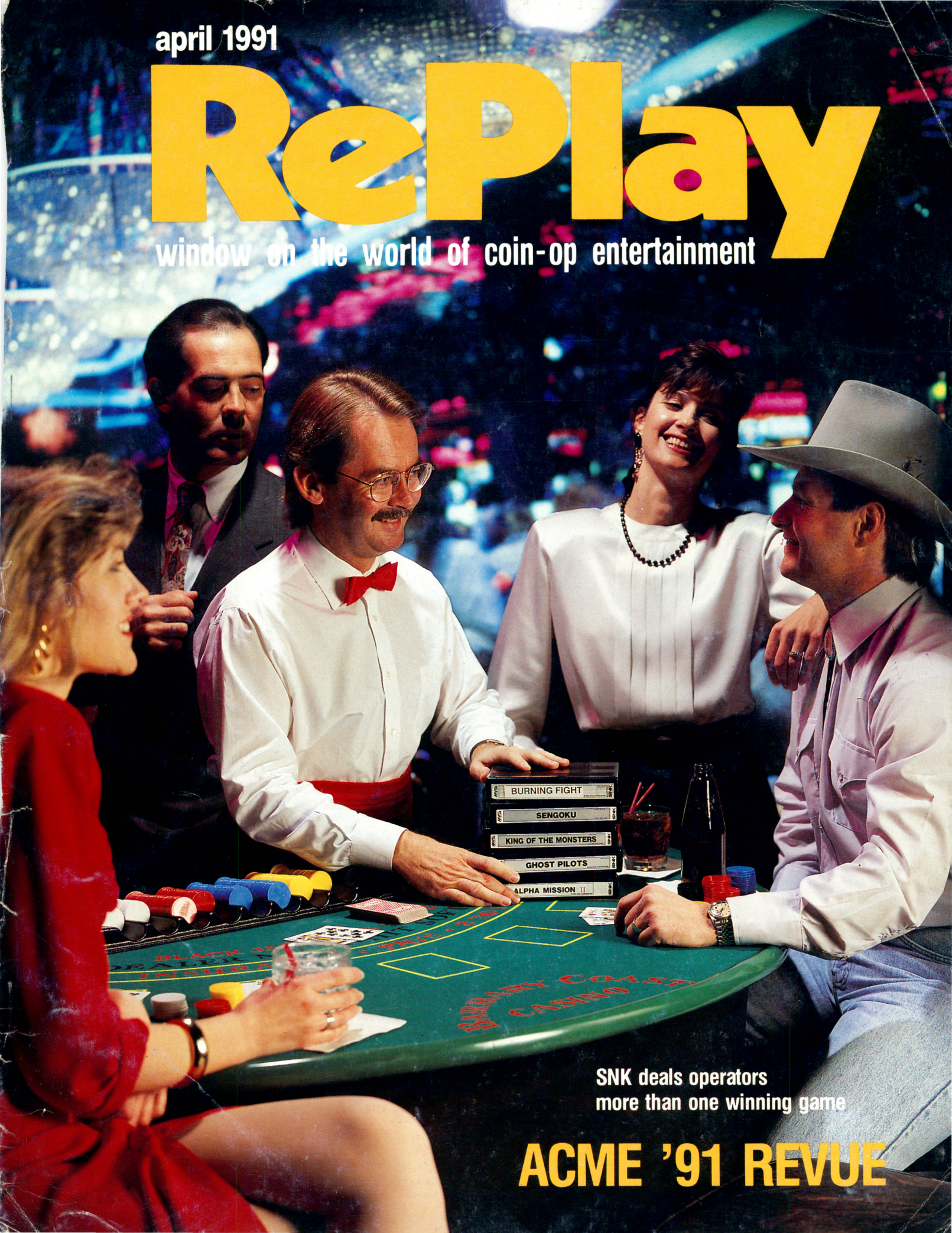
april 1991

RePlay

window on the world of coin-op entertainment



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ACME '91 REVUE

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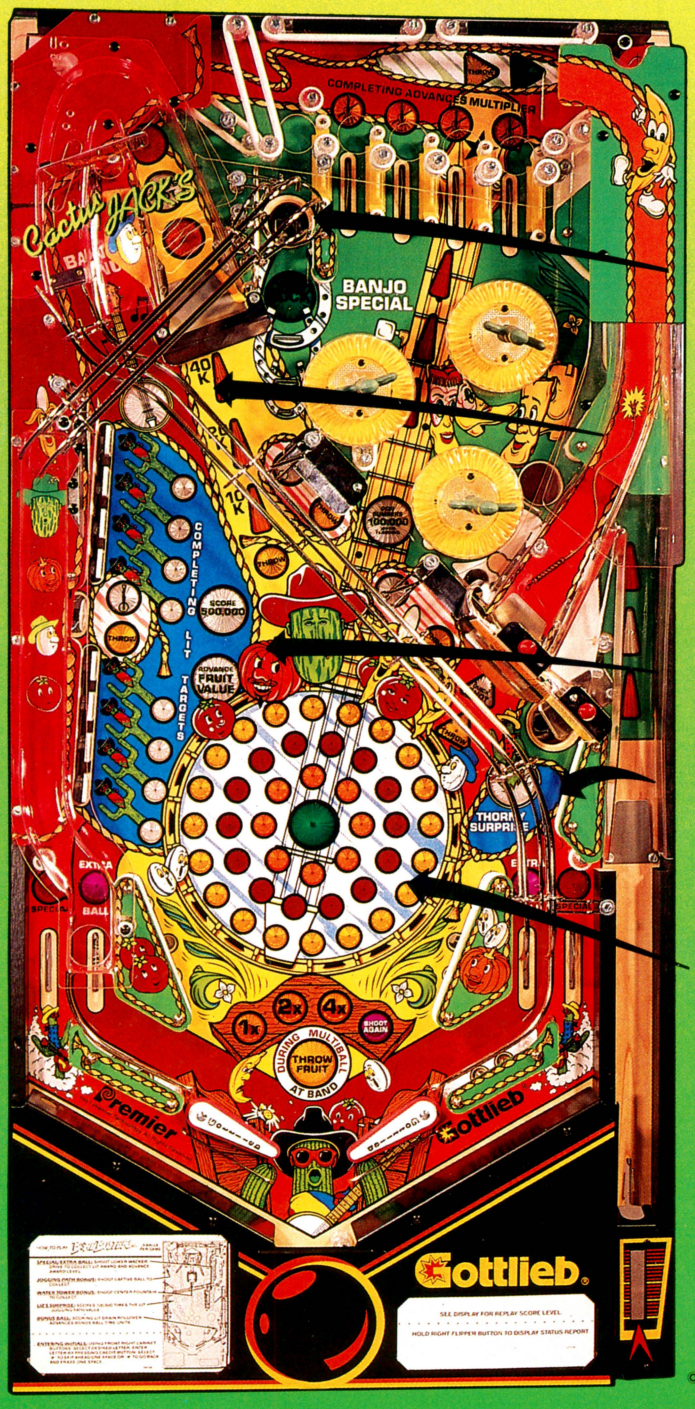

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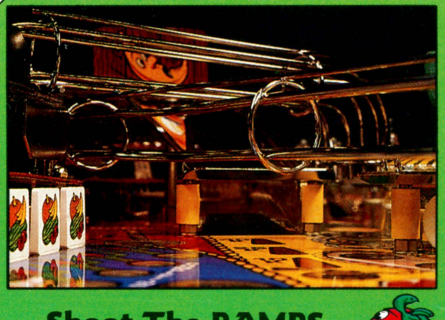

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HOT OFF THE PRESS!

JACKPOT — A record 6,000 people, including almost 2,000 from the street & arcade sector, registered for the late-March ACME show in Vegas and were pleased at the generous spread of new product on display. The best of the new goods will funnel to operators thru distributors (who really have a head-scratcher to figure which they'll buy and in what quantities since the show floor was so flush with good things). Konami's ***The Simpsons*** dedicated video has already scored generous dealer orders and Leland called its San Diego plant mid-convention to double the first production run on their brand new ***Indy Heat*** "follow-up" to ***Super Off Road*** (after returning to the plant, they bumped it up another 40%). . . With the show closing March 24, **RePlay** could only provide cursory coverage of ACME in this issue, though what there is, is choice. We plan to pick up on the rest next month in our usual post-expo story/photo revue fashion.

CAPCOM BUYS ARCADE CHAIN — Capcom USA has acquired all eight of **Mark Madura's** Yellow Brick Road game centers in the San Diego area, making for one more Japanese-owned concern getting into US arcade operations. Madura, who remains aboard as gen. mgr., retains ownership of his other centers in Mexico. The Brick Road game rooms in San Diego are among the nation's most attractive.

JUMPING THE GUN — After reporting that the sale of **American Shuffleboard** was imminent (see News Digest), **RePlay** learned that Union City officials started making noises regarding real estate codes, inspections, etc. that often happen when a firm changes hands; all of which means the company sale (which insiders still expect to go thru) may not happen as quickly as we inferred.

TIMELY — As many will agree, one of the best video investments on today's market is the SNK Neo Geo system. And now, for a limited time, the firm is offering a finance program to their distributors which assumedly will be passed along to operators with the intent of coaxing more routes & arcades to join the others already profiting from the multi-game product. Participating distributors only need to pay a small down-payment for their MVS-4 model with the balance due over the next ten months. Obviously, "the name of this game" is to allow operators to pay for their MVS-4s "out of the cash box earnings." The financing is interest-free as well (SNK is picking up the tab on that). This limited-time offer should clearly keep the Neo Geo engine smoking and bring it onto even more sites.

LOOKS LIKE A GO — Right at press time **Leoma Ballard** said legalization of video lottery in West Virginia was down to the short strokes. A meeting of operators and other interested parties took place at the Lottery Commission March 28 to go over regulations, etc. Leoma fully expects vid lottery to be legalized there this year; the only question is which month? This would become the third state after S. Dakota & Montana to install VL with operators very much in the whole program, and a rachet up for **Wally Bohrer's** national push.

WALLY BOHRER, a national point man pressing to legalize vid lottery with the operators squarely in the picture is trying to organize a coalition of trade people on all levels in order to present a uniform VL program to state law makers. A preliminary meeting toward the formation of his Alliance for Video Lottery took place in Chicago March 18 (23 attended). Wally wants the So. Dakota law to be basic "model legislation" for other states. He is also working on an AMOA "how to legalize lottery" booklet for interested parties. Wally's super-confident about the future of VL and believes twenty states will "go gaming" in the next five years. However, he cautions, "If we don't get one or two more in the next year we may miss that goal."

ITEMS — **Tom Siemieniec** has exited Seeburg to climb aboard Namco's sales wagon. . . **Lamar Forque** left Music-Vend to join the Merit sales team. . . Wico's **Larry Kesselman** (sorry to report) has left us all — a heart attack suffered while visiting Taiwan on business took him at the young age of 44. . . **Herb Jones,** a true patriarch with the old Bally organization, has passed away as well.

RePlay

the Players' Choice

APRIL 1991

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

upright videos

		MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
■	1	**RACE DRIVIN' (Atari) (6)**	**9.86**	**43%**
■	2	GP RIDER (Sega) (1)	9.54	11%
■	3	LASER GHOST (Sega) (1)	8.77	10%
■	4	SPACE GUN (Taito) (4)	8.72	22%
	5	G-LOC (Sega) (10)	8.70	35%
	6	HARD DRIVIN' (Atari) (25)	8.62	40%
	7	PIT FIGHTER (Atari) (7)	8.43	71%
■	8	RAMPART (Atari) (2)	8.43	21%
■	9	GALAXY FORCE (Sega) (11)	8.39	14%
	10	FINAL LAP (Atari) (29)	7.92	27%
	11	TMNT (TURTLES) (Konami) (16)	7.85	96%
	12	CYBERBALL 2072+ (Atari) (14)	7.73	39%
	13	BEAST BUSTERS (SNK) (15)	7.59	17%
	14	OFF ROAD (Leland) (25)	7.40	71%
	15	TURBO OUT RUN+ (Sega) (21)	7.38	49%
	16	S.C.I. (Taito) (15)	7.37	35%
	17	BIG RUN (Jaleco) (9)	7.24	13%
	18	SMASH TV (Williams) (10)	7.13	64%
	19	TEAM QUARTERBACK (Leland) (23)	7.05	49%
	20	OPERATION THUNDERBOLT (Taito) (23)	7.04	53%

+ indicates game was produced in both dedicated & software forms

flippers

■	1	**FUNHOUSE (Williams) (4)**	**9.33**	**75%**
■	2	THE SIMPSONS (Data East) (5)	8.61	57%
	3	DR. DUDE (Midway) (6)	7.93	42%
	4	DINER (Williams) (8)	7.89	51%
	5	EARTHSHAKER (Williams) (24)	7.88	52%
	6	WHIRLWIND (Williams) (14)	7.83	66%
	7	ELVIRA (Midway) (18)	7.63	52%
■	8	RADICAL (Bally) (1)	7.56	14%
	9	RIVERBOAT GAMBLER (Williams) (5)	7.54	22%
■	10	BUGS BUNNY (Midway) (3)	7.48	19%

best software

		MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
■	1	**HIGH IMPACT [H] (Williams) (3)**	**8.84**	**46%**
■	2	STREET FIGHTER II [H] (Capcom) (1)	8.77	10%
■	3	GROWL [H] (Taito) (1)	8.67	7%
■	4	SENGOKEI [S] (SNK) (1)	8.38	10%
■	5	FINAL FIGHT [H] (Capcom) (14)	8.35	88%
■	6	BLOOD BROS. [H] (Fabtek) (4)	8.24	16%
■	7	CYBERLIP [S] (SNK) (4)	8.03	24%
■	8	RAIDEN [V] (Fabtek) (8)	8.02	34%
■	9	NINJA COMBAT [S] (SNK) (6)	7.75	46%
■	10	GHOST PILOT [S] (SNK) (1)	7.57	10%
■	11	OFF ROAD TRAK PAK [R] (Leland) (11)	7.42	32%
■	12	SUPER SPY [S] (SNK) (4)	7.40	26%
■	13	MAGIC SWORD [H] (Capcom) (7)	7.39	69%
■	14	ROLLER GAMES [H] (Konami) (1)	7.38	6%
	15	HIT THE ICE [H] (Williams) (4)	7.20	19%
■	16	ATAXX [H] (Leland) (4)	7.17	47%
	17	WWF SUPERSTARS [H] (Technos) (21)	7.16	83%
■	18	VS. CYBERBALL [S] (Atari) (4)	7.05	16%
	19	VIOLENCE FIGHT [H] (Taito) (13)	7.00	18%
■	20	CARRIER AIR WING [H] (Capcom) (4)	7.00	10%
■	21	BASEBALL STARS [S] (SNK) (6)	6.78	34%
	22	HYDRA [H] (Atari) (7)	6.67	25%
■	23	STRATA BOWLING [V] (Strata) (6)	6.64	10%
	24	TETRIS [H] (Atari) (20)	6.57	69%
	25	CHAMP. WRESTLING [H] (Taito) (4)	6.55	8%

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

best new videos

■	1	MAD DOG (del. u/r) (Betson/Icat)
■	2	F-15 [u/r + s/d] (MicroProse)
■	3	CISCO HEAT [u/r+s/d] (Jaleco)

■ *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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COVER

Are they having fun? Wouldn't you if your product was 'Neo•Geo' and your pleasant job was to market lower-priced video that sacked quarters like the McDonald's sacks hamburgers? SNK, makers of this multi-game system, are definitely on a roll with their hardware and software, and with five new games shown at the Las Vegas ACME, are keeping up the steam.

While there's little gamble for operators with this product, the SNK exec staff employed the Vegas blackjack theme on our cover, complete with (from left) Kerann Christopherson (player), John Barone (pit boss), prexy Paul Jacobs (dealing) & Sue Jarocki with "winner" Tracy Tate playing. We're talking power product backed by a winning team of sales & service folks. See our Cover Story for more info inside.

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EDITORIAL

Some people in the trade believe if one good game comes out of a national show, that show was a success. So how do you like a whole platoon of hot products coming at you at the same time? Without question, the ACME outing in Las Vegas fielded quite a squad of tempting goods, and in all classes. Anyone who said we had a scarcity of good product over the winter now has to make his picks from a sea of quality equipment. The manufacturers of this industry have stepped up to the plate and hit the ball. The distributors are ready to move. The big question? What will the operators do about it?

Many of those operators passed the industrial ball back to the manufacturer when things got tough, saying "your themes, your prices, your lack of ingenuity and your ignorance about the operating business put us in a pickle." Those operators who really "worked" ACME have to change their minds now. The product is there again. When bought, installed and (where needed) promoted, maybe (recession depending) operators can now spend a lot more time counting quarters than jawing about the reasons, real or imagined, behind the falloff of play.

If product really drives this business, get ready for the fast lane. Not only did ACME showgoers inspect hot production goods ready for shipment but got an earful on future tech (some of which was on display at Sega with the first holographic 3D unit, at Data East with its DVI proto and maybe in hospitality suites where "future warriors" were sharpening their swords to take the amusement industry not into a new era but into a new world of entertainment.) Please make Marc Webb's mini-section on new technology must reading for you and your more important people; it appears within this magazine. Get your people more up to speed on developments we always believed video technology was capable of providing.

Necessity is the mother of invention and many manufacturers obviously found it necessary to pull all their stops to invent ways to hike their sales and the operator's collections. If you personally missed the Vegas show, catch the goods (and the buzz) at your local dealer's open house. The times, friends, are finally a'changing!

Within seconds of being behind RAD MOBILE's wheel, SEGA's new-generation technology sends you rocketing through traffic-clogged cities, skidding over mountain switchbacks, and careening around high-banked turns. You flip on your *headlights* as night falls, and brush aside the torrential rain with RAD MOBILE's *wind-shield wipers*. A quick glance at your rear-view mirror lets you know the status of trailing racers and pursuing troopers.

The moment you climbed behind the RAD MOBILE's wheel you knew that this race across the continent wasn't going to be routine. Not when the thrills were provided by SEGA. And not with the brawny 32-Bit CPU that SEGA engineers have stuffed under the hood.

Thanks to SEGA's advanced "System 32" electronics, RAD MOBILE provides a three-dimensional realism never before possible. Available in deluxe and upright models, the game offers constantly changing scenes through multiple stages of play, exceptional sound effects, and play action that is challenging to all skill levels.

Contact your SEGA distributor for more information, or for an appointment to take RAD MOBILE for a hair raising race cross-country.

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INSIDE

APRIL 1991

SPECIAL ARTICLES

OH, NO, CANADA

The province of New Brunswick deals video lottery through operators, but Newfoundland/Labrador & Nova Scotia don't. The result? Horrendous for one operator in the deprived region. Must reading for gaming-minded ops . . . . . pg. 31

NEW WORLD ORDER

Masaya Nakamura, supremo at both JAMMA & Namco in Japan, is logically worried that P Day (Dec. 1, 1991) will usher in counterfeit PCBs along with legit parallel boards. He'd like an international conference before the "boards hit the fan." See . . . . . pg. 44

HOW'D YOU DO IN THE WAR?

The Persian Gulf crisis has ebbed. The effects of same on coin-op were mixed, but largely negative at the arcades. Some games did better, but overall, it was downtime. . . . . Pg. 51

BRAVE NEW WORLDS

Marcus Webb, devoted as always in learning new ways to skin the coin-op cat, developed a solid mini-section on pending new technology for video, covering laser discs, CD-ROM, DVI and the sort of thing that progressive ops ought to know more about. Marco helps you out, beginning . . . . . pg. 64

ACME REVIEWED

The wealth of this industry's present brain power gathered its machinery at the Las Vegas Sands Convention Center late in March to show product for this spring and maybe springs to come. Covering this show made us late delivering the issue you're reading. Hope the wait was worth the while. See our section following . . . . . pg. 76

REGULAR FEATURES

BIG TICKET 118
BONDEAL CHART 90
BUYERS' BULLETIN 135
COVER STORY 27
DATEBOOK . . . . . ACME section
GRAPEVINE 132
INTERNATIONAL NEWS 121
INTERVIEW 98
JAPANESE CHART 88
NEWS DIGEST 13
ON YOUR MARK 42
TECHNICAL TIPS 130
TOURNAMENT NEWS 94
VIEWPOINT 10
VITAL TITLES 116

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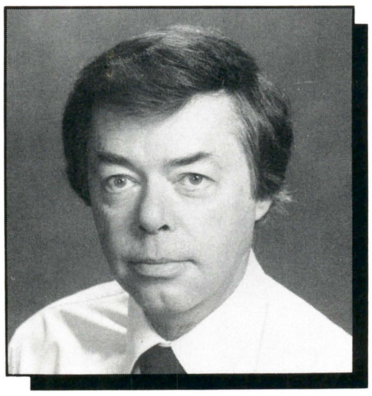

The 1991 spring season "sprung" two days before the ACME show opened in Las Vegas. As it always does at this time of year, new life comes along, and that includes fresh new goods (and now fresh technology) for the coin operator. Born in the R&D labs here and overseas and introduced to the trade at the Sands, these machines are the seeds for the routes and arcades to nurture this season and seasons to follow. I welcome 3D and all the rest, though the show where they debuted fell at an awkward time in the month for RePlay, *which accounts for the "ACME" page numbers in that section.*

Many good new items made their appearance in Las Vegas. But one "new product" I'd like to mention wasn't on display there . . . the perfectly beautiful baby girl born a couple of weeks before the show to our "chief" Key Snodgress which she and husband Jay named Kimberly Key. If you missed seeing "the chief" in Las Vegas (cameras hanging, notebooks fluttering), now you know why. She's coming back to us, but now, she's busy with the "next generation."

Little girls are special to men, especially when they're your own and most especially when they follow you into your business. Proportionately, there aren't nearly as many women as there are men in this industry. But as Spencer Tracy would say, those we have are choice, like Tami Norberg-Paulsen (now on the ladder to become AMOA's president), Susan Jarocki & Lauran Bromley working in the manufacturing sector and (I'd perish if I missed this) Debbie Anderson, Alicia Lavay & Ingrid Adlum working at the trade magazines. If you haven't noticed, every one of these "flowers" is second generation (or more) in this industry's history.

The coin machine business is a man's world (at least, right now). There are many men "born" into the business running things today (like AMOA's present chief Jim Trucano). But maybe we'll see more of the "gentler sex" coming up. And maybe we'll also see some of the new machinery introduced at ACME proving worthy of female play at the locations. Making up more than half the population, I think the female side of the business needs a bit more attention. Always has, when you think about it.

Ed Adlum

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- "Operators are making over $500 a week in bars, $400 in arcades!"
  Rick Kirby, New England Coin-Op
- "Games in good bars all collect very well, several $125-150 per day. This was the AMOA Sleeper."
  Glenn Charney, Lieberman Music
- "The game is a proven winner! Earnings $300-600 per week. Great Game!"
  Jim Wittler-Atlas Pittsburgh
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  Jim Poteet-Oklahoma Nets

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VIEWPOINTS

WAR WOES

Dear Ed:

I work for an operating company in a town near Florence, Italy which has subscribed to your magazine for over four years. I have always read your articles with great interest because they seem to reflect, to my judgment, the right spirit of this business . . . an activity which has the vocation to entertain people and mitigate a day's stress with a game or by hearing an oldie on the jukebox.

Your approach toward facing the problems which burden operators is very objective and so practical that it seems to reflect the Italian situation. But, your February issue disappointed me.

First, I consider the front cover improper and an insult to those who want to limit the belligerent nature of video games. Just the thought of war . . . of the killing of innocent lives . . . provokes horror and not a smiling face. Secondly, it's a shame that a company like Wurlitzer should seek publicity by donating a jukebox to Operation Desert Shield.

Let us be realistic. That war was just a question of oil. And, that word "God" has never been on so many lips nowadays. It passes from Saddam to Bush like a ping pong ball and it even pops out in your article. Let us keep "God" out of this. He knows perfectly well who to punish and who to bless.

I send my greetings and no hard feelings,

Dianda Gemma

[Dear Dianda: it is always prudent to keep religion and politics out of trade magazines. But please understand that this is essentially an American magazine and that this rotten war was considered "just" by American sensibilities. I fully share your concern over the use of God's name (I am very careful about that) and I am not blind to the "oil factor" either. However, I believe Wurlitzer was totally within its moral right to donate equipment to U.S. troops (others have sent things to the Persian Gulf as well). And if you'll forgive me, I think you have judged the Rowe "A Team" front cover in the context of current times, not knowing that the picture was taken late in 1990, well before the war broke out. As with our video games, that photo had no purposeful relevance to the war whatsoever. In fact, it was done in a jestful mood, showing two well-known U.S. jukebox people pretending to be players in a once-popular American TV show. I'm sorry your perception of these things was otherwise, but I do understand your concerns. ed]

VINYL SHORTAGE

Dear RePlay:

I'm the office manager for a route operation out of Spokane, Wash. and part of my job is to order the 45rpm records for our jukeboxes. My problem is that much of the currently available pop singles are no good while the good stuff isn't being put out on 45's.

One of the guys I work with said he read an article in your magazine about someone who is buying the rights to provide these better songs from the record labels. Can you tell me any more about this or give me any information on when or how I can get a hold of this person? Anything you can do for me would be appreciated.

Thank you,
Cindy Hosler
Keith's General Amusement

[Cindy: my answer will be longer than your letter. Sorry to report, but the idea of licensing rights to press unavailable singles is still just an idea. Several people have brainstormed this, but it seems that many record people are simply not "overwhelmed" with interest in anything to do with vinyl (there are legal matters like sync rights to consider too.) If the scarcity of desirable 45 titles gets worse, perhaps the demand for unavailable hits from operators like you will grow and some record-savvy American business entrepreneur will come along and plug the gap. But like you, I'm still waiting.

On the other hand, Mobile Records (Pittsburgh one-stop) and RSI (the 45 subscription service) have both placed "special orders" with certain labels on a couple of "demand" titles that weren't issued as 45's: "Ice Ice Baby" by Vanilla Ice and "Nothing Compares 2 U" by Sinead O'Connor as respective examples. I also know some one-stop suppliers are talking about teaming up to make their own special orders. But in order to get the record industry's attention, they have to order a decent amount. These would be one-way, no-return discs, so if the operators don't buy them, the one-stops would be stuck with them.

But as mentioned, to my knowledge no person or company has come along to license unavailable 45s for pressing and distribution. If he does, he'll have to be very careful about what he orders and also rather quick before the record peaks and drops. While the guaranteed money (paid in front) would seem tempting to the labels, it's my impression that many people in the record business are too down on vinyl, period, to be overly interested. I think these "special orders" (i.e. someone orders the 45s from the label who in turn presses and ships them to him) may make more sense at this point than leasing masters and getting them pressed yourself.

Finally, let's remember that dealing with a good one-stop or one-stops is more important today than ever (also consider RSI.) The better ones are plugged into the 45 grapevine and can be of immeasurable help by alerting operators to the best available new singles. Of course, there's only so much they can do. Some labels, like BMG (think RCA), Sony (CBS) and WEA (think Warners) are still pretty decent about making 45s while CEMA (the Capitol/EMI people) quite obviously keep them at arm's distance.

Is it a problem overall? You bet. I just checked the March 9th Billboard *pop chart, and only a third of the 100 titles listed were available on vinyl according to their people. Country is far better but black music singles are rare. Sorry to say, but if the records you need aren't available, some other titles may have to fill the gap. I know your locations don't want to hear this, but do your best to explain it. Vinyl seems to be passing away, slowly, like death by a hundred cuts. 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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NEWS DIGEST

FISHERS BUY HARRIS ROUTES

After many months in the rumor mill, the news that **Harvey & Gerry Fisher** were buying the enormous Stan Harris & Co. east coast routes became a fact March 8, 1991. Headquartered in Philadelphia, the house that Stan Harris built extends to locations in South Jersey and North Delaware and boasts one of the region's largest jukebox and games combines in street locations, with full line vending (and even manual food service) on top.

Harvey has already been the operation's president under its founder, **Stan Harris.** With some 34 years at the company, he knows the nuts and bolts of the organization as well as only Harris himself. Indeed, he told us a brief but fascinating anecdote: "March 11th, Monday, was the first workday when Gerry and I were the owners. I came to work, met Stan, we smiled at each other, and went about our business. It was business as usual."

Why not. This almost father-son relationship is well known among the area's operators. Stan may no longer be the owner, but he's still "Stan" and will continue to come by G Street to consult and help out. Stan's daughter **Sharon,** the firm's Director of Public Relations and Corporate Accounts, remains aboard, of course: "We are very close and she's an enormous asset to the company," said Harvey. So while Stan goes into semi-retirement, the Harris name continues with the company he founded.

Gerry Fisher has been with the operation over 25 years now and attends to a load of the "unsung" chores like location loans and other details. Now as VP and Treasurer, he'll be more visible within industry circles, while also continuing to attend to regular duties. Stan Harris & Co. employs around 130 people at their Philly G Street headquarters, which gives you some idea of their magnitude. They have a large fleet of sales & service vehicles, including four big vans that shuttle equipment around the route which covers bars, C-stores and lots more. On the future, Harvey says they intend to maintain not only the company name but the course set by Stan Harris, one Harvey himself played a large role in, one that's a model for success in the route business.

