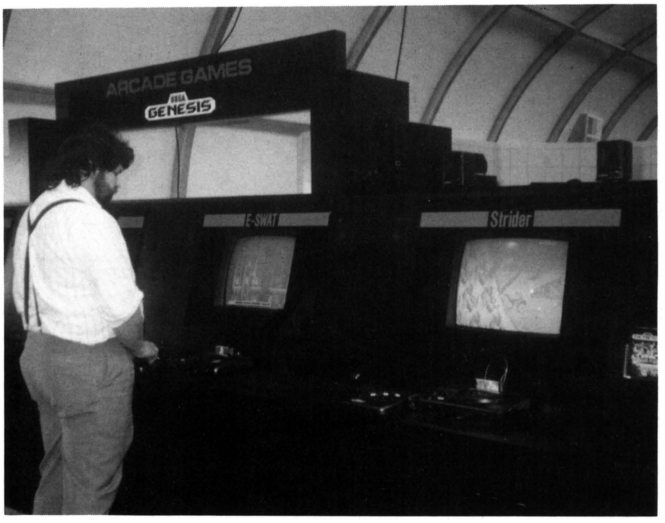
Data East's former U.S. prexy Bob Lloyd (r) is now president of Software Toolworks, founded by its C.E.O. Les Crane (the former Chicago TV talk show host, shown with Bob). Their company makes a package for NES that teaches folks how to play the piano and retails for under $300.



Sega's 16-bit Genesis displaying **E-Swat** *&* **Strider** *(the latter being one of the hot numbers). Nintendo's 16-bit Super Famicom is coming this fall.*

Lloyd is president of the latter company.)

Nintedo itself wants to get into interactive things with its systems. Some licensees already have. These things go far beyond game playing. Home video is another world. With the enormous difference in money potential, they are embracing new ideas and new technology. Game play is important, but hardly their universe (as it is ours). It is humbling for a coin machine person to witness what's going on apart from us these days in home video . . . a feeling like your date left the dance with another guy. So, where are the sharpies to bring us back to center stage?

PS: Plans for the production of a Danny DeVito movie called *Super Mario Brothers* are underway!

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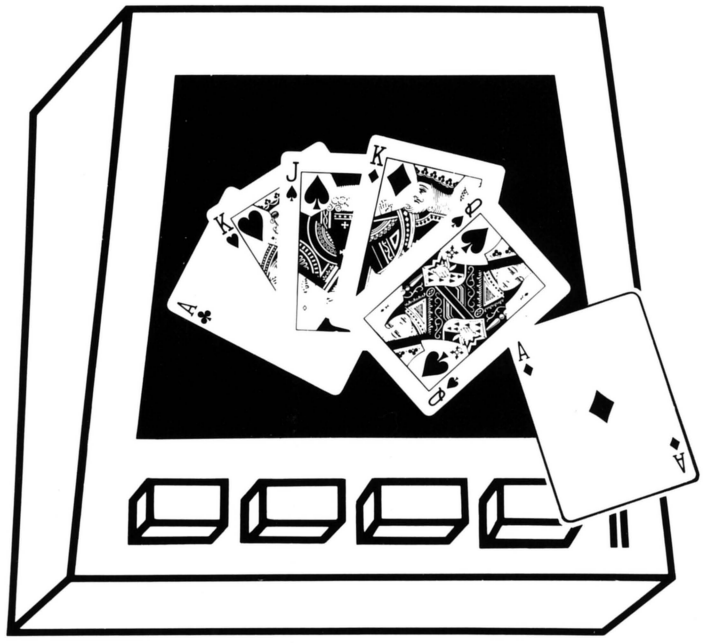

THE LINE ON THE LOTTERY

experts differ on whether more states will "go legal" in 1991; West Virginia called near victory; other states may face longer road

Slow down! Operator-run video lottery still promises great potential for several states which might legalize this activity around the U.S. But some expert tradesters are warning the industry not to get its hopes up for a string of quick, easy victories in 1991.

West Virginia is said to have the best chance for 1991 legalization, and promising (but very delicate) campaigns are going forward in two other "surprise" states. In Canada, Nova Scotia is rated a likely winner. But some of the big-name U.S. states may be looking at a longer fight than expected — over a year, say some insiders — even though these states are still given good chances to be ultimately successful, perhaps in 1992.

"On a national scale, video lottery is a five- to ten-year program," stated one leading operator who is closely involved in vidpoker lobbying in more than one state. "Video lottery represents a big gamble for operators because of the investment of money and prestige involved, win or lose. It's also a big gamble because so much potential profit is at stake. Many competitors are tempted to try to take this business from operators. Those competitors include locations and certain manufacturers. Powerful and wealthy manufacturers (from outside of coin-op amusements) would like to cut out coin-op distributors and operators alike. So operators must really be on the ball!"

Sources told *RePlay* that West Virginia's state lottery director has publicly endorsed operator-run video poker. Said one tradester: "That's a go; they're just waiting for a public announcement in February for contracts to award a central mainframe computer" that operator-run machines would be tied into. Yet even here, sources warn that Bally (the casino game people, not the Bally/Midway amusement game firm) has been testing gaming equipment on a West Virginia racetrack for some time. Bally's Scientific Games division could still wind up with rights to the whole market, freezing coin operators out of it, tradesters warned. As in other states, it's a "wait and see" situation.

In Texas, the state's new governor Ann Richards has made lottery the centerpiece of her agenda. AMOT members are optimistic for passage of video "instant lottery" this year on the tails of the governor's state lottery package. Some experienced sources outside the state wonder if Texas might offer lotto games first, then phase in operator-run machines gradually... perhaps next year. Verl Bernaugh, who helps oversee AMOT's "instant lottery" lobbying, denies this idea, saying: "If our bill goes through as written, we'll be tied right into any state lottery that Texas adopts." This month should show whether Ann Richards can get the legislature to push through her lottery bill as a high-priority item.

In New Jersey, the pro-poker campaign continues on track. AMOA-NJ President Frank Seninsky said: "A final version of our bill has been drafted and we've lined up our co-sponsors in the legislature. We've

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Minnesota has a great team of lobbyists, operators and distributors working for passage of video lottery, but they also face strong opposition from Indian reservations (which have 11 legal gaming casinos) and from charitable gaming interests (pull-tabs are huge business here). Said one operator in the state: "I'm all for video lottery, but it's going to be a tough, tough fight in Minnesota. Existing gambling interests don't want to share the wealth."

In Wisconsin, operators have a powerful state association (WAMO) and a powerful ally in Governor Tommy Thompson. "Surprisingly, there has been no organized opposition to this point," said WAMO Exec Director Joe Phillips, "and we're getting much more membership involvement in direct lobbying of our legislators. There's a growing feeling that we may be close now."

A highly polished third draft of WAMO's bill was expected to have been "tossed in the hopper and assigned a number" by February. Phillips hoped the bill would get a hearing this spring, although he said the statehouse would be "almost totally preoccupied" with the state budget for the first several months. WAMO hopes for a vote in the state's fall session. If the bill is passed, the governor's signature would follow two to four weeks later, and another couple of months (at least) would be required to draft detailed administrative regulations.

Pennsylvania, which lost its video poker campaign to a governor's veto last fall, is gearing up to try again, perhaps with changes in wording to make their bill more acceptable to Governor Casey. But legislative requirements are expected to make it a slow process at best. Optimists are hoping for a repeat of 1990's success in the statehouse, capped by a turnaround from the governor. Pessimists claim operators will "have to wait four years, till they get a new governor."

So the experts continue to be divided over video lottery prospects for 1991. One VLT manufacturer said: "I'd love to be wrong, but aside from West Virginia I believe there's little chance this year that video poker will be legalized in another state. I expect this year a lot of distributors and state associations will say, yes, we're going to pass video poker this year. But if they've only started lobbying in the last six months, and if they are just now getting around to writing their bill, they probably won't pass it this year. The state legislature would have to look at it very hard and decide to take a lot of heat from conservative elements in each state, if they approved video poker. I've been through this many times before, I've been in this market a long time, and I just don't see many states as being ready yet to make that step quite yet...although from a long-term point of view, video lottery definitely is the wave of the future."

More optimistic operators — some of them very wise politically — say as many as five states may succeed with their legalization campaigns this year. They cite AMOA's successful work with NAGRA, the North American Gaming Regulators' Assn., along with AMOA's increased financial commitment to this cause. All the sources we spoke to said nothing is certain for good or ill...that each state is different and bears close watching. We'll keep you informed as developments occur.

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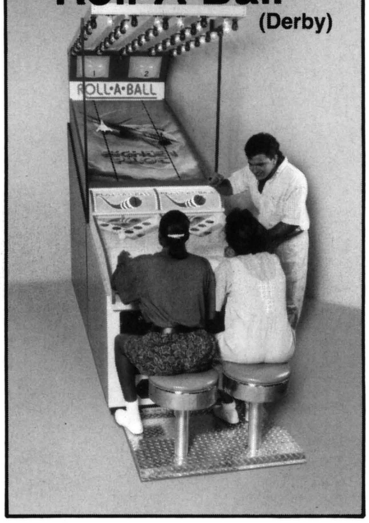

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"So You Want Video Lottery in Your State . . . Are You Prepared?"

by Bill Treger, Betson Enterprises



Betson's redemption sales rep BILL TREGER was treasurer of NAGRA for two years. He was also chief of N.J.'s Bureau of Amusement Games Control from 1982-1990.

Now that the football season has ended, many states are entering another important season . . . one which the coin-op industry, for the most part, has ignored for many years: the legislative season. Most state legislatures went into session right after New Year's Day, and quite a few are looking at issues that can impact your business.

Many of these legislatures are looking to ban cigarette machines, or at least limit their accessibility. Some legislatures are weighing the pros and cons of introducing video lottery machines in their states. Are you prepared for the season, or will you be cut off before the game even begins?

In my travels around the country, I have seen only a few organizations that are ready for the season. Those that are ready, enjoy this distinction only because they have played the game before and lost. They usually lost because they didn't know the rules or have a good game plan. Their previous loss taught them how to play the game, and specifically how to develop a game plan.

Before you rush headlong into an arena that you are not familiar with, stop and ask: "Are we ready to present our case intelligently, and do we have enough players and resources to finish the game?" Let's review what video lottery is before we get too far along.

On Oct. 16, 1989, the South Dakota Lottery instituted a new lottery game in the state's on-premise liquor licensed locations (bars and clubs). The new game came in the form of player activated video lottery terminals, on which the player could play poker, blackjack, bingo or keno. The game is geared to print a ticket when the player wishes to cash out. He must redeem this ticket at the bar (only at the bar where he played). The player can wager as little as 25¢ and as much as $2 per game, with the opportunity to win up to $1,000. Unlike most lottery games, which pay back to the player 40 or 50% of the total cash take, the video lottery is set to pay back from 80 to 92%.

The South Dakota Lottery has quite a few controls over the machines and operators through licensure; however, their greatest controlling device is their dial-up computerized communications system. Every night, the Lottery's computer calls up each video lottery terminal and extracts the information on the day's transactions. For their efforts, the Lottery receives 25% of the net (effective Jan. 1, 1991).

The video lottery has been a windfall for the State of South Dakota, for tavern owners, non-profit clubs and the South Dakota coin machine operators. In early October, approximately 4,600 games were grossing $7.23 per capita per week, and netting $2.60 per capita, per week. Figure out for yourself what this could mean for your state. (That is, multiply this figure by the total population of your state to find out how much money might be earned if video lottery were legal where you live.)

On Dec. 1, 1990, the Province of New Brunswick, Canada, started up their video lottery. From all reports, it's doing great. Our hats are off to the Atlantic Lottery Corporation and the New Brunswick operators.

Now, back to developing your game plan. In order to develop a good game plan, you have to ask a



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lot of questions. More important than asking them, you have to answer them! When you have the answers to the following questions, you have to study the answers . . . and from them, you'll know what your game plan should be.

You need answers for the following:

1. What is your state's current financial situation? Can the profits from the (existing state-run) lottery be used for the general fund, or are they dedicated?

2. What does your present lottery law allow? Is the percentage of payback set by law? Does your lottery director have any preconceived notions regarding video lottery?

3. What is the general feeling toward gambling issues in your state? What are the legislature's feelings? What are the governor's feelings?

4. Are gray area games a problem in your state? Approximately how many are being operated? How much money is the state losing on the operation of these games? Are the gray area operators willing to give up their games, if they can get legal gaming equipment?

5. What do you have to do to get video lottery legalized? Can the legislature implement it without a referendum? Can your lottery director implement video lottery under your present lottery law?

6. If you don't have lottery, what state agency can oversee legalized video gaming machines? When this is determined, re-ask all of the questions in number five!

7. Who is the best lobbyist in your state? Is he available? Can you afford him? If he is not available or is too expensive, who is available within your price range that can get the job done? Interview several lobbyists. Be fussy!

8. Who are your allies? Have you met with them? Who are your enemies or potential enemies? Can they be neutralized?

9. What is your time frame? Be conservative; give best-case and worst-case projections.

10. How much money is this going to cost? Where are you going to spend it? How are you going to raise it? Hint: don't ask manufacturers and distributors until their operators have made their commitment known.

After you have answered all the questions, and have started to raise money, the next steps are to hire a lobbyist and to write a good bill. Don't overcomplicate your bill. Remember, the lottery will dictate a lot about the operation through rules and regulations.

The best advice I can give you is to be positive and unified at all times, and remember — this is not the amusement business! This is the gaming industry, and it is licensed and regulated by *lottery professionals.*

If I can be of any service to you or your state committee, please feel free to call me at Betson Enterprises (201/440-2200). Let's play the legislative game . . . and win!



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PUTTING CHALLENGE

unique golf game scores "hole in one" in the cash box; players intrigued by the different-every-time playfield

Looking for something new and different... yet tried and true? Looking for a proven earner that goes equally well in sports bars, malls and redemption centers? Looking for a long-life game that will repay your investment for years to come?

Well, stop looking. *Putting Challenge*, the nifty golf game from I.C.E., is fulfilling the outstanding potential it showed at last fall's AMOA Expo. Players love it... and in some locations, the game has even "broken the barrier" on $1 play, accounting for weekly collections that are normally associated with hit videos.

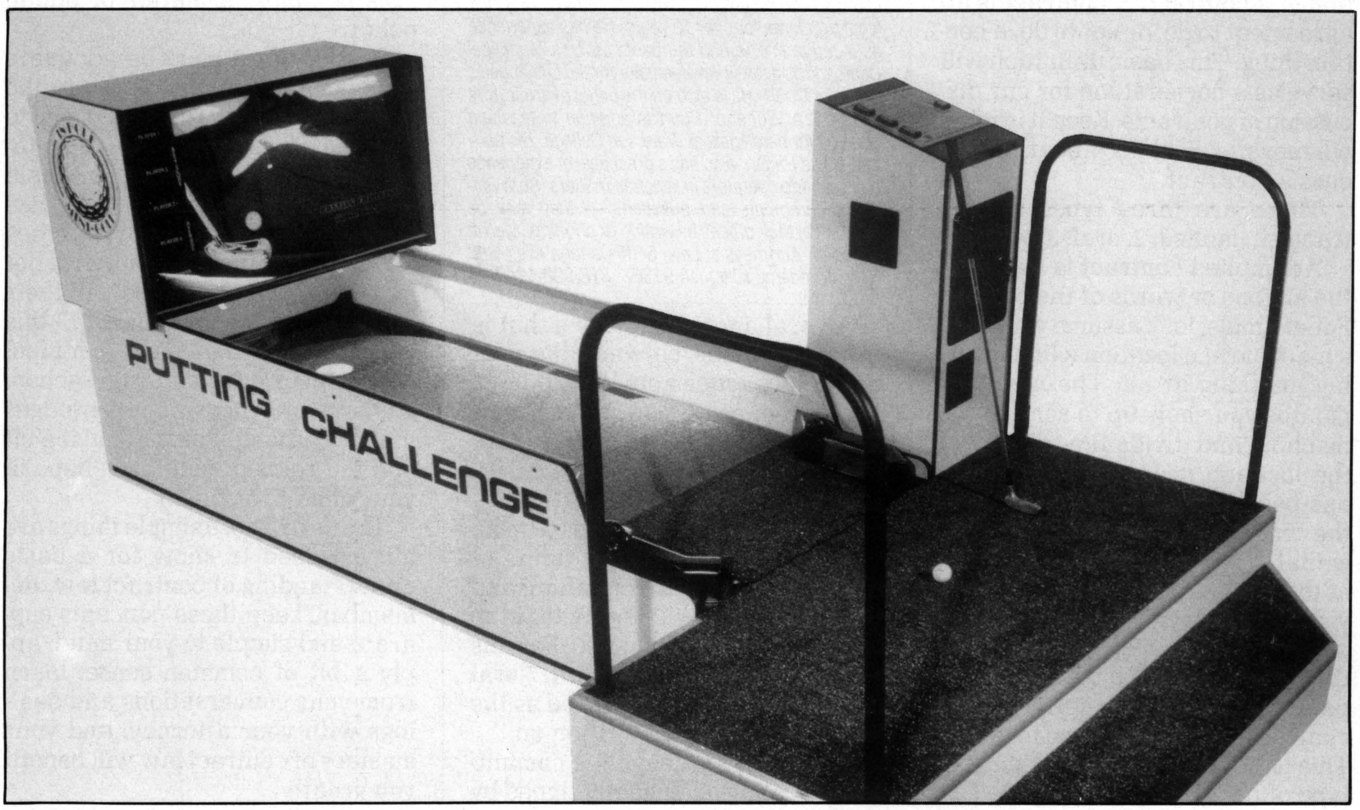
"*Putting Challenge* is the best thing to hit coin-op in a long time!" said the firm's unblushing President Ralph Coppola. "If you think basketball was big, this is the next big winner. And we've got earnings to prove it."

This one- to four-player electromechanical mini-golf game features a unique playfield: the putting green changes shape and contour for every shot! (Now you know why the company bills itself as "Innovative Concepts in Entertainment.") A total of 18 different greens are offered, and each one is a special challenge. (Heck, it's fun just to watch the playfield warp and transform as it shifts from one green to the next.)

Three modes of gameplay take full advantage of this diverse game, allowing players to play all 18 greens while aiming for the fewest possible strokes; or, to put all the emphasis on getting a hole in one; or to practice repeated putts on the green of their choice. Factory setting charges $1 for a "credit" (9 balls), but operators can adjust the cost of this credit. One player on nine holes takes about three minutes, for earnings of $16 to $20 per hour when used continually.

"I happen to love the game," said respected distributor Rick Kirby (New England Coin-Op). "It's different from kick-and-punch, and it's making nice money. My operators are making over $500 a week in sports bars and nearly $400 a week in arcades. It's a dollar per play and they're getting it! It works and it's reliable. By the way," Rick added, "kids are playing *Putting Challenge*, but it also appeals to the older crowd."

Now that's a game! For more information, contact your distributor or call I.C.E. (Innovative Concepts in Entertainment) at 716/833-0481.



Legal Questions

by Laurence Merritt and David Hagen

Back To Basics On Contracts

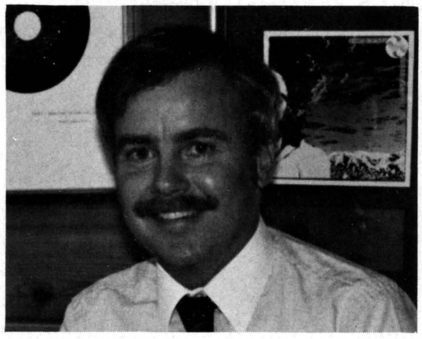
For the most part, the practice of law is not rocket science. We have contended for many years that to be successful in the practice of law one must have some good basic education. However, most importantly, an attorney needs an extra helping of common sense.

While speaking to groups of operators, we are surprised at the misconceptions that abound regarding the formalities of entering into a contract. We find that because they sometimes lack a good, basic education in contract law, they sometimes have a hard time using their common sense. Accordingly, we thought it would be a good idea to take our readers "back to the basics" with respect to contract law. With this basic education, and the good deal of common sense which so many operators seem to have, we hope our readers will feel much more at ease with the topic of contract law.

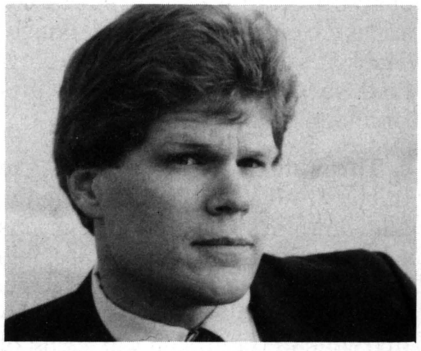
Let's start with a simple definition of a contract. A contract is an agreement to do, or not to do, a certain thing. This basic definition will serve as a cornerstone for our discussion of contracts. Keep it in mind whenever you think about or discuss a contract.

There are three types of contracts: 1. implied; 2. oral; 3. written.

An implied contract is based on the actions or words of the parties. For example, let's assume you place a machine at a location without saying anything at all. The next few months you show up to service the machine and divide the coins with the location operator. A contract has been formed here based upon the conduct of the parties. The deal is that you place certain machines at the location, service them, and divide the coins with the location. The problem with this type of contract is that many times the actions of the parties vary and the terms of the contract can thus be hard to prove. This is why it is the least desirable type of contract.



LARRY MERRITT



DAVID HAGEN

Laurence Merritt has been helping operators with their legal problems for over 12 years. He has experience as a Judge Pro Tem in the Santa Monica Municipal Court and as a family law mediator for the Los Angeles Superior Court. He is also on the panel of arbitrators for the L.A. Superior Court in addition to teaching courses for paralegals at Waterson College. His partner, David Hagen, also has a great deal of experience representing operators in litigation matters. Both welcome comments and questions — they may be reached at their offices by writing or phoning: Merritt & Hagen, Attorneys at Law, 6400 Canoga Ave., Ste. 311, Woodland Hills, CA 91367; 818/992-1940.

An oral agreement is one that is expressly made between the parties. Two parties actually sit down and agree, orally, on the terms of the deal. Oral agreements are valid. However, it can be very difficult to prove the terms of the oral agreement if the matter ever goes to trial. You will testify that the terms of the agreement were one thing and the other party will testify that the terms were something else. For this reason, we tell clients that, "oral agreements are only as good as the paper that they are written on."

A written agreement is committed to writing and usually signed by all parties to the agreement. Obviously, this type of contract is preferable in a court of law in that it is much more definite and not subject to the problems of proof that the other types of contracts are.

There are four simple elements which every contract must contain. They are: 1. parties capable of contracting; 2. consent of the parties; 3. a lawful object; 4. sufficient consideration or cause.

All parties to a contract whether they be persons, partnerships, or corporations, must be legally able to enter into a contract. Obviously, a child, mental invalid, or defunct corporation cannot enter into contracts.

Obviously, these contracting parties must consent, either by their words or actions, to the deal. Otherwise there would be no deal.

If the object of the contract is not a lawful one, (i.e. gambling or prostitution) the courts will not uphold it. This is simply a matter of public policy.

Lastly, there must be adequate consideration. Both parties to the contract must give up or promise to do something. Otherwise it is nothing more than a promise! A simple promise to do something is not a contract unless the other party agrees to pay something, do something, not to do something, or to rely to their detriment on the promise. (If this concept seems a bit hazy, don't feel bad — it confuses many law school students, attorneys, and even judges at times as well. Think about it a bit and the concept will take shape in your mind over time.)

That's it! These simple things are all you need to know for a basic understanding of contract law. Remember, keep these concepts separate and simple in your mind, apply a bit of common sense, learn from your conversations and dealings with your attorney, and your mastery of contract law will benefit you greatly.

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When it comes to the best horseshoe game in town, there's only one worth pitching: SHUUZ from Atari Games.

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One to four players can enjoy exciting individual or team competition. Players use a trackball to control the arc and distance of their toss. Amusing graphics and a regulation horseshoe pit keep Shuuz entertaining and competitive.

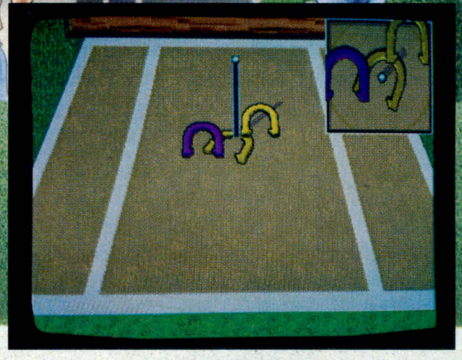
SHUUZ...Betcha can't toss just one!

Available as a universal kit. Includes PCB, trackball and buttons, JAMMA harness and artwork for header, control panel, bezel and side decals.

Up to 4 players can enjoy individual or team play.



A close-up view displays the winning Shuuz!



Optional "Beer Round" for bar and tavern locations.



SUPER-BOWL

Imagination Leisure brings out their version of a classic; perfect for sports bars, redemption centers and family sites

If you're in the coin-op amusement industry, the Super Bowl doesn't mean football. It means *Super-Bowl,* a big ball bowler that's perfect for sports bars (it can be placed against a wall)... yet also fits fine in redemption centers, arcades, and many other locations. Kids, teens and grown-ups all enjoy this classic bowling-themed piece.

First shown at last fall's AMOA, this unit from Imagination Leisure ships this month from their Chicago factory. You should check it out because it's an "industry standard" game with proven long lifespan (measured in decades, not months or years)... and this one's made by a company with a great track record. Imagination Leisure has manufactured air hockey games since its inception, but is the successor to U.S. Billiards (a major coin-op manufacturer for nearly 30 years). Company President Dick Simon held the same title at U.S. Billiards previously; he's a veteran of the industry for over 20 years.

"Purchase of these games is truly an investment with a positive return," said President Simon. "The unit was acclaimed at the AMOA show and we expect our first units to be in operation at Disney World this month." For anybody who knows the rigorous standards maintained by the Disney operation, that's all the endorsement you need.

To play, players pick up a 4½" duckpin-type bowling ball and roll it down the alley at the pins. Players may choose from six different games: regulation, red-strike, flash-o-matic, 10-strike, hi-score and random-flash. Players don't need to know how to keep score in order to play; the game keeps score for them! Simple instructions are posted near



the coin mech and three buttons (button functions are start, game select, and number of players).

The game is 29½" wide. It comes in a standard 14' configuration, but there are 44" extensions (they go between the head unit and the alley). The operator can use these extensions to make the game length 14' or 18' or 22' long. A high-abrasive melamine finish covers a butcher-block-type surface which is laminated to a composition board, making the alley "virtually indestructible," said the firm. The pins are lit from above via self-contained fluorescent fixtures. The 26" video monitor has an attract mode; it displays scoring during the game, and shows high score at the end of each game. Also, service data is displayed on the screen. Service is all done from the front.

The ticket-reward score levels and number of tickets awarded are operator-adjustable; the option of using the piece as a redemption unit is itself operator-selectable. At this width, multiple units can easily be banked in a redemption center for an attractive display. Another key option is the use of a dollar-bill validator.

For more information, contact your distributor or Imagination Leisure at 516/842-4242.

In 2135 AD, the Earth forces are attacked by a crafty and tenacious enemy. Two ultra high-tech "Aero Tactic Fighters" are dispatched across the galaxy into the heart of enemy territory to conquer the aggressive foe. You are chosen to successfully complete the mission.

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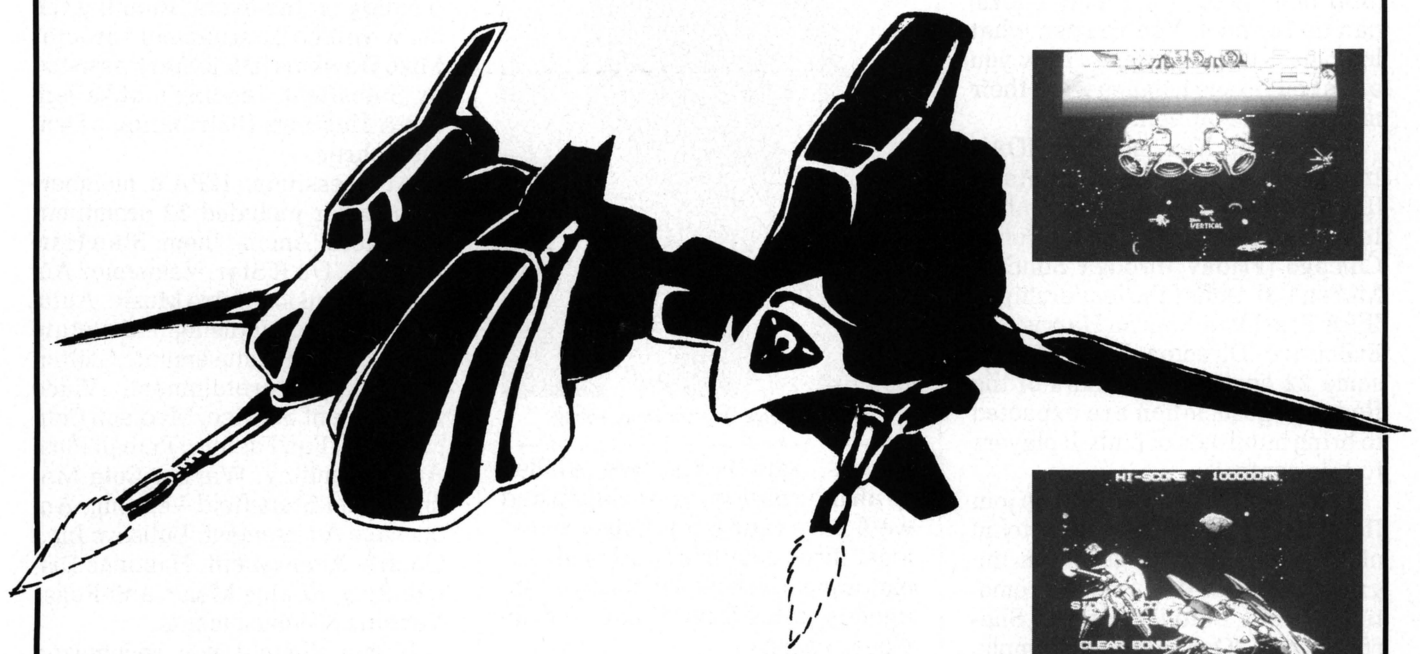

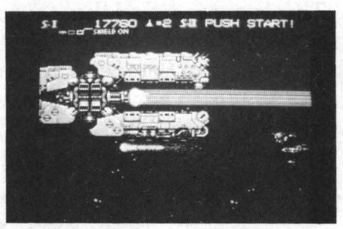

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PINBALL POWER!