Stan Harris (left) with wife Ruth, Harvey Fisher and daughter Sharon Harris, who remains with the company now under Harvey and Gerry Fisher's ownership. Stan's into semi-retirement which (we assume) suits Ruth quite nicely.

PHONE FOR JUKEBOX LICENSING

We ran an incorrect phone number for the **Jukebox Licensing Office** in our last issue. Their numbers are 800/955-5853 or 212/581-0190. Call them for information on jukebox licensing, to get registration forms, or to report unfair and illegal competition (i.e., unlicensed jukeboxes).

WHAT DID YOU DO IN THE WAR

The nation and the industry celebrated the successful completion of the Gulf War while keeping all those yellow ribbons out until the troops and "troopesses" came safely home. In assessing the impact of the conflict on the business, *RePlay* learned it amounted largely to a negative. Talk about players running to combat games hardly counterbalanced the income lost from absent servicemen, competition from CNN and the other news networks on barroom TVs and the general recession.

One of the arcade operators we checked with said some of his malls have been so quiet during the war that: "If you forgive this pun, you could have fired a cannon down those aisles and not hit anyone." Yes, the "real" trouble stateside is an economic one now, and arcade people (among others) are rolling up their sleeves until it works itself out. By the way: patriotic prizes like American flag pins did spark some extra interest in the game rooms. Our chief interest, however, is in celebrating the return of our Gulf heroes, and also in thanking those in the industry who donated goods and things to our brothers who were in harm's way.

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS

This show of support for our troops in the Persian Gulf comes from a Dayton, Ohio collection report.

cartoon courtesy of
NSM
The Performance Machine

MARY CUSANO IS SELLING AMERICAN SHUFFLEBOARD CO.

The American Shuffleboard Co., one of the oldest coin machine manufacturers in the industry, founded by the late **Paul Cusano** back in 1928, is being sold. Widow and owner **Mary Cusano** considered selling the company on and off for several years, but has finally struck an agreement with two New Jersey real estate developers that could go to a close rather soon.

The prospective buyers (who are confident the sale will be complete in due course) are **John** and **Joseph Penniplede.** John, who will become American's president when the deal closes, would not divulge the terms of the sale but said he is anxious to take charge and help bring the firm back into full production of their shuffleboards and pool tables.

There's been a backlog in order delivery at American for some time. Several industry people have looked at American Shuffleboard as a potential buy in recent years, knowing that an injection of cash was necessary to get production up to speed and maintain market share. Their products enjoy universal acceptance in terms of quality and durability and their sales director **Sol Lipkin** is not only among the keenest marketing people in the business but one of the industry's most popular figures.

John Penniplede told *RePlay* that Lipkin will remain aboard in his position, along with **Dick Delfino, Leo Stelter** and the rest of the execs. "I myself will devote all my time to American's business when my brother and I take over," John told us. "This is a very exciting opportunity for us and we are pleased that Sol, Dick, Leo and the rest of the staff will be there to make the transition smooth and the future bright," he added.

American Shuffleboard Co. was the brainchild of Paul Cusano. He started the company up in Jersey City and moved headquarters to Union City just before World War II. They presently occupy several pieces of plant property there, which will be part of the sale to the Penniplede brothers. Cusano passed away in the very early '60s and his wife appointed **Nick Melone** as its general manager to take his place (Melone left the firm last year).

Sol Lipkin came aboard in 1951. He, Delfino and Stelter have personified the firm at trade shows (and done much of the executive work in building and selling their table games these many years). "I'm very happy this is going through," Lipkin told *RePlay*. "John and Joe are enterprising fellows and I look forward to working with them in getting production up and orders out to my customers."

American makes a range of shuffleboards in 22', 12' and 9' lengths, as well as all popular sizes of coin-op pool tables. They also manufacture goods for the home market, including a regulation-sized pool table. And, they have assisted shuffleboard afficionados at tournaments for years (though never got into 6-pocket tournaments).

The buyer, John Penniplede, has made his career in real estate development (mostly in refurbishing apartments). He also owns a laundromat and a car wash. He has a degree in business management from Fairleigh Dickinson University. Brother Joseph has been a policeman in Union City and is presently police commissioner in the town of Matawan, N.J. (as well as a councilman there). We wish all well at this "changing of the guard" at one of the industry's most venerable manufacturing concerns.

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AAMA, AMOA PLAN SEPARATE TRIPS TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

The industry's two national trade associations will conduct separate lobbying visits two weeks apart, to Washington, D.C. next month. Both groups will be headquartered in the Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill.

Manufacturer and distributor members of **AAMA** will visit the Nation's Capitol from **May 5-8.** The agenda begins Sunday May 5 with a legislative reception. Monday will begin with briefings from noted senators and congressmen, plus officials from the U.S. Trade Representative and the Dept. of Commerce, who will discuss trade in South America, Mexico and Europe. Monday afternoon sees an enjoyable visit and cook-out at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Va. Tuesday brings visits to congressmen's offices on the Hill; a Congressional reception follows that night.

AAMA will elect new officers at their board meeting Wednesday, then enjoy dinner and awards that evening at the Georgetown Club. Get more details or hotel registration forms from AAMA at 703/494-2758.

AMOA holds its Government Affairs Conference from **May 19-21.** A Sunday evening reception May 19 leads to Monday's issues workshop and a luncheon with congressional speakers. Congressional visits and reception follow Tuesday, including the triple tournament on pins, b-ball and darts. Registration is $100 per family; hotel is extra. AMOA will set up visits with your congressman; call them at 312/245-1021 for details. Make discount room and airline reservations through ATI Travel Management at 800/477-4561 (U.S.) or 312/644-6642 (Illinois).

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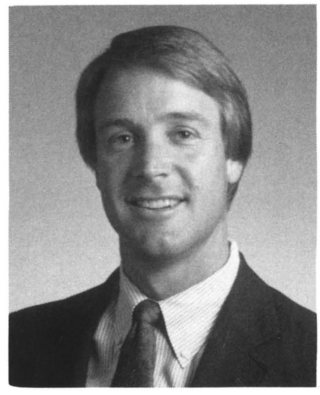
LOOK MA...NO GLASSES!

Sega of America broke through the **3D barrier** at ACME with a video that shows authentic 3D without the use of glasses! This inaugural holographic game utilizes technology developed by **Rick Dyer's** Allen Design Group in a time-traveling adventure featuring two live action 3D character against a computer-generated background.

You can actually put your hand through the players as they appear "in person" in mid-air. Neat 3D special effects and hot audio complement the attraction. The upright is laserdisc-based and (according to **Tom Petit)** will hopefully be on the market this spring. "It's that great leap forward we've been hinting at," said Tom. Sega also showed the new ***Rad Mobile*** (a 32-bit item shipping now), ***Clutch Hitter*** (baseball kit), ***Laser Ghost*** and ***GP Rider*** at ACME. Full plate! See more inside.



TOM PETIT

MIDWAY'S *HARLEY-DAVIDSON* REVS UP FLIPPER EXCITEMENT

Midway Manufacturing has "kick-started a legend" with their new pinball, ***Harley-Davidson,*** which pays tribute to the "classic American dream machine" of motorcycle fame. The timeless theme is supported with back-to-basics design, said the firm. The playfield represents a 10-city, coast to coast race. "It's balanced to challenge players of all skill levels first time, every time," said Midway execs. Features include a motor shaker, two- and three-ball play, loop shots, a speed trap kick-out hole, excellent graphics and heart-thumping music. The game was shown at ACME and is on view now at your authorized Midway distributor.

COUNTERFEITS IN ALASKA & L.A.

You may not hear much about the war on counterfeits these days, but it's still going on. **U.S. Customs** at Anchorage, Alaska recently has seized a shipment of counterfeit video game boards at the Federal Express hub. The illegal, phony boards were destined for a subject in Houston, Texas. Now they're awaiting destruction by Customs, who found them during a recent check. Two more shipments of counterfeits were also seized as a result of recent checks by the U.S. Customs Foreign Mail Division in Los Angeles. Those boards, too, will be destroyed by Customs. "Both of these cases are presently under investigation," stated AAMA Director of Investigations **Bill Kidwell.**

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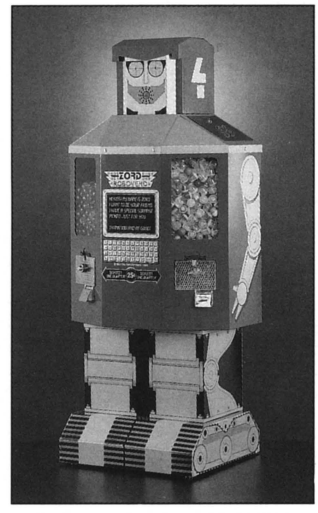

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COIN COALITION BACKS NEW $1 TO HONOR AMERICAN VETERANS

Christopher Columbus is "out" and the **American Veteran** is "in" for the face of a proposed new dollar coin. AMOA, AAMA and NAMA are all members of the Coin Coalition, which resubmitted its pro-coin legislation to the new Congress on March 5. This time it's called HR.1245, the "One Dollar Coin Act of 1991." The bill also calls for phased elimination of the $1 note. Tradesters are urged to write their congressmen (again) to get all of last year's co-sponsors to renew their support for this year's version of the bill. By the way, dollar coins have been endorsed by a major lobbying group, the **American Legion.** In addition to Coin Coalition exec director **Jim Benfield,** more heavyweight lobbyists are coming aboard the effort (such as **Wayne Vallis** at AMOA's behest;

and other major lobbyists hired by NAMA). This year's big strategic goal for the legislation is to get the Bush Administration on board. To that end, tradesters such as AMOA government relations chairman **Wally Bohrer** are meeting with the Veteran's Administration; and AAMA exec VP **Bob Fay** is meeting with administration officials from the White House Office of Management and Budget.

LEPRECHAUN'S ADDING IT ON

Leprechaun Games, Bill Cravens' new equipment sales organization, began with the ***Bowl-O-Rama*** kit, added a new redemption piece and has also capped a deal with Japan's Video Systems to bring their video games to these shores. One game is ***Welltris,*** the follow-up to *Tetris* that was designed by the same Russian (this more advanced version is Leprechaun's for North American sales). The strategy game could be on the market at the time you're reading this. (Apparently, the Russian designer is dealing through Video Systems on this item; ergo Cravens' access to this horizontal kit).

NAMA WESTERN SHOW: APRIL 19-21, ANAHEIM, CALIF.

NAMA, the National Automatic Merchandising Assn., will hold its 30th annual "Western Convention of Vending & Foodservice Management" in Anaheim, Calif. from April 19-21. Over 160 firms were slated to exhibit, which NAMA said showed how strong the vending industry is "even in times of economic uncertainty." On display will be everything from coin-op fresh-squeezed juice machines, to cleaning kits for bill validators and card readers, to bar code readers for inventory control. Call NAMA's hotel and travel desk for reservations on discount airplane tickets and hotel rooms at 800/666-6756. For show registration or more info, call NAMA at 312/246-0370.

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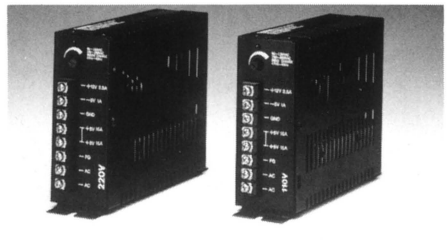

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YAMATE COPYRIGHT VALID, JUDGE SAYS; ORDERS ATLANTIC TO STOP SELLING *LUCKY 8-LINES*

Federal District Judge **Harold Ackerman** stated in a legal opinion issued March 4 that he now presumes Yamate USA owns valid copyrights on the *Lucky 8-Line W-4* video game. Accordingly, the judge issued a preliminary injunction, ordering **Myron Sugerman** and his **Atlantic & Pacific Amusement Corp.** to stop selling, making, buying, importing, using, performing, displaying, or "otherwise dealing or trafficking in" the game or anything like it, and to recover and surrender all "accused copies" (i.e., presumed counterfeits) to a federal marshal. . . including copies earlier sold to customers. A&P was also ordered to surrender any equipment that might be used in making copies of the game, and to tell the court where all known copies of the game currently are, including names and phone numbers of A&P customers. Marshals seized a small quantity of *Lucky 8-Line* boards from A&P on March 6.

The action is the latest outcome of a long and bitter copyright infringement suit filed by Yamate against A&P. The judge had earlier ruled in A&P's favor and allowed them to keep selling copies of the game, because A&P had claimed that *Lucky 8-Lines* had been published five years before Yamate applied for a copyright. Therefore, A&P argued, the Yamate copyright was invalid. To support this claim, A&P had submitted into evidence a *Lucky 8-Line* PCB which it said was made in 1983. After hearing from independent experts and A&P's own witnesses, the judge said on March 4 that "the court was misled" into believing A&P's arguments. The judge said experts found 1988 and 1989 chips on the contested board, along with indications of recent alterations. (Experts said the '88-'89 chips had been independently soldered into place; that the original date of manufacture had been erased from the board. . . pink erasure fragments were still on the PCB; and that the software program had been altered to say "1983"). The judge also said he was not persuaded by A&P arguments that it obtained its PCBs from Grayhound (an authorized Yamate dealer) and had the right to resell them. Judge Ackerman added that Yamate had demonstrated "reasonable likelihood of success on the merits" when the case goes to actual trial.

At presstime no statement was forthcoming from A&P, although *RePlay* understands that the firm was attempting to appeal for a stay of the judge's order. Meantime, Yamate USA exec VP **John Dugas** stated: "I am determined to protect the integrity of our copyrights, now that the courts have affirmed their validity. Counterfeiters can expect to hear from our attorneys soon."

JAMMA

Chairman **Masaya Nakamura** has stated that in his opinion, it would be advisable for U.S. and Japanese tradesters at all levels to meet and discuss ways to stop an expected flow of counterfeits which may arrive next year. Mr. Nakamura did not suggest a site, date or particular arrangements for such a summit, however. Manufacturers are afraid that when parallel imports become legal to operate in the U.S. on Dec. 1, crooks may use the parallel label as a "cover" for illegal copies.

ACME 91

AMERICAN COIN MACHINE EXPOSITION

ACME turns up a winner: new technology, great product spark renewed dawn of optimism & confidence

"The turning point is here: it is this show," smiled California street operator Yogi Taylor. He was talking about ACME '91, the March 22-24 Las Vegas extravaganza which tradesters judged a certifiable hit thanks to a wealth of excellent new games, new themes and even some eye-popping new technology. Many called it "the industry's best show in years!"

Organization and presentation were flawless. While some exhibitors said they wished for higher attendance, ACME officials said registration broke all prior records with 6,012 attendees. (Most of the increase came from operators.) Certainly there was always a crowd in the major companies' booths. Best of all, said Convention Chairman Bill Cravens, "They came to buy . . . and they did!"

CONFIDENCE & OPTIMISM

ACME kindled a new mood of optimism, hope, and confidence by operators, distributors and manufacturers alike for one simple reason: it offered an abundance of good product in every category. Great pins, redemption, sports games, music and novelty items debuted at the show. A strong list of quality videos (many in kit form) arrived, using state-of-the-art technology.

One spark which ignited much excitement was that, after years of operator pleas for new video technology, the first sample finally arrived. In partnership with innovator Rick Dyer, Sega showed the near-finished prototype of a dedicated unit featuring hologram-style graphics: no glasses needed, and no video screen visible to the player. The

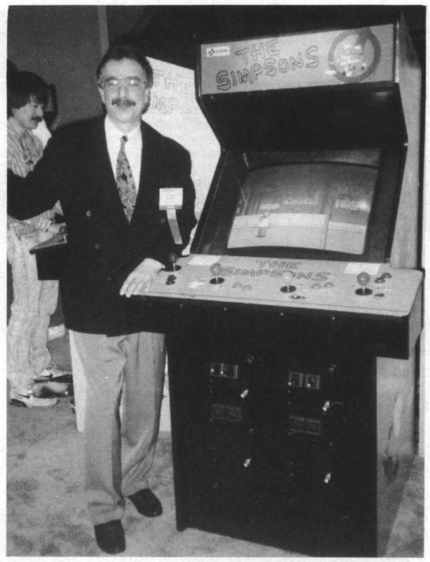
The new Las Vegas Sands Convention Center provided a super venue for the 1991 ACME outing March 22-24. Facilities were first cabin and show organizers should be congratulated for picking it.

Four of the folks who "made it happen" celebrate their success. From left: Bill Glasgow, Judy Novak, Bill Cravens & AAMA prexy Gil Pollock (who showed a fine new Premier flipper called Cactus Jack).

first game for this laserdisc-and-mirror based system will be called *Hologram Time Traveler*, and two Canadian operators said the trip to Vegas was worthwhile to see that one game! Sega definitely had the "buzz" game of the show. Completed versions should hit the market this May.

Make no mistake, however: ACME was not a one-game show. Far from it! Operators and distributors liked (and ordered) a whole list of great games. These included Konami's dedicated *Simpsons* video and two pins from Williams/Bally-Midway: *The Machine: Bride of Pinbot* (probably ACME's biggest seller), and their baseball card-vending *Slugfest* (everybody loved this one). Also frequently praised by operators were Namco's dedicated video *Steel Gunner*, Bromley's electromechanical shooting classic *Ghost Town*, American Technos' *Wrestlefest* video and Capcom's *Street Fighter II* (out and earning big bucks before the show). Williams' dedicated video *Strikeforce* and two from Sega (their *Rad Mobile* driver and their *Clutch Hitter* kit) also got rave reviews from operators. Irem's *Gun Force* was also well received.

For our part, *RePlay* loved Arachnid's revolutionary new *Galaxy Darts*, Premier's *Cactus Jack's* pinball, Atari's video kit *Batman*, Wurlitzer's snazzy new jukebox *New York, New York*, the latest Neo•Geo items from SNK and conversion materials for its one-slot version from Romstar, Data East's *Checkpoint* pinball, MicroProse's *F-15 Strike Eagle 2.2* (an easier version) and Leland's new driving video *Indy Heat*. We thought Kaneko's *Berlin Wall* was fun to play.



Flush with distributor orders for his brand new The Simpsons *video upright, Konami's Steve Kaufman has a "thumbs high" expression boding another slammer like their Turtles.*

As if that weren't enough, factories previewed even more upcoming product in their suites, or on the show floor, that had "hit" written all over them. Promising titles included Betson's preview of its next laserdisc game *Who Shot Johnny Rock*, MicroProse's *BOTS*, Data East's next licensed pinball *Turtles*, and an early prototype of a new 16-bit system from Nintendo. T.O.P. Distributing showed the Wellow steel-tip dart game to distribs in a suite . . . very interesting.

Several video conversion kits were offered in two- and four-player formats. One of them, Taito's *Ninja Kids*, jacked up the violence quotient of kick-punch games a tad. Data East's dedicated video *Desert Assault* was the only game themed after the war; we don't know if it will also be offered as a kit.

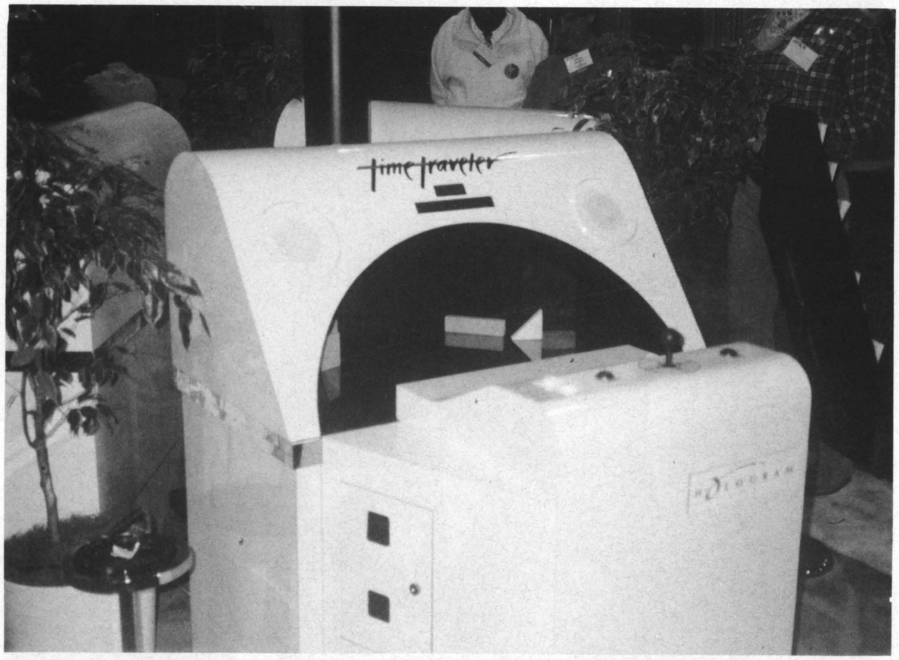
Redemption was lush with good new product, including Taito's video redemption novelty *Sonic Blastman*, Leprechaun's *Pot O' Gold* skill game, Coin Concepts' handsome skill-stop LED screen item *Prize Lines Prize Bingo*, Vari-Tech's animal-whacker *B.C. Bash*, Doyle's amusing *Dump the Ump* and Smart's *Super Pro Quarterback*.

Still more promising material was displayed including CD jukebox conversion kits, miniature shuffleboards, new photo booths . . . in all, an incredible spread. In fact, the whole show was so surprisingly good that we can't possibly mention all of ACME's new product in this story . . . or even cover all of it in this issue. After all, it took one year for ACME and its exhibitors to put this show together; due to time limitations, we'll have to give it our usual "all-out" treatment next month. So look for "part two" of our ACME coverage, with booth photos, a detailed laundry list of machines, in-depth seminar reports, etc., in our May issue.

OPERATORS SMILED . . . AND DEALERS ORDERED

The point is that, product-wise, ACME was a bountiful Horn of Plenty for every tradester who stepped onto the exhibit floor. "Anybody who's not stimulated by this spread of equipment is un-stimulate-able," summed up Data East's Steve Walton. Happily, showgoers were very stimulated indeed. Dealers ordered in quantity; operators chalked up big "want lists" as well.

"I have a long list of buys," said arcade operator Bob Szabo. "The manufacturers have put impressive



New technology! Sega's Hologram Time Traveler *shows 3D visions of actual actors on the glass in front of the control panel. It made for an impossible photo, unfortunately, but those who saw these performers fighting through their saga at ACME marveled at the sensation. Finished unit comes in May.*

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April 1991

Dear Music Operators:

On behalf of all of the employees of Rowe International, I thank you. With great pride, I accepted The Play Meter Award of Excellence for the Rowe LaserStar CD Jukebox voted as the "Best Jukebox of the Year" by you, the American Operators. Only six months ago, operators honored Rowe with the AMOA 1990 Most Played Jukebox Award — LaserStar CD-100.

The Rowe/AMi, Grand Rapids, Michigan factory has been designing and building jukeboxes for more than 60 years. It is a labor of "Love and Pride." Our people understand that craftsmanship, reliability, value and careful planning represent the Rowe tradition of building "The Best There Is."

While recognition by members of our own industry is the highest form of praise, we know we have a responsibility to pay constant attention to your needs. We pledge to continue manufacturing Jukeboxes that will contribute to your strong and profitable future.

We appreciate and thank you for your support.

Joel Friedman

Joel Friedman
Sr. Vice President — Music Group

equipment on the plate. If operators respond in kind, we'll have a good year. If the economy also cooperates a bit, the potential for 1991 is awesome!"

If anything, there was "too much" good product on the floor (as if that were possible). Distributors will perform their "funnel function" and operators will remain cherry-pickers... but folks, ACME grew a whole lot of cherries. Williams/Bally-Midway served as a microcosm of the trade's embarrassment of riches; every title they offered looked like a winner.

"Our biggest problem," smiled Williams Marketing VP Joe Dillon, "will be explaining to some of our successful design teams, why games created by some of our other teams are being built first!"

Some operators wondered how many of their brothers had the money to buy substantial new equipment in these hard times. But dealers hoped that a long-lived "soft market" might have stored some "pent-up demand" for new things. The war is over; interest rates and gasoline prices are down; consumer confidence and new housing starts are up. Will all of this translate into more operator buying?

Only time will tell, but *RePlay* adds this thought: the manufacturers (and players) "deserve" to have much of ACME's new product placed on the route. The games are good. The better operators and distributors know this and are already acting on it. The less professional will only hurt themselves in the long run (and maybe in the short run, too). As one revered trade veteran said at ACME: "Pioneers sometimes get arrows in the back, but slow buffaloes always get shot and die. The trick is to be somewhere in the middle!"

A BEAUTIFUL SITE

The new Sands Expo & Convention Center proved to be one of the best venues any coin-op trade show has ever enjoyed. With a record 741 exhibitor booths, ACME needed space, air and light... this hall provided all of that, plus spacious and comfortable seminar rooms. As organized by Bill Glasgow & Associates, the layout of booths was attractive, logical and functional. Seminars, meeting rooms, snack bars and rest rooms were close at hand, easy to find, and not too crowded. Inside, access was a breeze with wide aisles. Outside, frequent buses to Bally's Hotel (or a quick walk to the Sands Hotel) was equally easy and pleasant.

As always, Bill Glasgow and his "deputy commander" Judy Novak were the most visible people at the show, roaming the floor with walkie-talkies in their hands and smiles on their faces. They responded to every shift in the breeze with a fast, smooth adjustment that made life easy on everybody else. Their months of hard work showed!

Par for the course at a Vegas show, many attendees spent a fair amount of time in the casinos. (An amazed cabdriver asked one showgoer who didn't gamble: "You mean you actually attended your convention?") The result of this, plus the effect of using a huge and spacious hall, was that some tradesters felt the aisles looked "less than crammed" at times. True, but big waves of people came in on Friday

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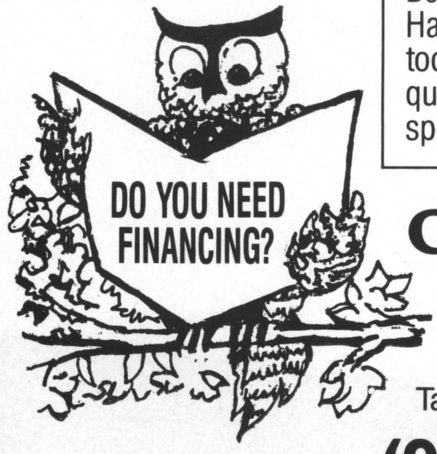

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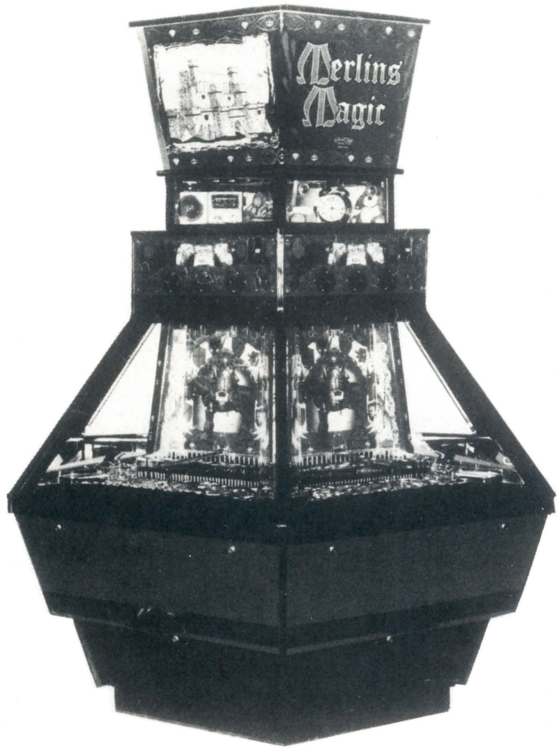

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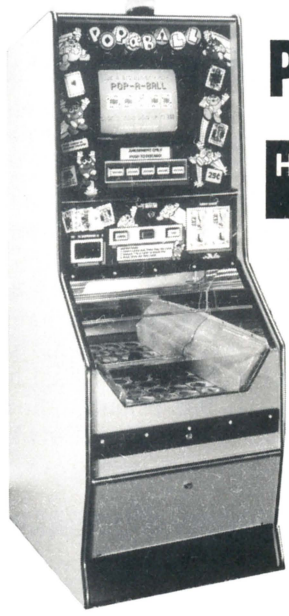

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AAMCF's Bill Cravens (l) with the AAMCF honoree Ray Galante and Ray's charming wife Jeanette. The Northwest dealer's late partner Lou Dunis was also honored posthumously at this year's charitable affair (over $80,000 has been raised so far, said Cravens).

and Saturday . . . and, as stated, the major companies had crowds almost all the time. Bill Glasgow pointed to the longest registration lines ACME had ever seen, too.