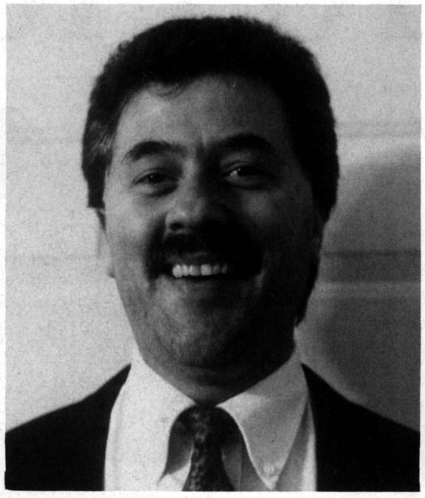
Chicago hosts AMOA's first-ever pinball tournament March 1-3; International Flipper Pinball Association to boost league play

Okay, operators, you've seen those what those great big flashy leagues (and their great big flashy bucks) can do for pool. You've seen what leagues can do for darts. Now you are about to see leagues work their magic for . . . pinball.

Yes, pinball. Next month, AMOA's International Flipper Pinball Assn. (IFPA) mounts its first-ever pinball tournament at the O'Hare Hilton in Chicago (Friday through Sunday, March 1-3). Under the leadership of IFPA President Sharon Harris and Executive Director Doug Young, some 22 operator members of the fledgling association are expected to bring hundreds of pinball players to this contest.

Best of all, it's not too late to join IFPA . . . to field your own team of players . . . and to get in on the ground floor of this unique promotional event. Said IFPA prexy Sharon Harris, "Our message is simple. Be there!"

The event is titled the "First Annual IFPA Pinball World Championships" and is expected to offer more than $20,000 in cash and prizes (depending on the size of the field). "We're hoping for a few hundred players," said Harris. "We're billed as an international association and we'll have representatives from at least three countries, although our major push has been in the five contiguous states from Illinois, for obvious reasons."



IFPA Executive Director Doug Young

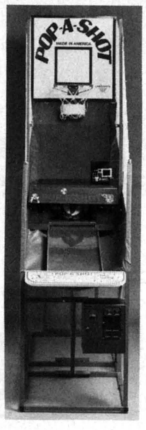
Although at presstime *RePlay* could not determine the exact schedule, we confidently expect to see several different types of events and competitions (teams, singles, special matches, tournament play, etc.) during the three-day affair. A separate event will be scheduled for kids (no alcohol served). Entry fees for events will be $5, $10 or $25 depending on the event. Running the show will be Tournament Director Mike Hawkins (D&R Star), assisted by Stansfield Vending's Mike Jensen & Hastings Distributing's Dennis Bohrer.

At presstime, IFPA's membership roster included 22 prominent operators. Among them: Stan Harris & Co., D&R Star, Velasquez Automatic Music, Metro Music, Automatic Merchandising, Mountain Coin, Gapter Amusement, Chilton Vending, Futuretainment, Video Amusement Service, Madison Coin Machine, Fun Factory, Pinball Plus, Apple Vending, Warner Coin Machine, Jim Stansfield Vending, Anchorage Amusement, Bullseye Inc., Quality Amusement, Hastings Distributing, Collins Music and Regal Vending & Amusements.

If you thought you recognized companies owned by lots of AMOA heavyweights, you're right. They're backing IFPA all the way, and some of the Minnesota and Wisconsin operators (who have big, successful dart and pool leagues already) are chartering busses to swing through the territories of several operators to bring pinball team players into Chicago for the event.

The pinball manufacturers are also strongly behind IFPA. Matching AMOA's funding contributions are Data East Pinball, Midway Mfg. Co., Premier Technology and Williams Electronics.

Operators and players may stay at the O'Hare Hilton for $60 per room; their number is 800/445-8667. Dues for joining IFPA run $200 (annual renewal costs $150). For more information or to join the association, contact AMOA-IFPA at 414/263-0233.



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Rowe's A-Team Targets CD

Anyone who still thinks that CD music is a "new animal in the coin-op forest" may be surprised to learn that 1991 marks the sixth year since the industry saw its very first compact disc jukebox. It also marks the fifth for Rowe International, the jukebox heavyweight that entered the arena with its very first CD/vinyl combo player (the R-91) in 1987.

Since then, Rowe has gone on to build the broadest "family" of CD-capable jukeboxes of anyone in this since-expanded field of manufacturers and importers. Their current product spread includes the fully-dedicated LaserStar *CD-100A and CD-51 units, a remote wall unit for selecting CDs called* WallStar, *a hideaway, and even a video tape combo with CD audio discs.*

They still make CD/45 combos and, yes, even pure 45 vinyl machinery. It's all built at their venerable Grand Rapids, Mich. plant, but a load of the ideas for new products and product changes come from the fertile minds at Rowe's Whippany, N.Y. world headquarters as well.

As many trade people know, two of those minds are owned by Rowe's Jerry Gordon (Senior VP of Sales & Distribution) and Joel Friedman (Senior VP of the Music Group)... their "A-Team" that interfaces with all aspects of jukebox marketing and manufacture as well as all levels of the trade that sells and operates them. They even play the jukebox themselves when they're out with the wives.

Their direction in machine concepts, cosmetic design and internal technique melds with Grand Rapids' engineering staff to produce the models that operators can see when they visit Rowe distributor showrooms. And their promotion abilities help put the spotlight on those products as they compete in a crowded marketplace.

As such, Gordon and Friedman are capable spokesmen on the subject of coin-op CD music and on such specifics as play-pricing and software availability. A lot of territory is covered in the interview you're about to read. We hope you find it useful (we did) and we thank Jerry and Joel for their thoughts, observations and advice as the "orderly transition" from vinyl to CD continues.

CAPTURED! Costumed as "Mr. G" & "Hannibal Friedman," Gordon & Friedman mug it up for RePlay's Eddie Adlum during their LaQuinta, Calif. distrib meeting where the line was introduced.

THE GOLD IS A KILLER



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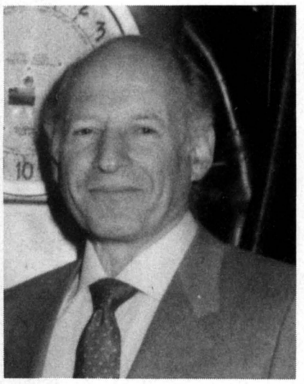
JOEL FRIEDMAN



JERRY GORDON

REPLAY: The jukebox has stood in the shadow of the amusement machine for many years but now it's come back to center stage. Was the CD jukebox the cause or were there other market elements working behind it as well?

GORDON: CD was the core reason for the comeback. More specifically, it was the higher play-pricing that CD boxes commanded. Before CD, there wasn't really any strong motivation for operators to buy new phonographs more frequently than they normally did. Some operators, of course, continued to upgrade their jukebox routes with new equipment on a rather frequent basis even before CD came along, but they were exceptional. I'm talking about people like Abe Fish from Connecticut who used to rotate his machines every three years or so. He was eminently successful, if you remember. But to repeat, it was the development of the CD jukebox that pushed the machine back to center stage, as you put it.

REPLAY: Blunt question: has the success of coin-op CD adversely affected the health of the video game by syphoning off operator investment dollars that used to go to that class of machine?

FRIEDMAN: No, not at all. I think each class of machine pretty much stands on its own. If one gets good cash flow going for the operator, he tends to put his investment dollars back into it. It's all geared toward R.O.I. and the cash box. Remember that a lot of operators went into redemption at the same time and for the same reason.

REPLAY: Let's turn the question around and ask if the overall "pall" on the market toward the end of 1990 adversely affected jukebox sales.

GORDON: Sales usually soften up toward the end of any year. But it's important to note that our jukeboxes enjoyed a huge 1989 and a even stronger 1990. This seasonal softening happens in the last couple of months with jukeboxes and in my opinion, isn't tied into any specific problem with other

types of equipment. As Joel said, jukeboxes largely stand on their own feet.

REPLAY: Most operators probably feel the chief reason they make more money with CD boxes over vinyl ones is the higher play-pricing and other financial arrangements they can make with the location. But, do other elements come into play here like sound and the novel ability to play album cuts by favorite artists?

FRIEDMAN: The higher play price is the number one reason behind the success of the CD jukebox. That's a given. However, there are some solid visual elements that get people up to the machines, like the display of the album jackets on the title rack. Rowe's CD machine is a great visual merchandiser. The improved sound of the CD disc is a factor, although it is not all-compelling. However, a proper setup with all the speakers, etc. does make a statement in the location.

GORDON: There's another element that should be mentioned: the huge selectivity of songs offered by the CD phonograph. Even with 200 selections on the vinyl boxes, a lot of operators still asked for even more. The spread of songs on a CD phonograph is unbelievable. I mean, you have a minimum



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REPLAY: Many operators, however, are putting CD jukes out at four and even five plays for

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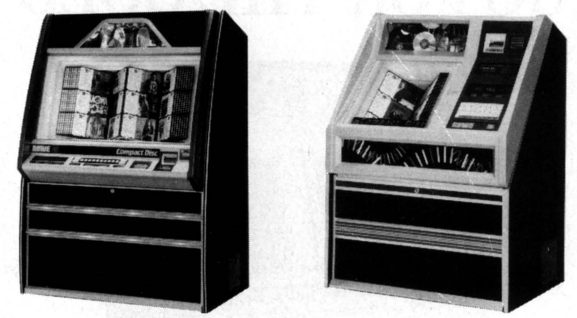
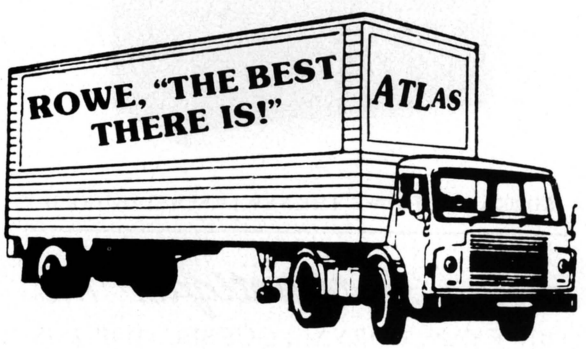


CD-100A **CD-51**



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a buck rather than three. What do you think about that, as if we have to ask?

FRIEDMAN: I'm sorry to say, but it's sad that they're missing the boat here. I do understand that it's not so easy for some to go right up to three for a dollar play, especially when they were giving vinyl selections away much more cheaply. But I always urge operators to take advantage of this tool to boost the price per play. You know, there's even an experiment going on in the East that has CD songs vending at two songs for a dollar.

GORDON: Over the years, there were operators who ran music as a profit center and others who kept them going at a lower cost per-song simply to keep the location happy, other machines in there and competitors away from the door. Measured against their cost of records and service, many really "gave" the music away. The CD phonograph is a profit center and should be approached that way, regardless of any other condition in the location. This is a different age and believe me, I'm not crazy when I say half buck play will grow as the years go along.

FRIEDMAN: We ship all our CD boxes set at three plays for a dollar and hope the operators put them out that way. But if an operator works in an area where this is difficult to float across, we strongly suggest that he go no lower than four for a dollar.

REPLAY: Not every operator who buys a new CD phonograph loads it to the brim with discs right out of the gate, preferring to add additional discs as he goes along. Do you approve of this or would you rather see him fully load it when he first puts it out?

GORDON: Not every location needs 100 discs right off the bat. The operators know how many to put into each of their stops. Let's say they start at 40 or 60 discs on a 100-disc machine and then add more as they go along. It's often good to have some available space for request discs rather than to have to pull one out to add the request, no?

FRIEDMAN: This relates to what we call "CD management," a new term for what's traditionally been called "record programming." The dynamics of CD operating are new and the trade is feeling its way along. Some players like oldie compilations while others prefer albums by their favorite artists. The operator should "manage" his titles by what he sees being played and by what requests his locations pass along to him. Some operators like to install their boxes completely filled with discs while others go part way and fill up the empty spaces as they read the location's tastes afterward.



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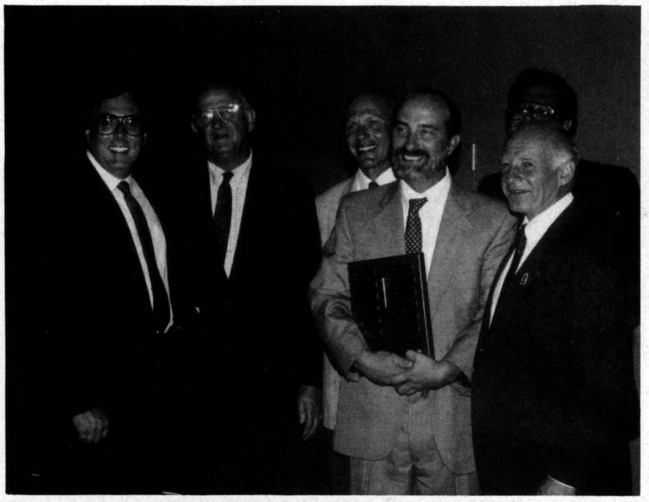

Rowe distributors Kelly Flynn, Al Toranto, Peter Betti and Bill McCartney with Rowe's Joel Friedman and Jerry Gordon at the distributor meeting.

REPLAY: Besides the 100-disc machine, you people also produce a 51-disc machine. Does the fact that the smaller machine only needs half the discs make this an attractive investment for the operator who's concerned about his software costs?

FRIEDMAN: The CD-51 machine has enjoyed some market acceptance, especially in smaller locations, but has not enjoyed the popularity of the CD-100 yet. And may I say it has little to do with the number of discs it holds. After all, an operator can always put out the larger machine with the same amount of discs if he wants. The CD-100 is generally considered to be a much better investment by operators.

GORDON: Both Cadillacs and Oldsmobiles are good cars, but a lot of people prefer the Cadillac . . . the CD-100 in our case. Remember, operators can run these machines seven, eight, ten years and more and along the line, they'll do better with a 100-disc machine rather than a smaller one. This is especially true when they're trying to get into a new stop where top-of-the-line equipment is the sales tool.

REPLAY: Most 45 vinyl machine operators have a routine way to update their record titles, like changing three or four new 45s every location visit. But there doesn't seem to be a routine yet for changing CDs. Some guys average a new one each week while far more are lucky if they add a new one each month. What do you hear? What do you recommend?

FRIEDMAN: As I said earlier, this relates to

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"CD management." Let's say that the dynamics of running an "album" jukebox are different from a "singles" machine. On one hand, both are hit-driven . . . but the CD box is also much more artist-driven than the vinyl machine. Operators are looking for discs that contain one or more hits by a known artist. They read the charts, talk with the one-stops and watch, wait and sometimes take educated guesses. Since the cost of a CD disc is far higher than a vinyl single, programming is a far more important factor with CD jukeboxes. But when you come down to the nitty gritty, it's still a matter of putting the right software into the right location.

GORDON: Operators of our CD machines can either read the amount of play per song or per disc manually or plug a printer in to retrieve that data. Just like with singles, the records changed should depend upon what records have gotten the better play. CD operators really have to learn how to use the play meters to their maximum advantage. And since CD is a new concept, they should also depend more heavily on the advice their one-stop reps give. These people know how many cuts are hits, or will be hits, on each disc.

REPLAY: Are any new record configurations being developed that might obsolete CD in the immediate years to come? What's brewing in the design shops here, or more likely in Japan?

FRIEDMAN: The 45 single had a good forty-year run and I think the CD will also have a long run . . . maybe not for forty years, but a good, long one nevertheless. Personally, the only new configuration that might come to any kind of importance in the future may be the CD video disc. But realistically, I don't see that thing making any impressive waves for another ten years or so from now. It first has to make an impression on the consumer market, become an off-the-shelf item at record stores, before it ever becomes a factor in the coin machine business. All of this is up to the labels.

GORDON: We obviously have no control over this, but we're monitoring any new developments. As Joel said, video discs could become a consumer factor one day, but not a day soon to come. Certainly, it won't be a threat to the audio CD business at this time in our business life. If any operator is worried that his investment in CD hardware will be obsoleted by some new configuration before the logical life of that hardware runs its course, he can bury those worries. There is no such immediate threat out there today.

REPLAY: Is the 3" CD disc a dead issue?

FRIEDMAN: I think so. It's never been a popu-



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lar item. It's not on the retail store shelf. The labels may or may not get more serious about a 5" CD single, another thing to be considered, but like the 3" disc, it's not a popular configuration. Remember, if for some reason, the 3" CD becomes popular, our present hardware can play it using the donut. Obviously, our machines can also play 5" CD singles if that becomes a factor.

REPLAY: So much of this involves the cost of the disc itself. Is there any downward movement in the cost of the present CD album?

FRIEDMAN: Unfortunately, no. The record labels seem to be getting some pressure from record retailers to adjust the prices downward, but they are still holding to their course. There is some price differential among the CDs out there, but apparently not for the better ones.

REPLAY: Has the availability of new vinyl 45s stabilized or are we still expecting the day when they won't be made any longer? Some operators are complaining rather loudly that they can't fill location requests.

FRIEDMAN: The number of available new 45s continues to shrink. And as that number goes down further, the price can go up. There are some companies licensing songs from the labels that haven't put certain titles out on vinyl, but that affects the cost of those singles as well. If more companies start licensing songs to make singles out of them, that's going to cost the operator more per record. Stands to reason. No, the vinyl situation is not improving and the picture will be even bleaker in two, three years.

GORDON: Some record artists only record on CD, period. If I was an operator, I surely wouldn't buy any more new vinyl jukeboxes. But, we still make them and still sell a few.

REPLAY: Since Rowe still makes traditional 45 vinyl jukeboxes as well as dedicated CD machines and even combo 45/CD units, your sales sheet is a great barometer to measure what operators are buying these days. Can you give us a glimpse?

FRIEDMAN: Just by looking at the sales figures over the last few months, dedicated CD jukeboxes have accounted for over 95% of our sales. The rest come from the CD/45 combos, which we intend to produce into the next model year, a few straight 45 vinyl boxes and our video jukeboxes. This video machine, by the way, does very well when it's in combination with CD players. Yes, we now have a combo CD/video jukebox!

GORDON: Look. There are still some operators who buy brand new vinyl machines. We're not going to turn that business away. But I seriously caution all operators that CD is the future and the longer they wait, the harder it will be for them to play catch up.

REPLAY: You folks have been pushing your video tape jukebox around for about eight years now. Do you ever see the day when this type of machine will get into the mainstream of the jukebox operating industry?

FRIEDMAN: We still do a good business with video tapes. The big breakthrough can come if the record labels get more serious about making and marketing video discs to the consumer. If and when that happens, the visual performance of a song will accompany the audio performance and become the next generation of the jukebox. Rowe will be there with the hardware and all the proper bells and whistles. It's all up to the record business right now.

REPLAY: Do you ever see the day when the CD audio jukebox will completely overtake the 45 vinyl box and if so, when?

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GORDON: The vinyl machines out in the field are not going to be thrown away all that quickly. Many will be around for years to come, we all know that. But in terms of new equipment buying, that market will become totally CD in a very short amount of time. This is almost the case as we speak. If you're wondering how long it will be before every single jukebox in America will be a CD, who can tell? You want me to guess? You want me to say four years, six years? There's no question that the CD configuration will be dominant before this decade is out. But none of us may still be around before the last vinyl jukebox rolls into the dump.

REPLAY: Has the hassle of different CD title card configurations among the different jukebox brands been streamlined yet?

FRIEDMAN: After seeing competitive machines at the New Orleans AMOA show, it's apparent that what we call the "Rowe style" has become standard. Sterling Title prints the title strips for the one-stops and the album cover goes next to it to add the sizzle onto the steak. We are finally in a uniform situation.

REPLAY: Is Rowe working on some interesting advance in jukebox design for the next model year that you can tease us about?

FRIEDMAN: Please don't expect me to answer that at this point. We have competitors who read your magazine. Of course we're exploring new ideas, but it's premature to mention them here. Let's just say it's concentrated in the area of the compact disc. It's what the industry expects from Rowe...a very carefully thought-out, money-making product.

GORDON: By hard work and if you'll forgive what may sound a little pompous, "vision" we're the market leader right now. We don't sit on our past accomplishments but try to stay ahead. Yes, our Grand Rapids people have things going to keep the industry, and Rowe, up to speed. Our current line demonstrates this. Our new products coming in September will demonstrate this as well, but it's a long way from now until then. All I ask of operators is to take stock of every single piece of equipment available on today's market, every brand, every type, and then direct investment dollars accordingly. They know better than anyone where to find their R.O.I. All any manufacturer can do is provide the best tools possible, a bit of advice and let the field take it from there to the player.

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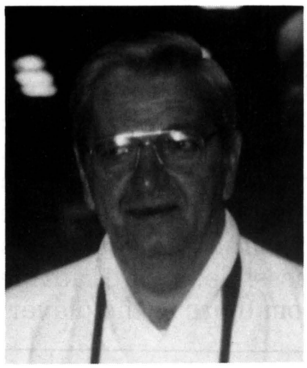
Operator Opinions

Q: *What's happening with CDs and 45s?*



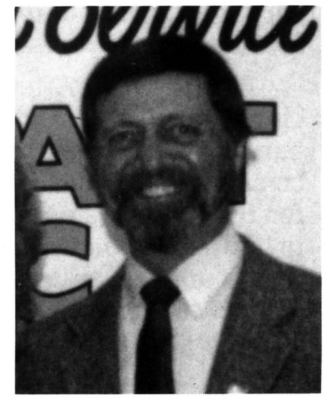
GUS TARTOL
Singer's One Stop
Illinois

Our proportion of CD and 45 sales to jukebox operators is about 50-50. Quite a few 45s are available but not long enough. They only press so many and after it hits the top 10, it's not available anymore. So if you don't get it before it's at the top of the chart, you're out of luck. An operator is better off buying early, especially if it's a known artist with a proven track record. I don't think the discontinuation of the LP will affect the 45. The LP market is completely divorced from the operator market. I'm sure the 45 will be around a lot longer. A few years, anyway. Of course, neither the music industry or the jukebox industry is really doing anything that I know of to ensure the 45's survival. Warners is still coming out with more singles than anybody. The labels are still making the same doomsday noises today about 45s that they were making last year. . . but nothing is happening. Maybe they've realized there's still a market. On the other hand, I've heard of situations where labels turned down 4,000 guaranteed sales and refused to press the record again. As for independent pressers and small labels, if they could get radio airtime, they'd make more noise. We did have one case where an independent label called Country International Records produced a 45 of a hit song. That was a David Chamberlain rendition of a Garth Brooks hit, "Friends in Low Places." I believe Brooks' rendition on Capitol was the country record of the year, but they quit making it in 45 format real quick! Capitol Records, Brooks' label, is the worst about this. So my advice to music operators is to buy early, while the 45 is still available.



TAMI NORBERG-PAULSEN
Chairperson, AMOA Jukebox Promotion Committee
Rochester, Minnesota

Although I'm an operator and not a one-stop, we find we can get most of the hits on 45s for our route. That's been true during the last six to nine months. The AMOA Jukebox Promotion Committee, which I chair, is not tracking the availability of 45s in any formal way; we're relying on our one-stops for that information. In all honesty the situation seems to have gotten better. I'm sure RSI (Record Service International) had something to do with it. For our company, we purchase music way in advance of when it hits the top ten, so we don't have a problem if pressing of 45s is discontinued after that point. I can see how operators who wait until late in a song's life cycle would have trouble. But as I say, for us there really hasn't been a problem in the last several months. We've kept a large record library of 45s and that's helped. What is the jukebox industry doing now to ensure the 45's survival? Through various promotions arranged by the Promotion Committee, we've been able to show several labels that they can sell substantial amounts of product through operators. We've also tried to help them break and promote new artists through jukeboxes, and Sam Atchley's efforts have been successful in this area. I haven't heard much about independent pressing. My advice to music operators for 1991 is to plan on using the CD jukebox, to begin updating their routes, and to maintain a good library of 45s, while also participating in the jukebox promotions sponsored by this committee, to help send a message to the record labels!



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The 45 is still leaps and bounds ahead of the CD. The latest figure I had is that there are now 45,000 or 50,000 CD boxes out there. AMOA estimates a total count of 225,000 jukeboxes (of all configurations) nationwide, but I think it's more like 350,000 or 450,000 jukeboxes. If so, then CD boxes represent 20% of the market at most. I doubt if you can even go that high. Availability of hits on 45 today is pretty good, but only just that. We're having some difficulty with R&B and some pop tunes. You have CEMA, one of the six majors out there with a large stable of top artists, and they don't want to mess with seven inch vinyl at all. CBS is still releasing pop and R&B; so does WEA, BMG and PolyGram. MCA — now Uni — is slowing down a little bit. So it's two out of the six who are giving us grief at this point in time, and we're still buying from the independents and small labels. I really don't know how long the

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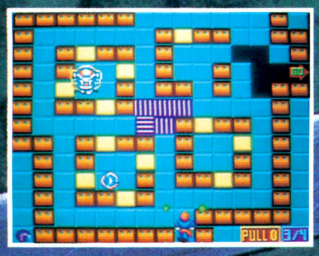

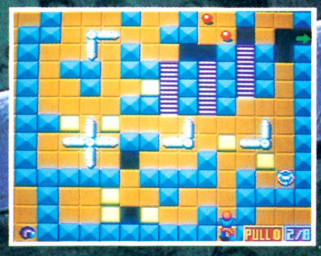



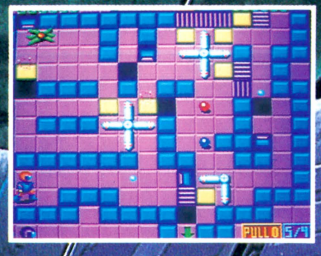



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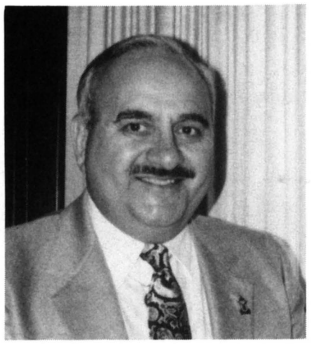
major labels will support the 45, but I think we'll learn the answer to that in 1991. There are still too many 45 jukeboxes out there, in my opinion, for labels to abandon this alternative method of exposing their new product. A 45 record today costs less than a ball-point pen! So it's really foolish for a label to turn their back on the 45. What is the industry doing to ensure 45 survival? There's nothing they can do about it. It's not the responsibility of the jukebox manufacturer. Besides, they're selling CD boxes now and they're not as concerned about vinyl. If vinyl goes away, they'll sell more CD boxes. So it's guys like myself and other one-stops, who know and understand the operator in a different light, who are working to keep the 45s coming. My advice to jukebox operators for this year? Hang in there, buy from Mobile Records! Pick up the phone and give me a call, I've got the product!



DON LIBERATORE
Don Record Company
New York

We're still moving a lot of 45s, probably more units than CDs. I'd say it's probably 65 or 70%. We still have the operator who runs 100 vinyl boxes and we make up a set of records up for him. With CDs we get requests, but the requests for changes don't come every week or every month like with 45s. Availability of hits on 45 today is fair, not great. As far as using the 'Billboard' charts, it stinks because so much of that stuff is just on cassette. Labels do cut their runs of 45 pressing quickly, but I think it has more life than when it reaches the top 10. We move quickly and have supplies ready, since we know what our customers need. As for the future of the 45, I'm more pessimistic than I was six months ago. But I can't project because they keep throwing surprises at us. For example, we didn't expect to see much 45 product from CBS after January 1, but they've given us a lot. Yet MCA, who had been supplying it, suddenly cut back. So we don't have a clear picture. I've also noticed one of my competitors has placed a large enough order to get the label, in this case Capitol, to press it in 45s. If that can happen, maybe some of us one-stops across the country can get together and do that on a consistent basis. We haven't really talked about it formally. I think 10,000 units of guaranteed sales could be the magic number that will get the labels to press it for you. I really don't think the jukebox industry is doing much to ensure the 45's survival. A handful of us one-stops are scratching and fighting, but more and more operators are throwing up their hands and saying, ''Well, I guess that's the way I have to go.'' They're tired of not having the music the customers want. As for independent pressing, I've seen some very nice things coming from Gotham Records out of Philadelphia, including nostalgia stuff I haven't seen for 25 years that we were excited about. My advice to music operators for 1991? Operators who are determined to keep 45 machines going should supplement their new 45 record buying with the purchase of oldies. By doing this, guys have found they're making money with vinyl. I think that's the way we have to continue in 1991; it will help stretch out the life of the 45!

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ARE YOU GETTING ALL THE GAME TITLES YOU'RE ENTITLED TO?

FRANK TALK



by Frank "the Crank" Seninsky

Good News for Operators: Tough Times Work for You

Eight hours from the time I write this (3PM on January 15), the world will probably go to war. If so, experts are saying it will be the first war in decades that's actually bad for the U.S. economy. What does this mean for operators and the amusement industry?

It means operators who don't have complete control of their companies may be driven out of business. Good operators will take advantage of today's economic conditions to actually make themselves stronger. The point is, you can't depend on sensational cashbox revenues to make your business successful. Any idiot could do that. Instead, you have to concentrate on managing your business wisely. If you do, the rewards will be visible immediately in your bottom line. . . and you'll be in great position to take advantage of the recovery, whenever it arrives. The motto to remember today is, "A quarter saved is two quarters grossed."

Assume a war starts tomorrow. What economic impact will it have? At least until the conflict is over, we'll see higher oil prices, which will trickle down to increase the cost of everything we buy.

Except, of course, we won't see higher price per play on video games! It seems that American consumers expect certain goods and services to cost 25¢ forever. . . including newspapers, phone calls and (regrettably) coin-op games. (By the way, I'll be doing a seminar at ACME which is aimed at ways to increase the price per play.)

One point must be stressed. Coping with a tighter economy doesn't mean you should stop buying new games. Refusing to invest in new equipment is the one sure way to drive your business into a downward spiral that could be permanent.

FOUR BASIC STRATEGIES

In this column, I want to discuss four strategies operators can use to make their businesses more efficient in this recession. The four strategies are: 1. reduce the number of machines per location to increase per-machine average earnings (while keeping the location gross constant). 2. Saying "no" to location requests that you know aren't right. 3. Getting rid of bad locations and moving your games where the people actually are. 4. Trying new things to save money (such as self-funded medical insurance).

Many of my recession strategies are based on this important fact: in a decent location, you can earn just as much revenue with a few good games, as you can with a lot of games whose average income is low. Why? Because players tend to spend the same amount of money at a given site. If you overload the location with games, the players simply spread their money among more machines. You, the operator, spend more overhead to earn the same gross. You may even lose money! You all know this, but now is the time to act upon it.

So when the economy tightens and your grosses

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start going down, it's a signal that you should begin reducing the number of games at each location. Take out the games you feel are not necessary. It's not very difficult to do this, when you explain your situation to most business owners. They understand exactly what the word "recession" means. They are also experiencing it.

One of the best techniques to use when negotiating with a location is to put yourself into your competitor's shoes. Realistically, the other operator in town faces the same prices of gas, labor and equipment that you do. Your competitor can't afford to give the location any more than you can. Keep this in mind, and refuse to promise more than is good for your company's bottom line.

FACING THE COMPETITION

When the location calls another operator, your competitor may say "yes, yes, yes" to every location request. The location will tell you all about that conversation, of course. But when it's time to deliver on those promises, the other operator won't be able to deliver.

Recently, I told a location owner that we had too many games in his location when you considered equipment cost, license fees, and the cost of collecting and service ($20 per week on pins and $10 on video . . . see my July column on cost control). I said I wanted to cut back on the number of low-earning games ($50 per week or less). But, I said I'd also increase the quality of the games that were left, and keep the overall revenues about the same or better. The location agreed completely.

I reduced the number of games by 12 in that location's chain of five stores. In this way, I saved $1,800 in license fees that very day. I also "gave" myself 12 games to place in other locations, where they are guaranteed to make more money. (The first quarter they take in, is more money!) And with better games in the first location, per-game earnings should start going up.

Since I'm saving on maintenance and collecting, the location's profitability has now increased substantially. While it could have been operating at a loss before, it's now operating at a profit. After earnings increase to a reasonable point, I'll be happy to sit down with the location once more, to talk about gradually increasing the number of games again.

You can tell when the economy is in a recession. That's when you get lots of calls every day from locations that never had coin-op games before. Now they're looking for a little help, because the rest of their business is off. Be careful, but take a look. Maybe you'll find a good new opportunity.

LEARNING TO SAY "NO"

When it comes to long-time accounts, remember: if the location is really dependent on you bringing in every new game that is available, and if they're unreasonable about making those demands, then you know that location has more problems than you do. Frankly, nothing you do for them will ever make a difference. You would be better off taking your equipment and your labor elsewhere. Let this location become a "drain" and a "headache" to one of your competitors.

Why do so many operators feel that if they lose a location — any location — they automatically lose money? I don't know how to drive this home: *some locations are not profitable!* You must analyze the costs of doing business at a location, not just look at the money in the cashbox. If you're actually losing money by having games at a certain stop . . . and if you can't renegotiate to make it a profitable site . . . then get out.

Maybe you can trade the location with another operator (say, if the reason you're losing money is because the location is too far from the rest of your route, etc.). But if you can't solve the problem and make the location profitable, then get out!

A CHANCE TO SAVE

Keep your eyes and ears open for new opportunities to save money, too. Readers may recall earlier discussions in this column about ways to save money on auto and medical

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6. **Spend My Life** Slaughter
7. **You're Amazing** Robert Palmer
8. **And So It Goes** Billy Joel
9. **I Saw Red** Warrant
10. **Power Of Love** Deee-lite
11. **Legs** ZZ Top
12. **Help** Bananarama
13. **Get Up** REM

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2. **Freedom '90** George Michael
3. **Games** New Kids On The Block
4. **Give It To Me Good** Trixter
5. **Rumor Has It** Reba McEntire
6. **Little Things** Marty Stuart
7. **Shelter Me** Cinderella
8. **Play That Funky Music** Vanilla Ice
9. **Roll With It** Steve Winwood
10. **Turn It Up** Dwight Yoakam
11. **Burning Down The House** Talking Heads
12. **1999** Prince
13. **Jamaica Farewell** Jimmy Buffet
14. **Over & Over** Neil Young & Crazy Horse

FEBRUARY HITS COMPILATION CD

Model#: A15-2-91

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5. **I Saw Red** Warrant
6. **Best I Can** Queensryche
7. **Give It To Me Good** Trixter
8. **Elvis Is Dead** Living Colour
9. **Your Time Is Gonna Come** Dread Zepplin
10. **Wherever Would I Be** Cheap Trick
11. **You're Amazing** Robert Palmer
12. **The Road** The Alarm
13. **Hammer And A Nail** Indigo Girls
14. **Poor Boy Blues** Chet Atkins & Mark Knopfler
15. **Ain't Necessarily So** Willie Nelson

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Model#: C2-2-91

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8. **Was It 26** The Charlie Daniels Band
9. **I'm Turning You Loose** Tammy Wynette
10. **Now That We're Alone** Rodney Crowell
11. **You Win Again** Mary Chapin-Carpenter
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14. **Another Old Soldier** Mark Collie
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insurance. Our latest look into this topic showed me that our company (which has 40-plus employees) paid about $50,000 in premiums in 1990 . . . and we got hit with an increase for 1991. I also learned about something called the "insurance ratio," a number which is very important to insurance companies.

This ratio is the amount paid to your company in claims, divided by the monthly premium. Each month that this ratio is over 10%, your insurance carrier gives you a black mark. If you earn as many as three black marks in one year, you can count on your rates going up faster than your real amount of damage claims increases.

Our ratio did exceed 10% for three separate months during the last year. Our overall ratio came out to 10.99%, which means that on $50,000 of premium, the insurance company had to pay $5,500 in claims. They were not happy with almost $45,000 in gross profit, and showed us how unhappy they were by hiking our rates by 30%! They told us "Even though you have a pretty good ratio, we had a bad year."

SELF-FUNDED MEDICAL INSURANCE

If your company's ratio is as low a ratio as ours, then you should look at some self-funded medical insurance programs. That means you find an insurance company that will insure you for catastrophe, while you pay the actual claims for medical services, with standard deductions for employees.

For example, we chose a plan which gave us better benefits than we normally have. We still have deductions of $100 per person, and $300 per family. After that, the insurance company will cover everything over $7,500 per person. If there's a million dollar claim, I'm covered. Meanwhile, the employee will pay 20% of any claim up to $2,500. My company pays the other 80% between $101 to $2,500 and 100% of the claims between $2,500 and $7,500 per person. This may turn out to be a large risk.

The cost of this policy for my company, for one year, is a flat $20,000 to the insurance company. And, based on my ratio, I'll probably pay another $5,000 in claims if we have the same claims ratio as last year. Admittedly, it's a roll of the dice, because if three employees have major claims exceeding $7,500 each, I'm back to where I was last year with a $50,000 premium! But I like the odds — we'll probably pay less this year than last (not even counting the 30% increase).

If more than three people have very high claims, I'll actually spend more money with my self-funded program than I would have with last year's insurance policy. Chances are good this won't happen, since most amusement industry employees are young and healthy. The largest medical expense incurred by the many young, healthy employees at our company is pregnancy. The medical cost of a pregnancy runs between $5,000 and $10,000. We estimate that we will encounter just one or two pregnancies per year.

All in all, we could save money or lose it with this new plan. I think the averages are in our favor. By the way, for the first time in our company's history, we started charging employees $5 per week (if they're single) or $10 per week (if they have a family policy) so that employees are also participating in the risk. The smart thing to do with these funds is to create a reserve pool to use in case of major claims this year or next year, etc. The company can keep the interest earned on the account.

Also, it's my guess that a few of the employees will come back and tell me they've decided to cancel their policy. That's because they are double-covered by their spouse's insurance program with another company, so they have no reason to pay $10 per week for coverage they don't really need.

A LOOK AHEAD

So that's my advice — renegotiate, learn to say no, move the games where the people are, and try new cost-cutting ventures such as self-funded medical insurance. Overall, the outlook for operators in 1991 is still positive, in my opinion. If you follow the advice given above, you can be very profitable during a recession.

Some people claim coin-op is "recession proof." For myself, I feel it's actually easier to make money during a recession period than it is during an expansion period or a boom. Remember how many operators found their bottom line was actually weaker after the video craze of the early 1980s? The whole strength of our industry is that as conditions get worse, it puts more negotiating tools into your hand, which allows you to make more money. Take advantage of these opportunities . . . and good luck.

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BLOOD BROTHERS

Fabtek & Tad Corp. worked hard to tweak game for U.S.
excellent earnings reported for latest kit from Fabtek;

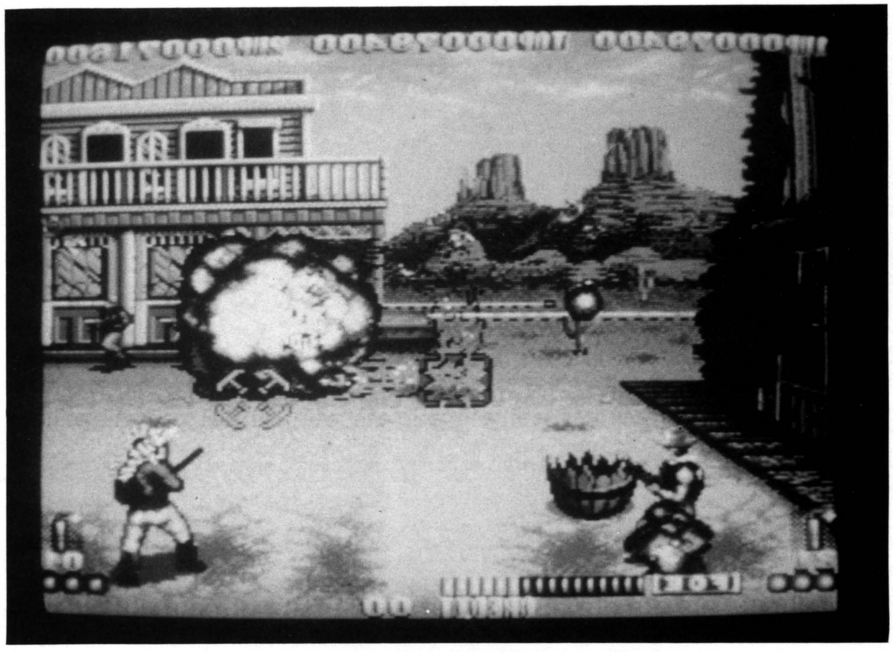
The bullets and arrows are flying — and so are the quarters — in Fabtek's current hit kit, *Blood Brothers*. "We're knocking 'em dead!" enthused the Redmond, Washington firm. "Collections are way up there and we're one of the only games that operators are buying in any quantity."

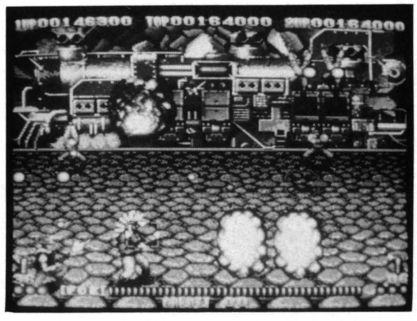
Reports from tradesters around the U.S. confirm that, yes, Fabtek has done it again. Earnings have been excellent, putting the game into solid competition with the industry's current top dedicated drivers and the current top kit.

Blood Brothers is a one- or two-player (simultaneous) conversion kit with the wildest "wild West" theme you've ever seen. Players take the part of two friends who have sworn a "blood oath" of allegiance: one is a cowboy, the other an Indian. Together, they take on all sorts of bad guys and the action is non-stop. With five stages of five levels each, the game gives players 25 distinctive screens. The second player can buy in at any time; if players run out of "lives," a continuation mode allows players to keep pumping in quarters to finish the game.

"*Blood Brothers* combines the challenging gameplay of *Cabal* with the outstanding graphics of *Toki* for a final result that's even more exciting," said Fabtek prexy Frank Ballouz. The game is Fabtek's third hit to be licensed from Tad Corp. (*Cabal* and *Toki* were the first two), giving both firms a great track record.

Ballouz stressed the value of the firm's close ties with its Japanese suppliers. "Drew Maniscalco and I go to Japan several times when a new product is under development," he said. "We work with Tad's engineers to tweak the game. Then we come back and put it on test in the U.S., and several of their engineers come here and sit in locations for hours on end, watching the reaction of U.S. players . . . and they change the game accordingly. That dedication and energy is priceless," Frank added. "If any one factor is responsible for our joint success, that's it."







Blood Brothers was initially tested with two types of controls (joystick vs. trackball), but the earnings were so close that Fabtek decided to go with the simpler, less expensive joystick. The kit also comes with a complete graphics package including unique art for the control panel, side panels and top marquee. A monitor card has also been supplied specifically for the game.

"These extras cost a bit more, but they definitely make for a better total package," Ballouz explained. "We've got to start cleaning up the product out there to attract those players."

The game started shipping Dec. 1 and is still going strong today. For more information, contact your distributor or for referral call Fabtek at 206/882-1093.

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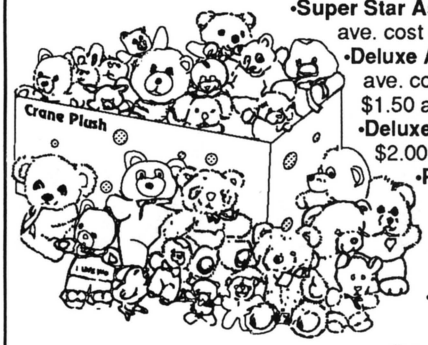

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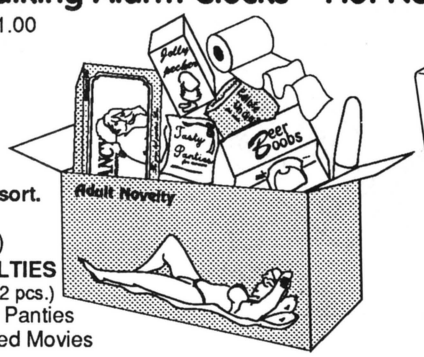

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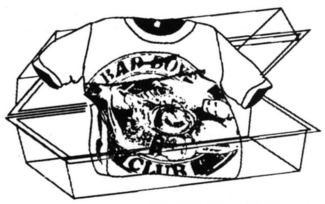

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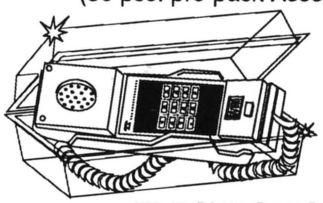

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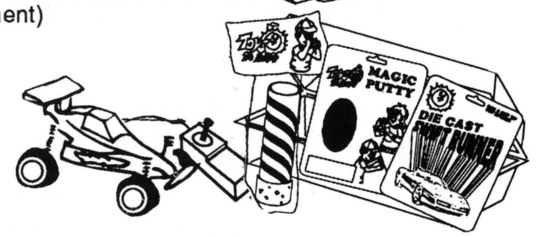

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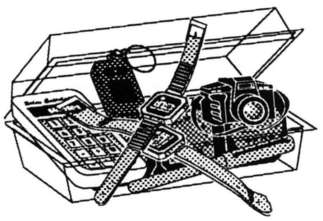

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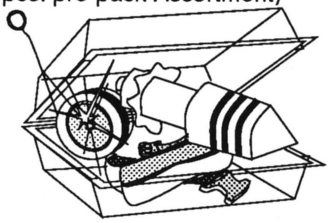

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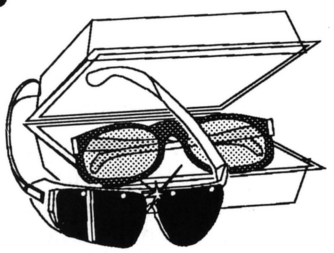

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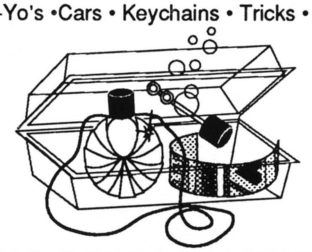

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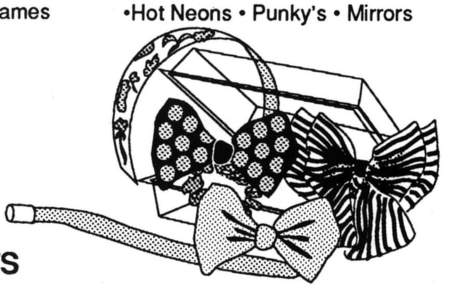

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the Big Ticket

Planning a Family Fun Center: Product Mix, Layout and Space Requirements

After seeing "very healthy" growth in redemption earnings during 1991, many of the best operators are expanding this part of their businesses in 1991. Some are planning to create family redemption centers, where ticket-vending, prize-awarding games are the main attraction. If you're one of the operators who is considering this move, allow this month's column to serve as your "consultant" as you design the layout of your new facility.

To start, decide on the overall size of your fun center. Have you set a budget? The budget will dictate not only the size, but also the character, of your place. Since it's impossible to cover every type of facility in a short article, let's concentrate on something in the mid-range: a "mini-park." That's not as large as a full-scale amusement park, but larger than a typical 1980s-style non-redemption game room.

Let's say we have a modest budget — we're not going to spend a million bucks — but we want to include different attractions so every member of the family will have something to enjoy. Therefore, we'll plan to have a video arcade, redemption games, kiddie area, small sports area, miniature golf (18 holes) and a snack bar or dining area. This would require a minimum of 11,000 to 12,000 square feet, total.

I usually like to work with strategically located windows that show off how much your players are enjoying themselves. If passers-by see families playing miniature golf, a mother and daughter competing in a race game, and a father and son shooting hoops, then the casual traffic may drop in for a closer look . . . and to join the fun. It's also a good idea to display a game that may attract the window watchers.

Now we come to dividing up all that space into separate attraction areas. Your anchor is your video arcade, with about 35 of the best videos and pins available. It's likely that in this section, 70% of your earnings will come from 15 or fewer units, but you still have to provide a good variety.

Your next section will be a redemption center. Include about 25

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Call your authorized SEGA distributor for the complete GP RIDER specs or to arrange a test ride. SEGA Enterprises, Inc., (USA), 2149 Paragon Drive, P.O. Box 610550, San Jose, CA 95161-0550. Telephone: (408) 435-0201.

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redemption games of all types (multi-player games count as one unit). Include an upright redemption show-case with about 20 feet of counter showcasing. Also, plan to install additional prize display cases (with locks on them) throughout your facility. You've got to show off those prizes to keep players interested and excited. . . and players have got to see the prizes from every place in your store! To hold your prize inventory, a modest storage area should also be planned. Make it at least 400 to 500 square feet.

We've now filled approximately 3,500 to 4,500 square feet of your site. To the above, let's add a sports game area: two batting cages, perhaps a new *Robo Pitch,* an adult basketball toss game, and maybe a golf simulator. Now you've used another 1,000 to 1,500 square feet.

The 18-hole miniature golf course will take at least 4,000 square feet, depending on layout. In such a small area, you can't create an elaborate, wonderfully scenic course. . . but you can have a modest and attractive one.

If you decide to have a separate kiddie area, provide another 1,000 to 1,500 square feet for that. Fill this section with rides, children's basketball games, child-sized ball roll games, ball jumps, etc. Leave plenty of space in the aisles for kids and parents to watch and wander around. Make this an enjoyable area.

Finally, the snack facility (with cooking equipment, refrigeration, counter space and preparation area) requires another 600 to 700 square feet. A stand-up eating counter, plus tables and seating, requires another 700 to 800 square feet. Many places also provide a separate birthday party room. Remember, parties are an excellent source of revenue; many family centers promote themselves heavily as party sites. If you can't manage a seprate room, then make sure your regular dining room area can double as the party site by including enough space to seat 25 to 35 children.

Now you have a general idea of the space requirements for each segment of your family fun center. Remember, leave some air in the aisles and between games! It avoids crowding players into a confined area. If you jam too many machines and bodies together, some players, especially the older ones, get claustrophobic and want to exit in a hurry. . . and your revenue walks out the door with them.

A spacious layout creates a sense of ease and time, which translates into more money spent per customer. On the other hand, if you waste space (perhaps by having too much of the same type of equipment), you are also losing revenue. It's important to strike a balance, to give players a sense of variety and — once again — to show them attractive prizes in displays scattered throughout your facility.

In other words. . . think redemption!

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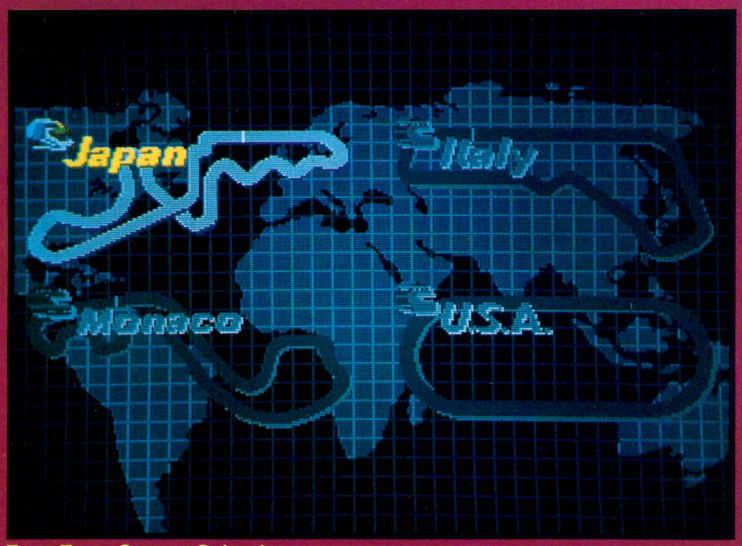


Four Race Course Selections



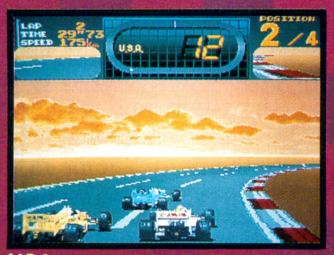
Japan



Italy



Monaco



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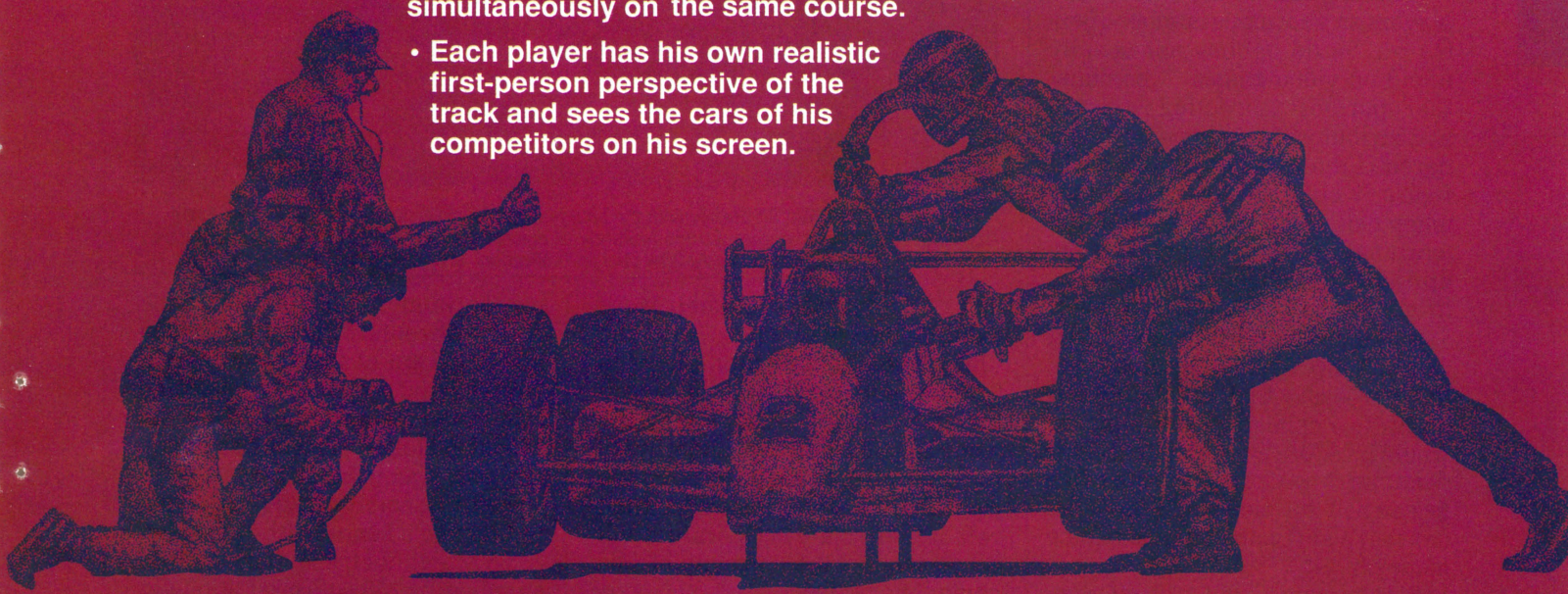

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F-15 IS ON COURSE

MicroProse's hi-tech simulator is booking the bread

"There's nothing wrong with coin-op video that a good injection of innovation wouldn't help." That statement has been made enough times for it to be carved in stone. Along came MicroProse Games with exactly that... their *F-15 Strike Eagle* air battle simulator... and operator comments went from "amazing!" to "do you think the players will be able to figure it out?"

Apparently they have, because the game is living up to the expectations of company President Bill Stealey. He finally began shipping production models around AMOA showtime and can now give the trade a reading on units operating in the field. "Some figures go from $750 to $1,000 a week, while admittedly some others run in the $450 range," he told *RePlay* "We have stops that booked over $10,000 over fifteen weeks and if that's not on a revenue sharing basis, you're talking amortization. Some have actually been paid off in eight weeks."

As many know, the *F-15* offers players an enormous number of extra air battle options not usually found on video games... so many that operators inspecting the piece at distributors have seriously wondered if the average player could figure it out. The answer is that many can. But it is harder and the learning curve is different, as is the up and down collection "spike" many games deliver in the cash box.

Stealey explains it thusly: "It's a slower curve up, taking maybe four to six weeks, which ultimately levels off to a collection any operator would love. We have monitored the dynamics and can tell the operator he can bolt this piece to the floor because it's still going to earn choice money in 1992."

Stealey says about 70% of players start at the "Beginner" level (which doesn't allow the plane to roll over and hence, he can play a more "manageable" game). More exotic game play comes with the "Intermediate" and ultimately the "Advanced" levels of aereal targeting and evasion. "That's why the game has such long legs and why we tell operators to keep the machine right there at the original location rather than rotate it. Operators will be pleased at the longevity of this game," he added.

The ultimate reward with *F-15* is to get the Congressional Medal of Honor at the end. "We sent a game over to Saudi Arabia for the troops and I got around 55 letters of thanks already. One of them was from a guy who said he pumped a lot of play into the game and finally won the Medal of Honor. He was one happy camper, according to his letter."

Final assembly of the *F-15* is done at Chicago's Lenc-Smith (a division of WMS Industries). The boards supplied by MicroProse (32 bits to effect the "3D" motion) cost around $2,500 alone, according to Stealey. "Much as I like the home computer



MicroProse chief Wild Bill Stealey with the brand-new sitdown version of his **F-15 Strike Eagle** *simulator (the above unit was used as a promotional draw at the recent C.E.S. show). Uprights have been shipping since AMOA time and collections & longevity look sound.*

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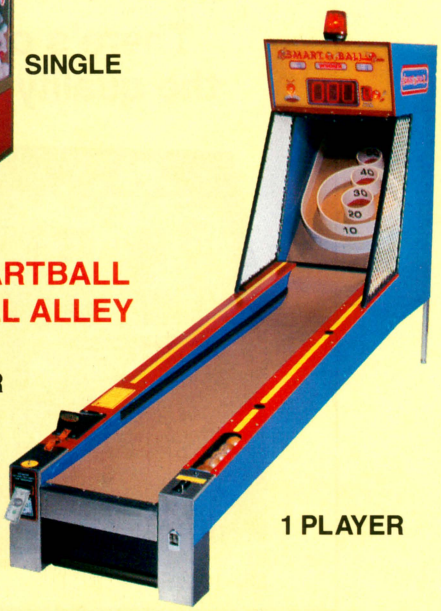

1 PLAYER



4 PLAYER



1 PLAYER

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WORLDWIDE EXPORT SPECIALISTS

game business, where we started, I also love the coin machine business," he said. "You can't play the coin-op version of *F-15* on a home system and that's so important to the coin machine business."