Registration figures showed that ACME pulled in a whopping 1,242 street operators . . . 724 arcade operators . . . 722 distributors . . . and 286 techs, operators guests, and others. Looking at badges, most seemed to be West Coast tradesters who don't often attend Chicago-based affairs. (One top redemption exhibitor also said this regional bias hurt sales of his type of product; the South and East are more redemption-oriented, he said.)

None of AMOA's current officers were seen by us, though some past AMOA presidents, current board members and other notable operators did attend. International attendance was strong as always. Exhibitors and manufacturers accounted for another 2,760 bodies, with 278 guests and journalists rounding out the crowd.

AAMCF BANQUET

Vegas once again proved a most hospitable site for related trade show events such as the plethora of parties. Topping that list had to be the AAMA Charitable Foundation banquet for distributors Ray Galante and his departed friend and partner Lou Dunis, held across the street from the Sands at Caesar's Palace. Ray delivered a moving and articulate address, thanking his friends and boosting our industry. It appeared that the entire Dunis family and the entire Galante family were present; they received suitable recognition.

The banquet also saw AAMA's two most important awards, honoring Atari and C.A. Robinson as manufacturer and distributor of the year, respectively. Yes, again (and

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Capcom's Street Fighter II *is considered the top kit on today's market by many and celebrating at their hospitality suite are company people & distribs like Canada's Jim Niblock (center court).*

deservedly so). After the banquet ceremonies, those who remained in the hall for the Endless Summer Band enjoyed great dancing.

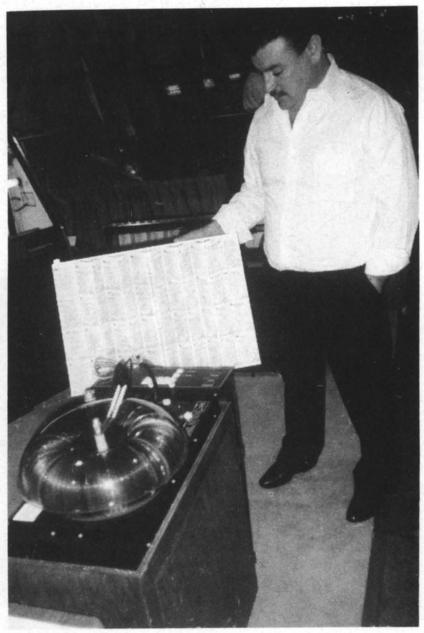
Much of the money raised for the Northwest charitable fund created by the honorees came from banquet tickets, but additional funds were raised via raffling a snazzy mint '68 Corvette. Of all people, classic car collector Marty Bromley won the prize!

ACME PARTIES GALORE

AAMCF's banquet was only the biggest of many ACME parties. Bally's was the "official" host hotel for ACME, and many fine parties took place there, notably an event hosted by Ira, Sandy and the Bettelman family of C.A. Robinson's. "Everybody who's anybody" was there at some point, and by this time (the second night of the show) people were beginning to realize they had an absolute, by-gosh hit show on their hands. A most happy and charming affair.

An "all-show cocktail party" hosted by ACME organizers was the occasion for the presentation of sales awards to eight major manufacturers (Capcom, Konami, Valley, Atari, SNK, Arachnid, Sega and Data East) based on high sales of their 1990 hits. Congratulations, all.

Bally's and the Sands were also the sites for quite a few manufacturer hospitality suites, parties and meetings. Such firms as Nintendo, Namco, Williams, Merit, Leland, MicroProse, and James Industries (along with Dynamo and their other friends like Wico) offered food, drink and fun to customers and friends.



Sunshine Distributing's Talih Ozturk shows off the Digital Disc CD conversion kit for old phonos they're now rep'ing.

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Carrier Air Wing	Jun. 30, 1992	$400

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Bronx operator Sam Morrison with Leland's new Indy Heat. *This 3PL driver has many features like their Super Off-Road hit .*

Several exhibitors, like Rowe above, dressed their displays with American flags & yellow ribbons and the floor looked grand in that respect. Joel Friedman is shown here demonstrating their new wireless remote control unit (volume, record selection, etc.).

SEMINARS, SPEECHES & POLITICS

The ACME seminar program offered a fine slate of topics and speakers, pulling in 715 "students" for the paid sessions. Video poker remained a major topic, with Sal (SMS) Mirando's seminar drawing heavy attendance . . . but the number of pokers and video slots on the exhibit floor was perhaps not as overwhelming as at some recent shows. Also, operators seemed to be getting the message that developing this market will require a long, challenging climb. It's no quick fix, not a sure thing, and there will be deadly serious competition for this business.

Redemption drew the most attendance of any paid seminar, with an audience of over 100 for an excel-

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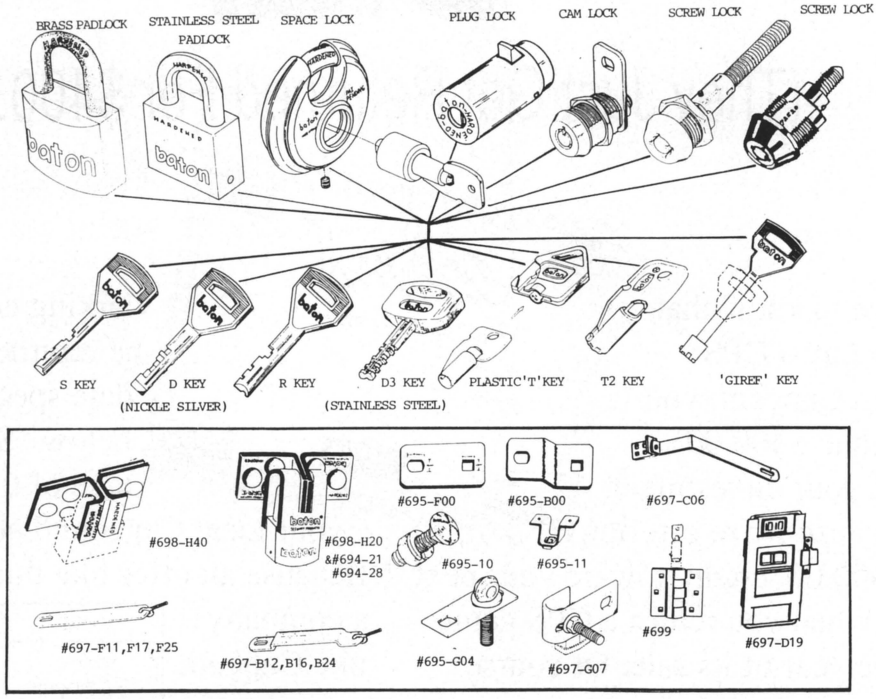

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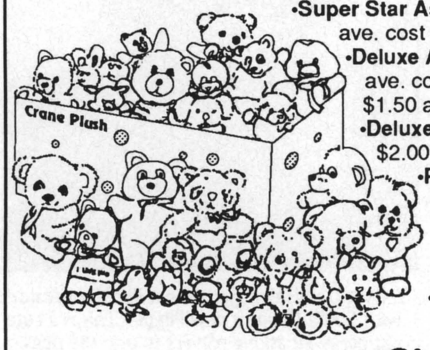

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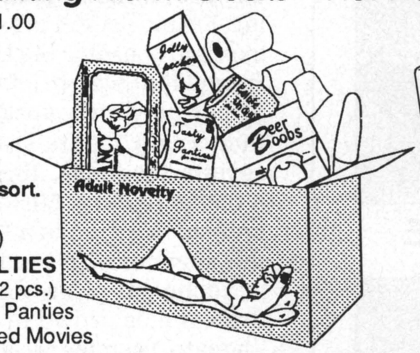

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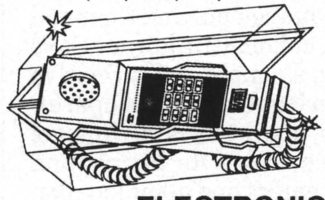
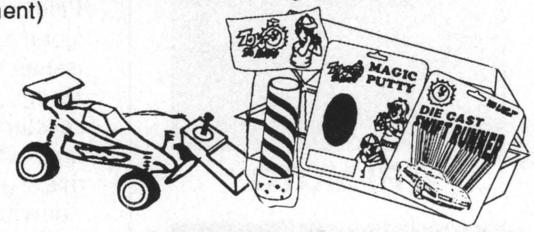


ELECTRONICS
•Stereo Radios •Telephones •Cameras



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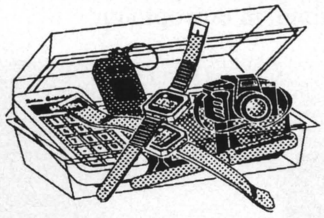

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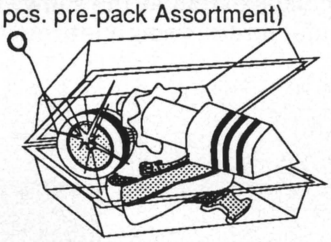

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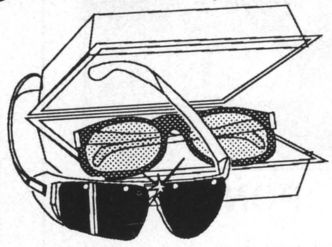

SUNGLASSES (huge assortment)
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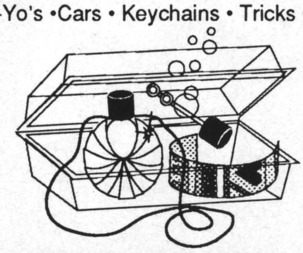

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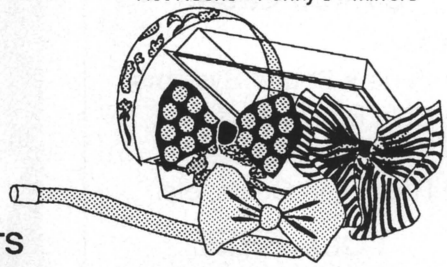

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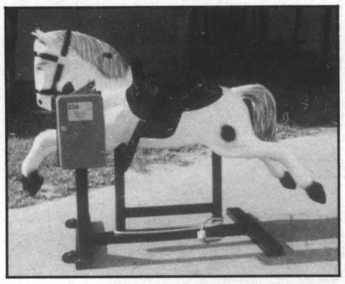

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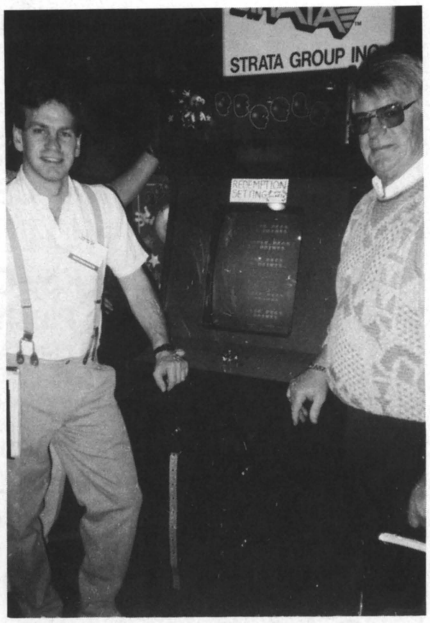
DAVID VEGA

lent session moderated by Betson's John Margold. If Western operators are somewhat behind the rest of the country on redemption, they surely seemed eager to learn (and perhaps ready to start catching up). We'll have a full report on the redemption seminar next issue.

Ready to charge more than a quarter? Maybe you can, said Frank Seninsky in his seminar on play pricing. Frank, AAMA president Gil Pollock and operator Bill Beckham confirmed that play-pricing of 50¢ and $1 per play may work just fine. In fact, Frank's data showed that in certain locations, three plays for a dollar led to a 50% earnings increase! We'll have a full report on this seminar also in our next issue.

Technical whiz Randy Fromm drew a nice crowd to his series of "how-to" seminars, and operator Charlie Ross and professor Richard Priesmeyer did likewise with sessions on management and financial issues. Our columnist, attorney Dave Hagen, ran a couple of informative sessions on legal aspects of operating, while operator Paul Spiegel drew a nice crowd for his chat on "bowling centers and other location gold mines."

In a refreshing change from years gone by, political problems were virtually non-existent at the show. The manufacturers' firing line drew sparse attendance and created mostly yawns. Nobody, anywhere, seemed worried about counterfeits or parallels. The best anybody could do was dredge up chronic complaints about warranties and spare parts. In a closed-door meeting, some operators raised the old cry of forming a "national buyers group" to bypass distribution...a ploy which has never succeeded in the past, and which won't go anywhere this time, in our opinion.



Chris & Don Hesch, prominent Illinois operators, with Strata Group's new Peggle. This is a cute strategy kit asking players to pop the pegs.

T.O.P. Distributing of New York State will be bringing Wellow Leisure's steel tip darts coin-op to our country beginning in June (unit can also be played with soft tip darts). Principles Andy Vining & Tom Tarantelli flank the unit at their hospitality suite.

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Overseas visitors included (left to right): Louise Roberge (Mendes), Hank Grant (Belgian Amusement), Andrea Schaatz & Bernd Donnalies (Stella, Germany) cement deal giving Stella distribution rights to Bowlingo in continental Europe (except for Italy).

"THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT"

It's clear the industry is ready to be optimistic when ACME's biggest draw (aside from parties and product) was Nolan Bushnell's visionary speech on "The Future of Coin-Op." The "father of the video game" drew a standing-room-only crowd of 265 tradesters for his charming 90-minute overview of what trends are coming in technology, sociology and law . . . and how they'll affect the trade domestically and worldwide.

"I believe the future of coin-op is bright for those who are willing to change," Bushnell concluded. Those words could serve as the official motto for ACME '91. It was one of the friendliest, happiest and most successful U.S. trade shows in a long, long time . . . and one that promises a creative, innovative and profitable new era for us all.

The manufacturers have provided the needed product; now it's up to the operators to put on their "showman" hats and make some money selling first-class coin-op entertainment. As one operator (from Reno, of all places) said: "There's a pile of good stuff at this show. Now I've gotta find the money to buy some of it!" Maybe he spoke for others, but find that money . . . and we'll all be able to say "Happy days are here again!"

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.

We have placed advertisements for the past three months notifying you of the need to convert your Atari Final Lap games. We advised you to work through your distributor to get the necessary conversion kits. To assist you we offered you a $100 credit for each game converted valid against purchases of the new Final Lap 2 dedicated video game. Up to five $100 credits can be added together and applied to the purchase of each new Namco Final Lap 2 dedicated game.

At this point, if any of you are having any difficulties whatsoever in making the conversion please contact Namco-America, Inc. directly at (408) 496-6371, Extension 29, and you will be provided with a means for having the conversion made.

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.

NOTICE OF UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT ORDER IN YAMATE U.S.A. CORP. VS. MYRON SUGARMAN AND ATLANTIC & PACIFIC AMUSEMENT CORP.

COURT ORDER AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN COUNTERFEIT LUCKY 8-LINE EQUIPMENT AND ORDERING RECALL OF COUNTERFEITS

The United State District Court, in the case of Yamate U.S.A. Corp. vs. Myron Sugarman and Atlantic & Pacific Amusement Corp., Civil Action No. 89-763 (HAA), has granted Yamate's request for a preliminary injunction and impounding order against the defendants.

PURCHASERS & USERS OF POSSIBLY COUNTERFEIT LUCKY 8-LINE GAMES SHOULD BE AWARE THAT THE COURT PRELIMINARILY ENJOINED DEFENDANTS SUGARMAN AND A&P IN THE CASE AS FOLLOWS:

- No more manufacturing, selling, and otherwise dealing in PCBs for Lucky 8-Line W-4 or any game substantially similar to it.
- Turn over to the U.S. Marshal all PCBs for Lucky 8-Line W-4 or games substantially similar to it.
- Make reasonable efforts to obtain from customers, distributors, and other persons – all Lucky 8-Line W-4 and substantially similar games sold or transferred to them.
- After recalling the games, turn them over to the U.S. Marshal.
- Furnish Yamate's counsel with names and last known addresses of all customers and other persons to whom Defendants sold or transferred Lucky 8-Line PCBs or games.

Yamate doesn't want to be harsh or punitive to innocent persons . . . but Yamate must protect the integrity of its intellectual property.

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★

MEMBER AAMA

DATEBOOK

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
MOMA (Minnesota) annual convention & trade show. Radisson Hotel, St. Paul. For more information contact Hy Sandler at 612/927-6662.

APRIL 19-21
NAMA Western Convention, Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, Calif. For more information, contact NAMA at 312/346-0370.

APRIL 25-28
FAVA (Florida) combined amusement & vending convention & trade show. Omni Hotel & Orlando Complex, Orlando. Contact FAVA for details at 407/898-3451.

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.

JUNE 14-16
ICMOA (Illinois) annual convention. Drake Hotel, Oak Brook. For more information call Adonna Jerman at 708/369-2406.

JUNE 20-23
California Coin Machine Assn. annual convention, Hyatt Lake Tahoe, Incline Village, Nevada. Contact Cindy Urcan or Kathy Waldie at 916/441-5451.

JULY 11-13
8th Annual Billiard Congress of America International Trade Expo, Downtown Nashville Convention Center, Tenn. For more info, contact Continental Productions at 619/278-3877.

JULY 12-14
Amusement & Music Operators of Idaho host tri-state summer meeting. Cour D'Alene Motel, Cour D'Alene. For more information, call Steve Gregory or Steve McGrath at 509/326-6054.

JULY 19-20
PAMMA (Pennsylvania) annual convention & trade show. Seven Springs Resort, Champion. For more information call 717/232-5322.

JULY 19-20
AMOT (Texas) annual convention. Radisson Hotel, Austin. For more information, call Vancie Todaro at 409/776-8287.

JULY 19-20
OAMOA (Oregon) annual convention. Inn of the Seventh Mountain, Bend. Get details from Cheryl McCown at 503/343-6642.

JULY 23-24
AAMA's 2nd Annual Latin American Expo, Mexico City, Mexico. For more information, contact AAMA at 703/494-2758.

JULY 26-28
MCMOA (Montana) annual summer meeting. Site to be announced. Call Chris Warren for details at 406/442-7088.

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

SEPTEMBER 27-29
Rocky Mountain AMOA annual convention & trade show. Hilton Inn South, Denver. For details call Jo Anne Hackett at 303/289-6200.

OCTOBER 1-3, 1992
AMOA Expo '92, Opryland Hotel & Convention Center, Nashville, Tenn. For more information, contact AMOA at 312/245-1021.

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- Drive into the **Pit Stop** to light your out lane special. Extra ball, mystery score, advance the tach, advance fast and miles hold over.
- Features on the game advance the tachometer for hot **Redline Action**. 6000 and 7000 RPMS lite the Checkpoint and Pit Stop for multiball.
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ALL-STAR LINEUP

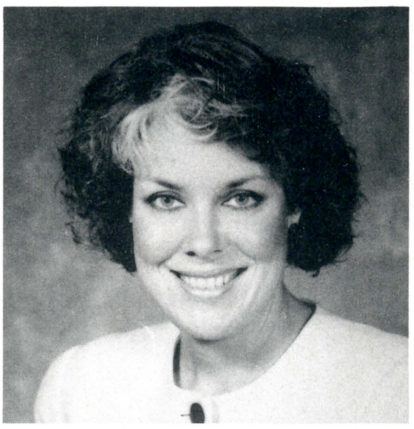
AMOA names Gene Urso & Craig Johnson top officers for 1991-92; Tami Norberg-Paulsen to be Secretary this fall. . . president later?

You've come a long way, baby! Tami Norberg-Paulsen will take up the quill as Secretary of AMOA this fall, putting her in line to become the second woman to serve as president of AMOA four years from now. (West Virginia's unforgettable Leoma Ballard was first woman to blaze this presidential trail in 1981.) Tami's term as president will occur in 1994-95 if the usual order of succession is followed.

The team was voted by AMOA's board of directors at their semi-annual meeting, held the third week of February at the Scottsdale Plaza resort hotel in Scottsdale, Ariz. It's a great appointment of a capable, hard-working association member and also reflects well on the industry. By the way, Tami's expecting her first child; the baby is due in October (after the AMOA Expo — nice timing, Tami) so double congratulations are due.

At the Scottsdale meeting, the AMOA board also confirmed that Gene Urso will become president of the association this fall, with Craig Johnson as First VP and R.A. Green III as Treasurer. Three new vice presidents were also appointed, with their terms beginning this fall: David Goudeau, Russ Love and Garland Garrett.

upcoming AMOA prexy GENE URSO



TAMI NORBERG-PAULSEN

The officers and board also approved a resolution calling for private industry to be involved in any future video lottery markets. This may not seem very surprising at first, since vidpoker seems to have become AMOA's top focus in recent times. But AMOA has shied away from adopting "position resolutions" on various issues in recent years. The reason for this particular resolution was to provide state associations with political support from their national association.

Other moves made by AMOA: 20 students were awarded $1,000 scholarships, funded by the Wayne E. Hesch memorial fund. By the way, AMOA has announced that Expo dates for 1992 are Oct. 1-3 in the Opryland Hotel, in Nashville, Tenn.

Officers and board members commented that the Scottsdale conference was run very smoothly, with a relatively brief meeting of the full board followed by longer sessions for individual committee work.

Russ Mawdsley (left) sent these photos taken at Saturday night's dinner. Correct: that's retired AMOA Executive Director Fred Granger with Fred Collins, Maria Granger and Gert Mawdsley. The Grangers live in Scottsdale.

AMOA's current President Jimmy Trucano (left) with wife Beth and former AMOA chief Garland Garrett Sr. take a snapshot at their cocktail reception. Jim's having a busy year for himself as association top.

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Yet, ultra fast as our changer is, it never so much as touches your expensive CD's. Just the trays they're cradled in. So there's never any CD damage. Not even any wear.

Next, take a look at our new CD jacket title display mechanism. But you better look quick.

Because it's ultra fast too. In fact, if you continually depress the Picture Display button, titles will appear and disappear as fast as your eye can absorb them. Most importantly, they're positioned and presented so patrons can really see them well.

Bet you didn't even notice something was missing... until you looked inside.

All NSM jukeboxes look – and act – as if they're filled with CD's, even though they may be loaded with as few as 4. That's because you can "lock-out" empty CD trays and title strip holders...and no one can tell from the outside. But you always have the capacity of a full 100-CD machine.

Now look – really look – at the little things.

Things like the computerized transport mechanism on the changer. The "port" on the electronic board that lets you plug in a hand-held printer to retrieve diagnostic and collection information. The automatic-read feature so the machine can instantly identify and play 5" CD albums, 3" Singles or the new "Maxi-Singles"...or any combination.

Look at something so simple as the loomed & fitted wiring harnesses. Or the size and number of speakers. Little things, perhaps. Unimportant things, no. These are, in fact, just a few of the technological and quality

features built into every NSM HyperBeam™ jukebox...so that they will not only last for decades, but be technologically equiped to handle whatever comes along in the meantime. They're also the reason why NSM was overwhelmingly voted the machine of choice by operators at the international trade show in England last year.

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ANNY AT ACME

Neo•Geo completes successful first year in Vegas

If you like success stories, you'll applaud SNK's Neo•Geo System. Launched onto the market at last year's ACME show, the multi-choice video game concept marked its first full year in the biz at the show just concluded at the Sands, putting five more "game candles" on its cake and impressing operators with a speedy bookkeeping card to chart its earnings back in the shop.

The firm bowed five new game cartridges at ACME 91, which added to those already introduced, number close to 20 brought out within roughly one year's time. Original skeptics who thought they'd slacken off on software follow-through are pleased to admit their mistake, although the firm can rather comfortably slow down game releases now and let it all sink in.

New games shown at ACME were: *Sengoku, King of the Monsters, Burning Fight, Alpha Mission II* and *Ghost Pilots.* All are good, the first three (in the words of SNK America's President Paul Jacobs) are "stone winners." Previous titles like *Ninja Combat* and *Baseball Stars Professional* (the latter is back in production) have made hot marks. They do know how to design fun product back there in Japan!

As if these weren't enough, Jacobs said "some excellent titles are coming, many geared to the adult location market." He revealed that games themed on basketball, football, boxing and soccer are in design. He also admitted that this "rush" of software they've been running out will downspeed a bit, "but the play quality will always be there."

Play appeal was obviously the reason this multi-game system scored. But other elements played their part in this product's success. SNK markets three versions of Neo•Geo: a large "arcade" cabinet offering players a choice of six games, a more convention-sized cabinet with four games and a 2-slot item in a smaller woodgrain cabinet for bars and lounges.

Front liners at SNK America (left to right) Kerann Christopherson, Sales VP John Barone, President Paul Jacobs, Product Manager Susan Jarocki & Sales Rep Tracy Tate smile the smiles of success.

Both the 6-slot and 4-slot cabinets have 25" monitors, but the preferred model by far is the 4-slot. Jacobs estimates that SNK sells five times as many 4-slot cabinets as they sell 6's and 2's combined. (Romstar has a separate deal with SNK Japan to market 1-slot kits.)

Jacobs believes that SNK has sold more full machines than any other video game this past year, "that is, if you consider *Turtles* to have come out beforehand." He refers to complete cabinets shipped and sold, not to game cartridges, which are obviously far larger in sales numbers.

Neo•Geo cartridges sell to operators (through SNK distributors only) at a cost just under $400 a pop. "You're talking roughly one quarter the price of a regulation kit and that's another key reason the system has been successful," Jacobs declared. (He said the factory is careful to test games on an individual basis, not in competition with their other games, in order to get true field feedback on their merits.) He added that the Neo•Geo games, while also available on their home system, are coin-industry engineered, referring to the fact that they run quicker than some competitive home games.

Graphics, as readers know, are solid (many bits here drive many colors and character movements). They also offer players a memory

card which can be used when a player has to leave a game (maybe go home for dinner) but wants to pick back up where he left off afterward.

SNK America's Operations Manager Neal Zook described this card thusly: "Let's say a player got up to level 5 on one of our games but had to split. He plugs the memory card into the cabinet and hours or days later, he can return to any Neo•Geo cabinet, plug the card back in and pick right up where he left off. That goes for the golf game where you left off at a certain hole and the others."

At ACME, Zook and staff presented a brand new card for operator use. This is used by pushing it into the cabinet slot up front. All earnings information is encoded (downloaded) citing number of plays, amount of money and the rest (but not the scores). When the serviceman returns to the shop, he can plug the card into any IBM PC compatible computer using the Lotus 123 software and immediately run that information up on the screen.

Use it once and you'll get the idea immediately (many operators have PCs capable of using this helpful bookkeeping device). But you need an extra "black box" to wire in, so check your SNK distributor if you didn't drink it all in at ACME.

Neo•Geo has been a good thing for the video game operator and the firm that brought it forth isn't resting on its laurels. As the front cover of this magazine infers, SNK's dealt the industry a winner . . . a winner this industry can surely use. ®

RIDING FREE

by Bob Rondeau

Over the 25-plus years that I personally ran distribution offices, I never met an operator who was bashful. Specifically, I never did business with one who used any finesse, was afraid of hurting my feelings or was particular about the language he used if he thought I charged too much, favored his competitor, sold him the wrong machine, didn't have the part he needed or charged him for certain repairs he felt were unjustified.

So why doesn't this guy . . . this guy who supports his local, state and national associations . . . face off with his competitor who **doesn't** belong and say: "Hey, buster! I'm sick and tired of supporting you! Everytime I write a check for the organization and spend time and money to go to meetings that affect our mutual business, you're getting a free ride on my money! Here's the application blank. Join and support them like I do!"

I've heard some pretty harsh words from the mouths of operators when they've been mad and "think" they're right. They are right as rain if they're angry about competitors who don't belong to the organizations. Okay, perhaps some non-members have never been asked to join the group whose efforts help put bread and butter on their tables. So ask! Maybe the non-members are embarrassed to come to meetings for one reason or another. So ask twice!

Look. Coin operators don't have to "love" their competitors, but there really is power in numbers. They all fight the same things, from city hall to the hypocrites to the prejudiced people out there. How much better it is to do this in an organization. So, get mad, end your frustration and pay a visit or a phone call to those competitors your association dues are supporting. Even if it doesn't do any good, at least you'll get the anger out of your system.

If they don't join after your pitch, go ahead and call them names. You have got a clear conscience knowing you tried. Bitterness, prejudice and distrust are pretty strong words but they shouldn't stand in the way of industry defense and industry progress. The ability to communicate is the greatest gift given to man. If man freely used this gift by sharing his knowledge with others, we'd all live to be 250 at least. There wouldn't be any disease, war and who knows, Utopia could be around the corner.

If there was ever a time for this industry to work together, it's now! But we need the ideas (and the money) from everyone who makes his or her living from this business. Call the free riders and tell it like it is. Make out you just got overcharged from your distributor and you just want to straighten things out. Now you've got the motivation!

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OH, NO, CANADA!

legalized video lottery can be a killer to music & game ops cut out of the deal

On Dec. 1, 1990 the Canadian Maritime province of New Brunswick authorized the installation of video lottery terminals (video poker and video slot ticket payoff machines). The law divides the net income as follows: 35% to the location where the machines are in place, 30% to the government and the other 35% to the operator. Yes, in New Brunswick, the coin operator has a slice of the gambling pie and apparently he likes it.