The game ships on 50¢ play with quarter-continue feature. "I think we make most of our collections on the continue quarters," Stealey said. "I also learned that many players who get boggled up in the air battle punch in more quarters and hit the Start button which brings them back clean. Interesting!" he added.

Operator tips: Stealey says that operators should advise players to keep their wings level at first, since it helps get them into game play easier. Once players get used to this rather advanced machine, they often stay at it for long periods (pumping in money in their attempt to develop expertise and ultimately get the coveted Medal).

Players, of course, are often happy to show others how to play the piece. Stealey says a game manager at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas gives new players lessons. "Sure, it's harder because it forces players to make so many decisions. But can I say one important thing? Most video game players aren't dumb... give them a chance," he said. "Of course, the younger players learn it quicker," he smiled.

Thus far, the game has only been marketed in upright fashion, but a more expensive sitdown version became available the end of January. MicroProse markets all these simulators through a select network of twelve distributors here. One of them, Betson Pacific's Peter Betti, told us: "This is an authentic simulator, a great piece to draw people into the game room and if you want to hear it, it's the most fantastic game I've ever seen in terms of technological advances."

F-15 sounds like a great investment as well as a choice piece of "theater" for the game room owner. Of course, not every arcade is right for this "thinking man's video game" but then again, no one can argue that another "something different" hasn't popped onto the present market.

F-15 Strike Eagle will display at the ACME show, along with a brand new piece which is hush, hush at this point. However, Stealey revealed that a ROM retro update for *F-15* to turn it into *Tank Killer* (another air combat game) will be available to operators next year. Meantime, eyes and sweaty player palms are on the *F-15* . . . a game one tradester compared to "chess" while many others are merely "checkers."

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NIFTY FIFTIES

Premier's new pin Car Hop *offers classic gameplay & sounds plus irresistible theme and art. . . for great ROI, says firm*

If you have fond memories of the drive-ins, bebop, pony tails and bobby-soxers from the 1950s, you'll love Premier Technology's jazzy new nostalgia-themed pinball, *Car Hop*. Players certainly do, according to initial test reports cited by the manufacturer and at least one enthusiastic distributor.

"The game is collecting very well," said Premier's sales pro Dan Clarton. "In respect to ROI it's an excellent buy. The keys to success with the game are, first, an attractive nostalgic theme and art, and second the designer was John Norris, who also did *Vegas*."

Chris Vecchione, game sales chief at Active/Mondial Dist. in Philadelphia, said: "I have always liked Premier pins. *Car Hop* is their best since *Silver Slugger*, using simplified play to appeal to older players. I've showed it to salesmen and gotten their blood pumping when they play the game and see all the features: you've got to make points, learn how to spell the letters, and make the thermometer go up... and you've got to compete against a timer!"

Continued Chris: "I've seen credible test reports which show *Car Hop's* gameplay brings people back for a long-term, enjoyable earning curve. These reports convincingly demonstrate that income grows over a period of weeks. I've never seen a game go up five weeks in a row when everything else goes down. It's priced very competitively, significantly lower than the other big names out there. Service is great — because it's lack of service. The last four Premier pins have been absolutely reliable. You can put them into a location 30 miles away and not worry about making those long round trips. And there's an option to go back to '50s-style scoring where 80,000 may be the high score... and you can also choose to have either modern or 1950s-style music and sound effects. With all these great features, *Car Hop* has gotten me really fired up!"



Samples of the game were testing in early January; production models were to begin shipping around January 24. For more information, contact your authorized Premier distributor. For referral, operators in Canada and the Northern states should call Dan Clarton at 708/350-0400; in Southern states, Premier's Ron Zaler can be reached in St. Louis at 314/961-4816.

Where Are We Now? Where Are We Headed?

. . . continued

The first portion of this collection of brief essays ran in our January edition, and we're pleased to say it received unanimously favorable comment. But as things go in the publishing business, several additional comments arrived after deadline, so we decided to run them this month. As with the first installment, some of these messages from your peers run from the philosophical to the functional. . . but all are thought-provoking and so needed in these times. Again, our thanks to one and all who shared their views with us and our readers.

RePlay



PETER BETTI
Betson Pacific Dist.
Los Angeles, Calif.

On the first of January, three operators went shopping for a new video game. Hiro, the owner of Banzai Games in Tokyo bought a PCB for "Ninja Turtle III" and put it in a six-year-old cocktail table at Joe's Sushi. He paid $1,000 for the kit. Tom, an operator in L.A., bought a "Ninja Turtle III" and put it in Joe's Pizza in Malibu. He paid $2,600 for the whole game. John, another operator in L.A., decided to hold off and see when parallels became available.

On March 30, 13 weeks later, Hiro pulls his PCB and trades it to his distributor for $500, who sells it to a U.S. distributor for $600, who advertises it for $750. John sees the ad and decides to buy it. He installs it into the location across from Joe's Pizza. By the time all of the transfers and trades are done it is now April 1.

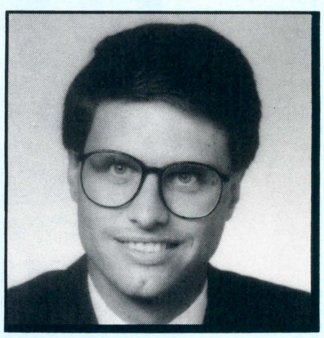
During the 17 weeks the "Ninja Turtle III" has been in Joe's Pizza, the location has grossed $150 a week more than John's location across the street which has identical games (except no "Ninja Turtle III"). Tom's share of the collections has been $1,265 greater than John's (plus he hasn't had to hear "where's my new game!" like John's been hearing for 17 weeks).

So where are we with dollars and cents? Tom spent $2,600, made $1,265 in earnings and has a game that's probably worth $1,500 in trade. He's up $165.

John has just spent his first $750, but can we really say it will do anything to increase his location gross after four months of exposure across the street in Joe's Pizza? Remember the important number here is the additional dollars that the "Ninja Turtle III" brought to Tom is $165. A big deal? Absolutely not. But the point is that the money John saved(?) never went into the cash box. It never came into the coin machine industry's cash flow.

John never had the use of these additional dollars to buy or not to buy new games. The factory distributor never had the use of that money to support infrastructure: parts, sales, technical support. The manufacturer never had the use of their dollars to support his research and development effort. Who came out ahead?

Of course the numbers change radically if Tom puts "Ninja Turtle III" out after 5 weeks instead of 17, but then we are not talking about copy boards, or are we?



RANDY CHILTON
Chilton Vending
Wichita, Kansas

Where are all the video game players from yesterday that crowded the arcades for years? They're still playing more than ever. . . at home. Some facts:

The total number of home entertainment systems in the United States is 28 million. The total number of software titles sold in 1990 in the U.S. is estimated at 70 million units. The home entertainment system business is a $5 billion industry in the U.S. alone.

Coin-op video games have become a secondary purchase in today's market. The primary video game market is in the home. I see nothing to suggest that this is

going to change, what with the advent of the 16 bit chip being introduced to the consumer this year. The proverbial "other shoe" is about to drop. That's okay if we realize it and adjust our businesses accordingly.

Any location where coin-operated amusement machines are the primary purchase product (arcades, convenience stores, etc.) are in a declining mode. The case ten years ago was you put your machines anywhere you wanted to and it didn't matter. Just go collect your $100 per-week per-machine.

Today, the "hot" locations are where the people already are. There must be a draw other than your games because your games do not have anywhere near the appeal they once did. Games are primarily an impulse product today. People just won't go out of their way to play them because they're not thinking about it. But if they "accidentally" see your games and they are inviting (clean, working properly, current titles, maybe even in a total entertainment center environment), then you have found yourself a profitable location.

Our games are very similar to the *National Enquirer* at the grocery store. Move it away from the cash register and put it back on row ten and you won't sell one per week. Put the *Enquirer* next to the counter where people have to look at it and you'll sell out every week. An impulse buy. Just like our video games.

This is what separates operators. None of us have the ability to bring players in the front door anymore (scary thought). Once a customer looks at a game, or peeks into a game room, the competition begins. Which operator can lure the largest number of customers to their games? Are the games outdated in a dark, dingy game room or are they current titles in a clean, inviting, well-designed area? Is the area highly visible or are the games hidden in a room (game room death)? If they can't see the games they won't play them because they won't think to look for them. If they do see your games and don't like what they see, then you haven't done your job very well.

The bright spot in our industry is in the growing area of video lottery terminals. But what must be stressed is this is a very limited window of opportunity. In a few years, the opportunity will not exist like it does today. Rally the troops. The AMOA has taken steps recently that make it our national association's top priority. The most "can do" man in our industry, Wally Bohrer, is leading this effort for the AMOA. He can't do it by himself. Operators need to band together like never before and seize the opportunity.

It's an unbelievably changing industry. Change with it. Your problems will not heal themselves.

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MILLIE McCARTHY
Catskill Amusements
Hurleyville, New York

Yes, it is a downturn, and has been for some time. But it is picking up slightly already, and may pull out by the next summer . . . unless the Persian Gulf crisis causes great changes. My son Vic never changes the amount of equipment (based on percentage of last year's gross) or records, no matter what the economy does. To do less is to further reduce collections. Instead, you plan and organize even tighter control to eliminate waste of time or duplication. Very often, of necessity, your most innovative business practices come about when business is slow.

Our hedge against a downturn is to aim for a decent balance at the end of the year in order to get a head start on next year's purchases with anxiety. A lot of money is saved when you pay as you go (no interest payments and discounts for cash). Of course, we also never stop rotating . . . daily . . . in all weather, with completely refurbished machines.

Having been through so many cycles, it's hard to have empathy for those who had the top years and came to expect it would always be this way. We managed to overcome them when there were no video games or pingames and when pool tables were illegal. You had to practically sit in a customer's lap and buy the bar drinks even when there wasn't enough money in the

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coin mechanism: electronical or mechanical
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machine, and someone had to sit with the phone 24 hours a day, seven days a week because there were no car phones or answering machines. And those who remember those days are the surviving route owners to this day.

So, shut off the damn TV. Each commentator tries to out-do the other in scaring you that the sky is falling. If it's true, then how come I wait five months for a carpenter, painter, etc. and I never ask the price? You feel so honored when they finally choose to come and you ask "can I get you something to eat, a beer, soda, anything?"

As Vic told me, there isn't any quick fix. We're in it, IBM is in it, Lee Iacocca is in it. So, given a lemon, they say go make some lemonade. I have to admit that Vic does a good job organizing things and when it's well organized, there isn't the pressure and the stress, which is the worst part of all.



JOHN BELL
Bell's Music Company
Vicksburg, Mississippi

When asking "where are we now?" and "where are we headed?", we must first consider where we have been. In the past decade, we have witnessed the success of *Asteroids, Defender, Galaga* and *Pac-Man,* to name a few. We have also witnessed the birth of a medium that may change our lives forever: the compact disc. But, in the waning years of the decade, our industry is sputtering. We have seen friends fold. And we have all wondered about our own fate in this business.

During these tumultuous ten years, we must agree that our major adversary was ourselves. We gave the people something new, something fresh and they responded with quarter after quarter of "thank you's." But, we rested on our laurels and assumed that we were the only people that could give the players this type of entertainment. We now know, if only too late, that this is far from the truth. Be honest. How many people reading this own their own home video games (Nintendo, Sega, TurboGrafx)? Why did you buy them? Because it was new, fresh and above all, convenient.

Now before you all destroy your *Super Marios* and such in protest, you have got to remember that these companies are out to make a living too. They have payrolls to meet just like the rest of us. They just came up with something new and exciting. Just like we did with *Asteroids, Pac-Man* and *High Speed.*

Think back. Do you remember the furor and interest created by *Dragon's Lair* when it was introduced? Granted, it gave the techs nightmares later, but the interest and initial response was phenomenal. Can we do this again? Can we bring the people back to the arcades and street locations?

I believe we can. But we have to do it together... from the game designers to the operators. If we want to survive, we all have to look back to "where we've been" and then answer the question "where are we headed?" **Together!**



JOE GILBERT
Sufferin, New York

It is approximately three years since I decided to leave the industry I'd spent over half my life in. During these last three years, I've had plenty of time to reflect on my decision, while also having the rare opportunity to look at the industry as an outsider.

I am sad to say that things are different, but yet still the same. I can remember the operator's lament of 1965, "the jukeboxes are priced too high... I can never get two plays for a quarter." And, "are you crazy charging $425 for a pinball!" Today, the operator is playing the same tune and singing the same kind of words.

I know there are operators out there that don't feel this way and I wish they'd speak out more. Why is it that people in general are always quick to bemoan the down side of every business slowdown instead of looking at the positives?

Do you remember when there were no video games, period? No sophisticated redemption machines, less maintenance on pinballs, no legal lottery or poker machines? Look at all the opportunities the last ten years have brought forth. Let's talk about all the new and improved electronics, the new 25" and 35" monitors, the ease of service in pinball and last but not least, all the dollars that have been earned from these machines. How many families have been housed and fed? How many children have been seen through college? How many businesses are being handed down from generation to generation?

Let's talk about the future and what the new advances are going to mean to the industry. I believe most people don't realize how many lives we touch on an everyday basis. We are an industry that is an integral part of these families' overall entertainment. Let's start to wake up and smell the roses instead of spouting garbage.

I am not naive enough to think we don't have our share of problems, but so does every other business. Unfortunately, this industry does not welcome change

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easily, but in a lot of cases, rejects it easily. It usually takes some progressive operators (mostly people that have not been in the industry that long), aggressive distributors and some dedicated manufacturers all banding together and after many frustrating months and even years of jamming it down everyone's throats, finally accomplishing their goal.

The bottom line on this commentary is a request to stop bemoaning the recession and all the doom and gloom and start creating some new and different marketing techniques that include the distributor and the operator and his location. Let's become more professional both in attitude and in performance and last but not least take a genuine pride in being part of an exciting and fun industry.

PS: Nothing is firm yet, but look for my return to my first love shortly. I can't get this business out of my blood.



FRED GILLMANN
Just Games
San Diego, California

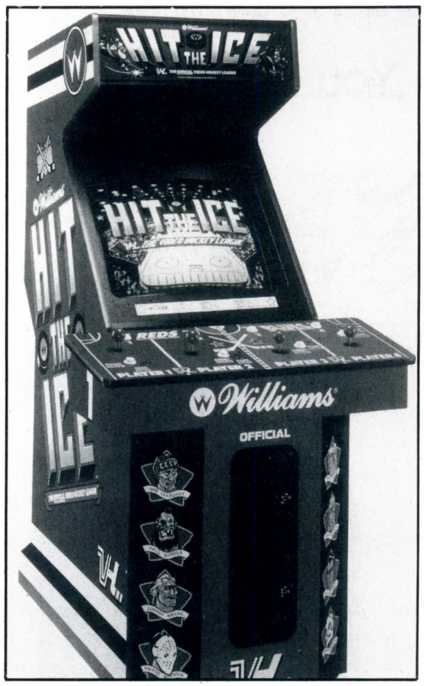
I recently sat down with my division managers and asked those same two questions: "where are we now?" and "where are we headed?" The consensus of opinion was that the manufacturers had delivered some unusually good games to the AMOA show as well as throughout the year.

We have seen several new pieces of equipment that have exceeded seven hundred dollars a week in earnings for their first few weeks. In this light, I have to say that the manufacturers have done their job for the industry.

The next area to address is the revenues for overall routes. We have taken the time to call the city licensing departments in the three major cities we operate in to find out what percentage increase in video licenses were issued in 1987, 1988 and in 1989. It came as no surprise that the increase in licenses issued was many times the population growth. In effect, all three areas have had considerable saturation of our product and it is my opinion that this is the major cause in the drop of volume for most operators.

Fortunately, some years ago, our company made a conscious decision to target limited market areas of our industry, essentially captive audiences; also to concentrate on the latest and most popular equipment. In addition, we emphasize education of our employees, service and image. It is our opinion that all of this and a great group of employees has come together in such a way that 1991 will be an outstanding growth year for our company.









FEARSOME FOURSOME

bowing to operators
Williams/Bally-Midway kits two hit videos;
drafts Bugs Bunny for new pinball
as Fun House *hits U.S. market*

Talk about singing in the rain! While some tradesters are crying the blues, the folks at Williams/Bally-Midway are enjoying a "full plate" of hit product. They've got video (available in kits or dedicated). They've got dedicated games. They've got pins. They've got it all!

The factory is selling what many say is today's hottest coin-op title — *High Impact,* the four-player, football-themed video game with sensational graphics and Williams quality. This Chicago factory has always said quality was the only solution to today's soft market . . . and now, impressive earnings reports for this kit are proving Williams was right.

"Operators are only buying what they perceive to be the number one or number two game, and we've got it," said the firm's Bob Lentz. "Operators are reporting that our earnings top everything else out there. In fact, *High Impact* is doing even better than last year's top hit dedicated game, when it was brand new. We're going like gangbusters with production, but we're still backordered and can hardly keep up with demand!"

Digitized graphics of superior quality, plus a timely theme, helped bring *High Impact* to its flush of success. "We've heard over and over how much operators want kits, want kits, want kits," said sales and marketing chief Joe Dillon. "We're trying to respond to that by keeping *High Impact* as a kit. The response from operators has been very, very good. We sensed that the market needed operator confidence that video can still make a lot of dollars with the right game in the right configuration. This game *is* making money, and we feel that shows the viability of the whole video market."

Is this going to be standard policy for Williams in the future? "If you've got a game with unique controls, it probably should be a dedicated game. If its joysticks and but-

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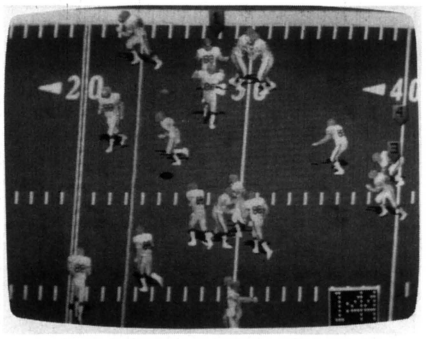

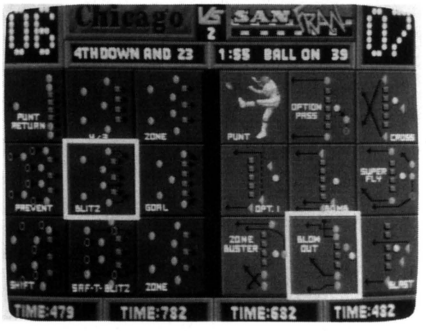

Above, two looks at the screen from Williams' High Impact football video. At top we see the players on the field in the middle of a play. At bottom, a look at the many play options.

tons, it probably should be a kit. But that's a decision each manufacturer will have to make."

Demonstrating that philosophy is the fact that *Hit the Ice* is also a kit. Gameplay continues Williams' *Arch Rivals* tradition of heavy wrestling-type action (you don't have to be a big fan of the particular sport to enjoy the game) combined with slapstick humor and character comedy. "In places where hockey is strong, it's been sensational," reported Joe Dillon. "Even in the Southwest or other non-hockey areas, response has still been quite strong."

At the same time, *High Impact* and *Hit the Ice* are both available in universal, four-player "dedicated" cabinets for those who prefer the games in this configuration. "We're leaving it up to the operators," said Joe Dillon.

On the flipper side of the company, *Fun House* won a phenomenal response at distributor shows last fall and it did great business in Europe. Now the game is in "serious domestic production" for the USA. Boasting truly wonderful execution of a classic theme, plus Pat Lawlor's great gameplay, *Funhouse* should be around for a long, long time...



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Upper left: ***What a class act! The Williams/Bally-Midway folks have such high standards, Joe Dillon tours the line in a tuxedo! Having fun for the RePlay photos are*** Fun House ***designer Pat Lawlor and Joe Dillon.*** *Upper right:* ***Dillon says hello to one of the gals on the assembly line.*** *Below left:* ***The*** Fun House ***design team. On the left side, front to back, are Larry DeMar (software and design), John Hey (sound) and John Krutsch (mechanical engineer). At right, front to back, are Chris Ganner (music), Brian Eddy (special effects) and Ed Boon (voice of Rudy). And standing top center is Pat Lawlor who did concept and lead design on the project. (Not pictured is artist John Youssi.)*** *Below right:* ***On the Bally-Midway side,*** Bugs Bunny ***looks very strong and fun.***





like many other Williams pins of the past.

The Bally pin *Bugs Bunny's Birthday Ball* is shipping now. Timed to coincide with Bugs' 50th anniversary, the game features America's most broadly popular American cartoon character. And the company expects the game to last nearly as long as the title character. "It's not a quick, six week 'earn or die' game," said Dillon. "We're looking for a long-term investment and that's why we chose this classic character for a licensed themed flipper game."

Designed by Python Angelo and John Trudeau, the game features a barnyard full of all the beloved Looney Tunes characters: Bugs, Daffy Duck, Elmer Fudd, Porky Pig, the Roadrunner, Wile E. Coyote, Foghorn Leghorn, Tweety and Sylvester, Speedy Gonzales, the Tasmanian Devil, Yosemite Sam, Pepe LePew and more. You'll hear their voices (recorded in studio by the Warner Bros. artists) and recognize the unmistakable clever music from those classic Warner Bros. cartoons.

Gameplay is simple and straightforward, appealing to younger players and women. Features include an inverted lower playfield (a "totally new dimension in pinball action," said the firm), plus an amazing, operator-adjustable, "50 Million Point Shot" when you "blow out the candles" on your favorite bunny's birthday cake. At the end of every game, an exclusive Bally pinball feature gives players a chance to get their own surprise "present" (it could be another shot, another game, a million points, etc.).

Operators will be able to purchase Looney Tunes merchandise from a Warner Bros. catalog that comes with every game. A promotional marketing program will also enable operators to buy some of the Warner Bros. merchandise in this catalog at a special discount. See "News Digest" for details.

Behind the scenes, the company is also working hard to keep up with today's market. Williams has named a five-firm "distributors' council" (Betson, Brady, C.A. Robinson & Co., Southgate and Hans Rosenzweig for Europe). Williams gave them a charter to improve communications between the factory and its dealers and operators. On December 17, Williams convened this group at their Chicago factory where the factory's approach to video was assessed.

"We've got more coming at ACME, so keep your eyes on Williams/Bally-Midway!" smiled Joe Dillon.

TECHNICAL TIPS

Can A Bad Picture Tube Be Repaired? Yes! (Sometimes, That Is)

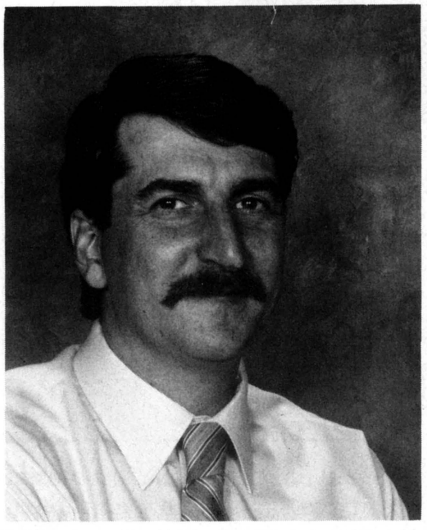
by RANDY FROMM

"If I have a bad picture, can I fix it?" I get asked this question just about every time I teach a class on video game monitor repair. It's a good question! As video games get converted and reconverted, the monitors can easily log tens of thousands of hours of operation. As a result, picture tube or CRT (cathode ray tube) failure has become increasingly more common.

Anyway, the answer to the question is yes. Sometimes. Kinda. Sorta. Maybe. But before we get into repairing picture tubes, let's take a look at some different types of picture tube failures. More specifically, we're going to look at the electron gun assembly that's located in the neck of the picture tube.

Each of the three electron guns in the electron gun assembly uses a heated cathode as a source of electrons. The heater is the element that you see glowing when you look at the neck of a picture tube. The heater must fit closely inside the metal cathode but it must not touch it. If the heater shorts to the cathode, the gun will be stuck "ON" and the screen will appear a super bright color (red, green or blue depending on which of the three guns is affected) with vertical retrace lines visible throughout the screen. Vertical retrace lines appear as diagonal lines that run from lower left to upper right across the screen.

If you believe you might have a heater-to-cathode short, try unsoldering and removing the associated video output transistor from the neck board of the monitor. Fire up the monitor with the transistor removed. If you still have a brightly colored screen with vertical retrace lines, there's a good chance the CRT has a heater-to-cathode short. You should be able to verify this with an ohmeter. With the neck board removed from the CRT, you should have an infinite resistance between

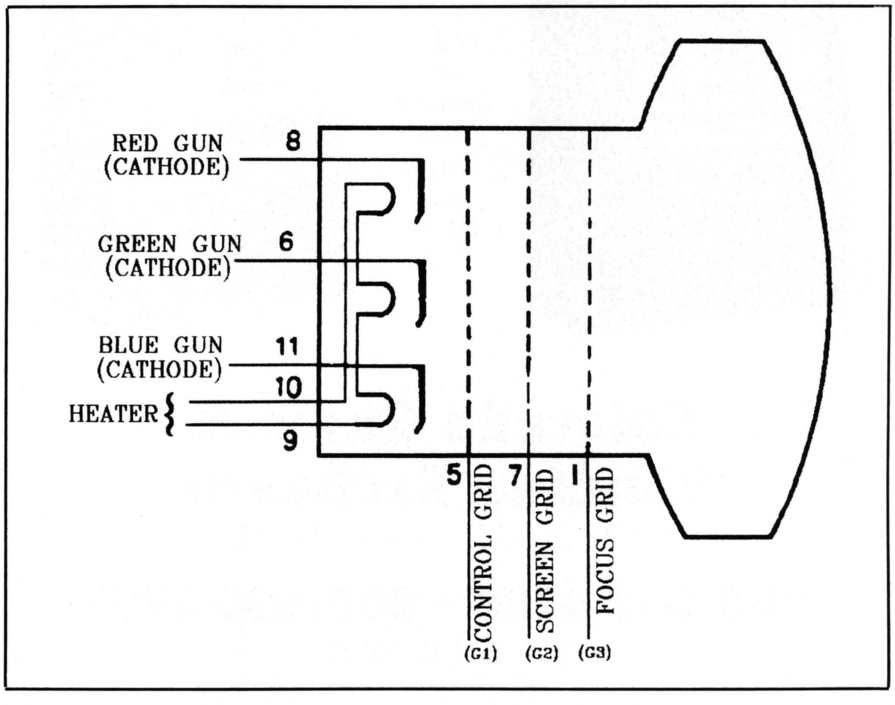


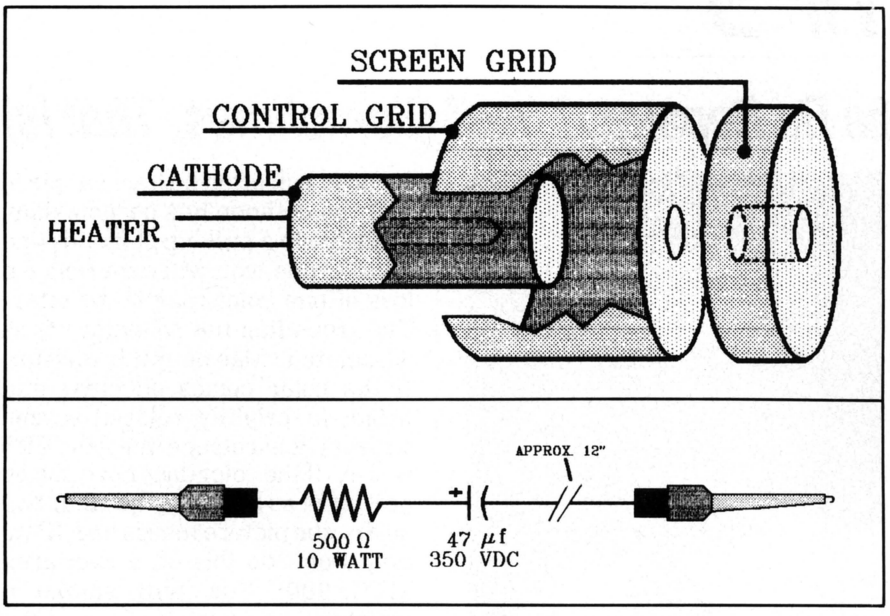
heater and cathode of the picture tube. Although there are many different types of CRTs, you will often find the red cathode at pin 8, the green cathode at pin 6, and the blue cathode at pin 11. Pins 9 and 10 are for the heater.

It is also possible that one of the cathodes might become shorted to a control grid. This can cause a similar symptom as a heater-to-cathode short. If the cathode is shorted to the control grid, you should be able to verify it with your meter. The control grid will often be found at pin 5.

If the cathode has become damaged due to a buildup of oxides and other crude, you will experience a loss of one color (partial or total.) Try grounding the collector of the associated video output transistor. If the color comes on clear and bright (a brightly colored screen with vertical retrace lines) the CRT is okay. If the color does not come on or it is not as bright as the other two colors, the picture tube is bad. (Caution: Don't do this on a Hantarex MTC 900. You will smoke a resistor.)

Another type of electron gun failure is a short between the control grid and the screen grid. This will cause an extremely dark picture (even with the screen control at maximum) or no picture at all. Measure the voltage at the screen grid (often pin 7) of the CRT. You should be able to run it through a range of 250 to 750 volts DC using the screen potentiometer. If the voltage is not high enough, pull the neck board off the CRT and measure the voltage at the CRT socket again. If the voltage is now normal, you probably have a short between the control grid and





the screen grid. Use your ohmeter to verify.

FIXING BAD TUBES

Is it really possible to fix a bad CRT? I have had a fair bit of success using some simple techniques. Shorted electron guns are often caused by small flakes of cathode material that have sloughed off and found their way into the electron gun. This type of failure is common in games with face-up mounted monitors (table games, gun games that use mirrors, etc.) because any crud in the CRT will naturally fall right into the electron gun. By turning the picture tube face down and tapping lightly and repeatedly on the neck with the plastic handle of a screwdriver, the flakes can sometimes be dislodged. Do not hit the convergence ring assembly and for goodness sake don't hit the glass neck hard enough to break it! Naturally, if you manage to shake the shorting particle out of the neck of the CRT, you do not want to use this picture tube for a table game again, ever!

There is another trick that you can use to save a shorted CRT. CAUTION: Do not try the following technique until you have verified that the picture tube is definitely bad. This is a 'last-ditch' attempt to repair a CRT that is otherwise unusable. Using this technique on a good CRT might damage it.

BUILD THE SHORT BUSTER

Commercial CRT service equipment uses a technique known as "rejuvenation" to remove shorts from electron guns. The rejuvenation circuit uses a capacitive discharge to blow away any little shorting particle. This is a simple project that you can make in a few minutes.

The construction is simple and self-explanatory (see illustration) but you must be careful how you use it. Here is a step-by-step technique for charging and using the Short Buster.

CAUTION: The procedures described herein involve potentially lethal voltages and must be performed by qualified personnel or at the very least by a mechanic with a decent sense of self-preservation.

1. Locate the screen voltage pin of the CRT socket (often pin 7 but check schematic to be sure.) With the neck board installed on the CRT, turn on the monitor and adjust the screen potentiometer to obtain a screen voltage of 300 volts DC as measured with a digital multimeter.

2. Ground the negative end of the capacitor to the monitor chassis.

3. Momentarily touch the end of the 500 ohm resistor to the screen voltage pin of the CRT socket. It only takes a second to charge the capacitor.

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now have a capacitor that is fully charged at a respectable 300 volts DC. You can get a nasty shock from it if you are not careful. Not to mention the fact that it will scare the living daylights out of you if you short the two leads together.

4. Turn off the monitor and remove the neck board. Connect the resistor end of the Short Buster to one of the two shorted pins on the CRT. It does not matter which pin. For example, if the CRT had a cathode to control grid short in the red gun, connect to either pin 8 or pin 5. In another example, for a heater to cathode short in the green gun, you would use pin 6 for the cathode connection and either pin 9 or 10 for the heater connection.

5. Disconnect the negative end of the capacitor from ground and touch it to the other shorted pin of the CRT. With luck, you will see a small blue arc in the neck of the CRT as the short is blown away.

6. Use your digital multimeter to verify that the short is gone. You should now read an infinite resistance. If not, repeat steps 1-6.

Cathode to grid shorts and grid to grid shorts can usually be removed with this technique. Heater to cathode shorts are another story as the thin filament of the heater will often blow out before the short circuit does. I have had about 50% success removing heater to cathode shorts this way.

Author's note: My new two-day classes are off to a great start, having completed one in Mexico City and a second in Vancouver, British Columbia. These classes may not always be advertised here in *RePlay*, so ask your distributor if you're interested in attending or contact me directly at my new telephone number 619/593-6131 to find out where and when the next weekend class is scheduled.

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UPCOMING CLASSES

San Diego, CA	Feb. 4-9
Seaside Heights, NJ	April 22-27
Charleston, SC	June 24-29
Columbus, OH	Aug. 12-14
Las Vegas, NV	Sept. 16-21
Chicago, IL	Oct. 14-19

TODD ON TARGET...

Why 1991 is a Good Time to Buy Video Games

by TODD ERICKSON

When Todd Erickson writes for us, we call his column "Todd on Target." The name is especially apt these days. More than two years ago, this Minnesota operator started warning that too many of the industry's video games all looked alike. Todd said that if manufacturers didn't inject some serious new technology and think of some fresh themes, we'd eventually bore the players and start losing money and even locations.

For a long time, Todd was "a voice crying in the wilderness." As long as the trade produced occasional hits like Double Dragon, Tetris *and* Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, *nobody seemed worried about the fact that hits were coming less often. Only a few eyebrows rose when people noticed that even the mega-hit games sold fewer units each year. And few seemed concerned that "also-ran" games were falling farther and farther behind in collections and sales.*

These days, it's a different story. Even the absolute top hits are experiencing slowed-down sales, compared to typical volume of past years. Non-hits are having a very tough time. AMOA President Jim Trucano recently spoke for many when he said, "Honestly, many operators would rather eat barbed wire than buy another video game." Operators, distributors and even manufacturers have joined the chorus calling for new technology and new themes to bring video back to its former glory.

Very wise... but let's remember who said it first (and loudest). Now Todd Erickson surveys the video scene once again. He's got thoughtful messages for operators, distributors and manufacturers alike. We suggest everyone pay close attention, and give the man his due!



It's not exactly news that video games, at least in the good old USA, seem to be on shaky ground these days. Many operators say they have given up on video, which means they only buy very best games... and even then, they only buy a few.

This anti-buying attitude has gotten out of hand, in my view. If continued, it can hurt us at every level. From the manufacturer's point of view, video is a hit-driven business: factories must have hits to make profits. From the operator's point of view, video is a product-driven business: you must have new products to maintain decent grosses on your route!

Many operators blame home games for their reduced video income, and they use home games as an excuse not to buy new coin-op videos. They say: "Why should I pay $2,500 for it when the kids can buy it for $45 at home?" You've probably heard this idea expressed a hundred times.

The truth is, home game competition makes it even *more* necessary for operators to stock their routes with fresh video. Buy things that the kids can't get at home. Yes, there are some video games that fall into this category, such as multi-player games, games with advanced graphics, etc. Of course, manufacturers should make more of these... but more on that later.

The amazing thing is that other world markets are much stronger than the U.S. for video. Video sells more (and earns more) overseas. This holds true whether the other countries have lots of home video systems (as in Japan) or much less home video (as in Europe). This fact leads me to suspect that home video may not be the only culprit in our decreased revenues.

There are many factors in our current troubles — such as the fact that price per play hasn't basically changed in 20 years. But while we wait for dollar coins, and work with locations to raise prices, there's something else that operators can do right now, on their own. That is, improve the presentation of their video games.

One definite reason video earnings have fallen off, is due to the quality of presentation given by American factories and operators — or lack of quality. This country prides itself on showmanship. American consumers expect and demand first-class entertainment, and they get it. Except, that is, from certain coin-op tradesters!

Too many of our cabinets and monitors are approaching their tenth birthday, and they look it. Many of these pressboard wonders should be treated more like disposable items, instead of permanent fixtures which can be re-kitted many times. But as game prices rise, operators hold onto their old hardware, stretching their dollars wherever they can. Can you blame them?

The truth is, some manufacturers have managed to bury themselves in the junk they sold many years ago. They went for the fast buck, and they got it. Now the long-term consequences are coming home to roost for all of us, operator and manufacturer alike.

I said earlier that operators must

keep buying new product in order to keep grosses up. However, choosing the correct product to buy today isn't always easy. Some manufacturers have been known to sell product they know is bad. This hurts distributors. Many times, it results in close-outs, which can help the operator if it happens soon enough in the life of the game. Staying alert for news of price reductions is one important tactic for today's smart buyer. Irem's *R-Type* (licensed by Nintendo) was sold at a closeout. Many operators think that means it probably wasn't a good game. But look at the facts: they are still on the street six years later!

Operators cannot solve their buying problems simply by following the industry's game rating charts in a knee-jerk fashion. As the trade magazines themselves say so often, the charts are "only a guide" on what to buy . . . not an infallible dictator. Some of the best buys never make it to Number One on the chart. In fact, they might not even hit the top ten!

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A good example of this was *Capcom Bowling*. While it never rose very high on the rating charts, it was an A-plus kit nevertheless. Why? Because it's a good one-player game that earns for a long, long time. Oddly enough, a good one-player at a good price may be a better value than a two-player that earns more for a short time.

Once you've purchased a decent game, it's up to the operator to get the most out of it by remembering that not all players are alike. Jukebox operators already know this: would you put R&B records in a country location, or vice versa? Of course not! You tailor the records to the audience found at each stop. Why not take the same approach to placing video games?

Study the demographics of your locations. Get to know what kind of people live in each neighborhood, and what their tastes are. For example, Irem's *Dragon Breed* and *R-Type II* were excellent one-player games for an average "white bread" location, but I noticed they seemed to earn even better with the Asian population. That's something to keep in mind if you service an Asian community. Along the same lines, *Arch Rivals* was another fine game for just about any type of location, but it earned even better when I placed it in a place where many of the players happened to be black.

Another example: there's a certain expensive shooting game on the market today which will probably do best in upscale locations, for obvious reasons. On the other hand, there's a new striptease video *(Gal's Panic* from Kaneko) which seems most suited for truckstops and rough street bars. The examples go on and on.

The point is, we all have a unique heritage. They say diversity is one of the things that makes America great, folks. Other industries cater to varied individual, ethnic and cultural tastes; it's time coin machine operators did likewise.

Operators also must make a point of buying different types of games. If you buy only a few top games, you're in trouble — your players will have nothing but drivers and kick-and-punch themes to choose from.

By the same logic, manufacturers must continue trying creative new themes like *Tetris*, which may have been last year's best ROI for the operator. Even if the factories can't be totally original, at least they should keep trying to present fresh twists on the old themes. Examples of this are Leland's *Attax*, Williams' superb *High Impact* and — believe it or not — American Technos' *Double Dragon 3*, which is earning big money in many locations (the three-player feature is an important reason why). Irem's *Hammerin' Harry*, with its unique use of trackballs, is another example of a good game which is successful basically because of one unusual twist. We also need more three- and four-player games. Good driving games, of course, speak for themselves. Look at *Race Drivin'* as an example!

After you've selected a game which would be good for your route, the next step is actually closing the best possible deal with your distributor. Close contact with your distributor can be very important! In these pressing times, several close-outs have become available and are excellent buys. But how can you get them? If your distributor has, say, only a dozen of a certain game at a good close-out price, why should he sell them to you instead of to another operator?

The answer is simple. If you regularly buy some games from your local distributor (when the games are not offered at special, discounted prices), then you are a valued customer. The distributor may well put you in line for many of these bargains. As the old saying goes, "If you want to have a friend, be a friend."

In conclusion, now is the time to buy video, so long as you do it wisely. My advice may sound strange to many in the trade. But often, the best strategy is to do exactly the opposite of what the rest of the market is doing! How many of us wish we had bought more *8-Ball Deluxes*, bill changers and jukeboxes during the big video boom a decade ago? The operators who prosper are the ones who think for themselves . . . not the ones who blindly follow the crowd.

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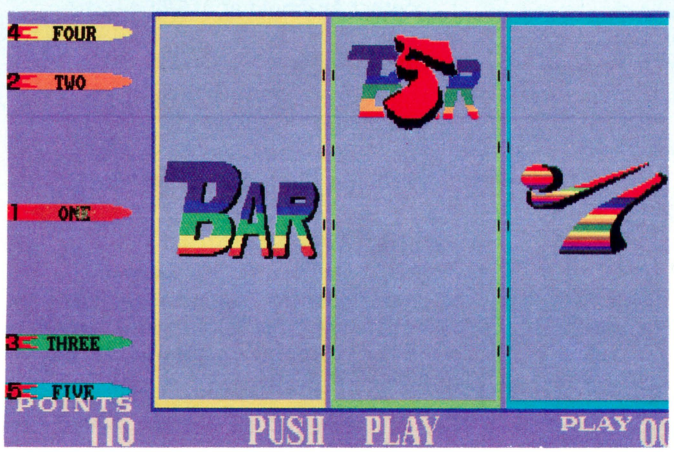



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TOURNAMENT CALENDAR

Note: The following is a list of local and regional qualifying tournaments for Arachnid and Merit dart programs, plus national events in pool, darts and pinball which are sponsored by various manufacturers, AMOA, etc.

Local qualifying tournaments for Valley pool and dart programs are not listed, since they are sponsored by individual operators for their own leagues. Valley pays airfare and hotel charges for winning dart players from local events to the national finals in Vegas; winners from this event will be flown to Austria in May for the world finals. The Valley VNEA pool league also climaxes with a national tournament in Las Vegas. To learn how to join either of these successful Valley programs, contact Valley's Dave Kristal (field promoter for darts) at 517/892-4535, or Gregg Elliott (VNEA pool director) at 517/893-1800.

FEBRUARY 8-10
Merit's World Series of Darts Ohio Open, Tiffin, Ohio. For more information, contact Merit at 215/639-4700 or 800/523-2760.

FEBRUARY 8-10
Arachnid's BullShooter VI Wisconsin Regional Dart Tournament, Waukesha County Expo Center, Waukesha, Wisc. For more information, call 815/654-0212.

FEBRUARY 15-17
Arachnid BullShooter VI Qualifying Regional Tournament. Holiday Inn, Torrance, California. For more information, contact Arachnid at 815/654-0212.

FEBRUARY 22-24
Merit's World Series of Darts 3rd Annual Great Lakes Open, Southgate, Michigan. For more information, contact Merit at 215/639-4700 or 800/523-2760.

FEBRUARY 22-24
Arachnid's BullShooter VI Qualifying Regional Tournament. West Water Inn, Olympia, Wash. For more information, contact Arachnid at 815/654-0212.

MARCH 1-3
First annual AMOA International Flipper Pinball Assn. team championships, O'Hare Hilton, Chicago, Ill. For more information, contact IFPA Executive Director Doug Young at 414/263-0233.

MARCH 1-3
Arachnid BullShooter VI Qualifying Regional Tournament. Hopkins House, Minneapolis, Minn. For more info, contact Arachnid at 815/654-0212.

MARCH 8-10
Merit's World Series of Darts New York Classic, Buffalo, New York. For more information, contact Merit at 215/639-4700 or 800/523-2760.

MARCH 15-17
Arachnid BullShooter VI Qualifying Regional Tournament. Parliament House hotel, Birmingham, Alabama. For more information, contact Arachnid at 815/654-0212.



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MARCH 21-23
Arachnid BullShooter VI Qualifying Regional Tournament. Hotel Ramada, Montreal, Canada. For more information, contact Arachnid at 815/654-0212.

MARCH 23
Valley North American Dart Championships, Imperial Palace Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada. Valley dart operators only. For more information, contact Dave Kristal at 517/892-4536.

APRIL 5-7
Merit's World Series of Darts Keystone Classic, Youngstown, Ohio. For more information, contact Merit at 215/639-4700 or 800/523-2760.

APRIL 12-14
Arachnid BullShooter VI Qualifying Regional Tournament. Wendover, Nevada. For more information, contact Arachnid at 815/654-0212.

APRIL 19-21
Merit's World Series of Darts Sunshine Classic, Clearwater, Florida. For more information, contact Merit at 215/639-4700 or 800/523-2760.

APRIL 19-21
Arachnid BullShooter VI Qualifying Regional Tournament. Hyatt San Jose, San Jose, Calif. For more information, contact Arachnid at 815/654-0212.

APRIL 26-28
Merit's World Series of Darts Northwest Open, Spokane, Washington. For more information, contact Merit at 215/639-4700 or 800/523-2760.

APRIL 30-MAY 4
AMOA National Dart Assn. team championships, Sahara Hotel, Las Vegas. For more information, contact NDA Executive Director Joe Conway at 414/263-2444.

MAY 25-JUNE 1
Valley National 8-Ball League Assn. (VNEA) 11th annual international singles & team championships, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada. (VNEA members only.) For more information contact Gregg Elliott at 517/893-1800.

JUNE 7-9
Merit's World Series of Darts L.A. Open, Anaheim, California. For more information, contact Merit at 215/639-4700 or 800/523-2760.

NEW PRODUCTS

Sega's LASER GHOST and GP RIDER





Laser Ghost from Sega is a three-player dedicated video gun game. It features one stand-up station, two sitdown stations (seats included) and three heavy-duty "laser" guns attached to the cabinet.

Gameplay: heroes Max, Bill and Carole go "ghost-busting" in a small town that's been taken over by ghost-like aliens. Simple but reliable optics inside the gunsight give the impressive illusion that you're shooting a real laser gun at the 26" monitor.

GP Rider is a two-player, two-monitor motorcycle simulator. It comes in a ride-on configuration, or as a large, dual upright.

Gameplay: in a first for Sega, this game features built-in, head-to-head player competition. The game takes players over the Grand Prix race course, letting them choose manual or automatic transmission and operate handlebars and pedals (on the sitdown) or buttons (on the upright) to control brakes, gears and gas.

For more information, ask your authorized distributor; or for referral it's Sega Enterprises, Inc. (USA), P.O. Box 610550, San Jose, CA 95161-0550; 408/435-0201.

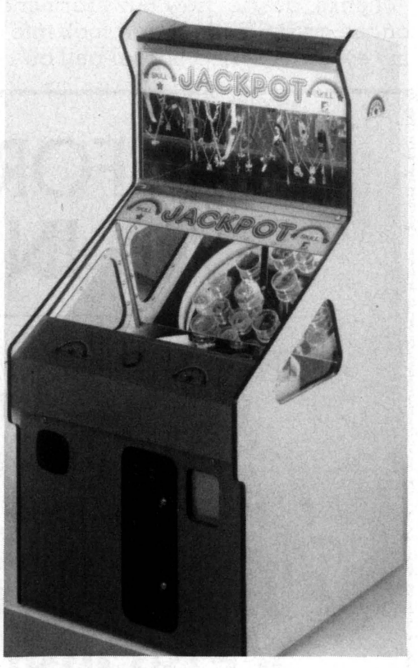
ZORD-ROBOVEND from Mayoni



Zord-Robovend is a clever vending machine, imaginatively disguised as an elaborately fabricated and decorated robot to catch kids' attention. After vending a product, the steel robot thanks the customer with a sentence (voice generated through solid state, battery-operated sound board). Zord's eyes light up with LEDs, too. Operators may vend their choice of two products; a very large capacity adds to the unit's eye appeal (and to operator economy).

For more information, ask your distributor or Mayoni Enterprises, 10340 Glenoaks Blvd., Pacoima, CA 91331; 818/899-2488 or 800/345-1183 out of state.

Smart's One-Player JACKPOT



The **Jackpot** rotary merchandiser from Smart Industries is now available in a single player version. Like the four-player, it features automatic prize dispenser system (located behind rotating mirrored playfield); adjustable award percentage levels (check for local legality of this feature); large-capacity storage container; "action" sound system; double coin mech; separate locked cash box; two rotating carousels for merchandise display; eye-catching

cabinet design; lighted buttons. Dimensions are 30"Wx40"Dx70"H.

For more information, ask your distributor or Smart Industries, 1626 Delaware Ave., Des Moines, IA 50317-2938; 800/553-2442; 515/265-9900.

New from Mr. Vend

Just installed in Disneyland's "Penny Arcade" are two games that less famous operators may now obtain. **The Talking Fortune Teller** and **Match Maker** are two nostalgia-themed impulse games that talk to the player via digital voice microchips (providing a clear human voice, yet no moving parts to wear out). Games feature today's electronics in appealing, old-fashioned American oak cabinets. "Turn of the century"-style cast aluminum feet and reinforced construction are featured.

The fortune-telling game features "Madame Esmerelda," a gypsy character whose voice encourages players to have their fortune told. After players coin up, the voice says: "Thanks, dearie, now put your hand on the crystal ball. . . Now look into my eyes." A raised crystal ball on



the control panel provides a swirling spectrum of colored lights and the eyes of the backboard character light up. An LCD display screen shows the player's "fortune."

Customized voice messages are available. Both games stand 68"Hx 16"Wx15"D. For more information, or to obtain a free 10-minute video tape which introduces the products, contact Mr. Vend, 9601 Owensmouth, Unit 2, Chatsworth, CA 91311; 818/718-6061.

UNCLAIMED FORTUNES from National Search Co.

Here is one of the wilder ideas for a coin-op machine we've ever heard of. This unit allows you to see if you are listed as the owner of unclaimed property by any of the 50 states. Just insert 50 cents and type in your name; **Unclaimed Fortunes** will run through the lists and see if you have any money coming to you.

The firms says that billions of dollars are waiting to be claimed (presumably from inactive accounts, government refunds or payments, etc.) and also that most customers spend several dollars because they check the names of many family members. "The advantage of this machine," smiled the firm's Jim Cooley, "is that the 'payouts' are made by the states!" He adds that the machine is legal in all 50 states (and we certainly see no reason why it shouldn't be).

The cabinet features a rich, leather-like finish with examples of un-

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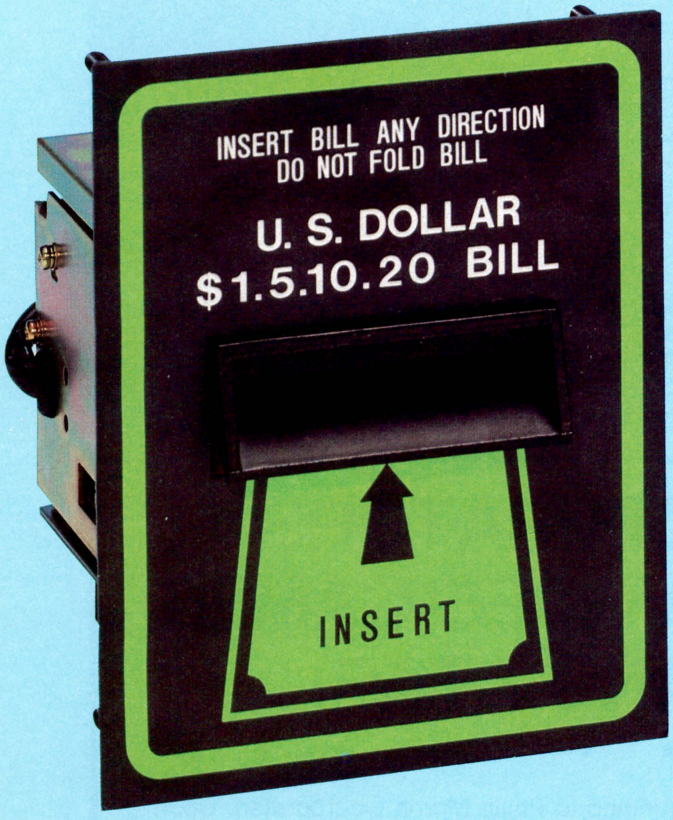



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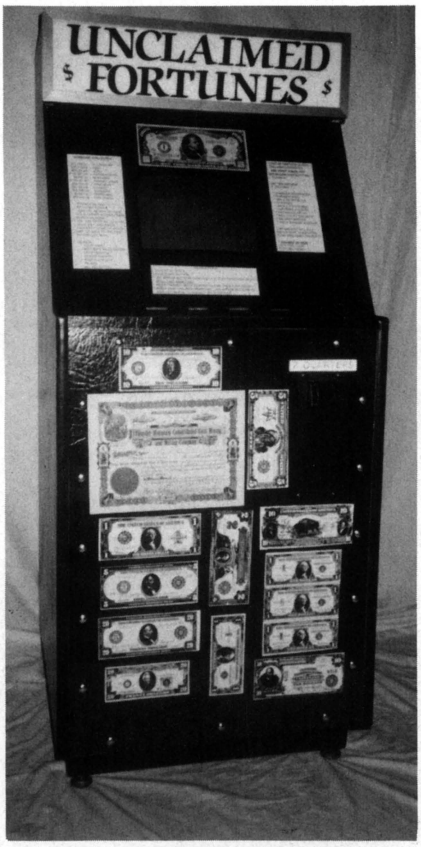

claimed property on the front of the machine. The 25¢ coin acceptor and backlit marquee complete the picture. Dimensions are 57"Hx25"Dx 24"W; it weighs 200 lbs.

For more information, contact National Search, P.O. Box 481, Yankton, SD 57078; 605/665-2062 or 800/829-6520.

Table Soccer Components from Tournament Time

The Hammer is the name of a line of "men" and balls which can be used to upgrade your soccer table games (patents applied for). The high-impact plastic units from Tournament Time may be used with Tornado or Dynamo tables. The "man" features a special pyramid-shaped foot design with pyramid grip; it comes in bright yellow and black. The balls come in bright orange.

By the way, Tournament Time's Jay Brotherton says he's seeking distributors for these products. For more information, contact Jay at Tournament Time, P.O. Box 82038; Oklahoma City, OK 73148; 405/942-1469.

MODEL 2000C TURBO from Communidyne

Model 2000C Turbo is billed as "the world's first coin-operated, self-



diagnostic, self-calibrating" alcohol breath analyzer. New features include automatic coin credit; unbreakable front panels, automatic legal intoxication level status. A 15% liquor liability insurance discount is now available to bars which install this machine. The machine is sold to 13 countries and its printed instructions are available in four

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

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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

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

Please contact your distributor to receive a conversion kit for each Atari Final Lap game that you own or operate. You will receive a $100 credit from Namco-America Inc. through your distributor for each game you convert, upon Namco-America's receipt of the original chip sets. Up to five $100 credits can be added together and applied to the purchase of each new Namco Final Lap 2 dedicated game, which is scheduled for introduction February, 1991.

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

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

—Ronald Malinowski
Vice President Equipment Services
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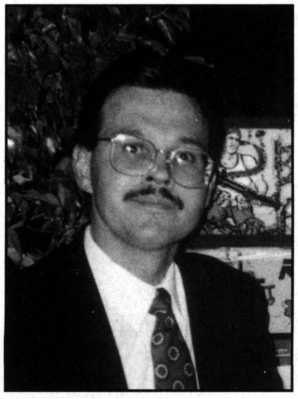
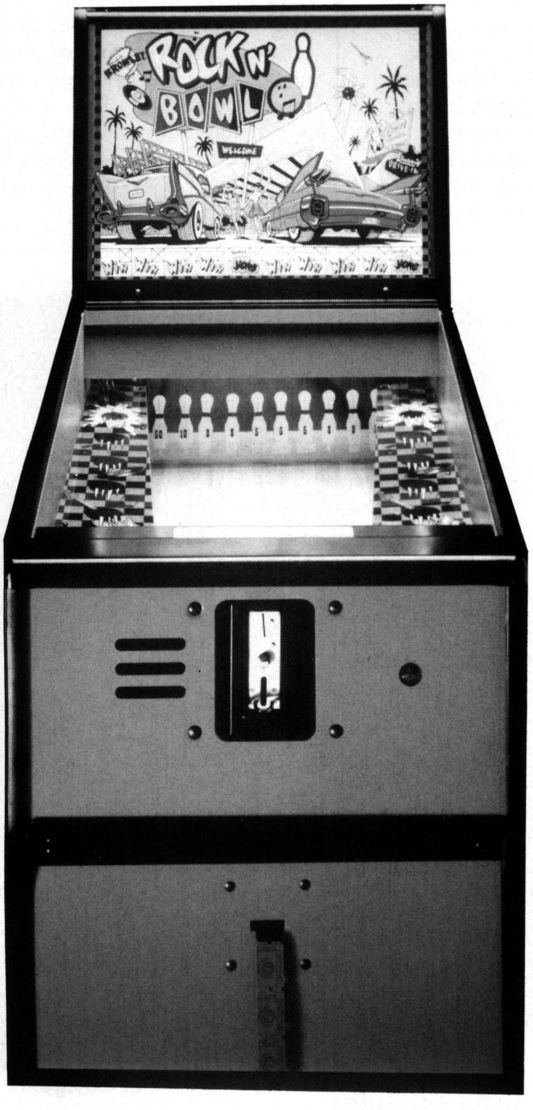


We couldn't have said it better!



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languages: English, French, Spanish and German.

For more information, ask your distributor or Communidyne, Inc., 636 Anthony Trail, Northbrook, IL 60062; 312/498-2444.

Floating Flowers Helium Balloon Vending Machine

If return on investment is what you seek, how about a machine that reportedly made over $400 in its first month at a six-store restaurant in North Carolina? And that's a machine that was set on 50 cent vend and typically provides 300 to 600% mark-up, says the firm.

From the company of the same name, **Floating Flowers** is a patented vender that's so unique, the firm has filed for protection of 10 original design concepts. Operators will be "licensed" by the firm to use only the highest quality balloons, said execs. . . you can also have balloons stamped with ads for your company or the location.

The machine requires two square feet of floor space and includes two vending/inflating stations and two coin mechs. Colorful clown graphics catch kids' attention. The ma-



chine meets all requirements of Uncle Sam's Occupational Safety & Health Administration and the Dept. of Transportation. Said the firm: "Helium will not burn and is safe to breathe. The system operates off a lantern battery so there is no electrical hazard. The helium system was specifically designed for a safe, slow 10 p.s.i. input into the balloon. In short, this unit overcomes all problems associated with an in-house cylinder. Most important, the machine is very customer-friendly and fun to operate!"