The next provinces to authorize video lottery were Newfoundland (which includes the region of Labrador) followed by Nova Scotia. The trouble there is a big one: the location gets 35% of the proceeds, the government gets the rest (although the final rules for Nova Scotia are still to be learned by us). Get the message? No operator involvement at all! We now advise all American operators interested in video gambling to read this story twice, because the difference between operator involvement and uninvolvement can be as stark as the difference between prosperity and the welfare line.

In New Brunswick, the program is going "very well," according to Paul Frenette of Frenette Amusements, Ltd. "It's been generating about $400 a week per machine net to the province for environmental concerns," he told us. "The operators are making more money than before, and if I may say so, we can sleep better at night without worrying about gray area poker."

Legalized video lottery, however, hasn't been friendly toward distributors of pure amusement and music machines. "I admit I haven't bought one of those for a good long time," Frenette told *RePlay*. "But, my lottery machines are almost completely installed and I intend to go back and upgrade my amusements. You know, if you neglect amusements, they can disappear," he added.

But when you go over the line (or the water) into Newfoundland, Labrador and Nova Scotia, the story we got was dark. Here the operator is completely out of the picture. According to prominent music and games operator Jeff Furneaux (headquartered in St. Johns, Newfoundland), the concept has been a "killer" to his kind. "The government and their Atlantic Lottery Corp. have taken over and it's crucified the music and amusement people," Furneaux told us.

"I've been forced to lay off eleven people and cut my expenses back by a quarter of a million dollars. I've had to pull pinballs, pokers, jukeboxes, video games and even some pool tables to give the locations room for these lottery terminals," he complained. "Some of these places have two liquor licenses allowing them to install ten terminals. They need room for them, so they tell us to take some of our equipment out. All factors considered, I bet I'm losing $25,000 a month," he declared.

Furneaux said pool and music are keeping him alive, but the terminals are hurting. "We've seen other games beaten down 40 to 60%, those we've managed to keep in the locations," he advised. "This is the worst thing that's happened to me in my fourteen years in this industry. It's comparable to terrorists coming into your home, raping your wife and threatening your children. The western world is supposed to be progressive. Instead, this is regressive. It's government intrusion into the private sector."

Furneaux said he and his fellow music and amusement operators have done everything possible to convince government of the need for operator involvement. "We've written to church groups, we pulled political favors, we even spoke to the provincial premier. Nothing! Gratefully for me, I have five other businesses, including my billiard rooms. But I really think some of the other fellows will go out of business because of this gambling thing and all because the government needs money and doesn't give a hoot about the problems they've created for us businessmen."

Then in a sober warning to American operators, Furneaux declared: "I want to tell your readers that we up here are the guinea pigs of North America and if your people don't make certain about their position in video lottery and end up getting cut out like we and the other operators in Nova Scotia did, they will learn the bitter truth about lottery's impact. I'm at wit's end with this and if I say more, I'll regret it.

"But let me leave you with a curious thought," Furneaux told *RePlay*. "The gambling locations have to do something like two hours of bookkeeping every day and if they come up short . . . say, because some player stringed the machine . . . they have to make up the difference. I've already talked three locations into throwing the gambling stuff out and staying with our normal equipment."

Newfoundland, where Furneaux operates (besides other places in Eastern Canada) had its lottery administered by the ALC, using a variety of video lottery equipment suppliers. Among those mentioned as actively involved or pending are VLC, Bally, IGT, Merit, SMS and a New Brunswick firm called Spielo Mfg. out of Moncton. The devices themselves, offering either poker or slot video, are hooked up to a central computer. A player can win up to $500 on a 25¢ vend. Winning tickets are dispensed, redeemable with location personnel.

Many terminals are located in

NO, CANADA!

bars, though others are in non-alcoholic locations. Newfoundland has over a thousand by now; Labrador was beginning to get them at this reading and Nova Scotia should be getting started. And while every single Canadian province is interested in video lottery to one extent or another (although Quebec just lost another round in an appeal of a poker case), it seems that Prince Edward Island may be the next to fall. Our thanks to Laniel's Jean Coutu for his help in getting this story together. And don't think the uninvolved operators up there have given up their fight for justice.

TOP HONORS TO FRANK

northeast show picks Seninksky as "man of the year"

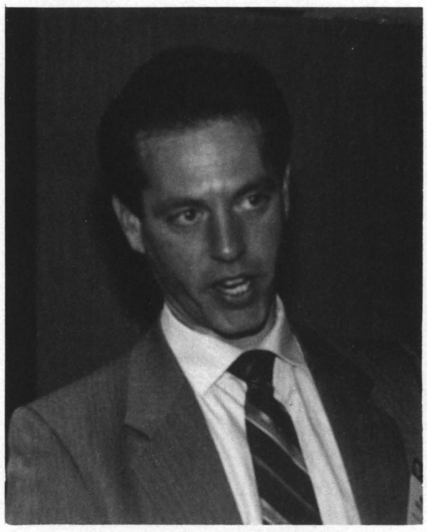
Frank Seninsky, sometimes called the "Walter Cronkite" of the coin amusement industry (due to his candid and credible columns in the trade magazines), will be saluted as Man of the Year during the Northeast Regional Trade Show early May.

This event (their third as a combined regional group) will run May 3-5 at the Trump Regency in Atlantic City and be sponsored by NYSCMA (New York State), AMOA (New York City) and AMOA New Jersey. Organizational pointman for the outing is Curt Matterson at the Delmar, N.Y. headquarters.

The show will feature machine and service exhibits plus social activities, highlighted by accolades to Seninsky. Said the promotion literature we received: "This distinct honor goes to a person with a long history of dedication, involvement and service to the industry" and they couldn't have picked a better man. An ad journal, mostly dedicated to Frank, will go toward support of the associations' legislative and other efforts to protect the area trade's economic health.

Actually, NYS folks have been involved in six trade shows, and companies who've exhibited in five consecutive ones will get a plaque. Awards for best all-around exhibits, most attractive exhibit and most original exhibit will also be presented in Atlantic City.

Anyone interested in exhibiting who hasn't made contact yet should call Curt Matterson at 518/439-0981. Anyone wishing to attend who has not received literature should also hit Curt for reservation information ASAP. The event isn't very far away and Atlantic City makes for an interesting vacation (mini-vacation?) spot for the family. Besides, the weather's broken!



MAN O'YEAR FRANK SENINSKY

CCMA TRADE ANNUAL

California (eh, Nevada) here I come!

The California Coin Machines Assn. (CCMA) will hold its 1991 annual convention Thursday, June 20 through Sunday, June 23 at the Hyatt Lake Tahoe in Incline Village, Nevada. CCMA normally holds its conventions in exotic, harder-to-reach locales, but it's the first time they've ever gone out of state (although Incline Village is quite close to the California/Nevada border and is a really spectacular spot).

Their last outing took place in Palm Springs, Cal. when Hank Tronick (C.A. Robinson & Co.) received the Giant of the Industry award. This year's recipient will be Henry Leyser of A.C.A., the operator who (among other accomplishments) brought the first NSM jukeboxes to these shores. With Leyser as their man of the year, attendance should be good.

CCMA's annuals combine business with lots of social activities (golf is high on their agenda). Business-wise, they will once again hold a concurrent series of seminars which operators go into one by one. The first is on game profitability (chaired by Bob Fay and Ken Anderson), the next is on vending sales (featuring Bob Tullio) and the third is entitled, "How to Make Money in Today's Tavern" (moderated by Marvin Gray of Silco (San Diego) and Russ Love (Royal Vending).

John Pierce of the state's Alcohol Beverage Control Board will address a luncheon, zeroing in on matters pertaining to Santa Ana, Long Beach and Inglewood. The association's Director Dennis Loper will deliver a legislative update to the membership which will be followed by the election of new officers and directors. George Karas is their current president.

Other activites include an equipment auction (products coming from state and national suppliers, proceeds going to the association), cocktails, dinner, a golf tourney and a cruise aboard the Sierra Cloud (a 55-foot catamaran working Lake Tahoe). Of course, the sites in the Tahoe area make for their own attraction.

A 40% discount on US Air's regular coach fares can be gained by calling Anita at House of Travel at 800/444-9996. For more general information, call CCMA at 916/441-5451.

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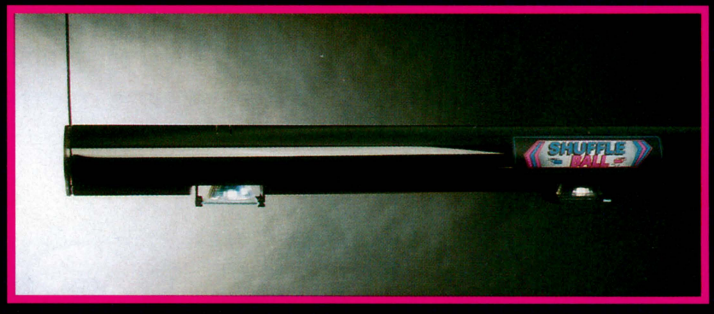

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WAREHOUSE O' GAMES BUYS MUSICAL SALES

With the acquisition of Musical Sales, Inc., the St. Louis area's premier vending dealership, Barry Schraier and Larry Potashnick have effectively turned their Warehouse of Games into a "warehouse of everything."

In the three brief years they've owned Warehouse, they've brought its status from "jobber" to front line jukebox and games distribution. Now with such vending lines as Automatic Products, RMI, Dixie-Narco and Rock-Ola in their domain, they have a truly full-service equipment hub for this territory's operators.

Joe McCormick, the retired patriarch of Musical Sales, concluded the sale with Schraier and Potashnick on Jan. 9 (Joe and his wife Toby reside at a lakefront home in Branson, Mo.). Machine and parts inventory has been systematically moved into Warehouse's Lackland Street headquarters since the purchase (the consolidation should be complete mid-March). Musical's key personnel like George Gruebert, Mike Hoehn, Dave Hines, Kurt McCormick, Kevin Schaffner and Mike Grott, have been relocating to Lackland and are all now working for the Warehouse.

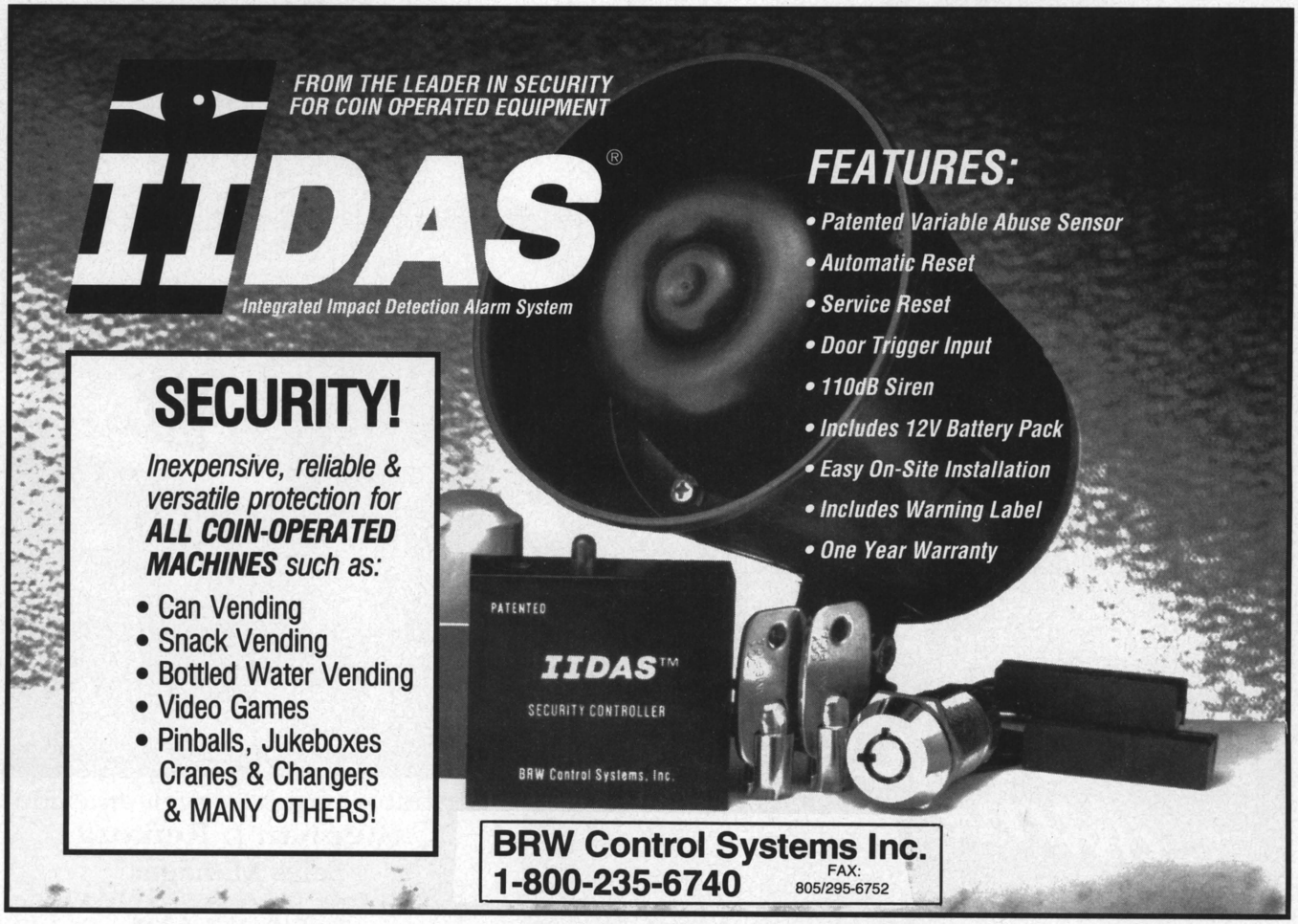
Facilities at Lackland have been expanded and refurbished to accommodate the added personnel, parts and equipment lines. The showroom has been enlarged and carpeted, dry wall has been put up to create sales offices and the parts department's been expanded to absorb the huge amount of vending spares coming over from Musical.

Warehouse's present owners bought the company from Don Ingerman a little over three years ago and purchased the 17,000-sq.-ft. Lackland facility a year and a half later with the idea of adding vending distribution always in mind. They entered mainstream distribution when they acquired Atari, NSM, Arachnid, Capcom and other top brands and recently joined the exclusive Williams/Bally network.

They built up an impressive parts inventory which, added to the inventory of vending spares acquired from Musical, probably puts them as the largest independent coin-op parts house in the region, according to Larry.

In addition to the vending lines acquired in the sale, Warehouse also got the Valley pool table line. Added to their existing roster of games (including Leland, Merit and others not mentioned above), they have indeed become distribution heavyweights in about the shortest time of anyone in recent history.

Warehouse owners Barry and Larry are obviously intent on building the organization and told *RePlay* that the accent is on service as well as on product sales. "It's now clear that the Warehouse is a central place to shop for product and for parts and service for both vending and amusement companies," Larry said.



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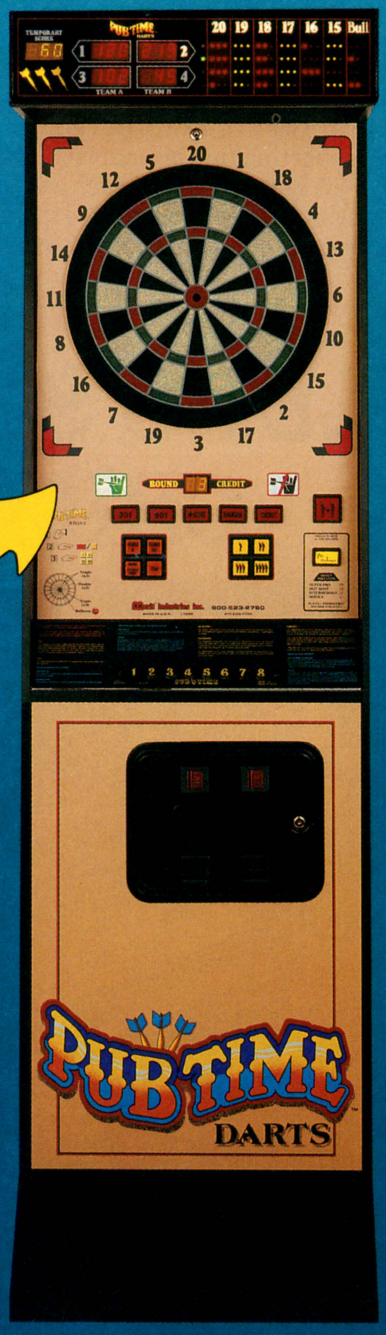

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AAMA & NOLAN RYAN STRIKE OUT AT CHILD ABUSE

The forth in its series of anti child abuse posters has been produced by AAMA (the American Amusement Machine Assn.) and is now available free of charge to arcade and street location operators who may wish to display them at game rooms, C-stores and other sites. Featuring baseball star Nolan Ryan and his family playing *Air Hockey* (an NSM jukebox is also shown in the poster toward the back), the full color poster measures roughly 1½ feet wide by 2 feet deep.

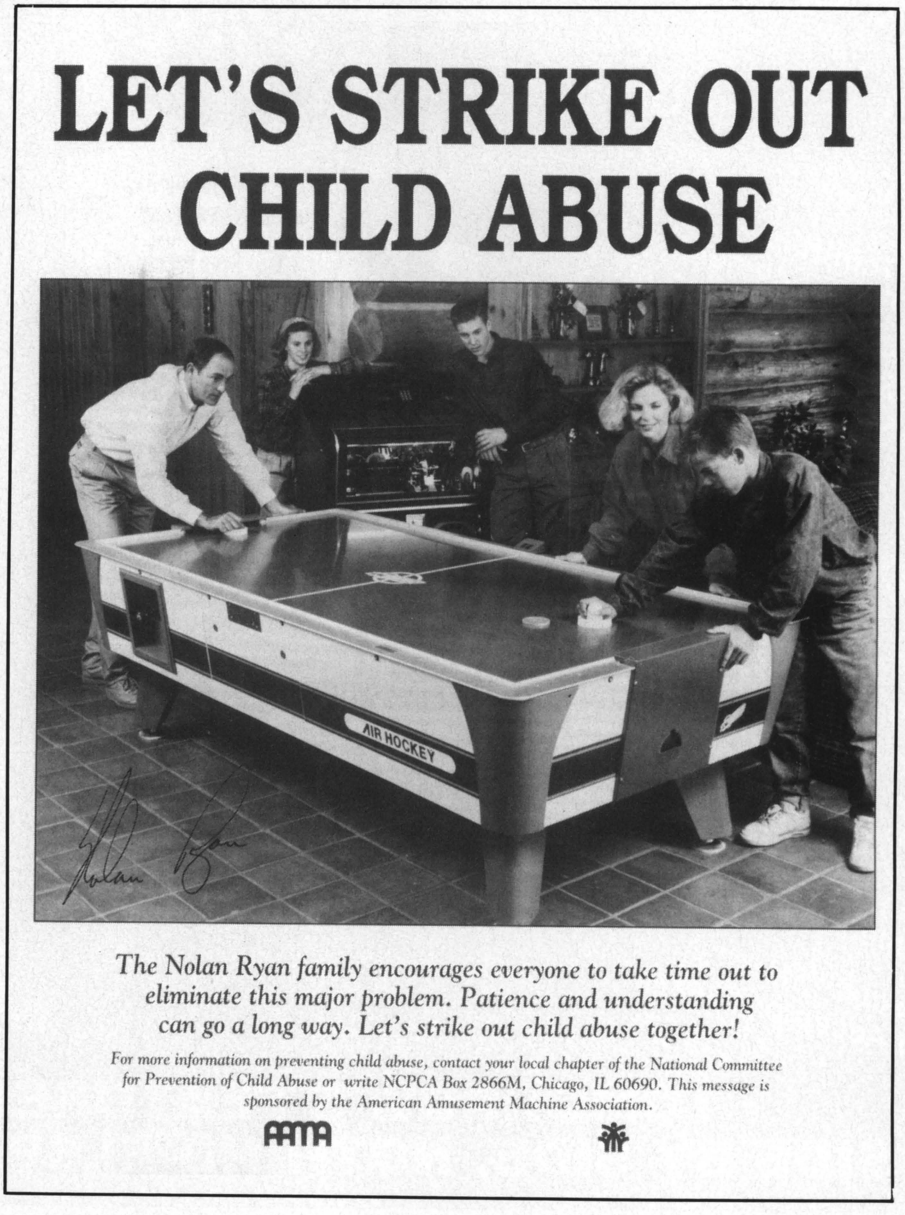
The primary message is obvious, but the more subtle one shows coin-op equipment in a wholesome setting. Previous posters featured popular sports announcer John Madden, another baseball star Don Mattingly and the young actor Fred Savage (starring on TV's "The Wonder Years" program) with his message "It shouldn't hurt to be a child." Considering that youngsters are an important player group for this industry, AAMA's child abuse campaign has been one of their finest PR programs.

Operators can call Liz Powell at AAMA's Virginia headquarters to secure one or more posters free of charge. Her phone is 703/494-2758. The AMOA may also provide information to its members on securing posters and Mark Robbins (of Dynamo *Air Hockey* fame) also has a quantity of them.

Ad "mats" have been targeted to important consumer magazines and newspapers by AAMA, hoping that the publications run this version of the poster as free public service messages (they have been successful at that before). TV will also be supplied with suitable artwork for possible telecast. Quantities of the poster are also being distributed to schools, libraries and youth-service organizations throughout the country by the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse (NCPCA).

On April 16, AAMA's Director Bob Fay (and posssibly the association's prexy Gil Pollock) will attend an NCPCA reception at the White house hosted by Mrs. Barbara Bush. Said Pollock: "Children are our business. In this industry of ours, there is no better use of our energy than to help America's kids. Our purpose in supporting this project is to help NCPCA reach its goal, which is to effectively prevent and reduce the incidence of child abuse in this country."

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Operators, therefore, are urged to call for a supply of posters, get them to the route people and out onto the walls and windows of their locations. Remember that the poster has a dual importance for our people preventing child abuse and boosting our own public image in the process. So, come on and help out.



The finished poster itself measures 17" wide x 22" deep and is printed in full color. There's also a small photo inset in the final version showing Nolan Ryan in baseball garb that's not shown above. We sincerely hope operators call AAMA for posters and put them up at locations.

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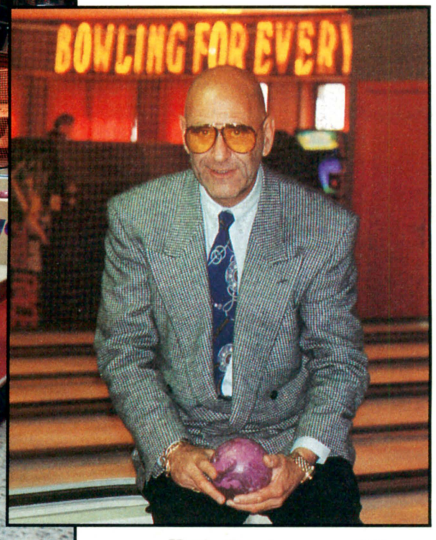

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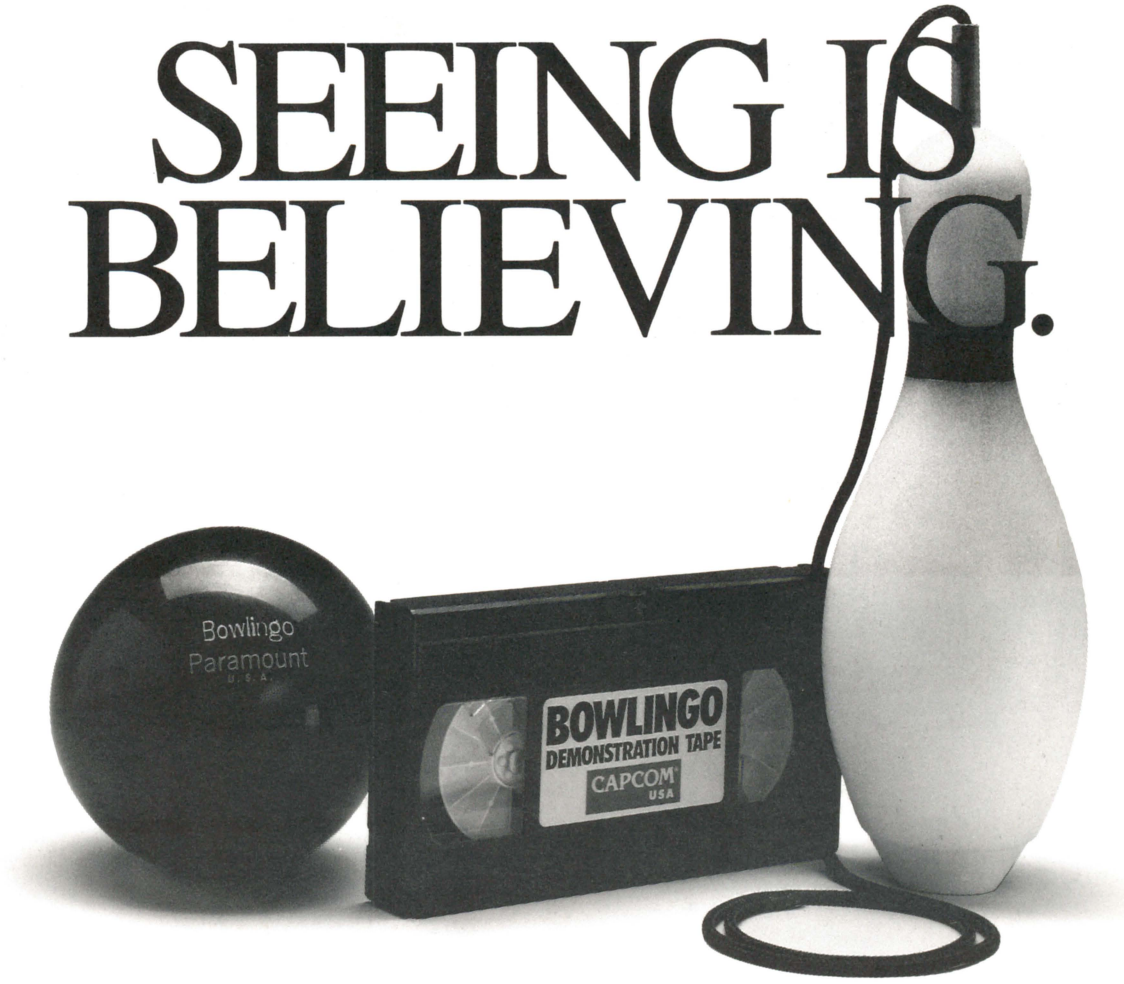

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MEET THE TOP OP

In November of 1990, Houston entrepreneur Terry Davis bought the entire Rowe Services mega-route from TW Holdings (parent company of the Canteen Corp.). With street operations running games, jukeboxes, cigarettes, snacks and candy vending in over a dozen US. market areas, the combined assets and number of locations served made Davis the nation's largest route owner with the stroke of a pen.

Rowe Services, now renamed the TD Rowe Corp., has routes running under a variety of names including Oakland Cigarette Service in the San Francisco Bay Area and B&B Vending in Texas. Major markets served include Denver, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Detroit. Around 300 people are listed on the combined payroll.

Executive control has passed from the former Paramus, N.J. office (now shutting down) to Davis' headquarters at 3 Riverway in Houston where Davis presides as chairman. Vice chairman (and industry veteran) Mel Grossberg continues working for the organization, but now from his New Jersey home. Richard Meyer has relocated to Houston as controller.

Rowe Services was founded, along with the manufacturer of the same name, back in 1926 and sold to Canteen in 1955 (they kept the routes but summarily sold the manufacturing division to Triangle Conduit & Cable Co. in 1968).

Davis is one of Houston's successful entrepreneurs. After graduating from the University of Texas, he joined Arthur Andersen & Co. at its Houston office. After eight years there, he joined Price Waterhouse (also in Houston) and three years later, took the position of chief financial and administrative officer for Sandefer Oil and Gas, Inc. (an independent oil and gas producer in Texas).

He co-founded the Choice Davis Group, Inc. in 1982 with the purpose of assisting energy-related companies and large investment groups in the design, negotiation and ongoing management of capital investments. He then became president and principal owner of Wesmarc, Inc., a diversified company whose investments included a 1,200-mile pipeline in West Texas, numerous oil and gas wells and a computer software company.

Terry W. Davis, largest street operator in the land

Then last fall, he bought the national Rowe routes for a very sensible reason: "We've made investments in a number of businesses and this seemed like another good one," he told *RePlay*. He also expressed his belief that the street vending business in the U.S. has "a bright long-term future. We look forward to expanding our operations both in terms of new lines of business and cities served," he advised, adding that "geographical and product diversity should provide the best protection against adverse business changes in the future."

At this time, Davis said that no new cities have been identified for expansion, but that seems to be an idea he has in mind. He did not elaborate on what he means by "new lines of business" or on "product diversity." Therefore, we all have to wait and see what this obvious winner in the oil and gas sweepstakes has in mind to grow his newly-acquired mega-route. Welcome aboard, Terry Davis. (PS: our thanks to his gal friday Kay Paschal for getting us access to her busy boss.)

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On Your Mark...

by Marcus Webb

"Give us the tools and we will finish the job." When Winston Churchill said that in 1940, he was asking the U.S. for weapons of war. Today, coin machine operators should adopt that same motto. "Give us new technology and new themes," they have been pleading for two years. What they should add is: "...and we will support them with proper presentation, promotion, and play-pricing."

Manufacturers started providing the tools at the last two trade shows. Betson's big-screen laserdisc system is a platform for "interactive movies." Sega's 3-D laserdisc system will be a platform for holography-style excitement. Data East's forthcoming DVI/CD-ROM video system is a platform for movie-like animation and longer, more complex games.

We're getting the tools. Now, what is the operator's job?

First, investment. Price tags on some new technologies may seem high, compared to an average video game. But did anyone expect to get hi-tech on the cheap? What counts is not price, but ROI. Please stop looking so hard at the price tag, and look harder at the bottom line. If it earns huge returns, it justifies huge investment.

The second part of the operator's job is promotion. Good operators have realized that the era of "plug it in, walk away, and come back to collect the quarters" is over. That's why AMOA makes such a big deal out of pool, dart and pinball leagues and tournaments, and jukebox promos. With hi-tech video games, we've really got something to promote. Please, let's do it right. Signs, props, local advertising, PR schemes with nearby record stores and movie theaters, and promotional schemes with locations, all help create player excitement. Let's maximize game income, not leave high-priced equipment to sink or swim on its own. The word is showmanship!

Third, it is the operator's responsibility to charge the correct price per play. Disc-based technology previously allowed us to charge more for music; now it is opening the same window for video. Quick, before it goes to the home market, jump through that window! Consumers will pay higher prices for better quality. Just ask the guys who make the $150 "pump" running shoes, or the Hollywood producers who charge $7.25 per ticket.

Distributors, it is your job to help educate operators on all of this. You're already showing your commitment with "service schools." How about starting "promotion schools" to share success stories and teach promotional techniques?

One last thought: when manufacturers provide new "tools," many operators will hang back to see (1) if they'll earn; and (2) if the product will be supported with needed follow-up, including software sequels, warranty coverage and plenty of spare parts. Service is just as important as sales.

We've all got our work to do. The "tools" are here. Let's finish the job!

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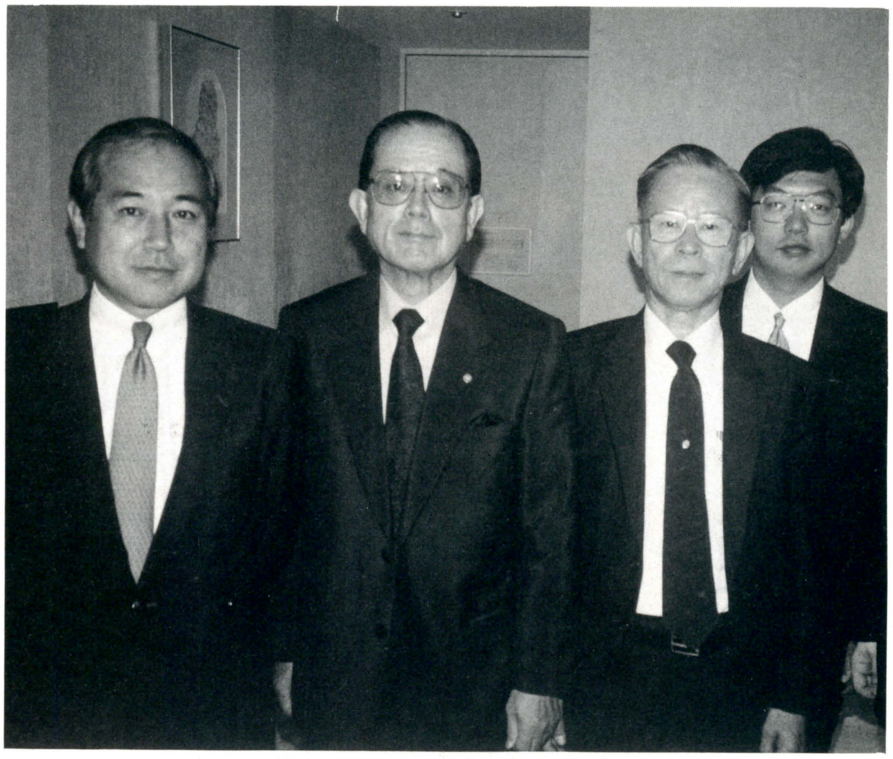
NEW WORLD ORDER?

Mr. Masaya Nakamura, the chairman of JAMMA, discusses parallels: he's worried about counterfeits but hopes for global cooperation

All the blood, sweat and tears the industry has shed over parallel imports in recent years may have a good outcome for everybody, if it results in closer cooperation between Japan and the U.S. Fortunately, exactly that outcome may be in the wings. Leading trade members on both sides of the Pacific are beginning to reach out to each other for consultation and dialogue. If a new worldwide integration of coin-op does come about, history may record that the highly esteemed Chairman of JAMMA (Japanese Amusement Machine Manufacturers Assn.), the honorable Masaya Nakamura, was the man who set it all in motion.

Last month, we reported that Mr. Nakamura was leading JAMMA to a stance which accepted the legality of parallels for the U.S., but called on all tradesters to work together to prevent counterfeits from flooding the market. This month, we are delighted to publish the full text of a letter written by this man — called by some "the single most important member of the coin-op industry, worldwide" — detailing JAMMA's position on parallels.

First, some needed background. In the coin-op amusement industry, a parallel import is a lawfully made video game PCB intended to be sold and operated in a foreign market . . . but it is imported into the U.S. by brokers who buy them overseas (new or used), and ship them into the States for resale. Parallel brokers sell these boards to American operators from their own companies or through a network of dealers, often at discount prices and without needed artwork, control panel materials, etc. that make up complete conversion kits. Parallel board brokers work in direct competition with the original manufacturer's authorized, copyright-protected agents and distributors, who sell these boards either in complete kit form or, on occasion, as dedicated video games.



JAMMA and Namco Chairman Nakamura (second from left) with his advisor Shunji Iki (left), JAMMA Director Mr. Kaoruttinami and Namco's PR Manager Tsutomu Kawai. The complete text of Mr. Nakamura's views on parallel PCBs begins next page.

According to the federal appeals court in *Red Baron vs. Taito America*, parallel imports of video games are legal to buy and sell right now . . . but illegal to operate. By an act of Congress, as of Dec. 1, 1991 they will be legal to "publicly perform" (operate) as well.

Manufacturers generally dislike parallels because they usually sell for much lower prices than "authorized" goods. Manufacturers also question whether some so-called parallels may actually be counterfeit games. Operators, of course, like lower prices and also like having a choice of game configuration (dedicated or kit). But responsible operators have always condemned counterfeit games, and have usually insisted that they could be relied upon to know the difference between a legitimate, lawfully-made parallel and an illegal, counterfeit copy.

This issue bitterly divided the U.S. industry for five years, although now that Congress has spoken, AAMA and AMOA are trying to put the controversy behind them. But this still leaves a major industry sector to be heard from . . . probably the most important sector of all: Japan.

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ed the new law, *RePlay* contacted Mr. Nakamura to request his association's views on parallel imports. We asked several questions on issues including Japan's possible role in U.S. legislative politics, worldwide game prices, parallel sources, possible Japanese market strategies to cope with parallels, and the counterfeit problem.

Speaking for the Japanese manufacturer association, Mr. Nakamura graciously agreed to answer our questions, in consultation with his colleagues at JAMMA. We print his reply here. As you'll see, JAMMA is very concerned about the possibility of renewed counterfeiting activity which might poison the global market. That's a concern shared by many U.S. tradesters as well, including this publication.

Otherwise, the news is very encouraging. Mr. Nakamura believes the time has come for much closer East-West consultation, on all levels of the industry, in a spirit of cooperation to improve conditions for us all: Japanese, Americans, game creators, manufacturers, distributors, operators . . . and players! This call for increased communication is a suggestion that *RePlay* heartily endorses.

Mr. Nakamura has many friends in the U.S. trade already. But for those who have not yet had the pleasure of meeting him, we think they will find him candid, far-sighted, intellectually keen, imaginative in finding solutions to problems, and — most important — a man of unimpeachable integrity. It is our hope that this letter represents the start of a new East-West dialogue for coin-op.

Our deep thanks go to Mr. Nakamura for his kind consideration in giving us his valuable time and thoughts. Thanks are also due to Mr. A. Shunji Iki, special assistant to Mr. Nakamura, for his tireless efforts and good will as a conduit and catalyst for this communication.

Here, then, is the text of Mr. Nakamura's letter. For ease of reading and understanding, we have inserted our questions into the text of Mr. Nakamura's reply in bold type.

— the editors.

"TIME . . . FOR JOINT EFFORTS"

Mr. Marcus Webb
Editor
RePlay Magazine

Dear Mr. Webb:

On Oct. 27, 1990, the U.S. Congress passed an amendment to HR. 5316 and it was signed by President Bush on Dec. 1, 1990. A provision of this law reversed the existing law, thereby now permitting the public performance and display of legally made copies of electronic audiovisual games intended for use in coin-operated equipment without the permission of the copyright owner of the game.

In view of the significant impact of the new law on the international coin-operated games industry, you forwarded to JAMMA several questions, the intentions of which are to determine the position of JAMMA on this issue. We herewith respond to your questions as follows in the order in which the questions were received:

1. Question: Forgive our frankness, but the people at JAMMA have never seriously tried to help their American subsidiaries and licensees who were trying to keep parallel boards out of America. Some think JAMMA is not worried about the new pro-parallel law. Exactly what is JAMMA's view now that the law passed?

1. Answer: The new law was passed by the highest legislative body in the USA, subsequent to serious deliberation by responsible members of the legislature. Accordingly, JAMMA as a foreign trade association is in no position to comment thereon. Additionally, JAMMA could be construed as interfering with the domestic affairs of another country if it assists in any effort within the USA to keep the parallel boards out of America. Accordingly, JAMMA must treat this matter with extreme care and discretion.

2. Question: The American operator's principle complaint in this whole matter has been about game prices, especially when the same game is available as a kit in foreign markets, but only as a dedicated game here. What is your view on this, and about kit prices in various foreign markets compared to U.S. prices?

2. Answer: You have pointed out the principle problem results from the fact that in the U.S., only dedicated games are sold. However, the actual fact is that a large portion of the games which are exported from Japan to the U.S. are sold in kit form. These kits are often assembled in the U.S. by technically qualified experts into dedicated games. These activities not only assure the quality of the game itself and mechanical reliability thereof, but also contribute toward a creation of jobs in the U.S. Additionally, it should be noted that the price we obtain for new boards of any given game, whether in the U.S., European, or Southeast Asian market, is nearly identical. It also appears quite natural in a free economy to see higher prices for new rather than used boards.

3. Question: Let us be very frank. For years, and in varying amounts, parallel boards have been imported into the States. Where do the brokers get them? Do they buy them used from your domestic Japanese operators? Do they buy them brand new from some authorized distributors in the Far East? Do they even buy some directly from JAMMA members?

3. Answer: We must assume that there are numerous routes for the parallel boards to find their way into the U.S. It is also believed that more often than not, parallel boards of new games are illegal copies since it is difficult to conceive of a situation where one of our officially-recognized distributors in a foreign country other than the U.S. would sell parallel boards of a new game into the U.S. Additionally, Japanese manufacturers would export new games only through officially recognized distribution channels.

4. Question: Perhaps you answered this in your reply to the preceding question, but do you see

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a difference between a new and used board in the context of this problem? We mean, do you think the American operator should have always been allowed to buy a used board from a foreign operating company, or even a broker . . . or, should even used boards be constrained from U.S. import?

4. Answer: The importation and use of used boards by many U.S. operators could cause problems from the point of view of game quality and mechanical reliability. Accordingly, we would encourage the operators to purchase only new boards.

5. Question: The U.S. law is on the books and goes into effect Dec. 1. But, does JAMMA or any of its members intend pursuing any steps to prevent or curtail the flow of parallels into the U.S.? It seems that the video manufacturers in Japan could quite easily deny shipments of product to suspected brokkers if they wanted to.

5. Answer: It would be very difficult to prevent or even curtail the flow of parallel boards into the U.S. since the transactions for these boards must be conducted basically within the environment of free competition. However, preventive measures must be established to prevent the flow of illegal copies.

6. Question: The real glamour of a parallel board is the price. Since very few video games are built in dedicated form these days, other than the big arcade pieces, the real situation is this: the price of the parallel board vs. the price of an authorized kit. Is that really a savings for the operator?

6. Answer: It is extremely difficult to discuss the comparative pricing of parallel boards and authorized kits, the primary reason being that parallel boards are often used boards and there is a strong possibility that skillfully made illegal copies are mixed therewith, whereas the authorized kits are new products, the prices of which to some extent must reflect the R&D costs.

7. Question: The number one fear is that counterfeit boards will once again flow into the U.S. once the parallel law goes into effect. And this must be addressed at the root . . . at the Japanese video game maker's door. What are you doing, and what more can you do, to prevent the return of the copy games?

RePlay Editor Marcus Webb with Masaya Nakamura during recent interview in Japan. "He is an intellectually keen, honest and imaginative gentleman," said Webb of the JAMMA & Namco supremo.

7. Answer: As you know, we have been quite active in attempting to prevent the flow of illegal copies. Many of the so-called parallel boards are illegal copies and we have been able to determine the names of companies which are involved in the creation and sale of these illegal copies. We have taken and will continue to take all necessary legal steps to completely eliminate such illegal copies.

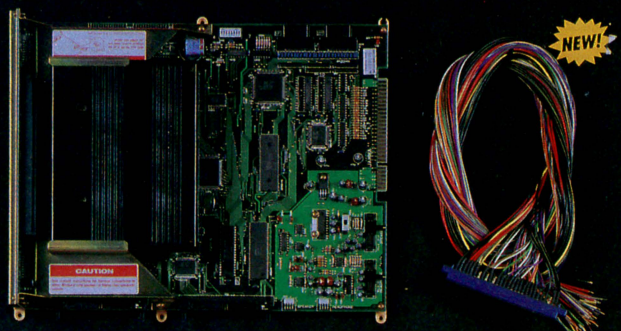
In conclusion, we believe that the recently passed amendment to HR. 5316 will definitely increase the flow of parallel boards. We are concerned that such flow of parallel boards would be contaminated by numerous skillfully made counterfeits, which will be sold at very low prices. Such would discourage the R&D activities of game creators and in turn, would adversely affect the orderly business activities of distributors as well as the operators. The long-term effect on the international coin-op games industry would be devastating.

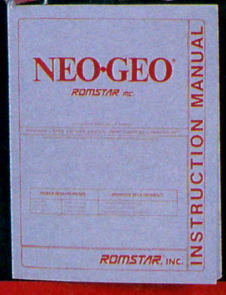
The only savior is to eliminate the illegal copies from the industry. In this regard, we have seized every opportunity, such as during the JAMMA Show in Tokyo, to exchange views on this subject with the responsible members of the industry. I am attaching hereto a copy of a Joint Statement which resulted from one of these occasions. The recent action by the U.S. government has increased the significance of our past and ongoing activities to eliminate illegal copies. I feel it is now time for game developers, manufacturers, distributors and operators to come to a single forum to discuss and agree on ways for the industry to eliminate illegal copies and to exert joint efforts for the international development and prosperity of the industry.

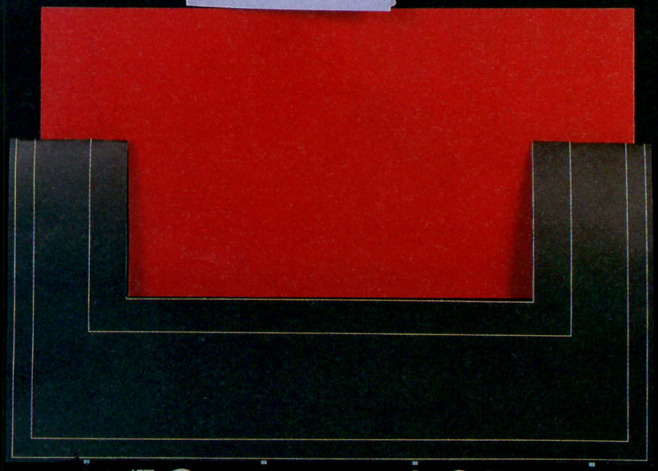
With best wishes,
Yours very truly,
Masaya Nakamura
Chairman

Enclosed with Mr. Nakamura's letter was a copy of a 1983 Joint Statement from JAMMA and AAMA announcing "our intention to make continuing and tireless efforts towards further strengthening our cooperation, so that all plagiarism still found throughout the world will be eliminated, so that our rights will be securely protected on a world-wide level and so that the industry will become well-recognized by the public and be worthy of its respect." The statement was datelined Tokyo, Sept. 27, 1983 and was signed by JAMMA Chairman Mr. Masaya Nakamura and then-president of AAMA, Joe Robbins.

Operator: What have your old classic games done for you lately?







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WORLDWIDE EXPORT SPECIALISTS

THE WAR IMPACT

an overall downer for arcade ops

Many media pundits have termed the Persian Gulf Crisis the "video game war" owing to the military's exhaustive use of computer-guided weaponry. Others called it the "television war" with respect to the enormous amount of air time devoted to war coverage by CNN and the other networks . . . a factor that clearly hurt collections for street operators when customers played the jukebox or a "noisy" game while the "George and Saddam Show" was playing on the location's TV set and sometimes got dirty looks from viewers sitting at the bar.

Last month's *RePlay* poll showed that two out of every five operators lost income (for one reason or another) due to the war, especially those operating in military towns which sent troops to the Gulf. If you take hundreds of thousands of active and reserve servicemen and women out of the market, it's bound to make an impact.

The impact was largely a negative one for operators on both sides of our street. While some reported a bit of an upswing in collections on combat-themed games, and certainly on patriotic merchandise used in cranes and redeemed from prize counters at arcades, this hardly took up the slack from the general collection falloff.

Gratefully for the troops, their families and the nation in general, that war is over and ended up more like a "30-day video game wonder" than a protracted mess like Vietnam (it actually took 43 days). But the other "war" for operators . . . the economic one . . . has gone on a lot longer. When we rang up a number of the better-known arcade operators to learn what the war did to their income averages, they talked as much about the general recession as they did about the Gulf. Here's a sampling from the folks we called:

ALAN BRUCK
Recreational Concepts
Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania

"The best TV show going was CNN. How often did you hear someone say 'I'm going home to watch the war?' Of course it hurt collections. But the larger hurt has been the recession. Shopping is down at the malls. Some of the big anchor mall stores have let people go, and some of them were customers of ours during lunch hours or breaks. I'm sure other arcade operators have told you the same things. The war posed one more problem in an already testy business.

"On a machine-to-machine basis, I don't think we had one single combat game that enjoyed increased collections due to any linkage with the Gulf Crisis, with the possible exception of *F-15*. That game jumped up to the second or third spot and it's amazing to think it was developed long before the desert war began, yet that was its theme.

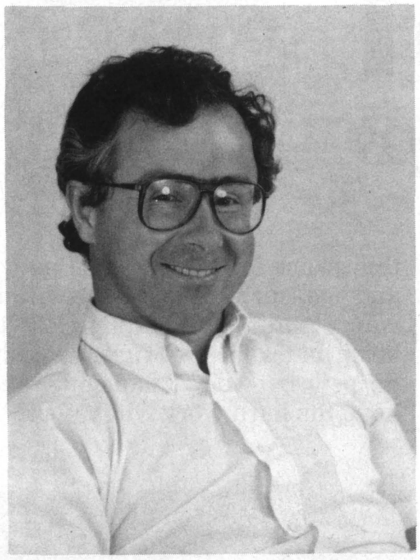
"Look, the business is depressed, but it's not like it was in the early '80s. We've even had a few stores that did better measured against the previous year. But overall, I'd say we're off maybe 6%. We're fighting this by getting into more promotions . . . St. Patrick's Day things, one for Valentine's Day . . . and measuring the results afterward. And, we're getting close to being all-token here. Times are a little testy, but we're "managing" and hope the hard work will pay off."

●

RON GETLAN
Amusement Consultants Ltd.
New Rochelle, New York

"Our whole game room route has been down from 10% to 40% due to the economy and the war didn't help at all. A number of fighting and air battle games like *F-15* and *Afterburner* did better. But in general, many people stayed close to home watching the news on TV. We did do some numbers on patriotic merchandise in the cranes and at the counter like American flag pins. But overall, the war hurt an already depressed situation.

"Understand that many of our game rooms are in New England, one of the areas hardest hit by the recession. Things have been really hard for a lot of people in that region and we've clearly felt that in the collection box. And while a couple of our managers put up yellow ribbons, etc. in some of the stores, the overall economic result of this war was negative."



KEVIN HAYES
Namco America
Santa Clara, California

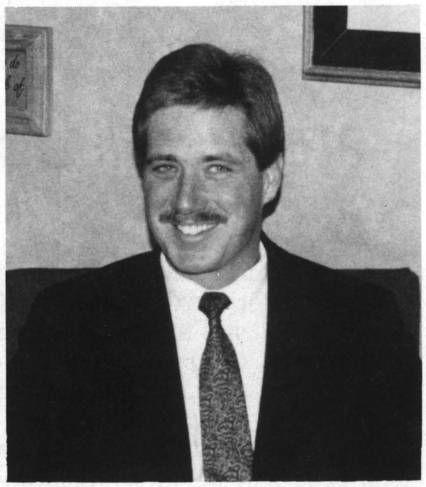
"I'm not one of these fellows who thinks the coin machine business gets better when things in general get worse. The recession, aggravated by the war, has not been good for collections. Our chain started slipping last June, had a mixed summer and then went into a general downer in August about the time the mess began in the Gulf. Things are sort of leveling out now but it's nothing to write home about yet because some places continue to fall off.

"Specifically, the war put more of a pall on business at the malls where 95% of our business comes from. There are just fewer people there and they're spending less money. And there's really nothing concrete about war games getting a boost from this desert battle. I suppose everybody's thinking about the *F-15* game, but I can tell you that our chain didn't get any boost on combat games from the war.

●

CRAIG JOHNSON
Tataka, Inc.
Salt Lake City, Utah

"February is typically a down month, so we didn't notice any major hits due to the war. We operate a military base location, and



even there the play stayed about the same. Since the market here is cyclical (business fluctuates depending on the ski season), it is difficult to judge if a dip in collections was due to the nature of our market or to the war."

"As far as gameplay went, we did receive location requests for combat games, especially the *F-15.* But can I truthfully pin a drop in business on the war? I'd have to say no."

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The CLUTCH HITTER kit includes game board, controls, JAMMA harness, full graphics display as well as a 25"/19" monitor bezel and is the leading contender for this season's MVK Award (Most Valuable Kit). Contact your Sega distributor for more information.

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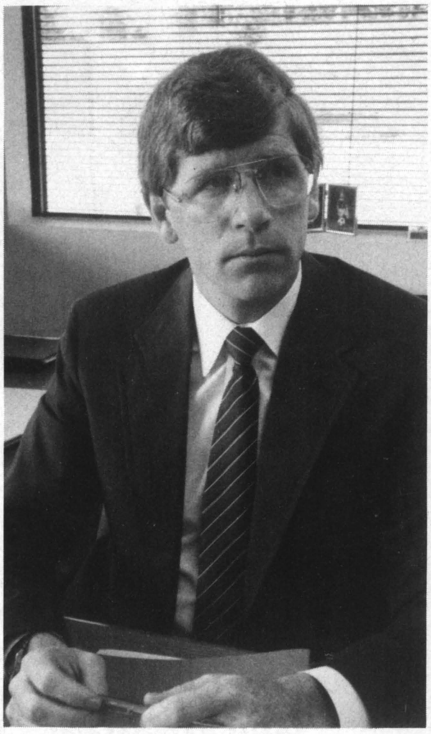

TOM McAULIFFE
Champions Amusement Centers
Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania

"Our business was soft before the war and soft during the war . . . off by maybe 10%. You must understand that mall arcades rely a great deal on shoppers and there's been a scarcity of them. I hate to strike this pun here, but if you fired a cannon down the aisles of some of these malls, you wouldn't hit anybody. On top, we lost a base of thousands of shoppers/players when the Portsmouth naval base sent so many of its people to the Gulf. Their dependents tended to go home and stay there.

"Some of our people tied yellow ribbons onto a number of the combat games and I believe this targeted the patriotic player's eyes and interest. We even had some American flags flying in some spots. I think games like *Shinobi* and *1943* probably picked up income as did other games with planes or tanks featured in them. I guess if you featured them in the patriotic way, you got some extra play.

"But I assure you nobody here tried to exploit the war in any way. But we did get patriotic and got a lot of favorable comment about the flags and such. The economy has been a far more sobering thing than this. People's credit cards are filled up, many are afraid of losing their jobs if they haven't lost them already. The economic war is really what has us all concerned, sorry to say."

●

NORMAN PINK
American Amusement Arcades
Minneapolis, Minnesota

"The war alone didn't bring business down. But when added to other factors, there was a very noticeable negative effect. Here in Minneapolis, we had two things to consider: the war and the weather. Yes, the Persian Gulf crisis adversely affected collections just as the weather is capable of doing.

"The first weekend of the war was the slowest. Everyone wanted information and stayed close to the TV, even in the bars, so gameplay was at a minimum. However, there was a surge in redemption play as people tried for the Desert Shield items. War merchandise was a highly desired prize.

"Immediately after the war, we enjoyed an increase in business.

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MARK BLUM
United Distributors
Wichita, Kansas

"If I was to gauge the effect of the war on my combined arcade and street assets, I'd have to say it was negative. While my people tell me some of the combat games got a collection boost, I also know things got soft on the route. The reason there was loss of patronage from reservists called to active duty which not only pulled them away but cut down the amount of disposable income their remaining family members could spend playing the equipment.

"*Raiden* is one game that continues to do well, although I'm not certain if that's because it's a good game by itself or because its tank-combat theme had some special interest to players as a result of all this publicity about computer-guided weapons used in the Gulf. But now we have *Street Fighter II* out, which is basically a kick, punch item having really nothing to do with war games and it hit number one the first week we put it into our Wichita arcade. But on balance, I'd have to guess that the war impact was more negative than positive."

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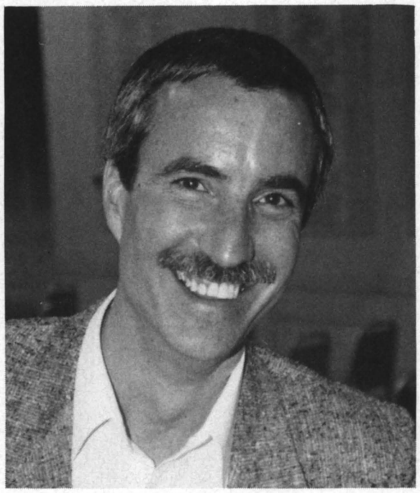

BILL BECKHAM
Red Baron of Ohio
Toledo, Ohio

"I primarily operate game rooms and there was no truly noticeable effect due to the war from what I gathered. In fact, the local media reviewed the relationship of the war to combat gameplay, and this publicity, more than anything else, led some people to the games."

"You have to look at the whole picture. Generally, people exhibited feelings of pessimism and low confidence during the crisis and that affected mall attendance where retail figures were low overall. On the other hand, nobody boycotted the combat games, so any effect we experienced was not severe."

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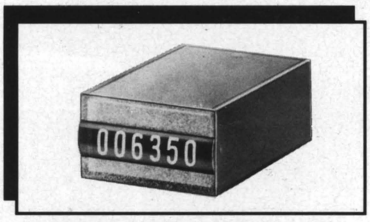

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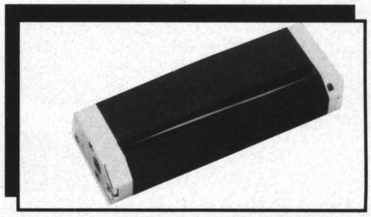

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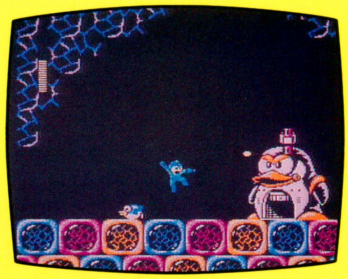
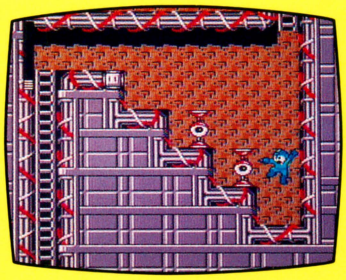


Mega Man is once again after the evil Dr. Wily.