Floating Flowers, Inc. is a major national balloon distributor with customers in about 40 states. Their 14,000-sq.-ft. headquarter services many large chains with helium, balloons, accessories, custom imprinting, etc. For more information, contact them at: Floating Flowers, Inc., 12615 Steele Creek Rd., P.O. Box 410667; Charlotte, NC 28241-0667; 704/588-4358.

New Happ Coin/ Currency Controls

Made in the USA, new **Over/ Under Coin Doors** from Happ Controls feature top construction with heavy-duty 16-gauge steel; excellent design with a metal one-piece frame; and suspended cash box or full metal cash box enclosures. All necessary mounting hardware is included.

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For more information, ask your distributor or Happ Controls, 106 Garlisch, Elk Grove, IL 60007; 708/593-6130.

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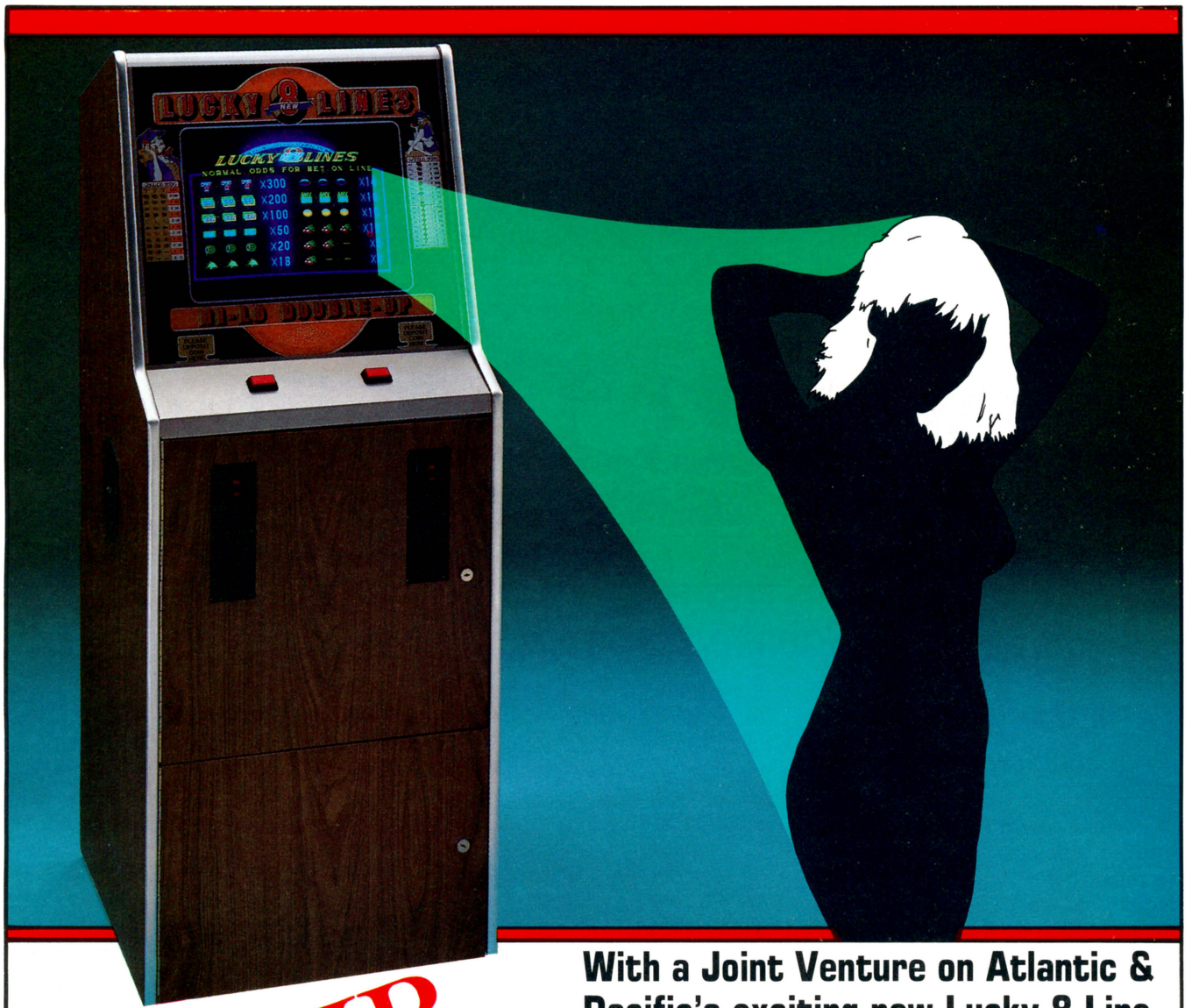

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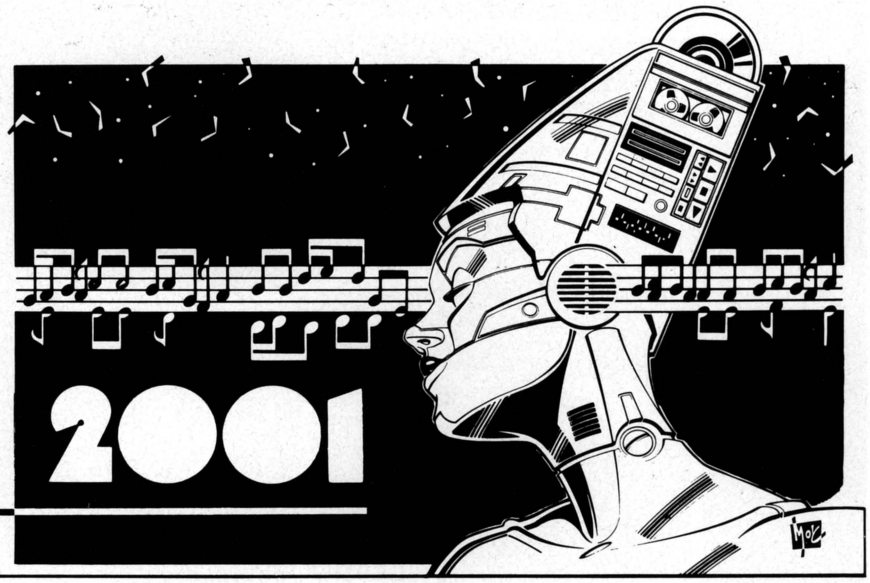

JUKEBOX 2001

TAKING YOUR MUSIC SERVICES INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

"What External Speakers Should I Use With My Jukebox?"

by Emery Kertesz
and Steve Devlin

Jukebox operators Emery Kertesz and Steve Devlin run their own coin-op music consulting firm (L.A. East in Hatfield, Pa.). Their "mission" is to teach other operators how to improve jukebox performance — and earnings — by using off-the-shelf items such as extra speakers, amps, video monitors, etc.

"Jukebox operators already have plenty of technical know-how," say Steve and Emery. "Putting some glitter on that expertise is what we're all about." This month, the boys provide a little glitter from the world of Hollywood by introducing a speaker (suitable for jukebox applications) that meets the rigorous standards of special-effects wizard and film director George Lucas.

Many operators around the country ask us what speaker they can use for most applications of their CD boxes. Well, JBL has a very fine speaker that's well suited for coin-op use. It's called the "8330," and it's approved to meet the Lucasfilm THX standard. This is a very tight specification, created to ensure that music, voices and sound effects in movie theaters are of the highest quality. (THX accurately reproduces what the film sound engineers originally intended for the listeners to hear and experience.)



We have tested this speaker with various systems including NSM, Rowe, Pioneer, Videobox and professional foreground systems. In all types of applications, the product has proven outstanding. One thing we really like about the 8330 is the 15 degree angle which the cabinet has built in (please see illustration). This tilt is perfect for putting the listener on axis with the speakers in the cabinet.

The cost of this speaker is more that of some competing speakers at your local distributor's. But the fact that "they are all speakers" is where the comparison ends! Please consider that most sound systems (including those found in your own home, in nightclubs, and in all of the big entertainment and sports arenas) have budgeted anywhere from 20 to 60% of the sound system's cost to the speakers. The reason: no matter what you invest in the rest of the system, you'll lose it all, if the speakers don't perform adequately.

Installing a typical jukebox these days could cost you between five and ten thousand dollars. Why not insure its success, with the right dol-

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lars for the best speakers?

Now, when many operators decide to add external speakers, they seem consumed with getting big cabinets and 15" woofers. When they appraise a speaker, one of the first questions they ask is, "How is the bottom end? How is the bass?"

Good question, but remember one thing: if the speaker and the acoustic environment aren't designed properly, nobody will be able to hear the bass response anyway!

There's a good scientific reason for this. In order for listeners to get the full benefit of a good sound system, the room must be large enough to contain the long wavelengths of bass sound. And, the speaker has to be large enough in diameter to produce the wave of sound correctly (15 to 18 inches).

SPECIFICATIONS

SYSTEM:	
Frequency Range (−10 dB):	40 Hz to 20 kHz
Frequency Response (±3 dB):	70 Hz to 14 kHz
Power Capacity[1]:	100 W continuous pink noise
Sensitivity[2]:	91 dB SPL, 1 W (2.83V) 1 m (3.3 ft)
Directivity[2]: Factor (Q):	3
Index (DI):	4.8 dB
Nominal Impedance:	8 ohms
Crossover Frequencies:	650 Hz and 3.1 kHz
Polarity:	Positive voltage to Red Terminal causes inward low-frequency cone motion.
LOW FREQUENCY LOUDSPEAKER:	
Material:	Laminated High Polymer Cone
Nominal Diameter:	203 mm (8 in)
MIDRANGE LOUDSPEAKER:	
Material:	Laminated High Polymer Cone
Nominal Diameter:	130 mm (5 in)
HIGH FREQUENCY LOUDSPEAKER:	
Material:	Titanium Laminate Dome
Nominal Diameter:	25 mm (1 in)
GENERAL:	
Finish:	Black vinyl
Grille Color:	Dark Grey
Dimensions:	494 mm x 481 mm x 257 mm deep 19⁷⁄₁₆ in H x 18¹⁵⁄₁₆ in W x 10⅛ in D
Net Weight:	14 kg (31 lbs)
Shipping Weight:	16.3 kg (36 lbs)

[1]Rating based on test signal of filtered random noise conforming to international standard IEC 268-5 (pink noise with 12 dB/octave rolloff below 40 Hz and above 5 kHz with a peak-to-average ratio of 6 dB), two hours duration.
[2]Averaged from 500 Hz to 2.5 kHz

If you put a good bass speaker into a too-small room, the sound waves become muddled. It's like throwing a rock into a small pond which isn't large enough to let the waves peter out. What happens instead? The waves crash into the sides of that pond, then lash back into the next set of waves, causing turbulence.

The same thing can happen with sound waves. Did you ever go into a room and notice the lower registers of the music were very boomy and uneven? Your ears aren't comfortable; the whole feeling of the room is "off." This is caused by an incorrect system design and poor match-up of room and speaker system. The equalization is off.

So our advice is, don't assume that buying a big cabinet with 15 to 18 inch woofers is a magic guarantee of great sound! Instead, put your money into a quality sound that's flat across the audio spectrum. Take a look at the frequency response of the 8330. We think you'll be hard-pressed to find similar performance from many other speakers now being used by the industry.

And, as this column has said all along, add a little salesmanship to your presentation. When signing up a location, flaunt the fact that that you're installing the finest equipment money can buy. Ask the location, "You know what our jukebox has in common with Lucasfilms, makers of the Star Wars movies? We use the same JBL speaker!" Use the best . . . and earn the most!

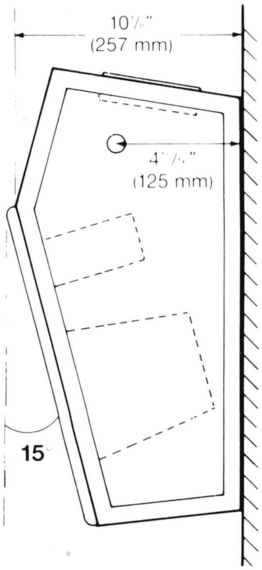
Here are some of technical specs on the 8330 from JBL literature:

"The 8330 is a three-way design with an 8-inch woofer, a 5-inch mid-range transducer, and a 1-inch titanium laminate dome tweeter. While it superficially resembles a typical high-fidelity system, it has been optimized for surround use . . .

"Enclosure geometry: the front baffle of the 8330 is angled downward 15 degrees, providing the desired cross-firing for surround purposes. The back of the enclosure can thus be mounted parallel to the wall. The dark vinyl finish and stretch grille material let the system blend in with the surroundings.

"Variable equalization contouring: a switch on top of the enclosure provides flat on-axis response for foreground music purposes . . . Ease in mounting: size internal T-nuts facilitate rigging with an Omni-mount or other suitable hardware . . . High acoustical output: for their relatively small size, these models generate substantial acoustical power. The rated sensitivity is 91dB, one watt measured at one meter, and rated maximum power output is 100 watts (based on IEC 268-5 pink noise spectrum)."

Of course, there's much more technical information, written in greater detail, available from JBL. To get a copy or to discuss other jukebox system questions, call Steve or Emery at 215/362-2890.



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Vital Titles

top-selling 45s and CDs at key one-stops as of Jan. 22, 1991 ★ = *significant crossover activity*

POP

1. ***HIGH ENOUGH,*** *Damn Yankees, Warner Bros. 19595*
★ 2. ***LOVE WILL NEVER DO,*** *Janet Jackson, A&M 1538*
★ 3. ***ALL THE MAN THAT I NEED,*** *Whitney Houston, Arista 2153*
★ 4. ***JUSTIFY MY LOVE,*** *Madonna, Sire/Warner Bros. 19485*
5. ***MONEYTALKS,*** *AC/DC, Atco 98881*
★ 6. ***JUST ANOTHER DREAM,*** *Cathy Dennis, Polydor 887962*
7. ***FROM A DISTANCE,*** *Bette Midler, Atlantic 87820*
8. ***ONE AND ONLY MAN,*** *Steve Winwood, Virgin 98892*
9. ***SHELTER ME,*** *Cinderella, Mercury 878700*
★ 10. ***THE FIRST TIME,*** *Surface, Columbia 73502*

POP PICK HITS

COMING OUT OF THE DARK
Gloria Estefan - Epic 73666

WAITING FOR THAT DAY
George Michael - Columbia 73663

SOMEDAY
Mariah Carey - Columbia 73561

CHASIN' THE WIND
Chicago - Reprise 19466

DON'T HOLD BACK YOUR LOVE
Daryl Hall & John Oates - Arista 2157

CW

1. ***UNANSWERED PRAYERS,*** *Garth Brooks, Capitol 44650*
2. ***FOREVER'S AS FAR AS I'LL GO,*** *Alabama, RCA 2706*
3. ***I'VE COME TO EXPECT IT FROM YOU,*** *George Strait, MCA 53869*
4. ***THESE LIPS DON'T KNOW HOW. . .,*** *Doug Stone, Epic 73570*
5. ***CHASIN' THAT NEON RAINBOW,*** *Alan Jackson, Arista 9005*
6. ***TURN IT ON. . .,*** *Dwight Yoakam, Warner Bros. 19543*
7. ***LOVE CAN BUILD A BRIDGE,*** *The Judds, Curb/RCA 2708*
8. ***BROTHER JUKEBOX,*** *Mark Chesnutt, MCA 53965*
9. ***DADDY'S COME AROUND,*** *Paul Overstreet, RCA 2707*
10. ***RUMOR HAS IT,*** *Reba McEntire, MCA 53970*

COUNTRY PICK HITS

HEROES AND FRIENDS
Randy Travis - Warner Bros. 19469

I'D LOVE YOU ALL OVER AGAIN
Alan Jackson - Arista 2166

I GOT YOU
Shenandoah - Columbia 73672

DRIFT OFF TO A DREAM
Travis Tritt - Warner Bros. 19431

MEN
The Forester Sisters - Warner Bros. 19450

R&B

★ 1. ***IT NEVER RAINS,*** *Tony! Toni! Tone!, Wing/Polydor 879068*
2. ***ONLY HUMAN,*** *Jeffrey Osborne, Arista 2127*
★ 3. ***THE GHETTO,*** *Too Short, Jive/RCA 1397*
★ 4. ***LOVE WILL NEVER DO,*** *Janet Jackson, A&M 1538*
★ 5. ***THE FIRST TIME,*** *Surface, Columbia 73502*
6. ***MELT IN YOUR MOUTH,*** *Candyman, Epic 73652*
★ 7. ***ALL THE MAN THAT I NEED,*** *Whitney Houston, Arista 2156*
★ 8. ***KEEP OUR LOVE ALIVE,*** *Stevie Wonder, Motown 1990*
9. ***MY LAST CHANCE,*** *Marvin Gaye, Motown 2083*
10. ***MARY HAD A LITTLE BOY,*** *Snap, Arista 2142*

R&B PICK HITS

SOMEDAY
Mariah Carey - Columbia 73561

ALL TRUE MAN
Alexander O'Neal - Tabu/Epic 73627

FAIRY TALES
Anita Baker - Elektra 64910

GOLD DIGGER
EPMD - Columbia 73634

DON'T BLAME IT ON YOKO
Young Fresh Fellows - RCA 4675

CDs

1. ***MARIAH CAREY,*** *Mariah Carey, Columbia 45202*
2. ***TO THE EXTREME,*** *Vanilla Ice, SBK 95325*
3. ***SHAKE YOUR MONEY MAKER,*** *The Black Crowes, Def American 24278*
4. ***PLEASE HAMMER DON'T HURT 'EM,*** *M.C. Hammer, Capitol 92857*
5. ***RAZOR'S EDGE,*** *AC/DC, Atco 91413*
6. ***NO FENCES,*** *Garth Brooks, Enigma/Capitol 91813*
7. ***I'M YOUR BABY TONIGHT,*** *Whitney Houston, Arista 8616*
8. ***SERIOUS HITS. . . LIVE!,*** *Phil Collins, Atlantic 82157*
9. ***PUT YOURSELF IN MY SHOES,*** *Clint Black, RCA 2372*
10. ***PUMP,*** *Aerosmith, Geffen 24254*

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Music Operators Service

meeting the needs of today's changing music market with enthusiasm, diversity, hard work and top-notch customer service

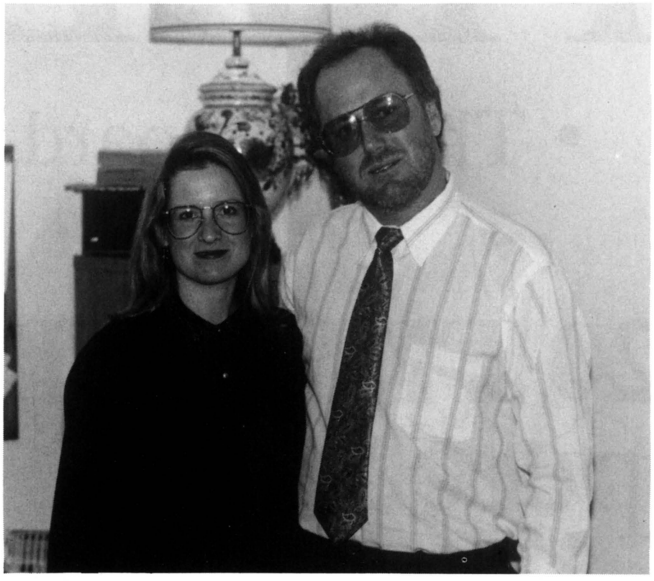
If you want to meet an upbeat, optimistic, go-getter who in two short years has as much jukebox business in his blood as any veteran, go see Music Operators Service's Terry Hopple.

The Fullerton, Calif. one-stop really is the "non-stop one-stop." Not only does Terry's company sell 45s and CDs to jukebox operators, it also markets its own product (the "CD Marquee," a wall-mount lighted display that shows off the CDs most recently added to the jukebox below). In addition, Hopple runs his own DJ business (Have Music Will Travel), sells music to other DJs, rents jukeboxes for parties, operates a photo/video service for weddings and other events, and even brokers limos.

A musician since the age of 10, Hopple originally wanted to be a rock star, an ambition he finally gave up in 1971. He had a good job working for the Santa Fe Railroad when his wife's brother told him about a fantastic college party he had gone to that had a DJ spinning records. Hopple got enthused, went out and bought two speakers, a turntable and one amp, and became an instant DJ. The only problem was that nobody wanted a DJ. They all wanted live bands.

"You couldn't give away the service," Hopple explained. "People would hang up when they found out that I'd only be playing records. Remember, this was before the disco craze." He did, however, get a lot of business spinning records for junior high and high school dances (business he still gets today).

Then in the summer of 1977, *Saturday Night Fever* came out and *bingo!* Being one of only two or so DJs in the Los Angeles/Orange County area, he was flooded with business. And Have Music Will Travel, now in its 16th year, has been thriving ever since.



Rita & Terry Hopple (the bookkeeper and president respectively). For the first 14-16 months, the couple poured every dollar back into the firm, working seven days a week without a paycheck. Their efforts have paid off with a fine-tuned computer system and an ever-expanding catalog.

"The DJ business is very service-oriented," Hopple explained. "Word of mouth is how you get a lot of bookings, and customer satisfaction is the most important thing in the world. At least 50% of our business is referral."

DO WE RENT JUKEBOXES?

So what led him into the record one-stop business? Well, he started getting calls from people wanting to know if he rented jukeboxes for parties.

"This was about seven years ago," he explained. "After I turned down the fifth call in one month, the lights came on." (He now has six machines and during this past Christmas, all were rented out every weekend.)

Hopple had to buy his records somewhere and that's how he came to know the founder of Music Operators Service, Buddy Robinson. (Robinson had started the business in November of 1970 and had been with California Music before that. Buddy, by the way, started in the record business at age 16 as a wax boy for Decca records.) One thing led to another and Robinson, after spending 46 years in the music business, decided he wanted to retire. Terry Hopple and his wife, Rita, became the new owners in March 1989.

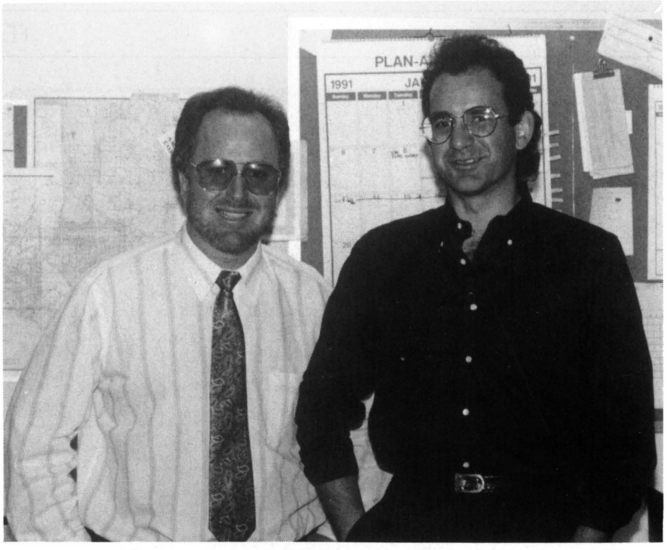
BRINGING M.O.S. UP TO DATE . . . COMPUTERS & CDS

"When we bought the business," Hopple said, "it wasn't automated at all. Luckily for me, my wife Rita's computer background let us see the benefits of automation and we went for it."

And what a computer system they have! To describe it adequately would take pages but suffice it to say, "You name it, it does it." From bookkeeping to inventory to reorder information to special instructions (not only for each customer, but for



Singles buyer Cheri Owens deals with the frustations of limited 45s on a daily basis. Operators, here's someone who's really on your side!



Terry Hopple & "Have Music Will Travel" Manager Art Villar. The business currently employs 10 DJs with eight complete systems. During the month of December, the firm had a total of 140 bookings.



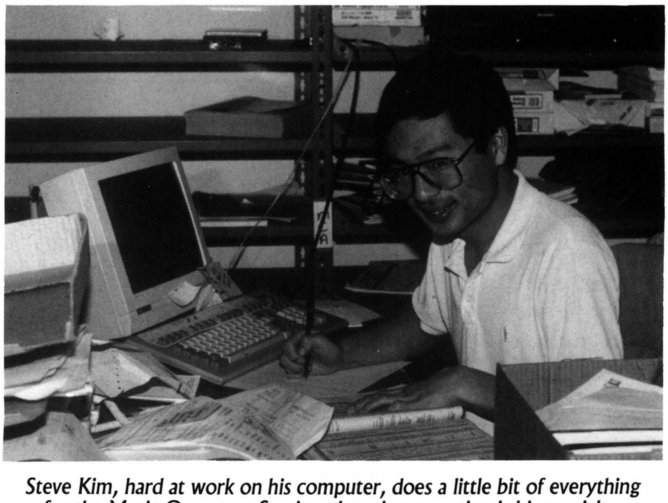
Roz Grajeda works with Cheri Owens on preparing the flyer that gets mailed to customers as well as handles the 12" orders.



Showing off the title strips in the shipping department are Hung Lam and shipping ace Peter Mabini. They get the orders out fast!



Lisa Portillo works the CD order desk as the firm continues to increase its library of compact discs. They add about 45 a month with title strips.



Steve Kim, hard at work on his computer, does a little bit of everything for the Music Operators Service, though accounting is his specialty.

each individual jukebox the customer has), the system has really streamlined operations. On top of that, the stock room has been reorganized so that orders are filled quickly and efficiently.

"Just like the DJ business, being a one-stop is very service-oriented," Hopple said. "Jukebox operators can buy their records anywhere. The big question is who's going to get the order right."

He added, "A lot of one-stops only have about a 50% fill (the operator only gets about half of the records ordered). We're able to provide about a 90% fill on average, especially on oldies. And with our





At left are just a couple of the stacks of 45s ready to be pulled for orders and shipped out to operators. At right, a portion of the compact disc area.

computer system, the customer gets a printout of what wasn't shipped and the reason why (temporarily unavailable, discontinued/cut out and so on). This makes life so much easier for the route man, who can then turn around and tell the location exactly why he can't fill their request."

"On vinyl, we carry everything Music Operators Service ever did and even more on the oldies. On current music on 45s, we'll take anything we can get," Hopple continued. He also still carries one or two of any record that's available on any label. "You're always going to get that once-in-a-blue-moon request and we want to be able to fill it."

As for the wave of the future — the compact disc — the pre-Hopple Music Operators Service had none at all. Now, their CD area is quite sizeable and continues to expand at a rate of 45 new titles each month with title strips.

45 AVAILABILITY

It sounds almost like a broken record when you're talking to one-stops today about problems getting current releases on 45s. And it's no different for Terry Hopple and Singles Buyer Cheri Owens. Since record labels nowadays tend to press only a limited number of a record, one-stops and their operator customers are forced to either buy early (before you know if the record is a hit or not), or else, wait and risk not being able to get the product at all (which is bad news after it becomes a hit).

The big problem is that even though CD is growing, the majority of jukeboxes on the market are vinyl. Hopple says that his firm is about 50/50 with 45s and CDs, money-wise. "However, we're still shipping about 10 times as much vinyl as compact discs," he added. "And the record companies say there isn't enough demand for vinyl!"

"As for the future of 45s, nobody on the sales level will give us a straight answer as to what to expect," Hopple said. "At the recent NARM meeting a high official at Capitol said that vinyl accounts for less than 5% of the sales, so 'why

The BONDEAL CHART

top kits and dedicated videos at the Hong Kong Flashback Arcade for the week ending Jan. 12, 1991

TOP KITS	Jan. 12	Jan. 15	Dec. 29	Weeks on Location
Super Pang	1	1	1	9
Gun Frontier	2	—	—	1
League Bowling	3	4	—	2
Dragon Saber	4	3	3	3
Super Space Invaders	5	6	8	4
Gals Panic	6	7	4	12
Pit Fighter	7	2	5	13
Passing Shot	8	10	10	83
Thunder & Lightning	9	—	7	4
Columns	10	—	—	42
TOP DEDICATED GAMES				
Cisco Heat	1	4	1	2
Big Run	2	1	—	50
Four Trax	3	3	—	6
Hard Drivin'	4	2	2	91
Super Hang On	5	5	3	177



Terry Hopple with his favorite one of the six jukeboxes he rents out for parties.

should we be concerned with that.' But since all labels have a no-return policy on current 45s (about half the oldies are non-returnable), there's no way for them to lose."

Hopple cites the Capitol release of Garth Brooks *Friends in Low Places* as a prime example of how the labels are not responding to the jukebox market.

"1,000 units was our initial order—and this was without knowing whether it would be a hit or not, and without knowing how many of those 1,000 *non-returnable* 45s we'd have to eat. Well, after the first week, we already were half way through that order and ordered another 1,000. We never got them.

"As of Thanksgiving, we were told by Capitol that they had backorders for over 4,000 of those singles from all across the country. Those were guaranteed, no-return orders and probably with 4,000-plus on order they could have easily sold around 7,000. They still have not pressed those records and said they were not going to," he continued.

"In the case of that Garth Brooks record, most of that 4,000 was for jukebox consumption (bars). With 4,000 bars across the country and being very conservative and saying they have maybe 20 people in and out during a single day, that's 80,000 people who didn't have an opportunity to play that record each day," Hopple said. "That was while the record was number one on the charts! And those people could quite possibly have liked it so much they would have bought the CD! Instead they played (and quite possibly bought) something else such as Clint Black, whose RCA hit was readily available."

Hopple says another example of the recording industry missing out on guaranteed sales was with M.C. Hammer's *You Can't Touch This*, which was never brought out on 7" vinyl. The same holds true for new artist Vanilla Ice.