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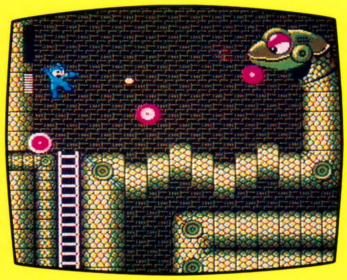

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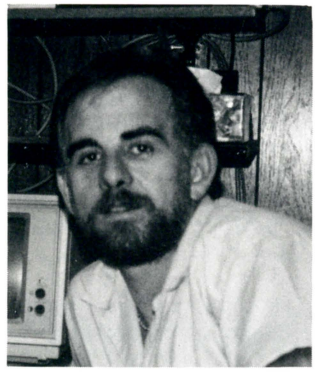
Operator Opinions

Q: *What's the bright spot in your business these days?*

RON MALINOWSKY
Aladdin's Castle
Chicago, Illinois

Operators who run family entertainment centers in malls have got a plateful of opportunities today. When times are tough, a mall that once had three shoe stores will find that one of them is behind in his rent. Suddenly an amusement center becomes a welcome tenant — and that happened during the last economic bust, too! We're welcomed into the mall and given better space, better visibility, and more prestigious neighbors.

Although the recent choice of new games has often not been very good, product and earnings will both get better after Easter. We've been testing a new Konami video game *(The Simpsons)* and it looks like it's going to be great. Those guys really know what they're doing with licensing and they also price their games right. So we're expecting a strong spring and summer . . . and we've budgeted accordingly!

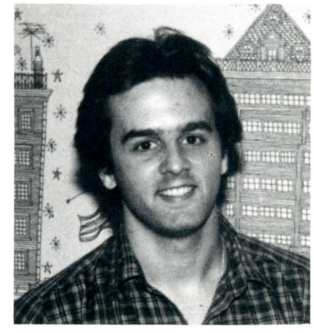


DAVID PECK
Family Amusement Corp.
Los Angeles, California

Pinballs! I'm putting pinballs into almost all my locations and they're outrunning almost all my videos, including some top titles. They're great! I've got *Simpsons,* some of the *Fun House* pins, and I've now got customers calling me up and asking me to take out other types of equipment and put in more pins. They're really helping me. Service is mostly living up to the factories' promises now. I'd say 90% of my pins are from Williams and I strongly believe in them. They probably make the best game out there.

TONY URSO
Madison Coin Machine
Monona, Wisconsin

It's hard to pick one bright spot. There are several successes for me. But if I had to narrow it down, I would say dart and pool leagues shine the brightest. I've found that the "staples" do well (pool, darts). And when leagues are involved, they do exceptionally well. Darts and pool have always been old favorites and are the norm for many bar locations. I can't say all bars are good locations, but a league program greatly enhances its merits as a successful one. It's the best location for me when leagues are run there. There is a lot of league expansion now and I plan to grow with it.



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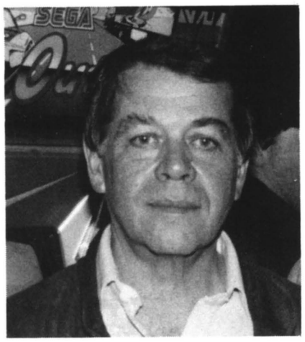
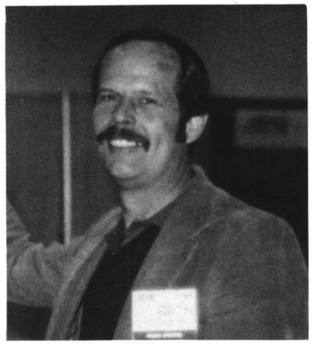


PHIL CALLA
Capitol Vending
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Being in the business for 26 years, I have a rich field of experience to draw from. I've found that physical games do the best business for me. The "take a ball and put it in your hand" type games are my biggest successes. Air hockey is excellent along with the new golf games — even the golfers are surprised at the skill required to play. Redemption pieces are another money maker. People want something. The ticket games do extremely well in my arcade locations. If the player knows there will be a tangible reward for his efforts, he is more likely to spend money on a game which gives him something in return.



DALE MOORE
L.A. Games, Inc.
Torrance, California

Each game attracts a certain age and sex group, so each game is successful in some small way. Smaller children enjoy the redemption games, teenagers like video, and the 21+ crowd prefers pool, darts and other "grown-up" activities. But obviously, there are some overall successes. In terms of location, sports bars have proven profitable. They have evened the losses I take from convenience stores and other locations. I can maintain my market share through the sports bars until new technology and innovation is applied to video games — which will then get the business.

As an aside, I think the whole industry has milked the '79-82 technology. We can only have so many fighting and cutesy games. It is rightfully the manufacturer's job to come up with the new technology to make video games fresh and innovative. Once that happens, video games will again attract players. In terms of ROI, the pool table is the best thing in this industry. The initial cost is low, maintenance is low, and it's a bar favorite. It's been around for awhile and I expect its popularity to continue.

DONALD LEWIS
Salem Amusement
Salem, Oregon

I operate a small route with a little less than 100 machines. Things have been down for awhile, but I'd have to say the future is the bright spot in my business and the overall industry. The future is going to look up. The money is still there to be made; the areas where it can be made have just shifted. The potential is within our industry, we just need to tap into it.

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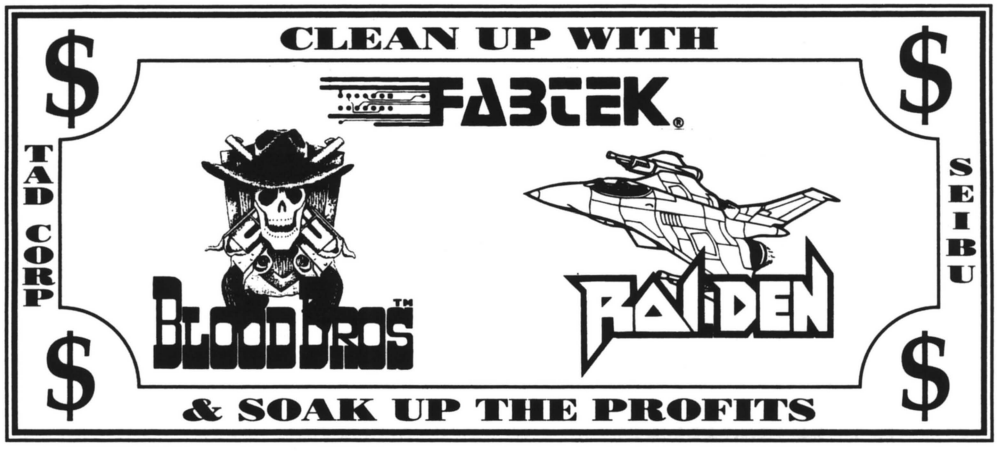

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oldies really are goodies in a disappearing vinyl market

The Ardmore, Penn. record company offering over 3,000 oldie 45 titles dating from the late '40s to the late '80s is aptly named Collectables Records Corp. In this sad time when many of the current hit tunes are simply unavailable on 45 vinyl format, Collectables fills a widening gap in jukebox software supply and has seen its coin-op sales grow, even though overall vinyl is a declining market.

Collectables VP Melissa Greene is so plugged into her vast library of oldies that she'll tick off labels (like Laurie) and artists (like Tommy James) quick as a wink. The total picture is lengthy in terms of titles and performers and Melissa has a massive list of 45s operators can buy through their one-stops.

"Collectables does the majority of its business on the consumer retail level," she told us. "We love the operator's business, though, and have nice dealings with one-stops like Singers, Music Operators in L.A., Mobil, Galgano, Don's, Lieberman's and some others. We don't deal directly with operators except through our own one-stop here, but our products go to them through these fine suppliers around the nation."

Collectables targets single hits coming off the charts. If they're deemed as true oldies, the company will contract with the original label for an order. They do not order pressings from outside companies. Melissa said they've thought about ordering certain unavailable current singles for the jukebox trade, but this isn't in the cards. "We would if we could but there are so many factors to consider. It seems the record labels would rather make these songs available on other configurations like cassettes. Our expertise at Collectables is in the oldie category and we do a good job there."

They do such a good job that they have exclusive oldie distribution rights to the Sony, Motown, Rhino and some other brand discs in what is called the "oldie" market. In fact, oldies from all the major labels are available from her firm (albeit at local one-stops). It's a massive job but apparently one she likes. "Want to talk Buddah singles? We have Buddah singles," she smiles.

Collectables is headquartered in Ardmore, Penn. and is a division of Gotham Distributing. For referral information on their oldies line, call them at 215/649-7650.

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COIN-OP ENTERS

special section on new technology compiled by Marcus Webb

DISC-BASED VIDEO GAMES ARE HERE!

The coin-op amusement industry is entering an exciting new universe called *multimedia.* Individual planets inside this dawning constellation have names like CD-ROM, CDI, DVI, and laserdisc. Get used to the new lingo, because these and other confusing names and acronyms are about to become part of the industry's vocabulary.

These technologies are already leaping into consumer applications: point of purchase sales displays, industrial training, educational software, you name it. Before long, disc-based technology may dominate the video game market. . . and optimists hope multimedia could even restore video to *Pac-Man* levels of glory (and earnings). . . to a position that no home system could possibly match.

At least potentially, we're talking about the ability to realize true 3-D graphics. . . full-motion, full-color photography and/or animation. . . whole paragraphs of synthesized speech, not just a phrase or two. . . a wide variety of different plot "branches". . . plus alternative ways of exploring and interacting with the fictional characters and setting.

The common components "under the hood" which will make all of this possible are: *special computer chips* which can compress sound and image data; *optical discs* (advanced CDs or laserdiscs) which serve as giant warehouses for enough sound and imagery to fill hundreds of floppy discs; *audio systems* which can synthesize CD-quality soundtracks (including voices, sound effects and music); and a *central processor* which makes the chips take the data from the discs, then manipulates the data on the screen or in the speakers.

Hi-tech is arriving, and its uses are going to be limited chiefly by our imaginations (as with any marketing success, the investment will pay for itself). For coin-op, this is indeed a brave new world!

BRAVE
NEW
WORLDS

LASER DISC GAMES

Betson's Mad Dog *and* Johnny Rock *games use laserdisc; full-motion video, all-talking recorded soundtrack featured*

Okay, gunslinger, ready for a Wild West showdown with *Mad Dog McCree*? Or would you rather pull on your trenchcoat and walk down those dangerous big-city streets to investigate *Who Shot Johnny Rock*?

The first success in multimedia video games for the 1990s is Betson's laserdisc-based system, licensed from Icat, Inc. (Institute for Combat Arms And Tactics), based in Albuquerque, New Mexico. "It's an interactive video branching system," explained Derek Hughes, operations manager for American Laser Games (an Icat subsidiary).

Some of the hardware is specially engineered for Icat, but other components are "off the shelf," Derek Hughes said. "The program controls a computer, which in turn controls a laserdisc player and sound generation, video mixing, the control console inputs, and of course the guns," he stated. Add a video monitor and you've got all the major components of the system.

The game itself is recorded on a single 12" laserdisc, also called an optical disc because it is "read" with a beam of laser light. A single laserdisc can easily store the equivalent of hundreds of floppy discs. The surface of the laserdisc has billions of microscopic holes which represent digitized information. A laser scans these holes as the disc rotates, then translates the holes into a zero or one. The processor gathers these "zeros and ones" and converts them into video and audio signals.

"One of the nice things about laserdisc is that it produces very high quality audio and video," Derek Hughes said. He's certainly right about that, as anyone who's seen the game will testify. Full motion video with live actors, dialog, sound effects and real movie-type sets are all presented with the realism and effectiveness of a Hollywood movie.

To produce the games, in fact, Icat's subsidiary American Laser Games creates a motion picture production company. This crew films a real life movie with live actors, costumes, special effects, recorded dialog, etc. The firm shoots tons of footage to cover all the possibilities that may occur, depending on how the player interacts with the game. Then the total is edited down to between 26 and 28 minutes of screen

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time.

The movie-like games are produced by Bob Grebe (president of American Laser Games). "Bob is a man with a movie industry background," said Betson sales representative John Margold. "He knows how to film a story on a tight budget and also where to find horses you can jump on, dogs that bark on cue, or

LASERDISC GAMES

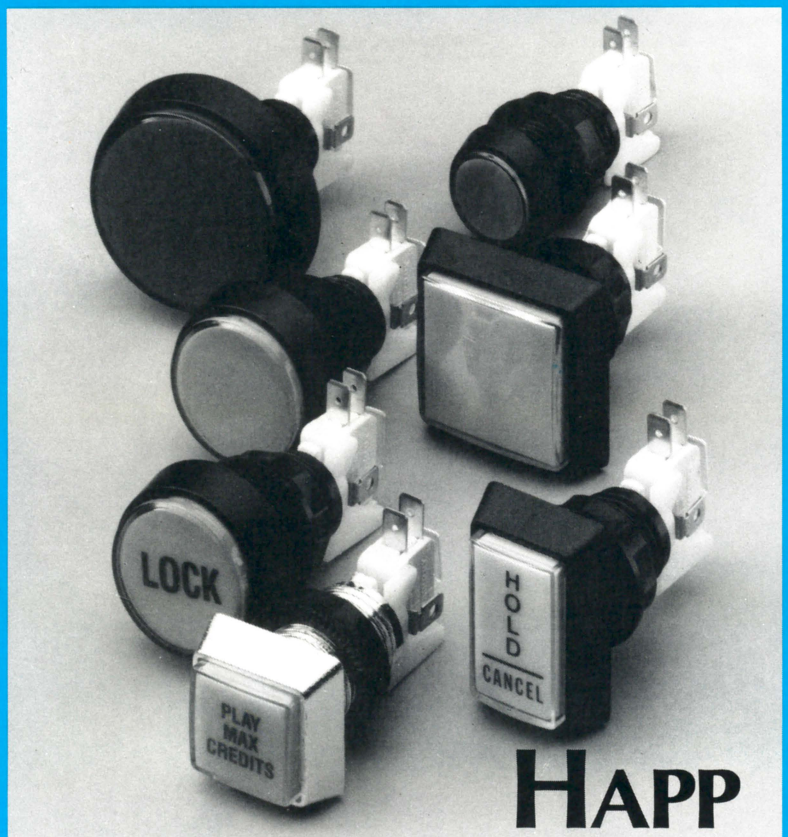
what have you." Grebe oversees the production in a movie-mogul sense, hiring and leading a full movie production team from director to screenwriter and lighting crew, plus actors and stunt men, etc.

The cost of producing one of these games is "serious money," said Betson — in the mid-six figures. The cast size alone is impressive; about 48 people were needed in *Johnny Rock* and nearly that many in *Mad Dog*. "If you stop and think what it costs to make an action movie in Hollywood, then subtract the fancy prices for the big-name stars, that's what it costs to make a game for this hardware system," John Margold explained.

Mad Dog McCree and *Who Shot Johnny Rock* are both shooting games, but Betson says they have kicked around the idea of using other types of games (flying, driving, etc.) and other types of controls (steering wheels, airplane joystick, etc.). However, for now Betson's concern is maximizing the operator's investment in hardware. "We like those ideas of other types of games, but for now we like the idea of sticking with the same basic theme for the first games: figure out where you are, learning who are the good guys and bad guys, testing your shooting skills against the enemy and so on," Margold stated.

Yes, the system costs a pretty penny, as reported earlier, and the monthly software rental fees are nothing to sneeze at. But then, you are basically getting not just a game, but an actual "interactive movie." If you were a movie theater operator, renting a first-run film from Paramount or Twentieth Century Fox, you'd have to pay the production company 90% of the film's first-month gross, then 80% of the second-month gross, etc. . . . so Betson's really offering a pretty good deal.

Besides, from all reports, this system is earning back operators' investments and then some, especially where properly promoted. Wherever Betson takes the Icat system in the future, they've obviously helped coin-op leapfrog past the low-tech of the '80s and well into the hi-tech of the '90s. Live-action laserdisc games may have been "one small step" for Betson . . . but they represent "one giant leap" for all of coin-op!



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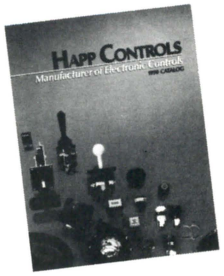

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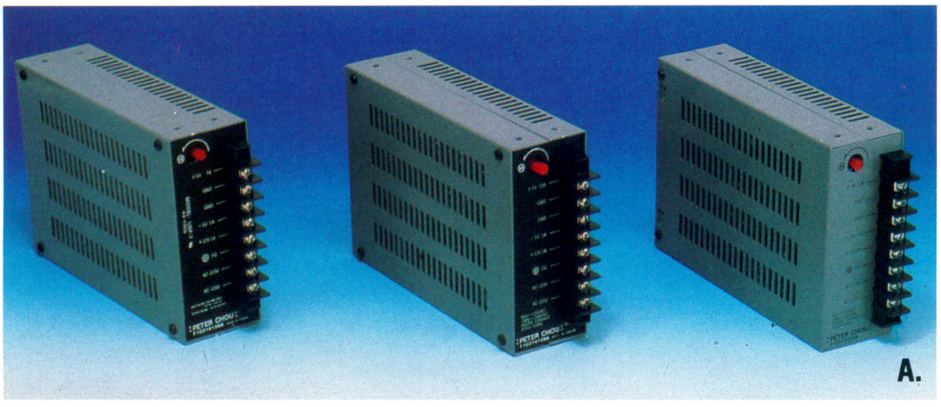

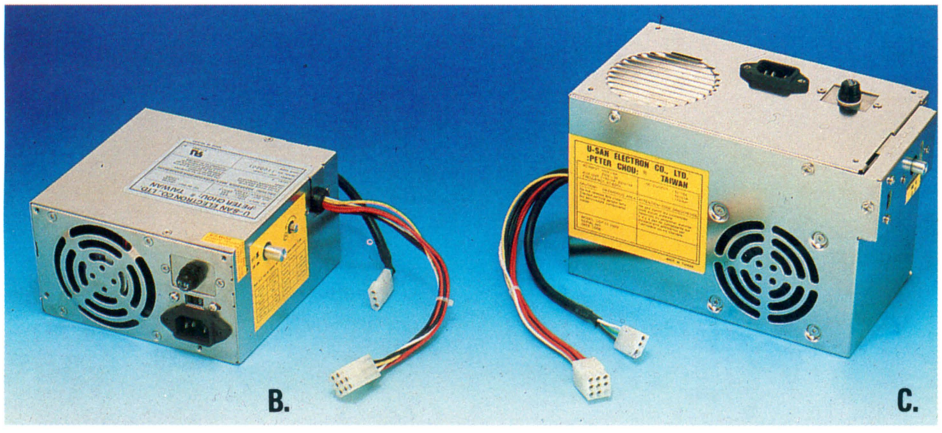

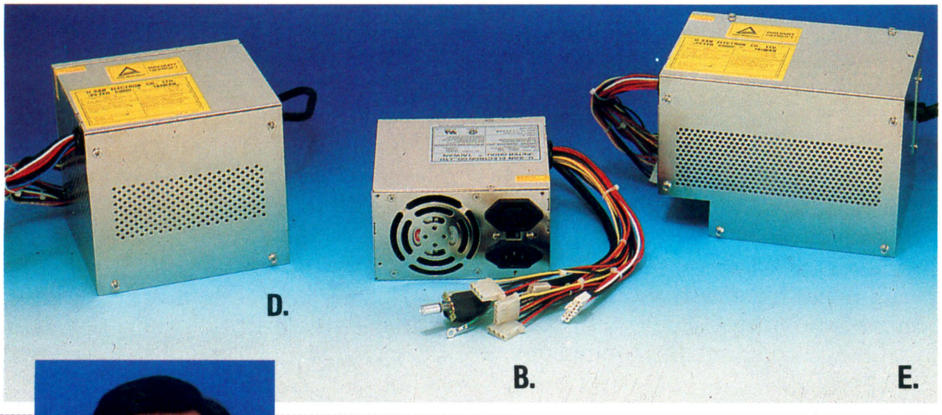

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CD-ROM GAMES

new storage system handles 1,000 times the data of home cartridge; limited animation, complex plots, full CD audio track featured

CD-ROM (compact disc, read-only memory) is an advanced storage system for computer data. The disc software requires a special player which looks just like a $250 audio CD player, but which cost about $1,200 when it first hit the market a couple of years ago. This software/hardware system works in conjunction with a computer to provide CD-quality audio and limited-animation video (10 to 15 frames per second), or perhaps hundreds of color stills, maps, etc. A CD-ROM disc can hold *one thousand times* the information of a typical home game cartridge . . . yet a CD-ROM disc costs just $2 to manufacture, as opposed to $10 for the home game!

Hundreds of CD-ROM titles have already been published and are on the consumer market today. Some are nothing more than super-libraries of computer articles, but others include impressive sound and graphics for business and educational applications.

As for video games, the NEC home system has CD-ROM games already. Some of their CD-ROM titles involve text and resemble computer games, but others are more like arcade-type games with full sound. Latest titles (such as *Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective)* resemble "interactive movies" with live, filmed actors on sets, displayed at limited-presentation level of frames per second (i.e., jerky motion picture-type images). The visuals are supported by a full-blown, motion picture-type soundtrack including recorded voices, sound effects and music.

"It Came from the Desert" is an "interactive movie" video game on CD-ROM for home systems featuring live actors mixed with computer animation and full CD-quality, movie-type soundtrack.

Sony is close to an agreement to build CD-ROM players for the forthcoming 16-bit Nintendo Entertainment System.

Like all compact disc technology, CD-ROM stores its video and audio by "digitizing" them . . . that is to say, translating the sounds and pictures into numbers which are stored (and manipulated by computer) in the form of measured, pulsed electronic signals. A graphics processor (such as NEC's 16-bit system) retrieves and presents this data, retranslating it back into text, sounds and pictures once more.

One developer claimed that "saying that CD-ROM is just a new wrinkle in video games, is like saying that TV is nothing more than radio with pictures." He's right — with CD-ROM, video games have stepped more than halfway into the world of motion pictures.

By the way, the music world is looking at a new format called CD + G (CD plus graphics . . . also called CD Gold). This is basically a music CD with some add-ons which can be accessed via a computer with a CD-ROM player such as NEC's. The add-ons include such items as color stills of album cover art, text interviews with artists, liner notes, etc. — all of which are displayed on the computer screen. A few CDG albums are on the market already, and such firms as Warner New Media have plans to make more of them.

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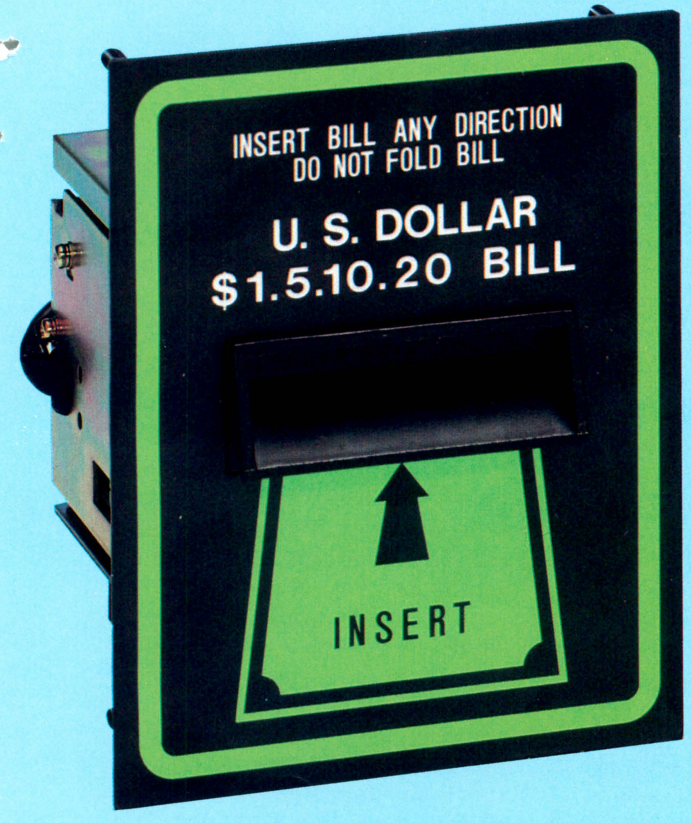

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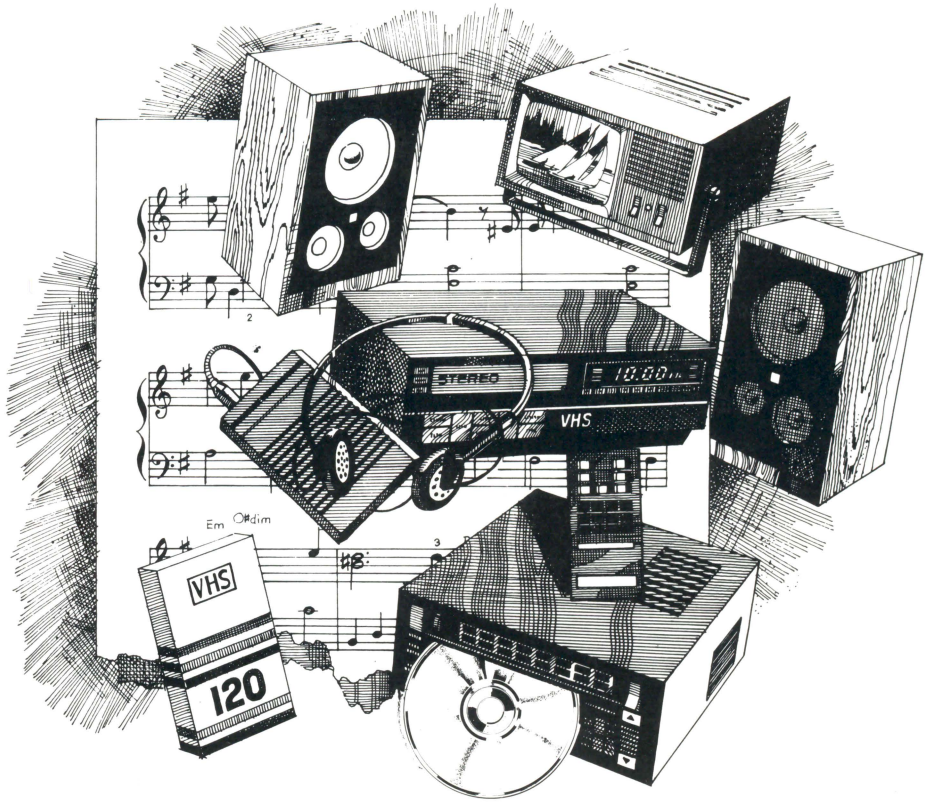

Expected to launch for the worldwide consumer market this fall is CDI (compact disc-interactive). CDI is a low-cost computer that plugs into standard TVs to display text and video stored on CDs. What's the difference between CDI and the other CD-based formats? Simple: CDI combines audio CD, CD-ROM and CDG, and combines all their application possibilities. Also, CDI is expected to interact with yet-to-be-designed compression chips in computers, enabling presentation of full-motion video. CD-ROM only has limited animation — jerky images — while CDI will eventually be able to present smooth, realistic, motion picture-type photography which the player can manipulate like a video game.

The Dutch multinational electronics giant Philips, along with Japanese giants Sony and Matsushita, are the big players behind this format. A Philips' subsidiary called American Interactive Media (AIM) is working up educational CDI products in cooperation with such as the Smithsonian Museum. Since AIM is also tied into another Philips subsidiary called PolyGram — that's right, the record label — it should come as no surprise that some "golden oldie jukebox" MTV-type CDI titles have already been announced. Principle production on the first phase of their consumer titles is completed, AIM said recently.

Billboard has reported that "a number of leading publishers, entertainment companies, broadcasters and educational institutions in the U.S. have committed themselves to the format, including Rand McNally, Grolier, Time-Life, Smithsonian, Children's Television Workshop, Parker Bros., and Harcourt Brace Janovitch."

Some CDI video game titles have been under development for the home already, such as a "fantasy baseball league" in which you can assemble your own team from any player in the history of baseball. The game digitized animated images from old newsreels or recent TV footage to achieve players' likenesses, and programming in the game matches up the actual performance stats to the onscreen character. Another title (this one from AIM) features an 18-hole golf course, user-selectable clubs, etc. presented with very realistic-looking digitized imagery.

Again, rather limited and jerky color animation is all that's been achieved yet, but full-motion animation will become possible when a standard, industry-wide format and compression technology is adopted. Audio, however, is just as good and realistic as watching the Dodgers play the Red Sox on your TV today . . . or watching the Pebble Beach Celebrity Pro-Am, complete with crowd murmur, color commentator, sound effects, etc.

Developing a standard arcade video game costs around $250,000. Experts say developing a CDI game will cost more like $400,000. We haven't heard anything concrete about coin-op applications of CDI, but strongly suspect some of the more innovative firms are avidly investigating the possibilities.