"Between those two I could move 2,000 of each easily," he said. "That is just at this one one-stop. Imagine how many of those records could have been sold across the country." Terry Hopple adds that in the M.C. Hammer case, the fact that the label never brought out a 45, meant that a bootlegger did. He said one of his



The CD Marquee mounts on the wall above the jukebox and promotes the recently-added CDs.

TOP HITS OF JAPAN

from Game Machine Magazine, Feb. 1, 1991

TOP 25 VIDEO COCKTAIL

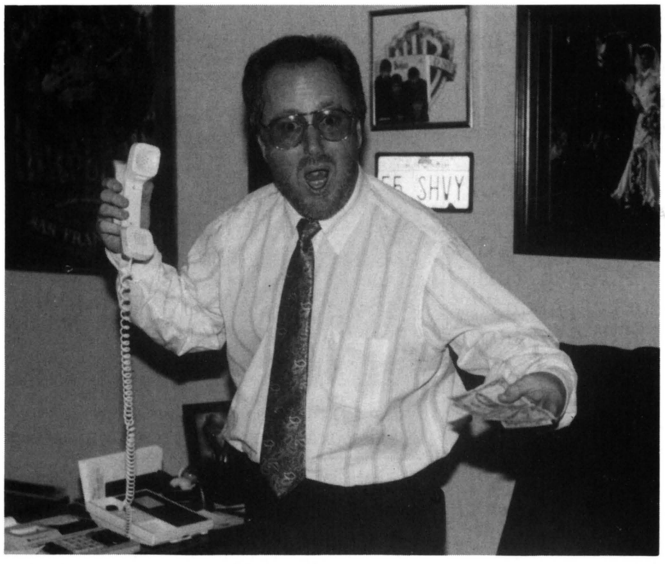
	Model (manufacturer)
1	Punk Shot (Konami)
2	Gals Panic (Kaneko)
3	Pound For Pound (Irem)
4	Sky Smasher (Nihon/Taito)
5	Dragon Saber (Namco)
6	Double Dragon III (Technos)
7	Raiden (Seibu)
8	League Bowling (SNK)
9	Super Burger Time (Data East)
10	Final Fight (Capcom)
11	Pit Fighter (Atari/Konami)
12	Puzzled (SNK)
13	Majestic Twelve (Taito)
14	Super Pang (Mitchell)
15	Columns (Sega)
16	Thunder Force AC (Sega)
17	World Cup '90 (Tecmo)
18	World Stadium '90 (Namco)
19	Tetris (Sega)
20	Columns II (Sega)
21	Capcom World (Capcom)
22	Super Spy (SNK)
23	Super Masters (Sega)
24	M.V.P. (Sega)
25	Combatribes (Technos)

TOP 15 UPRIGHTS & COCKPITS

	Model (manufacturer)
1	Final Lap 2 [del.] (Atari/Namco)
2	Space Gun (Taito)
3	Final Lap 2 [standard] (Namco)
4	Hard Drivin' (Atari/Namco)
5	Cisco Heat (Jaleco)
6	GP Rider [ride-on] (Sega)
7	Beast Busters (SNK)
8	Laser Ghost (Sega)
9	Big Run (Jaleco)
10	Super Monaco GP [del.] (Sega)
11	Winning Run (Namco)
12	G-LOC [deluxe] (Sega)
13	S.C.I. (Taito)
14	Out Run [deluxe] (Sega)
15	Air Inferno [deluxe] (Taito)

TOP 5 FLIPPERS

	Model (manufacturer)
1	The Simpsons (Data East)
2	Riverboat Gambler (Williams)
3	Phantom of the Opera (Data East)
4	Rollergames (Williams)
5	Earthshaker (Williams)



"Take my money — PLEASE!!!" Terry Hopple makes an impassioned plea to record labels, artists, etc. to press 45s for the jukebox operators across the country.

customers saw and played a black market version of the song on a jukebox in Orange County, Calif.

"The bottom line," according to Hopple, "is that I don't know who does their books, but when they cry 'recession,' I don't feel sorry for them one bit. If they're worried about cost, remember that operators don't want pretty picture sleeves for the 45s. They just want the song. They need the hits."

Singles Buyer Cheri Owens also gets upset about the problem. She recalls when artists used to come by Music Operators Service and promote their new releases. "Seven inch vinyl was originally a promotional tool," Owens said. "That tool is still there, the record labels just aren't using it."

"If sales on 45s are down, whose fault is it? Here they have a no-return policy and they've also got demand," Hopple said, adding that perhaps if the one-stops started working together they could make a difference.

"I was talking with a representative from CEMA recently and it's their opinion that we should team up," he said. "Let's say I need 2,000. If we all get together, maybe we're looking at an order of 40 or 50,000. As long as we keep creating a demand and screaming for product, we'll get it. The more of us are screaming, the better our chances of getting the record. But if we just, by ourselves, make little squeaks . . . who knows where we'll end up."

Terry makes an impassioned plea to the artists, songwriters, licensing agencies and anyone who has a stake in the music business. "Please help us! Please don't forget your roots. The jukebox was used to promote music *before* radio and it can still do the job for you today."

THE SWITCH TO CD

"The vendors are switching to CD as much as they can, when the location warrants it," Hopple said, "But with the extra speakers, programming and the cost of the new CD machine, that's quite an investment."

Cheri Owens added, "We're seeing more and more small vendors going out of business because they can't make the transition from 45 to CD. In large, metropolitan areas it may work out okay, but small towns and rural areas just can't support a CD machine."

She adds that with the slowdown in the economy an operator just can't set as many new CD machines as he would have otherwise. "The hot dance clubs and locations like that will get their CD boxes, but look at all the VFW, Elks and Moose halls. They will probably always have vinyl boxes and yet they still want to play the hits."

Even with all the caveats, Hopple advises operators to make the transition to compact disc as quickly as possible. "It seems without question that CDs are the future. If you want to keep your locations, expand into CD as quickly as your pocketbook will allow. I've heard of a lot of operators getting bumped from locations because someone else wanted to put a CD box in there. The general public likes CDs and they are definitely the future for pop locations."

Regardless of what the future does hold with the 45 and the compact disc, Terry Hopple and his hard-working crew at Music Operators Service stand ready to fill the orders. And they'll do so quickly and with a smile. The firm is located at 536 W. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, CA 92634; phone: 714/879-1771.

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GRAPEVINE

international

JAPAN'S WINNERS — *Game Machine Magazine* in Osaka released a list of last year's top coin-op games in the Japanese market. Topping the software chart was *Tetris,* followed by *Final Fight* and *World Cup '90.* The top three dedicated hits were *Super Monaco GP, Winning Run* (deluxe version) and *Special Criminal Investigation.* All of the top 10 flippers were Williams pieces.

NAME'S THE SAME — Sony Japan, which bought the music empire from CBS, has now "Sony-ized" divisional names. For example, CBS records is now Sony Music and CBS Records Distribution is Sony Music Distribution. However, they will keep the names Columbia, Epic, Solar, etc. on their record labels themselves. . . Meantime in another Japan-ization of the American music business, Matsushita Electric's purchase of MCA, Inc. became official Jan. 3. Among the latter's properties is a huge record division with hot current acts plus a library of oldie cuts.

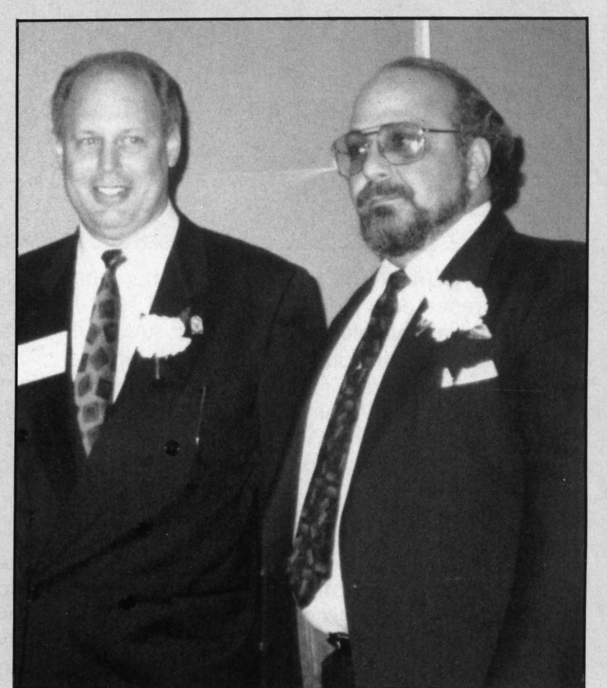
northeast

MORE FUN — R.H. Belam Co. has acquired the Wizard arcade in Smithtown, Long Island from Rich Berland, according to Simon Deith. This fine game room currently sports 52 pieces (plus a nice party room) and intends to boost that to 85 games. Regarding the repurchase of Belam from the bankrupt U.K. company Corton Beach, Simon indicated that all goes well and that they're just waiting for the closing date.

I KNOW THAT GUY — After a three-year "sabbatical" from the coin machine business (during which he worked for his brother's catering business in Manwah, N.J.) trade vet Joe Gilbert's coming home. He joins the T.O.P. Distributing staff this month as a VP charged with expanding their parts division into a national situation. "My mission is to help T.O.P. become one of the major players in the national parts business," he told *RePlay.* To accomplish that, Joe will help set up their catalogs, get them distributed into both the U.S. and Canadian markets, oversee telemarketing and possibly even make personal visits to operators. "I'm pleased that Tom Tarantelli's offered me this opportunity," Joe said. "I've missed the business and I'm anxious to work with Tom and his staff in this challenging project. We have a good personal relationship built over ten years since I worked at Nintendo and he was one of my distributors. My wife Roberta and I are looking forward to this a great deal."

HAPPY 80TH, J.B. — Johnny Bilotta, patriarch of the New York State distributing business (and a pretty fair hand at operating) celebrated his 80th birthday Jan. 30 with his big family up in Newark, N.Y. J.B. still puts his hours into the job but was running a case of the flu when we wished him our best. He wasn't feeling all that hot late last year either and missed "my first AMOA show in 50 years," he joked. Hope to see him at the ACME in Vegas.

SMOKY THOUGHTS — The New York State Coin Machine Assn., NYSCMA, has jumped aboard the programs proposed by the Tobacco Institute, AMOA and NAMA to keep tobacco out of the hands of minors. President Ralph Ceraldi called on NYSCMA members who vend smokes to work with their locations to place machines in supervised areas, and to use signage provided by the Tobacco Institute which says, "It's the law — we do not sell tobacco products to persons under 18."

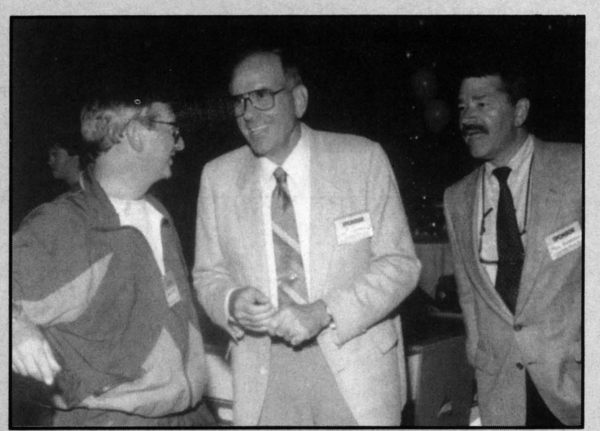


AMOA-NY ELECTIONS — That Ralph Ceraldi gets around. AMOA of New York has re-elected Bob Herman as president, Ralph Ceraldi as VP, Frank Calland as Treasurer and Scot Tartaglia as Secretary. Congrats!

NEW FACES AT R&M — Richard Bartlett, president of R&M Distributing (West Hempstead, N.Y.), says the firm is expanding its Export Sales Division with two new men. Louis Butierz-Rummenigge will cover Europe, Asia and parts of Latin America (he's fluent in Spanish, Italian and German). Roberto Hernandez will travel throughout South America and the Caribbean (he's fluent in Spanish). Both men are based in New York. For more information, contact them at 800/229-4FUN (4386).

midwest

RETROVILLE — Ed Pellegrini's come out with a retro kit to turn *Capcom Bowling* into *Bowl-O-Rama* and Bill Cravens' brand new Leprecaun, Inc. is selling it via distributors. We get a note from a "Players Choice" reporting operator asking for a retro for *Pole Position*. What do you think, Atari?. . . And in a "retro" back to the early '80s, another reporter writes, saying, "Everything, everywhere seems like 1982 all over again! It would be nice to see some really new product. But I guess we'll have to wait for March or April, and till then, eat the feathers, not the chicken!"



CHARITY DONATION — The AAMA Charitable Foundation presented a $2,500 check to the 1991 International Special Olympics last December. AAMA VP Steve Lieberman made the presentation, which represents the "as yet un-awarded" first place prize money from AAMA's "Games Within the Games" charity tournament, sponsored by AAMA and Lieberman Music Co. last summer in connection with the 1990 U.S. Olympic Festival. Nice going, all!

MORE AUCTIONS — U.S. Amusement Auction Co. is adding more auction sites for this spring, trying to cover as many geographic areas as possible. New places now include Anaheim Stadium in Southern California on Feb. 23; the Florida State Fairgrounds in Tampa (late March); plus Dallas, Texas and New Jersey (both in April). Look for auctions also in Indianapolis, Ind. and in Columbus, Ohio. USAA has been in the auction biz since 1983 and they're pros. For more information, call Ric Stephan at 812/333-9939.



BOZO GAME HITS TV — The folks at Design Plus Industries are busting with pride over the huge audience exposure they're getting for their *Bozo Basketball* game on "The Bozo Show,' a live, syndicated morning TV program which goes out via WGN-TV's satellite bounce to 35 million households on both sides of the Equator. Seen here from left are show characters Professor Andy, Bozo and Cookie the Clown with Laurie Seibert, producer Allan Hall, Design Plus company toppers Diane and Mike Seibert (Laurie is their daughter), and show character Wizzo.

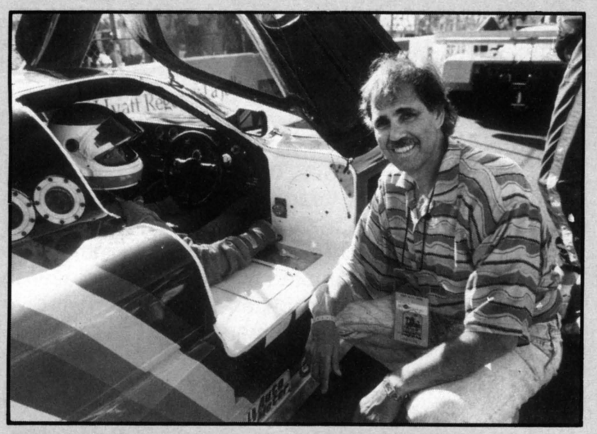
southwest



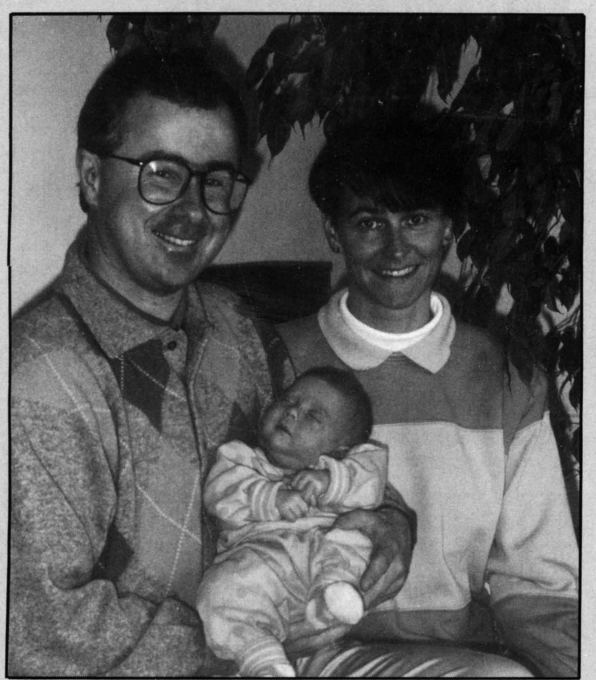
MEDIEVAL TIMES —C.A. Robinson & Co. hosted several hundred operators to a showing of Atari's new *Rampart* video game on Jan. 18 in their Los Angeles showroom. On hand to assist operators and demonstrate the play action were Atari's Linda Benzler and Chris Downend (he was the engineering director in charge of the game). *Rampart* combines the features of a strategy/puzzle game with action, putting the player back in the Middle Ages building castles and conquering enemies. For one to three players, this dedicated game is shipping now (see it at your local Atari dealer). Pictured at the open house, which also featured the distributorship's traditional yummy lunch, are: Ira and Sandy Bettelman, Hank Tronick (who is still recovering from his recent hip surgery) and Linda Benzler.

INSURANCE SOURCE — Some operators report that getting insurance for their routes and arcades is a big headache. . . if it's possible at all. Well, we've learned of one insurance firm that specializes in recreation and

amusements. It's R.J. Salisbury & Associates, Inc. (Recreation Industries, Inc.) based at 811 South 500 West, Suite 103, Bountiful, UT 84010; 800/926-1400. Give them a call!



BFE SPONSORS CAR — Barry Feinblatt, famous as a pioneer of hi-tech skill cranes through his firm UAI, is still going strong, now running his BFE Enterprises. One of his many current activities: he's the biggest Taco Bell franchisee in Southern California! BFE and Taco Bell Corp. co-sponsored a GTP car at the recent Camel GT Race, a top event sited at the Del Mar Race Track. Seen here is Barry with accomplished pro driver David Rocha, and the car in action.



KEVIN, ANNE & MOLLY — Namco's Kevin Hayes is the proud pop, Atari's Anne Hayes is the magnificent mom, and little Molly Hayes is their new daughter. (This shot was taken when Molly was just seven weeks old.) "If the baby looks tired," said Kevin, "it's because she just spent her first evening being babysat by Atari's Shane Breaks. Shane's babysitting fee is two scotches per hour," Kevin added, "and he never brings a date." Again, congratulations to the happy family.



DEALER OF THE YEAR — Seen here, from left, are Jack Thomas and Bill Murphy of Coin Acceptors, Inc. presenting the "distributor of the year" award to John Schultz and Mike Blankenship of Weymouth Distributing in Los Angeles. Congratulations!

STAR SERVICE, the Fullerton, Calif. operating company, will sponsor a Valley soft-tip dart tournament to qualify players for Valley's Vegas dart championship. The event boasts a $5,000 guaranteed purse and takes place Feb. 8-10 at the Conestoga Inn, 1240 So. Walnut, Anaheim, Calif. Four winners determined at the event (two men, two women) will be sent by Valley to compete in their March finals in Las Vegas. Proceeds from special events at the tourney will go to support the cystic fibro-

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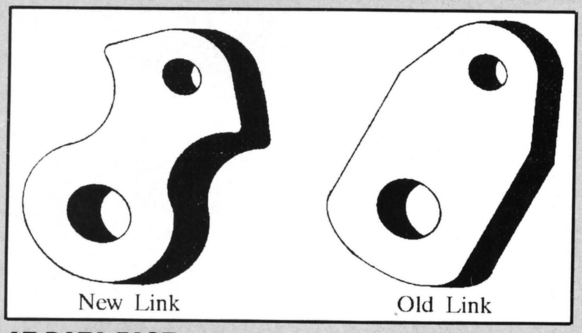
sis foundation, said Star prexy Phil Scarborough. For more info, contact Judy Bush at 714/992-0363.



SIMPSONS PROMO — Operator Tom Seaver, president of the Land of Oz (Sequel, Calif.), ran a two-week promo on his *Simpsons* pin in a mall arcade site. Players who scored a million points won a "Bart buck" which they entered in a drawing for a *Super Pac Man* video game. More "Bart bucks" could be used to buy Simpsons merchandise. "The promo went very well with over 800 entries," smiled Tom. "During the event, the pin averaged about $40 per day. It was a great way to start a mailing list for future promos, too!" By the way, Tom added: "We like the Data East game very much and believe the way they tie their products to popular themes, heroes, movies, etc. makes for successful coin-op equipment." Seen here is Tom's young son Angelo with two Simpsons characters (they were doing an event elsewhere in the mall; Tom got them to drop by). Nice going!



AT DATA EAST they've improved their flipper assembly. The new flipper link (with one year guarantee) has a "revolutionary new shape." The firms says the new link performed superbly under very tough testing. They've also increased the width of the flipper base plate, which is made of a stronger metal. Also, a new shoulder screw attaches the flipper link and bushing to the lever arm. This screw has less threading, so there's nothing to wear down and interfere with performance after many plays. The total package means a stronger, longer-lasting flipper assembly with fewer service problems. "We're the first to do this," Data East said proudly of their innovations.

ARNIE AARSTAD has been promoted from field service rep to Director of Field Service for the Data East pinball division. He brings 16 years of experience to his post, much of it as service manager for Bally, Midway and Bally/Sente. Congrats! Also at Data East Pinball, Jim Gorman has been promoted from design engineer to field service rep. His years of games operating will give him plenty of insight into customers' needs, said the firm.

WESTERN NAMA — The vending association's 30th annual Western convention and exhibit of vending and foodservice management takes place April 19-21 in Anaheim, Calif. Some 170 firms are expected to exhibit. A full roster of seminars will focus on current problems and opportunities faced by vending operators. There's even a trendy session on "vending and the environment" — nice touch! Get more info from NAMA at 312/246-0370.

southeast



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE — Coin Acceptors President Jack Thomas, left, looks on as the firm's Bill Murphy presents their annual "award of excellence." This years' recipients, new distribs Jerry McKeown and Harry Steinbok (American Vending Enterprises, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.) purchased $100,000 worth of Coinco products their first year in business. Congratulations!

MINI GOLF EXPO — A new trade show called "International Family Fun Center and Miniature Golf Show" takes place Oct. 24-26 at Market Center in Atlanta. The sponsors, Bellwether Expo Co., says that 155 million Americans visited mini golf courses and family fun centers last year and that their gross revenues have quadrupled in 10 years. The show should cover more than 80,000 sq. ft. with more than 200 exhibitors, said sponsors. Seminars will be on the menu, too. For more information, contact the organizers at 914/923-0129.

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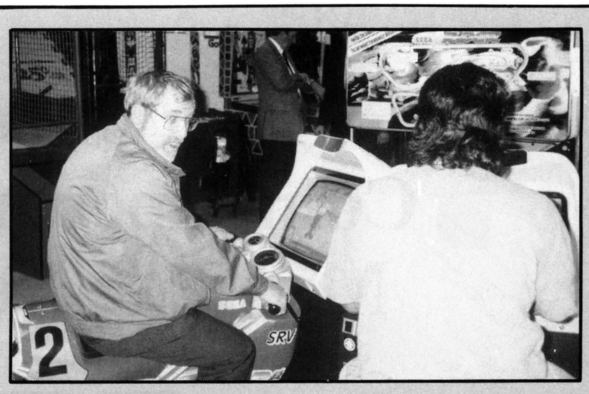
(And don't forget AMOA's 1991 Government Affairs Conference, May 19-21 in Washington, D.C., and Expo '91, September 12-14 in Las Vegas!)

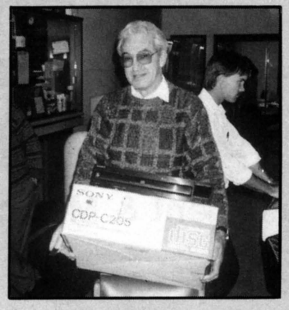
▫ ▫ ▫

For more information contact:

Amusement & Music Operators Association
401 N. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611
Direct Line: 312/245-1021









PARTY HEARTY — Music-Vend/Dunis Dist. sent us these photos from their post-AMOA shows. Seen here are Dunis VP Mike Damtew hoisting Konami's Mary Hermanson aloft; Curt Peterson playing Sega's new motorcycle race simulator; operator Harold Siegel (B & G Music) with his handsome door prize, a Sony CD player; and Capcom's irrepressible Brian Duke threatening to leap from the top of a machine unless Music-Vend's Marv Galante orders more of them. The parties, which took place in Seattle and Spokane, featured lots of Southern cooking, Western costumes and Northwestern operators.

DATEBOOK

FEBRUARY 22-24
South Carolina Coin Operators Assn. Annual Convention & Trade Show, Columbia. For more info, contact Helen Sikes at 803/779-2798.

MARCH 1-3
First Annual AMOA International Flipper Pinball Assn. Tournament, O'Hare Hilton, Chicago, Ill. For more information, contact IFPA exec director Doug Young at 414/263-0233.

MARCH 22-24
ACME '91, Sands Expo & Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. For more information, contact Glasgow & Associates at 708/333-9292.

APRIL 12-14
National Amusement & Vending Expo, Commonwealth Convention Center, Louisville, Kent. Contact show organizers Andry Montgomery & Assoc.: 502/473-1992; fax: 502/473-1999.

APRIL 19-21
NAMA Western Convention, Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, Calif. For more information, contact NAMA at 312/356-0370.

APRIL 25-28
Mid-South Regional Amusement & Music Operators Convention & Trade Show, Omni Memphis Hotel, Memphis. For info, contact LaVerle Franzen or Jan Green at 901/353-1000.

APRIL 30-MAY 4
AMOA National Dart Assn. Team Championship, Sahara Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas. For room reservations, call 800/634-6666. For more info, contact Joe Conway at 414/263-2444.

MAY 3-5
Northeast Regional Trade Show (co-sponsored by AMOA-NY, NYSCMA & AMOA-NJ). Atlantic City, N.J. For more information, contact Sue Matterson at 518/439-0981.

MAY 5-9
AAMA Government Affairs Conference, Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C. For more information, contact AAMA at 703/494-2758.

MAY 16-18
WAMO Spring Convention, Country Inn, Pewaukee, Wisc. For more information, contact WAMO at 414/529-4704.

MAY 25-JUNE 1
The 11th Annual Valley National Eight-ball Assn. Int'l. Singles & Team Championships, Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas. Contact Gregg Elliott at 517/893-1800.

MAY 31-JUNE 1
Ohio Coin Machine Assn. Annual Expo, Columbus. For more information, contact OCMA at 614/486-8677.

MAY 19-21
AMOA Government Affairs Conference, Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C. For more information, contact AMOA at 312/245-1021.

SEPTEMBER 12-14
AMOA Expo '91, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. For more information, contact AMOA at 312/245-1021.

THE BLUE PAGES

BUYERS' BULLETIN

A COMPENDIUM OF USED EQUIPMENT ADS & OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST TO THE COIN INDUSTRY

A number of video game manufacturers have been successful in enforcing their copyrights and trademarks in the U.S. courts against those who supply or use unlawful copies. Readers are warned of the risks involved when copies of video games are purchased from sources other than the manufacturer or one of its authorized distributors. We can offer no assurance that a video game or printed circuit board set purchased from all the sources of such are legitimate. RePlay asks its readers to write us regarding any complaints about a product or service advertised in this magazine.