By the way, a big new subsidiary of GTE Corp. (called ImagiTrek) has been formed, based in Carlsbad, Calif., to provide CDI software to the consumer market, and perhaps also to coin-op. We predict you'll be hearing more about them.

Philips says they'll bow their CDI players and software to the consumer market in October. The company also predicts it will sell 40,000 units in 1991 and eventually penetrate 40% of all homes which currently have CD players.

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DVI GAMES

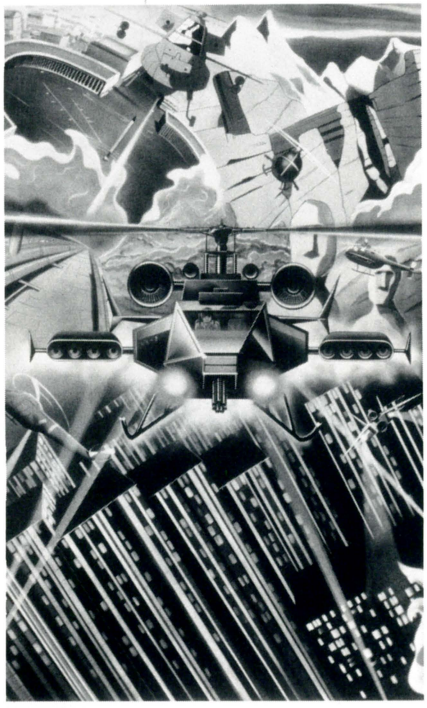
Data East system will use Intel chips to access data stored on CD-ROM; limited animation, complex plots and full CD audio track featured

Coming to coin-op this year will be a game utilizing DVI (digital video interactive). This technology was first developed by RCA. They sold it to Intel, the Texas chip maker. Of course, the usual broad range of consumer and business applications are going to make a lot more noise than video games, but at least the industry is getting aboard one of the major new computer formats!

DVI does the same kinds of things that CDI does, but "how" it achieves these results is quite different. Essentially, DVI is a combined hardware and software system which allows special, powerful computer chips to compress video footage (which ordinarily consumes a heck of a lot of "bytes" of information) into clever algorithms, or mathematical formulas. The result is that even cheap computers can store and manipulate sophisticated, realistic imagery. According to *Business Week* in late 1989, DVI "can reduce memory requirements by factors of 100 or more." By now, it's probably much more.

The basic images can be stored on optical discs, in the form of "compressed" digital data. Intel's DVI chips take these numbers and turn them into onscreen, full-color images at a rate of 30 frames per second (you only need 24 frames per second to fool the human eye into the illusion of lifelike motion). IBM has endorsed DVI and is working on home and business computer applications for its PS/2 personal computer, so DVI looks to become very much a "standard" format.

Data East is applying DVI to coin-op. Working with Intel, they've created a new arcade system which stores the digital data on a CD-ROM disc, played naturally by a CD-ROM player. The game accesses and manipulates this disc-stored data with special compression chips on a 32-bit CPU capacity system board.



Screen shot from Thunderstorm, *Data East's prototype DVI video game using CD-ROM and compression chips from Intel.*

Data East promises spectacular results. "Instead of just moving a character up, down, left or right against a single-direction background, the new games will be able to make more complex screens," said the firm. "Games will take real images and add them to the background. Since the picture is composed of digital data, it is possible to take out a single portion of the picture, enlarge it or rotate it." The company also said the Intel compression technology permits storage of 72 minutes of imagery on a single CD-ROM disc.

Summed up Data East USA prexy Joe Keenan: "Our DVI games will revolutionize the arcade video game marketplace. For the first time, arcade games will have graphics with the intensity, depth and realism of film animation. Players will have the sensation of being inside the game as never before."

Data East added that maintenance and future software changes will be greatly simplified by their system . . . and that video game prices should come down as a result! The firm plans to provide DVI hardware and software development tools to third party game designers who are interested in producing DVI video games, too. New driving games and other simulation games are planned for release later this year. A prototype DVI arcade game from Data East called *Thunderstorm* has been previewed at computer and multimedia trade conferences in Japan and the U.S.

Will DVI video games sneak into the home market and deprive coin-op of this technological edge? Not for a good long while, Keenan suggested. He described DVI as "a highly advanced, multimedia computer technology that will be found in arcade systems long before its entry into the home marketplace."

By the way, Data East is talking about eventually building video jukeboxes using their DVI technology. There's much talk from other sources, too, about how digital compression of video data may eventually impact the jukebox market. Don't look for anything to replace CD jukes, but one day they could be supplemented with attractive new technologies which provide more flexible software at lower cost.

WANTED!

Mad Dog McCree

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The player is part of a true-to-life movie... combining laser technology with player interaction!

Mad Dog McCree is the first game to command a dollar a play with a dollar-to-continue buy-in feature.

Bill acceptor is standard.

Comprehensive warranty on internal electronic components.

Mad Dog McCree offers the player realism never before seen in the amusement game industry.

The player needs a fast draw and a sharp eye — skills that improve with lots of practice (at a dollar a play!)

As the player saves the townspeople he receives more clues to the whereabouts of Mad Dog's hideout.

The final challenge is the showdown against Mad Dog McCree.

Two monitor sizes are available: 33 inch and 50 inch rear projection.

Pedestal size:
32½" High
34" Wide
23" Deep

33" monitor base:
77" High
33½" Wide
33" Deep

50" monitor base:
78" High
48" Wide
35½" Deep

Distance between player pedestal and base is operator adjustable.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

"start spreadin' the news!"

Many tradesters like the money from their new CD jukeboxes very well indeed...but in their heart of hearts, they still miss the outrageous "jukey" appearance of coin-op phonographs from the 1930s and '40s. Colored lights, chrome stripping, art deco styling — the old machines simply had a romance to them which today's more functional machines sometimes lack.

Wurlitzer agrees. Combine modern audio technology with design features reminiscent of a golden age, and the result is the new Wurlitzer *New York, New York* jukebox, a computerized CD entertainment unit targeted for high potential locations.

Although *New York, New York's* symmetry is unique, its classic contours hark back to the early Wurlitzer models of the '40s and '50s. "The name Wurlitzer has always been synonymous with elegant jukebox design," says Wurlitzer-Nelson International prexy Joseph Tedeschi. "The dramatic *New York, New York* maintains this link to the styling excellence of the past, while its modern audio technology is a direct link to the future. This model is pleasing to the eye and ear, making it an ideal for an operator's best locations."

New York, New York, specially named to honor the city's prominence as an entertainment center, features a "Y"-shaped bubble in front, with the city's familiar skyline etched on eye-catching mirrored panels below. The horizontal surfaces of the bubble tube display program selection boards which flip at the touch of a button, while the back of the piece spins and changes colors.

The model offers more than 1,500 selections, playing to their optimal sound value thanks to six loudspeakers and 200 watt output. Other features include a popularity counter, an automatic top tunes display, and interface connections for printer, microphone, additional amplifiers and external loudspeakers.

CHECKPOINT

Data East sees checkered flags with driving-themed pin; "our best pin ever," smiles top designer Joe Kaminkow

You all know that driving games are perennial hits, but Data East is out to prove that "driving pinballs" can be an equally reliable category. Data East's *Checkpoint* delivers a unique driving experience in a pinball format.

The game's alive with digital car sounds, a heavy duty shaker motor, and the player's choice of music (rock, country, rap, jazz or soul). Revved up with special features like the chrome plated key starter and automatic speed detection (players see how fast their ball goes), this game has it all!

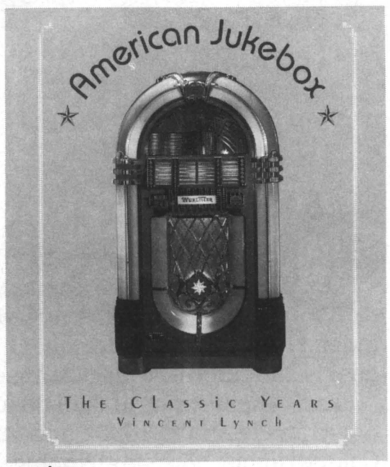
While the objective is simple — to advance the tachometer from 2,000 rpms to 8,000 — the player sure has fun getting there. He can visit the pit stop for awards, score big spins, and turbo-boost his way to multiball play, where skill pays off in double jackpot scoring.

All scoring and player selection are shown via a dot matrix display . . . that's right, another Data East industry first. Combined with a superior playfield, it looks like *Checkpoint* should cannonball its way to success!

For information contact your authorized Data East Pinball distributor, or call the factory at 708/345-7700.

BOOK REVIEW

american jukebox classic years



Music operators and jukebox afficionados may be interested in hitting their local bookstore in search of a new volume called 'American Jukebox/the Classic Years.' Published by Chronicle Books of San Francisco, this 114-page item is a "must" for anyone who dotes on jukebox history and artwork, but the cover price ($16.95) is a tad scary although understandable considering the special audience the book will cater to.

Light on words but heavy on color photography, the book covers what author Vincent Lynch called the "Classic Years" (the 1937 through 1948 period of jukebox design that saw the greatest art deco machines ever on the market). Many photos of such as Rowe's *Mother of Plastic* and the old Seeburgs, Rock-Olas and Wurlitzers have been pictured other jukebox history books, but they are always worth savoring again. A caption section behind the photo revue offers readers some statistics on the machines pictured beforehand. Lots of speakers are also shown.

Author Lynch, billed as an "authority on the history, manufacturing and restoration of jukeboxes" by the publishing company, runs a seven-page "history" of the jukebox business before he gets into the main photographic body of his work. A lot of this ground's been covered in other jukebox histories, but some items Lynch mentions carry special interest. For example, he claims that the first A/C electric-powered juke-

box was Brunswick's *Panatrope*, introduced in 1924 (complete with vacuum tube amplifier and a dynamic speaker).

Lynch writes that an estimated 225,000 jukeboxes were on location by 1939. "Prior to the outbreak of World War II, sales of records (all 78's) rocketed to 127 million, of which jukebox sales accounted for more than 50%," he writes. He also talks about the war's impact on jukebox manufacturing:

"The industry boomed in the early 1940s until Pearl Harbor. On Dec. 11, 1941, the government directed jukebox and other coin-operated machine manufacturers to immediately cut production by 75%. Production ceased in the spring of 1942," he advises.

"Working under gorvenment contracts with frantic production deadlines, the jukebox factories went on three eight-hour shifts per day to manufacture essential products for the war," he continues. "Wurlitzer made electronic devices for tanks and the signal corps, de-icing and other aircraft components. Rock-Ola went from music to munitions, producing rifles and ammunition boxes. Seeburg specialized in electromechanics, making the 'intervalometer,' a device that time-released bombs.

"Seeburg's wartime research would not be appreciated by the musical public until the late forties and early fifties with the introduction of the revolutionary *Model M100-A,*" the author contends, referring to the machine that closed off the Classic Period he speaks of.

As mentioned, Lynch's work is more of a picture book than a history of the jukebox business, but as he says in reference to his approach: "Listen to the photographs; see with your eyes and hear with your heart. America's love affair was based as much on the jukebox as an object as on the music it played."

Chronicle Books told *RePlay* that the book has been ordered by "all major book wholesalers" and that if it's not in stock at local stores, those stores can order it. Operators interested in quantity discounts (should they want such for location gifts or some other reason) may contact Julie Chanter at Chronicle to see if such may be available. Call her at 415/777-7240.

RAD MOBILE

Sega's new 32-bit system arrives in U.S. with first title; is driving simulator in upright & sitdown versions

Racing down the road of new technology, Sega's new high-speed driving game, *Rad Mobile,* thrusts the player on a fast and furious trip across the USA utilizing sharp graphics and realistic player interaction.

Driven by a revolutionary 32-bit hardware system resulting in crystal clear graphics, *Rad Mobile* realistically simulates night driving, dense fog, and torrential rains. Speeding through 20 cities, the player must battle the obstacles exclusive to each locale using the rear-view mirror, headlights, windshield wipers and speed-sensitive steering to outwit the elements and his rivals.

Maneuvering through each city within the allotted time, the driver must use skill to avoid other vehicles, the roadway's edge and the police. All obstacles are graphically brought to the screen by Sega's "System 32" board. The 32-bit CPU is the first of its kind (most games currently have an 8- or 16-bit system). The system creates crisp, realistic images, giving the "driver" the equivalent of a high-speed race.

U.S. operators will have the choice between a moving, sitdown version and an upright model. Sega seems to be accelerating toward success with this one! To join the ride, contact your local Sega distributor or call Sega Enterprises at 405/435-0201.

Sega's new driver Rad Mobile *in moving cabinet form; it's also available in uprights.*

Sega's CLUTCH HITTER

Finally, somebody brings out a great baseball game at the start of baseball season! **Clutch Hitter,** previewed at ACME, is a baseball-themed horizontal kit for one or two players simultaneously. Even competing manufacturers are calling this latest Sega game a real winner.

Theme: managing, as well as playing, big-league ball.

Gameplay: players must use strategic smarts to select the composition of their teams. You get your choice of all the real-life players in the 26 major league teams, from Nolan Ryan to Jose Canseco, Rickey Henderson, Ken Griffey, Dave Stewart, Darryl Strawbery, Don Mattingly . . . you want him, you got him! And game programming matches performance to the true-life abilities and strengths of these players, too.

Video game players also get full control over the onscreen baseball stars, including batting, running, pitching and fielding. Each player gets a joystick and 3 buttons. A variety of game situations is offered, including Regular Season play, All-Star games and Tournament Play. Play may be continued at any point during the game.

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.

New Bill Changer from Drew's

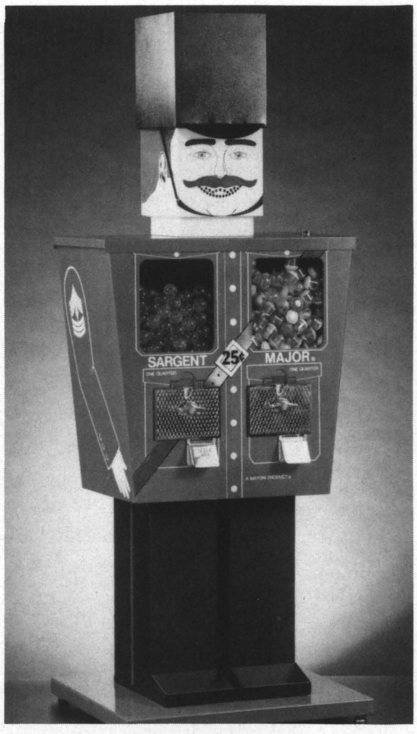
Drew's Industries now makes a heavy-duty construction bill changer that features a 14-gauge steel cabinet and steel mounting bracket. The Mars VFM3S-D4C high-security down-stacker bill acceptor has a 400 bill capacity. The universal hopper has a 1,600 coin capacity with coin reserve so it can't short-change the customer.

Features include an "out of service/out of coins" light; a disabler for the bill acceptor when the machine is out of coins or service; a Fort Lock Ace cylinder T-hasp (with three point locking rods); a Motorola microprocessor-controlled CPU with battery backup; a coin counting feature with accessory bracket for easy coin removal; and adjustable coin/token purchase pricing.

The U.S.-made unit readily accepts .900 tokens. Dimensions are 20" tall x 21" wide x 7" deep. Weight is 60 lbs. and it comes in your choice of colors: blue, brown or black. Price is very competitive.

For more information, ask your distributor or Drew's, P.O. Box 632, Fairforest, S.C. 29336; 803/574-0162.

Mayoni's SERGEANT MAJOR



Sergeant Major is a unique dual vendor especially designed to attract and delight kids. It plays off the classic "toy soldier" concept, so should fit any location, said the firm. Features include bold primary colors and graphics; dual vending storage cells; dual hoppers; up to 2,000 total prize capacity (vends rubber balls, gum or small capsules); rugged construction; reliable all-mechanical operation (no electricity needed); optional battery-powered voice and LED eyes. Dimensions are 54" high x 20.5" wide x 18" deep. Weight 70 lbs.

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.

New from Betson

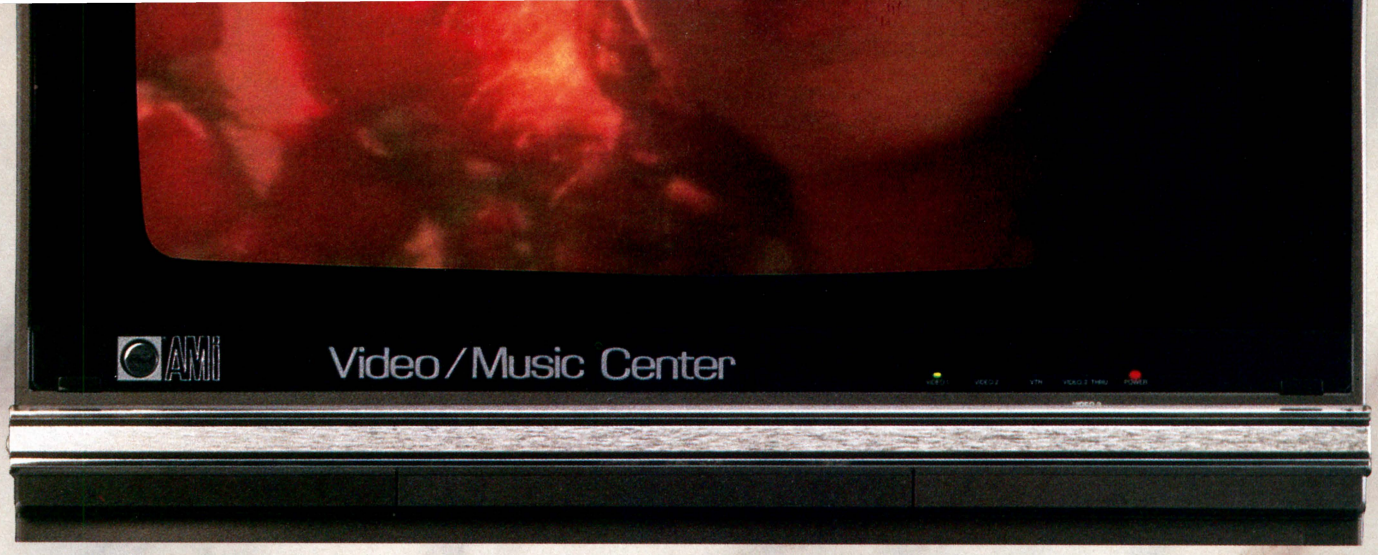
Variety is a three-in-one, three-player redemption piece from Crompton's, the famed English manufacturer. The two end units, called 'Variety,' are coin pushers; the middle unit is a cover-the-spot coin rolldown game called 'Magic Circle.' Dimensions are 86" high x 74" wide x 31" deep. By the way, you can get 'Magic Circle' as a single upright unit, too.

For more information, contact Betson Enterprises, 6 Empire Blvd., Moonachie, NJ 07074; 201/440-2200.

TVM from Clever Devices

TVM is a new "ticket vending mechanism" from Clever Devices. Company President Bill Long debuted it at ACME and says it's engineered for years of reliable operation, thanks to a simple design that has only four moving parts (should run without jamming or hesitation). Rugged, positive-drive gearing with patented anti-theft clutch means nobody can pull tickets through, either.

For more information, contact your distributor or Clever Devices Ltd., 10 Sagamore Hill Dr., Port Washington, NY 11051; 516/767-0682 or 800/872-6127.



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Rowe's CD/Video Jukebox combines the most popular features in today's music: CD sound and music videos.

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It's a winning combination. Because the more you offer patrons, the longer they'll want to stay…and spend.

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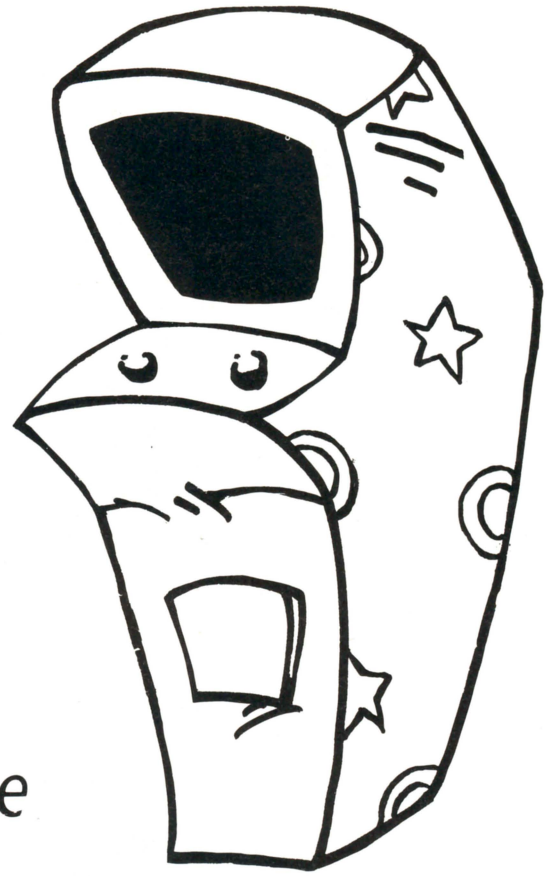

coin-op could learn valuable lessons from a certain Mouse

by Marcus Webb

Walking through a shopping mall recently, I noticed something new: a Disney Store. The display window featured a striking diorama with large, moving models of Mickey, Minnie and Donald — notice how I don't have to use their last names — in a canoe on a river.

Inside the 2,000-sq.-ft. store, at least 20 moms and dads were buying t-shirts, dolls, audio and VCR tapes, lunchboxes, etc. for their excited children. All of the merchandise featured characters that Disney had invented (like the trio mentioned above), or else characters that Disney didn't invent, but practically "owns" anyway (Pinocchio, Snow White, etc.).

Get it? In the middle of a recession, Disney is attracting crowds. In a national market that's supposedly splintered by age, sex, income, cultural background, ethnicity, etc., Disney is still appealing to the broad-based American family. Perhaps most significant of all, in an era when any product more than five minutes old is "outdated," Disney is exploiting a perpetual goldmine with characters who were invented, in Mickey's case, over 60 years ago...in Snow White's case, at least 300 years ago.

Walt Disney Productions is one of the shrewdest entertainment companies in the history of Hollywood. It long ago mastered a marketing principle which most of our industry still hasn't learned: products and media may come and go, but "stars" (or in this case, classic characters) last forever. It's time for coin-op to re-invent the wheel and apply this lesson to our own products, particularly video games.

A FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

For the past two years, trade members have been saying video needs two things to generate a revival: new themes and new technology. Well, the new technology is arriving in the form of digital graphics, 3-D, CD-ROM, laserdisc, CDI, DVI, etc. Some of these new technologies are almost certain to be successful, based on their novelty value alone — for a while. But what about

the long term?

By itself, new technology is not a long-term solution to maintaining the appeal of video games, any more than great special effects are enough to supply the movie industry with a steady stream of hits. Even the greatest special effect becomes ho-hum after a while, and video designers can't keep topping themselves with spectacular new tricks every six months. It's self-defeating to try, because you set up expectations which cannot possibly be fulfilled.

To keep the next generation of games from eventually sinking into the same trap, we also need new themes. Like what?, you say. Video poker is fine for appealing to the adult market, but it would be foolish for us to abandon the $200 billion annual market of little kids, teens and college students. How do we appeal to them? The decades-long popularity of Mickey and Donald (or, for older kids, Spiderman and Captain America) may hold the secret of taking video to its next level of success: characters.

NINTENDO KNOWS THIS SECRET

Nintendo has already caught on. With the Mario Brothers, they've got two characters who sell airtime (via their Saturday morning TV show), breakfast cereal, t-shirts, and . . . video games. Literally millions of kids look forward to the next Mario Brothers adventure. Each time a new Mario Brothers game is announced for the NES, customers line up in the stores (Mario and Luigi do quite well for Nintendo's coin-op systems, too). The company is now on "Mario Brothers 4" in the home market, or will be soon. Who's to say that by the next century, Nintendo won't be releasing "Mario Brothers 27"?

I believe that video games have reached a new level of maturity, both in terms of technology and in terms of market positioning. We're not a novelty anymore. A broad-based market of adults, teens and kiddies probably won't play any future *Pac-Man* because the technology, and the simple motor skills it demands, are now familiar . . . and it will basically remain familiar, despite upgrades like 3-D and full-motion video. To ensure a long-term, steady track record of success, is it possible that — like Disney and Nintendo — video games need star power?

CHARACTER APPEAL

I'm not talking about licensing. That approach sometimes works very well (as with Konami's coin-op video *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* and Data East's pinball *The Simpsons).* But sometimes, licensing doesn't help a bit. For example, a couple of games based on *Superman* and certain other big names fell pretty flat in recent years.

No, the best approach is to create our own characters, our own "stars" — like Mickey Mouse, or Mario and Luigi. Characters who can sustain not just one game, but a whole series of games. Characters who can create their own, built-in fans/audience/customers. Characters who will transcend the limited appeal of gee-whiz technology.

Part of our problem has been myopia. This is not just the "video game industry," although some in our insular "closed circle" seem to think so. This is the *entertainment industry,* and it will succeed or fail on the same principles that cause any other type of entertainment to succeed or fail. One of the key principles is, you must keep developing your content, not just your technology or medium of communication, to new levels of sophistication. If you don't, the audience will get bored and begin to seek diversion somewhere else.

Our first generation of games — *Pac-Man* and *Space Invaders* — offered a simple test of motor skills. Today we're coming to the end of the second generation, which offered limited role-playing (simplistic characters who undertake a fixed, linear, physical-strategic mission . . . everything from *Karate Champ* to *Pit Fighter).* The third phase, which began with some of the more complex home computer games, will offer characters with more depth, plots with more complexity, and player interaction of far greater emotional involvement. In a word, drama. But to reach this new level,

What lies beneath the SHADOW?

PROFIT$

When it comes down to it, the measure of a game is " the bottom line ".

Kaneko, manufacturer of clever video products since 1980, changed one of the rules to successful " Street Games ".

Keep them,

1) Simple
2) Simple
3) ~~Simple~~ Sexy

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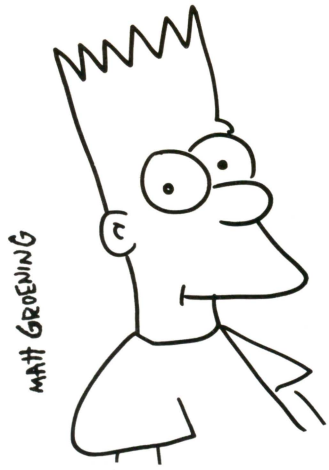

the vitally necessary first ingredient is, star power! Appealing characters!

LEARNING FROM THE MOVIES

The movie industry went through exactly this phase around 1915, when people stopped watching nickelodeons of "The Kiss" or "The Train." That stuff got old, even though it was enhanced with widescreen photography and primitive color (yes, Hollywood experimented with these "hi-tech" devices before World War I). Instead, the public responded to personalities . . . characters . . . stars who became familiar attractions in one production after another.

Rather than merely offering more and more spectacular novelties, the motion picture offered the likes of Charlie Chaplin and Clara Bow, who appeared in formulaic movies which all looked pretty much alike (no major technological innovations needed for many years). Result: the movie industry — originally predicted to be a short-term fad — grew and prospered into a permanent and highly profitable industry.

The comic book industry did the same thing: it created its own stars. Superman, Spiderman, Batman, Captain America . . . the list is endless. No costly licensing fees were needed, but another type of investment was required. The comics industry (like movies, TV and radio) had to hire writers who could create characters and storylines.

WE'RE RIPE FOR THE NEXT PHASE

Some computer-based game producers have already realized that the video game is ripe to make the same leap from mere physical simulation, to emotion-based drama. People like Trip Hawkins (president of Electronic Arts, a Nintendo home game supplier) were already hiring Hollywood writers for projected CD-ROM games two years ago. Why? Because the real world is far more complex (and interesting) than any of the games kids have been playing for the past 10 years. Most of today's games are long on special effects, but short on heart and emotion. As CDI game developer Garry Hare said: "One of the rules for creating the game simulations of tomorrow is, just because it's possible doesn't make it interesting."

Tomorrow's hits will be different. The arrival of CD-based and laserdisc based games means that we can finally go beyond driving simulators and punch-kick games. The increased storage capacity of compression technology means that a more sophisticated fictional universe can be created, presented and experienced. Games can offer more choices, more often, to players: Where will you go? What will your goal be in the game? What strategies will you use to achieve this goal? What psychological and emotional obstacles (not just physical ones) will you have to confront and overcome, in order to achieve your goal?

The result will be that video games, like movies, can make the transition from a short-lived novelty, to a long-lived dramatic medium. "When was the last time a video game made you scared, made you laugh, made you cry?" asked one forward-looking home game manufacturer. "The competition isn't arcade games; it's TV."

CHARACTERS: THE KEY INGREDIENT

Make no mistake about it, characters are the first key to success in a complex, story-telling medium. Jack the Giant-Killer is a pretty boring story . . . unless you cast an adorable underdog like Mickey Mouse in the role of Jack. Shooting arrows at targets is a pretty dull affair . . . unless some exiting guy like Robin Hood is doing the shooting.