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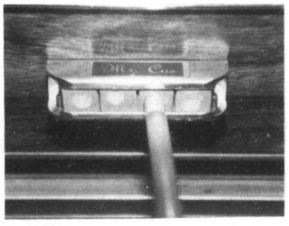

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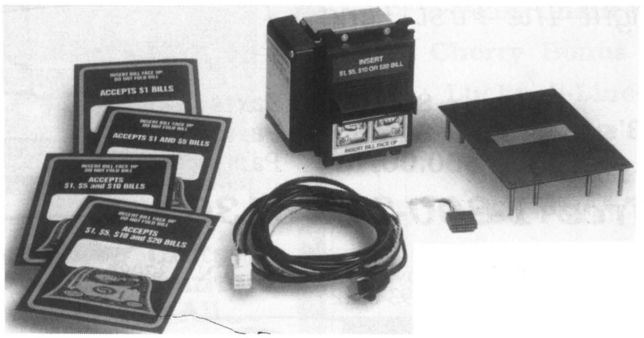

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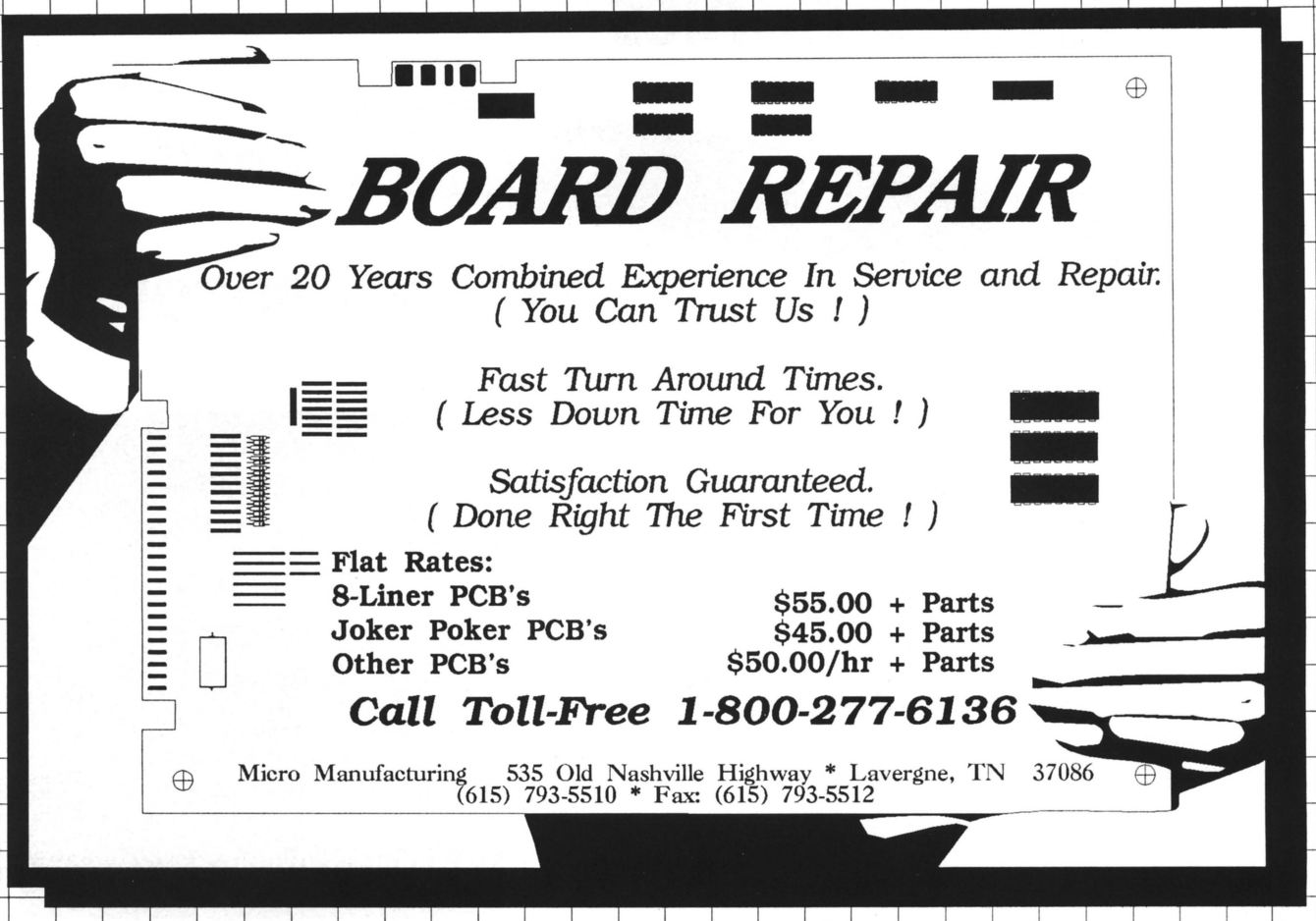

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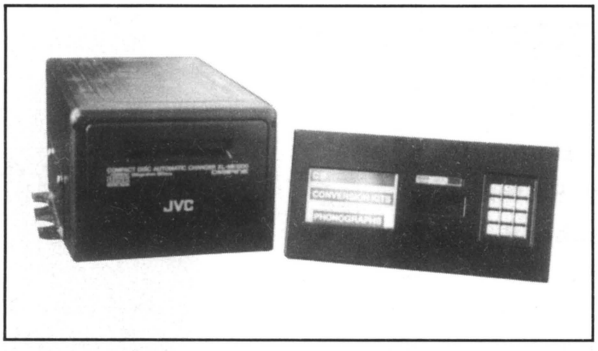

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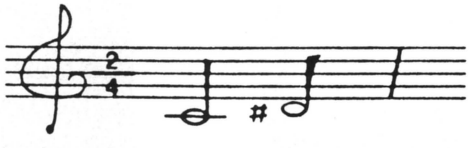

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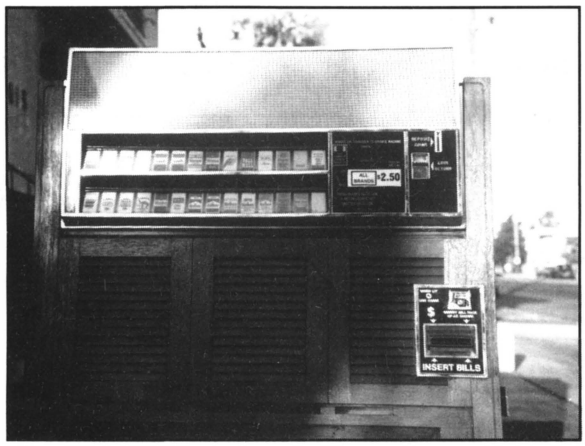

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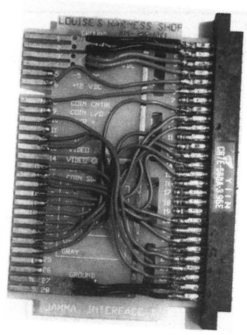

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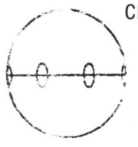



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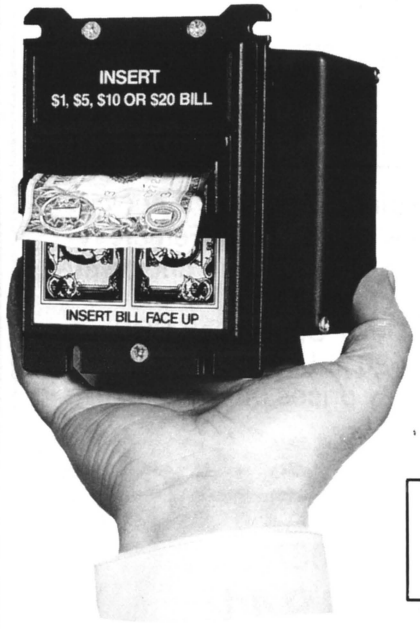

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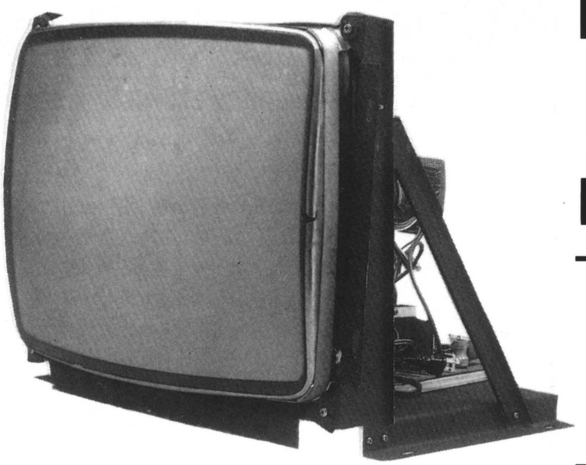

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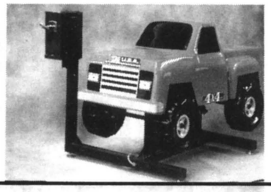

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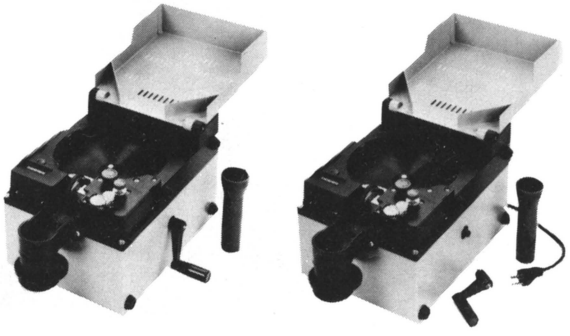

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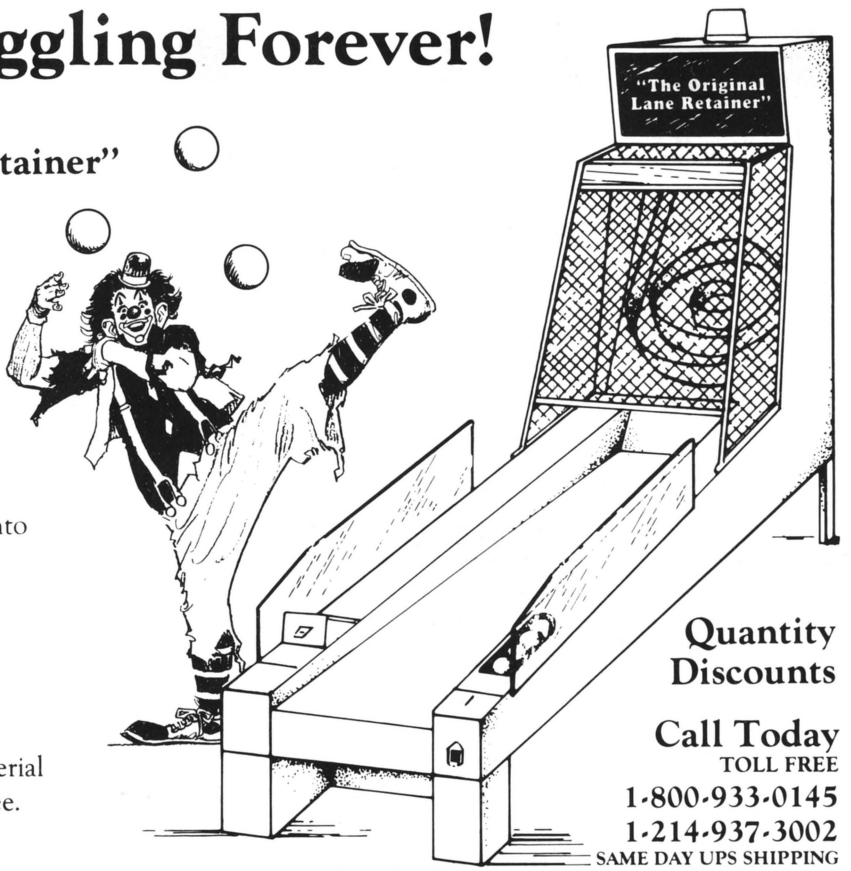

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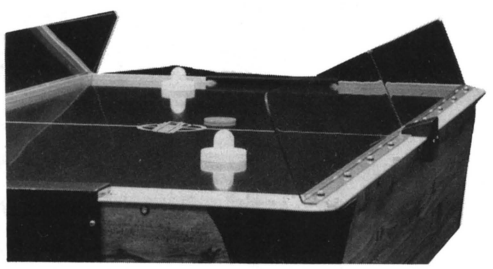

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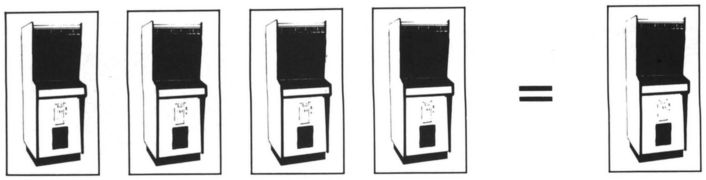

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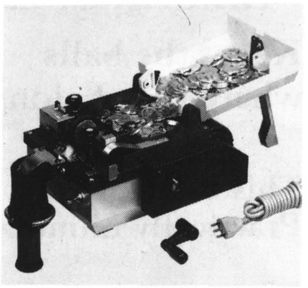

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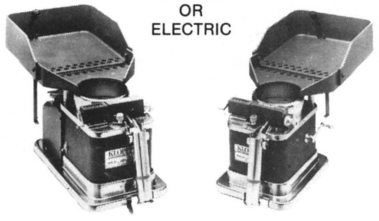

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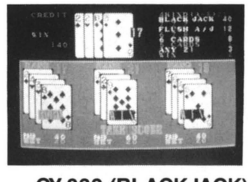

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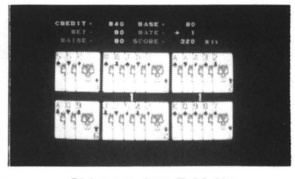

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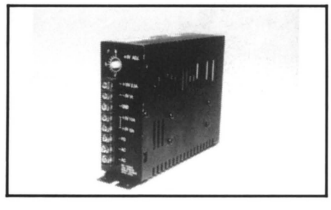

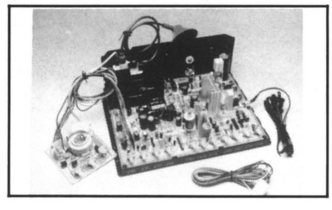

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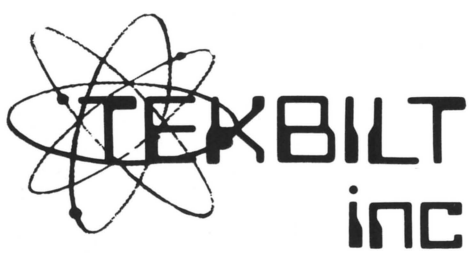

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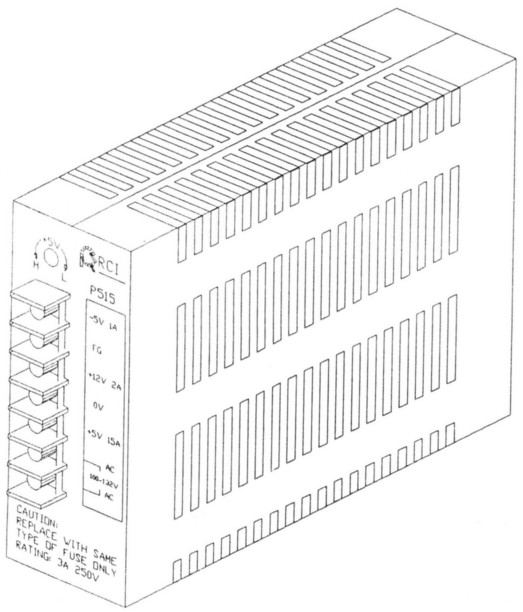
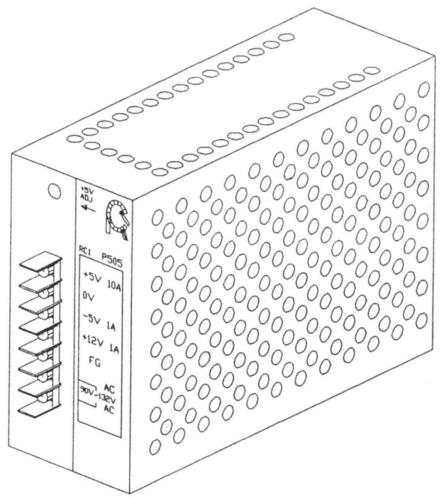


P515
15 AMP



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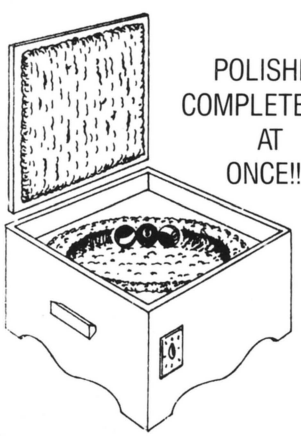

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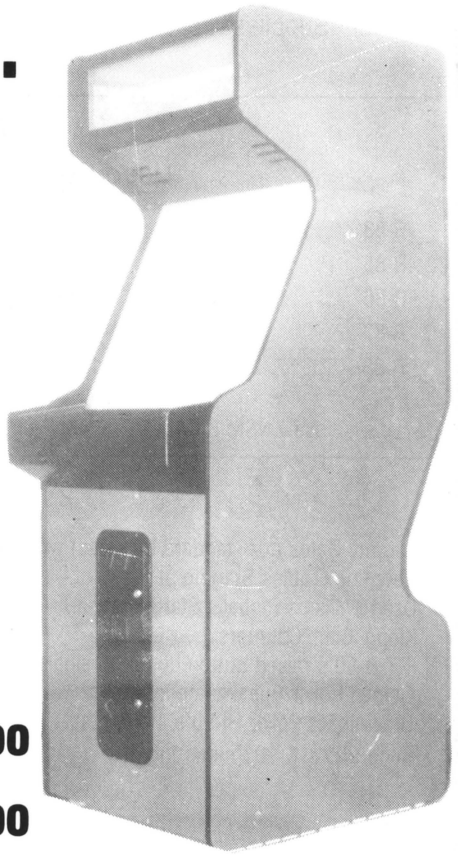

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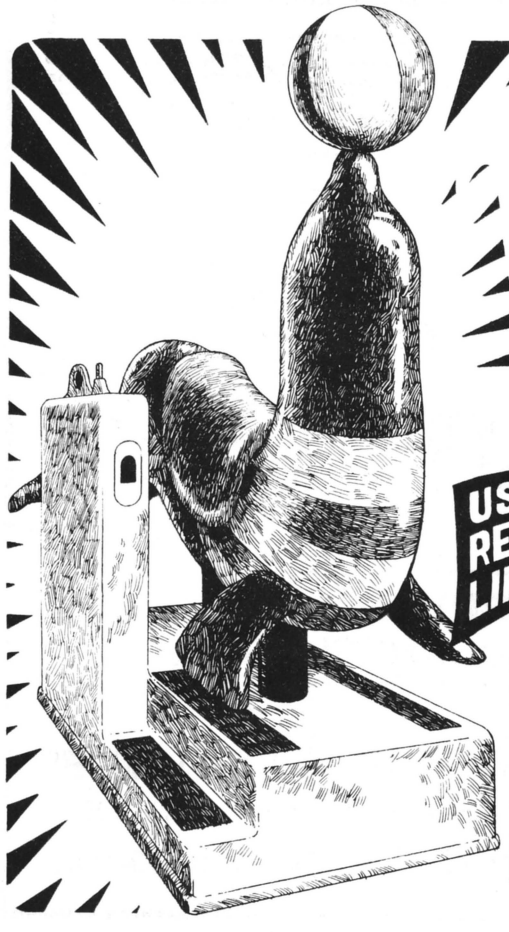

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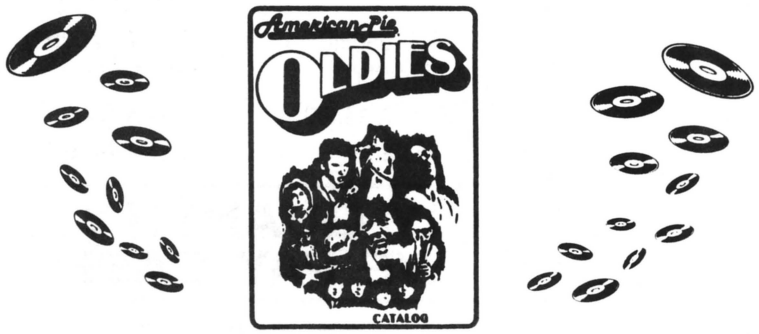

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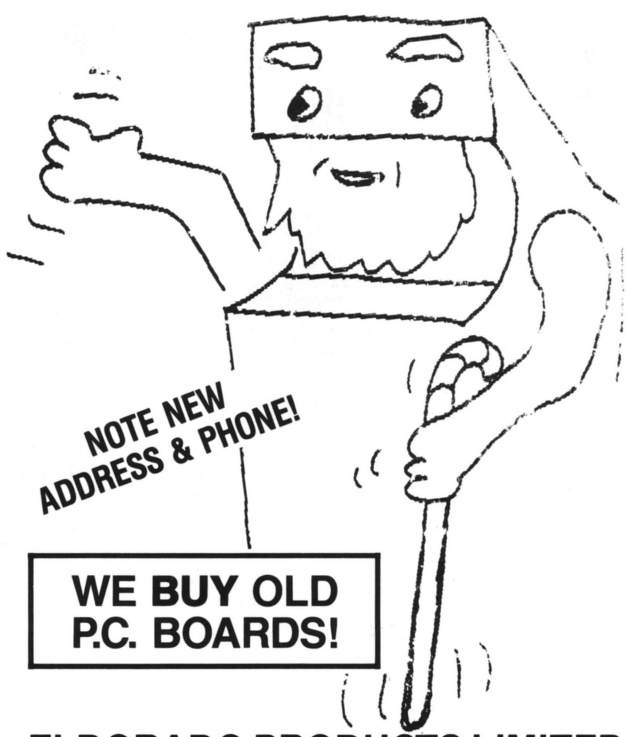

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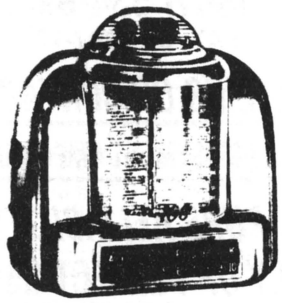

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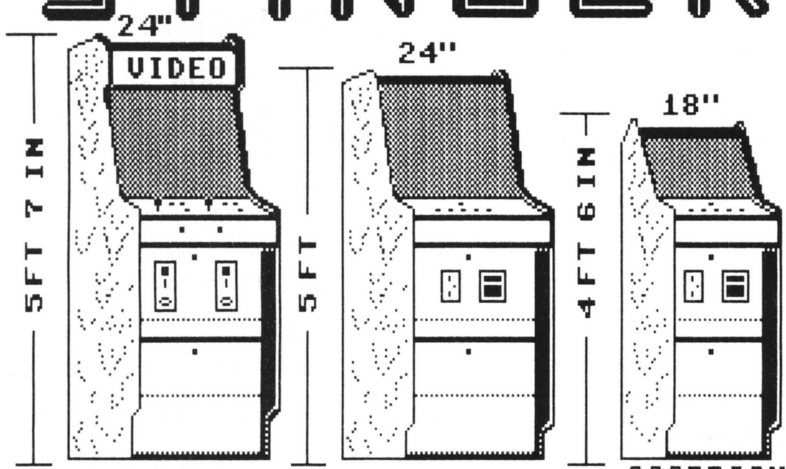

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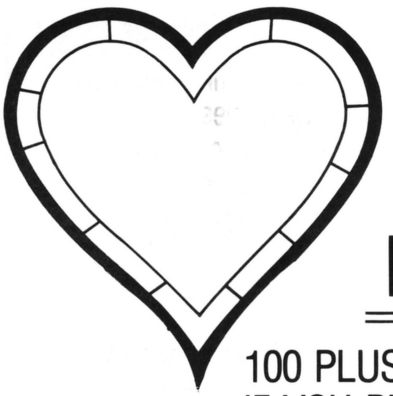

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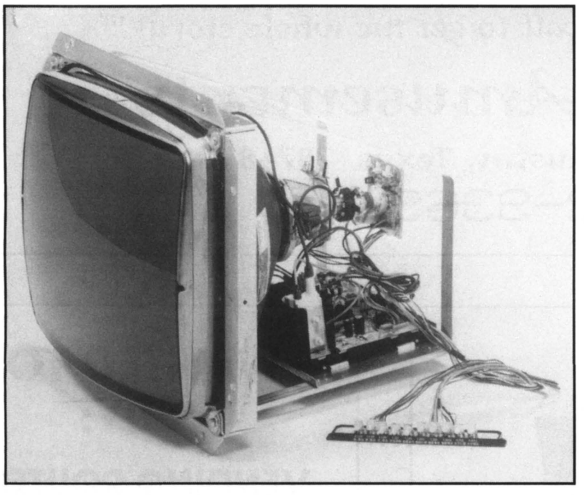

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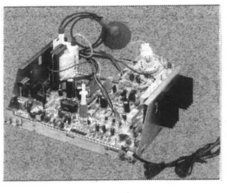

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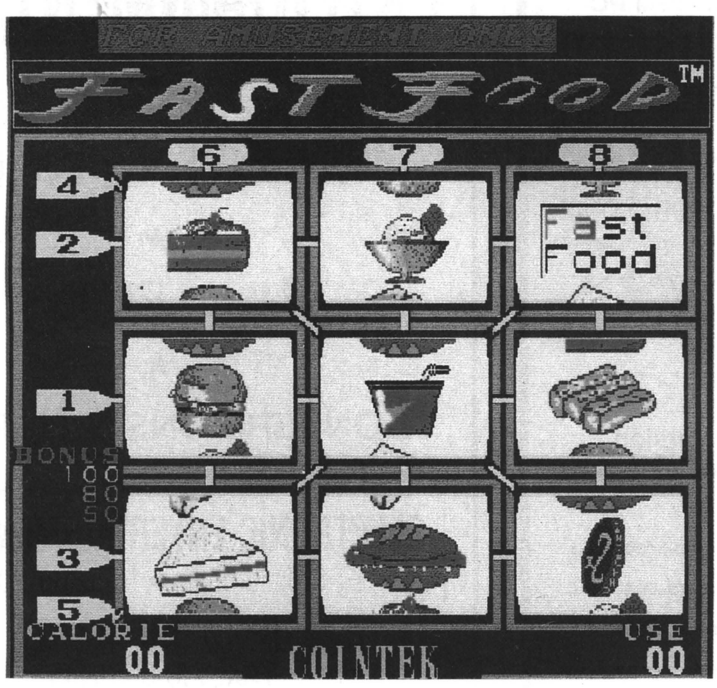

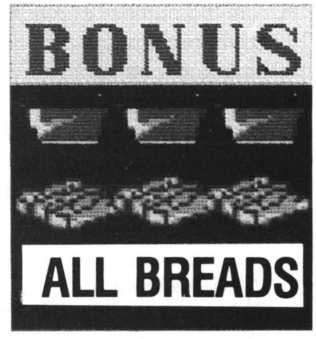



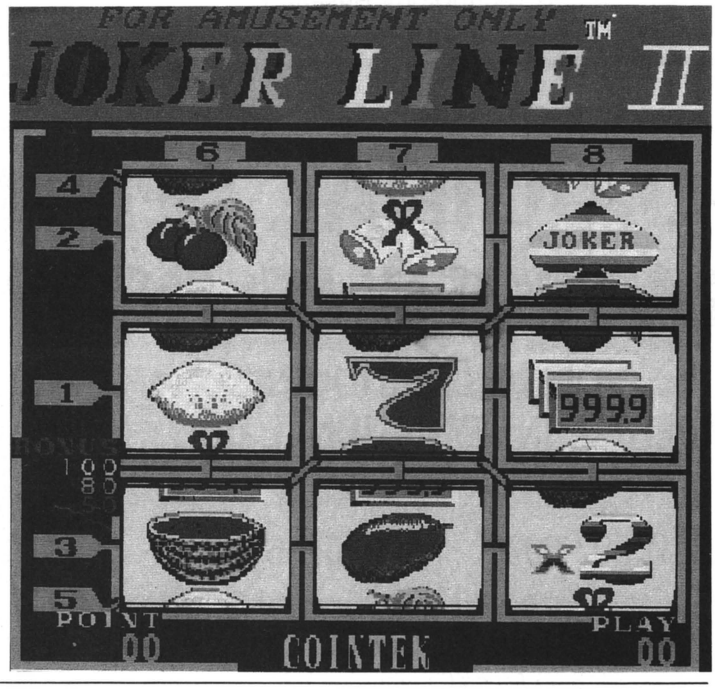

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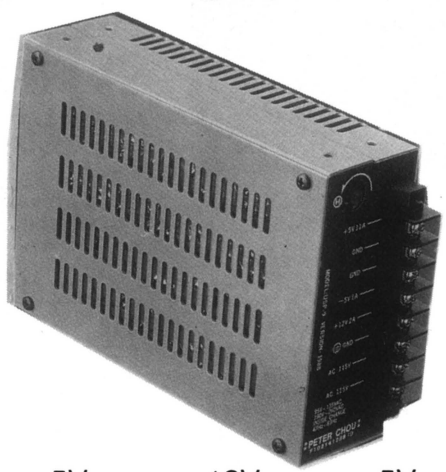

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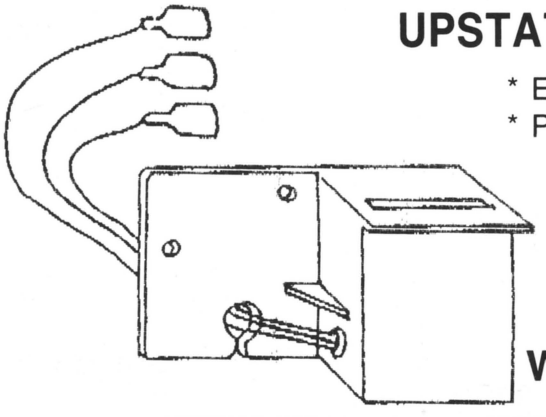

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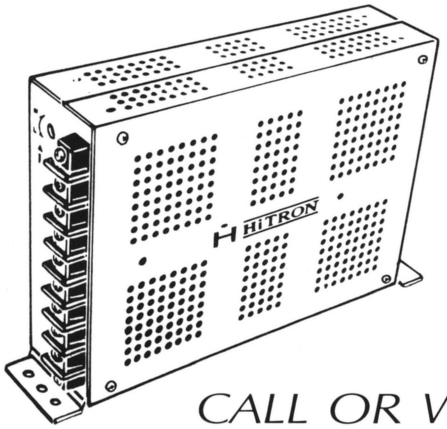

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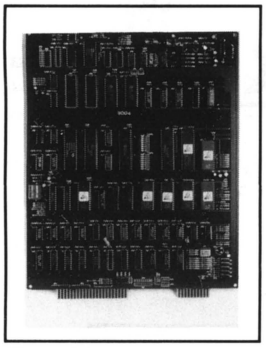

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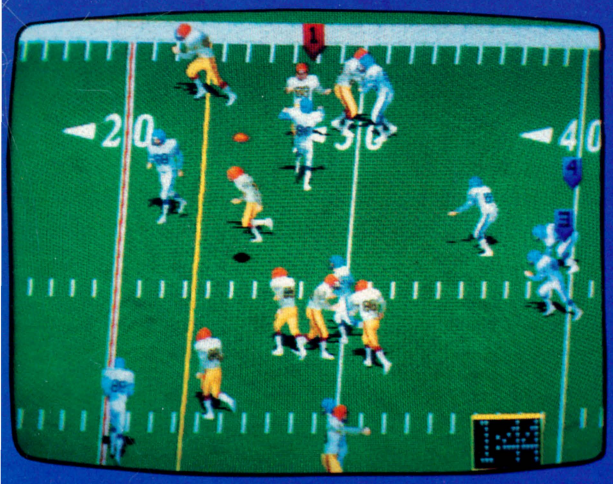







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