"The character is the door through which the audience enters

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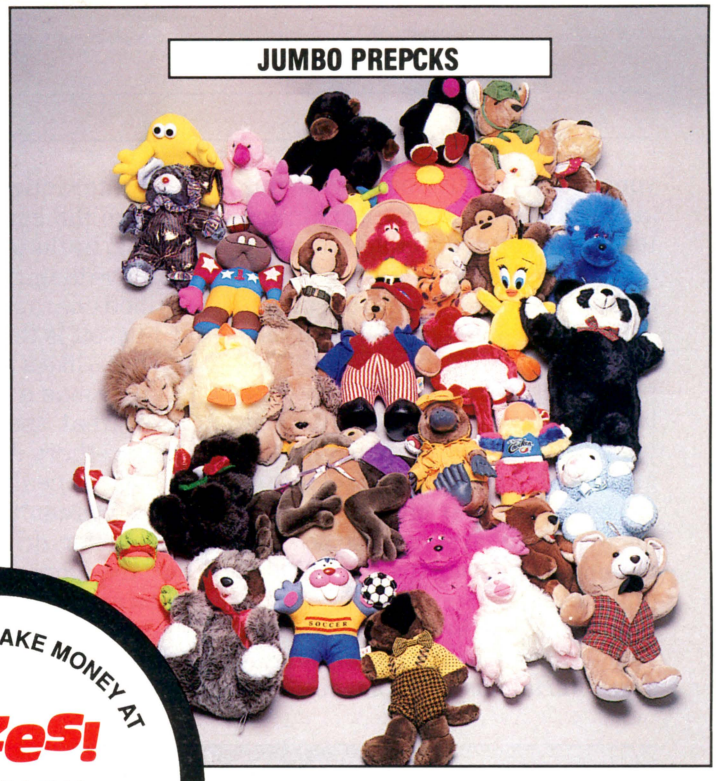

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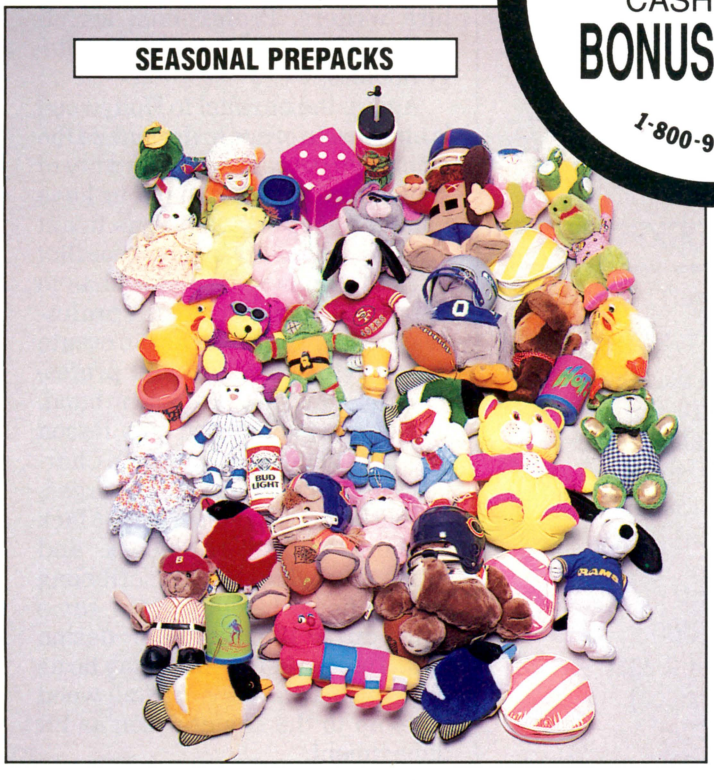

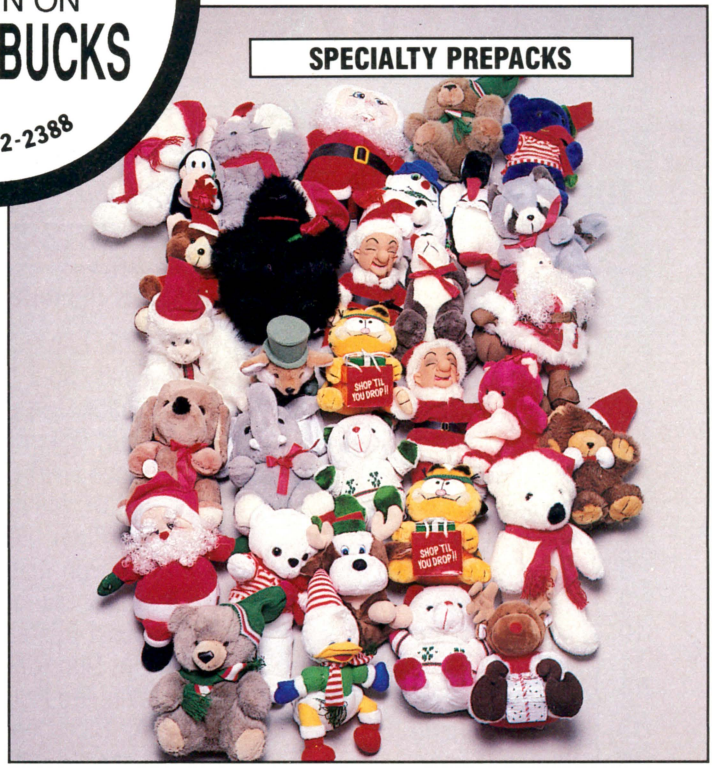

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your story," Hollywood TV writer (and USC professor) Robert McKee tells his ($400 per student) seminar audiences. "In order to get the viewer involved emotionally, the protagonist must be somebody we can care about," McKee explains. "The protagonist must be, at the very least, empathetic: somebody about whom we can say, there but for the grace of God go I. If you want to create a very popular hit, it's preferable that the character also be sympathetic, which means: empathetic plus likeable."

Some tradesters will object that video games are different from passive entertainment like movies. Video is interactive. In a video game, you are the hero. You get to drive the car, fly the jet, shoot the bad guy, and save the girl. So who needs well-defined characters, when the player himself is the protagonist?

That's like a movie mogul saying, "Who needs a plot, so long as we have great special effects?" The you-are-there approach offers the proven appeal of letting you do things you can't do in real life (flying a jet fighter, driving in the LeMans). But the appeal is even stronger when games also let you **be** someone you aren't in real life. Why stop with the vicarious physical appeal of flying? Why not add the vicarious emotional appeal of being partners with the Turtles? Or the vicarious psychological appeal of actually being one of the Turtles, yourself? Konami did exactly that... and they made a mint.

Advice to the next generation of video game creators: go thou and do likewise!

NEXT: ADD A GOOD STORY

As stated, slapping the name and likeness of a popular character onto a game is, by itself, no guarantee of success. We can probably all point to some expensive licensed games that were dogs. That's why, besides appealing characters, a second element is also needed: good stories. And that means, video manufacturers will eventually need to hire writers. Professional scriptwriters. Gag men. Rewrite men. Story doctors.

Again, the parallel to Hollywood is obvious. In order to dramatize the emotional content or personality of your character, you have to have him *do something*... he has to act out his personality, against conflict ...and that means, a story has to happen. And that means, a professional story specialist has to create the story! Characters and professional story writers go hand in hand.

The movies learned this lesson long ago: about the same time Charlie Chaplin and other stars emerged, people behind the camera like Mack Sennett, Alfred Hitchcock and Frank Capra had to start scribbling plot outlines. Leaving video game plots up to the computer design teams or marketing staff may be as big a mistake as leaving Hollywood plots up to the camera men or PR department.

A STORYBOARD IS NOT A STORY

"Oh, we have detailed plots," some video manufacturers will say. "We plan out the action of our video games on storyboards, just like they do in the movies." Wrong. The cliched pattern of so many recent video games is not a story. You know the scenario I mean: bad guys capture/threaten X; good guys go after X; good guys fight minor bad guys;

TOP HITS OF JAPAN

from Game Machine Magazine, March 15, 1991

TOP 25 VIDEO COCKTAIL

	Model (manufacturer)
1	Quiz Lord's Adventure (Capcom)
2	Growl (Taito)
3	Bells and Whistles (Konami)
4	Lightning Swords (Irem)
5	Quiz My Home Work (Sega)
6	League Bowling (SNK)
7	Raiden (Seibu)
8	Strato Fighter (Tecmo)
9	Pound for Pound (Irem)
10	Final Fight (Capcom)
11	Gals Panic (Kaneko)
12	Gun Frontier (Taito)
13	Sengoku Densho (SNK)
14	Columns (Sega)
15	Escape Kids (Konami)
16	World Cup '90 (Tecmo)
17	Blood Brothers (TAD)
18	Tetris (Sega)
19	Punk Shot (Konami)
20	Sky Smasher (Taito)
21	Puzzled (SNK)
22	Quiz H.Q. (Taito)
23	Edward Randy (Data East)
24	Columns II (Sega)
25	Majestic Twelve (Taito)

TOP 15 UPRIGHTS & COCKPITS

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

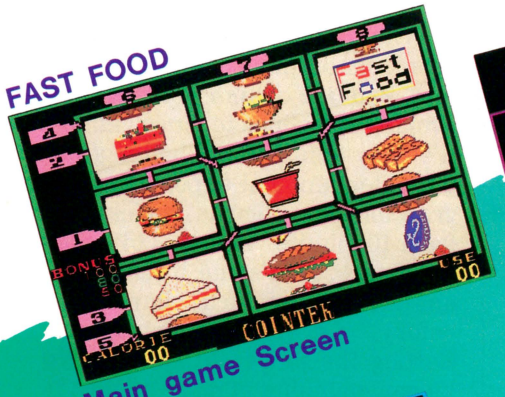
TOP 5 FLIPPERS

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

GAMES THAT ASSURE INTEREST OF YOURS AND TO PLAYERS

3 BONUSES RENDER GREAT ATTRACTION

FAST FOOD



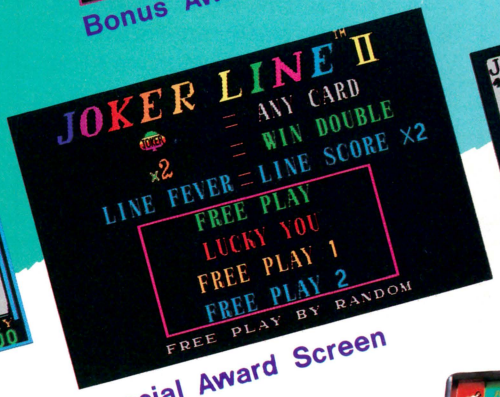
Main game Screen

Bonus Award Screen

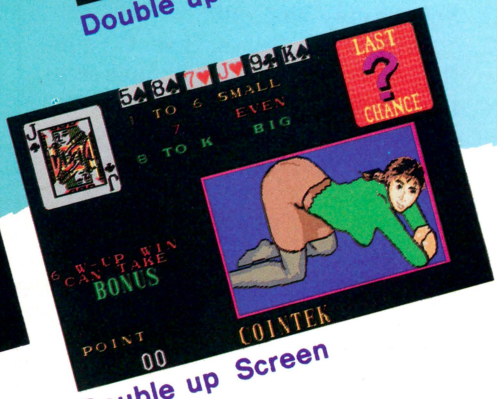
Double up Screen

JOKER LINE II

Main game Screen



Special Award Screen



Double up Screen

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good guys fight major bad guy; good guys rescue/retrieve X.

Not only is this action pattern not a true story, it's not even a plot. It's simply a linear series of contests. A fights B, A fights C, A fights D. It is totally predictable. Unless you're a teenaged male whose aggression hormones are on overdrive, it is boring. Even if you are a teenaged male, after the ten thousandth variation on the same theme, it becomes boring. This is one reason we are slowly losing our customer base, according to one of the biggest coin-op distributors in the country. A mega-hit game, several years ago, used to be 50,000 unit sales. Now it's 15,000. Soon it may be 5,000.

Why is this "A vs. B vs. C" conflict scenario boring? Because strategy and skill alone determine the winner. No human emotion, no character, no psychological decision, can possibly change the outcome. Oh, sure, you can change the *appearance* of the characters — they can be Turtles, or street fighters, or Karate Champs, with appropriate weapons or skills — but underneath the graphics, they are the exact same stand-in for the player, the same generic "hero on a quest." (Joseph Campbell, where are you when we need you?)

Since the characters and action pattern is virtually identical from game to game, there may be conflict but there is no real *drama*. No values or emotions are at stake (except the shallow excitement of winning, and the shallow satisfaction of proving you're top dog). No emotional conflict has to be resolved; only a contest of strength or skill has to be settled.

In other words, we've been modeling our games after sports events. We should model them more after movies, instead. As one project director for some forthcoming "interactive movie" CD-ROM home video games explained: "We must emulate the emotional experience and frame of reference from movies and TV. . . That means good writing has lots of impact" on the success or failure of a truly drama-based game.

THE SHAPE OF GAMES TO COME

What impact will ultimately derive from adding complex characters, genuine drama and emotion-evoking storylines to video games? It's easy to imagine. The length of the entertainment experience will grow longer . . . just as movies grew from 10-minute "shorts," to three-hour epics. That's fine; it simply means more money can be charged per "story," i.e. per complete game. Getting the player to stand there longer, pumping in more money, is the whole point, isn't it?

A second result could be that each factory may have its own stable of characters who appear in game after game. Nintendo's Mario and Luigi, Disney's Mickey and Donald, DC Comics' Superman and Green Lantern might be joined by equivalent characters solely created and owned by the likes of Atari, Capcom, Konami, Sega, Williams, etc. With characters who remain the same from game to game, year to year, and story to story, each factory could have its own profitable "dynasty" of fictional resources to mine. (And, as Walt Disney himself used to point out, you never have to worry about contract negotiations, actors' temperaments or labor disputes when your stars are animated characters.) The investment risk of each new product would be drastically minimized, because each game would feature a proven, popular character with a built-in, loyal, long-term audience.

As I said earlier, this is simple reinventing the wheel stuff. If it seems obvious, that's because it is. So how come nobody in the industry except Nintendo is doing it yet? Aside from Mario and Luigi, can you think of one other video game character who has achieved name recognition from the general public? (Don't say *Pac-Man*, because he wasn't a char-

The BONDEAL CHART

top kits and dedicated videos at the Hong Kong Flashback Arcade for the week ending March 9, 1991

TOP KITS	Mar. 9	Mar. 2	Feb. 23	Weeks on Location
Street Fighter II	1	1	1	4
Joe & Mac	2	2	2	3
Cycle Warriors	3	3	4	4
Super Pang	4	5	6	17
Robo Cop II	5	—	—	1
Columns	6	6	9	49
Big Karnak	7	—	—	1
Escape Kids	8	4	3	6
Gals Panic	9	8	10	20
Growl	10	7	5	4
TOP DEDICATED GAMES				
Hard Drivin'	1	1	2	99
Big Run	2	3	1	58
Cisco Heat	3	2	3	10
Four Trax	4	4	4	14
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Cash box and coin mechanism: large format cash box
coin mechanism: electronical or mechanical
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Installation of the table: simple installation by simply screwing on the feet
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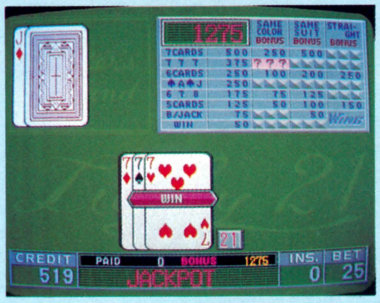
NUMBER ONE GAMES



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acter; he was a vacuum cleaner with a face painted on it.)

We've got a serious "character drought" in this industry. Fortunately, nobody has imposed rationing on our imaginations. It's time to drill some new wells into the creative unconscious. If a couple of guys sitting around on a lark inventing silly "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" can hit a gusher, so can the creative teams at Atari, Capcom, Data East, etc.

What else will be different about drama-driven games? They will probably also give players advice at various points (perhaps from the mouths of minor characters . . . like the Greek Chorus in the plays of old) in order to help guide players to an emotionally satisfying experience. This is already happening in a minor way in, for example, some of the "quest" games for SNK's Neo•Geo system (although the minor characters here confine their advice to points of strategy).

Eventually, games could even take on all the other time-tested elements of story craftsmanship: an inciting incident which defines an emotionally-charged story problem and propels the characters into action; a three-act structure, with acts separated by major plot turning points which require the characters to adapt new goals or try new types of behavior to reach their initial goal; a moment of ultimate crisis or psychological decision . . . which is a test of character, as much or more than it is a test of strength and skill; a final climax wherein the character/player acts on his decision and carries it out in physical terms, etc. . . . just like hit movies, popular novels and tales around the campfire have done for decades, if not centuries.

Another possible outcome of drama-based video games is that the industry could branch into a variety of genres, which would broaden the product's appeal to customers besides the teenaged male. Action-adventure, strategy-puzzle, and motion-simulation is not everybody's cup of tea. Some people like soap operas and love stories. Others prefer comedy or musicals. So far, all we're offering in the video game world is the equivalent of three brands of ice cream, and wondering how come everybody isn't still crazy about vanilla, chocolate and strawberry after 10 years. It's a Baskin-Robbins world, friends: 39 flavors are barely enough to keep people interested these days. Identify your market niche, diversify!

Does all of this sound utterly fantastic and unreal? Don't laugh. Remember, the future belongs to the dreamers and risk-takers, to the creative people . . . not to the play-it-safe, "do what worked before" crowd.

After all, if a skinny cartoonist with a mustache had told you 70 years ago he was going to build a culture-shaking, globe-spanning empire based on a little mouse with a squeaky voice, would you have believed him?

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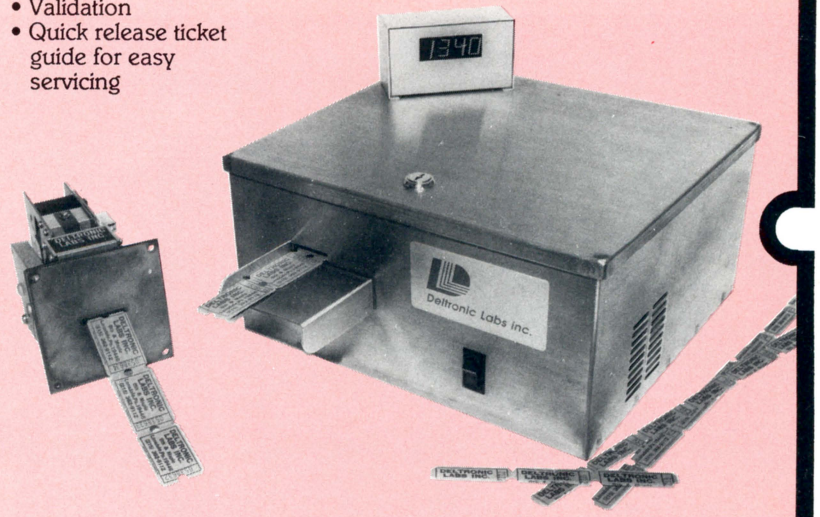

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PINBALL LEAGUES WORK

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Over 200 enthusiastic players joined in that evaluation of the March 1-3 event, held at the O'Hare Hilton near Chicago. Co-sponsored by the four major pinball makers, the tournament featured 80 machines and pulled in coast-to-coast player talent from 20 states, as well as attracting overseas and cross-border player talent from four foreign nations (Canada, England, Scotland and Spain). The event drew positive media coverage from *Entertainment Tonight* on TV, and — in the world of print journalism — the likes of *Smithsonian Magazine* and *The New York Times*.

Most important of all, the tournament proved that pinball can be promoted as a competitive league sport. "Now it's time for operators to go home and start local leagues," enthused Gary Stern, general manager of Data East Pinball. IFPA President Sharon Harris and Executive Director Doug Young vow that the new association will play a vital role in educating, inspiring and supporting operators, players and locations as they do just that.

Want to join the 26 charter members of IFPA? They range from California to Yugoslavia, and if you're an AMOA member you qualify to belong, too. Call IFPA's Doug Young at 414/263-0233!

Here's the glorious panorama of the Hilton's Galaxy Room, which was filled with hundreds of players and scores of machines including Premier's Hoops, *Williams'* Fun House, *Data East's* Checkpoint *and Midway's* Harley-Davidson.

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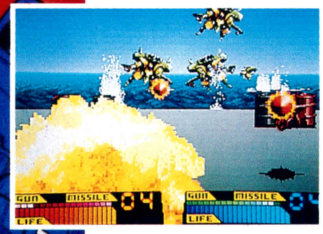

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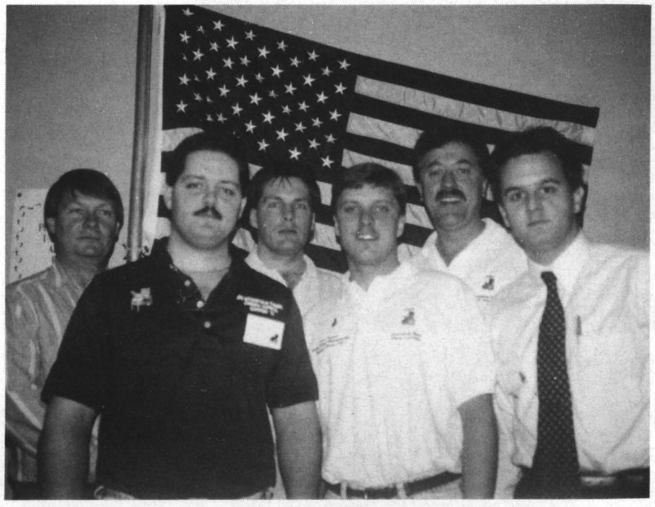
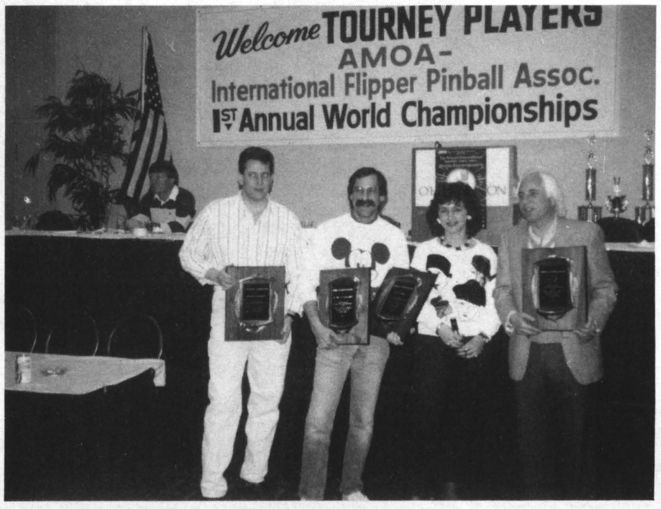


Doing the dirty work of running the tournament was this stalwart bunch of fellows. From left: Chris Warren, Brian Graw, Dennis Bohrer, Mike Hawkins, IFPA Executive Director Doug Young, and Tony Urso.

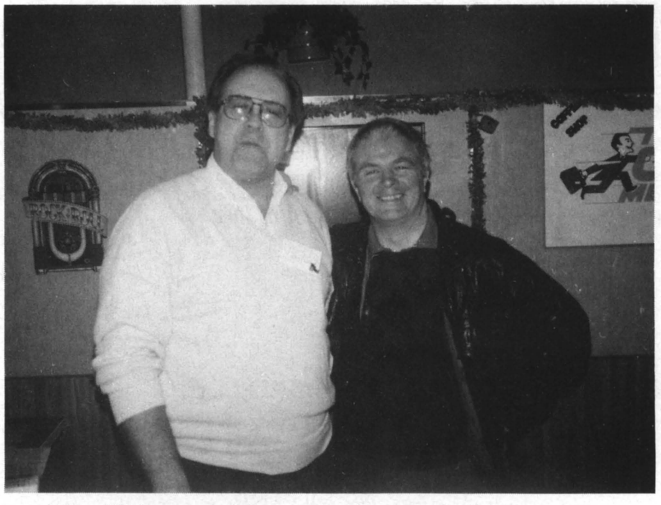


Plaques acknowledge strong factory support of IFPA. From left that's Premier's Gil Pollock, Williams/Bally-Midway's Roger Sharpe, IFPA President Sharon Harris, and Data East Pinball's Gary Stern.

Pinball is for women, too, as you can see by checking out the faces of this enthusiastic team of gals. IFPA ran competitive pinball divisions for men and for women. Kids had their own special division.

At far right is Williams/Bally-Midway distrib for Spain, Felix Herman Martin. His assistant Ann Atienza stands at far left. Middle are (from left) WMS's L.J. Greene, Mrs. Joe Dillon (Ann), Mike Pacek, and WMS sales veep Joe Dillon.

And here they are! Chicago operator Eddie Velasquez bused in a number of inner-city kids to compete in the youth division, and as you can see from their smiling faces, they all went home feeling on top of the world.



AMOA-NDA executive director Joe Conway with British pinball player Malcolm Rimmer, who flew in from England to compete. Malcolm (age 40) was crowned World Amateur Pinball Champion in an earlier London event.

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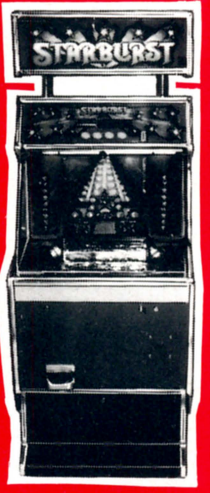

STAR BURST

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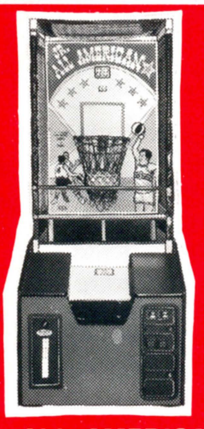

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MARK ROBBINS

the "ace of air hockey" presides over sport's growing revival as dedicated player, promoter, consultant & part of Dynamo

● *Whenever anyone says the words "air hockey," the first person we think of is Mark Robbins. He is "Mr. Air Hockey" at Dynamo Corp., which is today the leading manufacturer of air hockey tables. Mark's association with the sport goes back many years, both as a dedicated player and as a successful promoter and operator.*

Mark was born into the coin machine business 39 years ago, son of famed industry veteran Joe Robbins. Originally, Mark intended to become a lawyer like his grandfather . . . but he must have caught the coin-op bug while working in Empire Distributing's parts department during several summers in the 1960s. In 1973 he walked into the student union of the University of Arizona. There, he says, "I discovered air hockey."

A player was born. "The speed and excitement of coin-op air hockey really appealed to me," Mark says. "Within a week or two I was absolutely hooked." In 1974 he began entering, and winning, tournaments. He was good enough to get into the first North American Air Hockey Championships that November. "Those were the great early days of the sport," Mark recalls. "We were inventing new techniques that are now classics, new ways to hit the puck or make a shot. It was a very exciting time."

In 1978 Mark and Phil Arnold (co-founder of the U.S. Air Hockey Assn.) organized the first-ever USAA national championship, set in Houston. They offered a $500 purse and drew 40 players, as well as coverage by two TV stations. This time, a promoter was born! By the early 1980s, Mark Robbins was consulting for U.S. Billiards, marketing their tables as well as selling another table made specifically for him, and organizing more national tournaments from his base in Colorado.

"Trying to build interest in air hockey was very slow in that period," he says. "It wasn't the right time in the industry because video was booming. The industry's perception was that air hockey had come and gone, and this made it a low point for the sport. Any sane person would have given it up. Fortunately, I wasn't!"

By 1984, the sport had slowly begun to make a comeback. Showbiz Pizza was succeeding with air hockey tables supplied by Mark. He was also supplying tables to prestigious places like Malibu Grand Prix and Aladdin's Castle. Mark shared his ideas for improved product and promotion with Dynamo President Bill Rickett, and in the fall of 1985 they agreed that Mark would assist in the design, sales, marketing, promotion and service of a new air hockey table from Dynamo.

The rest, as they say, is history. Today air hockey tables enjoy steady and growing sales. "Earnings on location continue to be great," Mark says. "Many, many operators I talk to say that our game is their top piece, and many others report air hockey is in their top three or top five." Mark plans to focus on promotion for the next several years "to make sure the operator continues to earn money with air hockey, and to make sure the player continues playing the game."

REPLAY: Mark, air hockey hooked you nearly 20 years ago and it hasn't let you go. What is the secret of the game's appeal?

ROBBINS: Air hockey has a wide and pervasive appeal to the public because it's physical, fast, exciting, demanding and challenging . . . and, at the same time, it's very easy to play. It's inviting. Women play it as much or more than any other coin-operated game. It appeals to a very wide age range, from six-year-olds up to their grandparents. It's wholesome and clean. It's a game for the whole family.

REPLAY: Air hockey fans seem to keep playing for many years. Why is this?

ROBBINS: Because at whatever level they play — national tournaments, or two guys who drop into the bar, or two kids who play after school — it's extremely competitive and there's no mastering the game.

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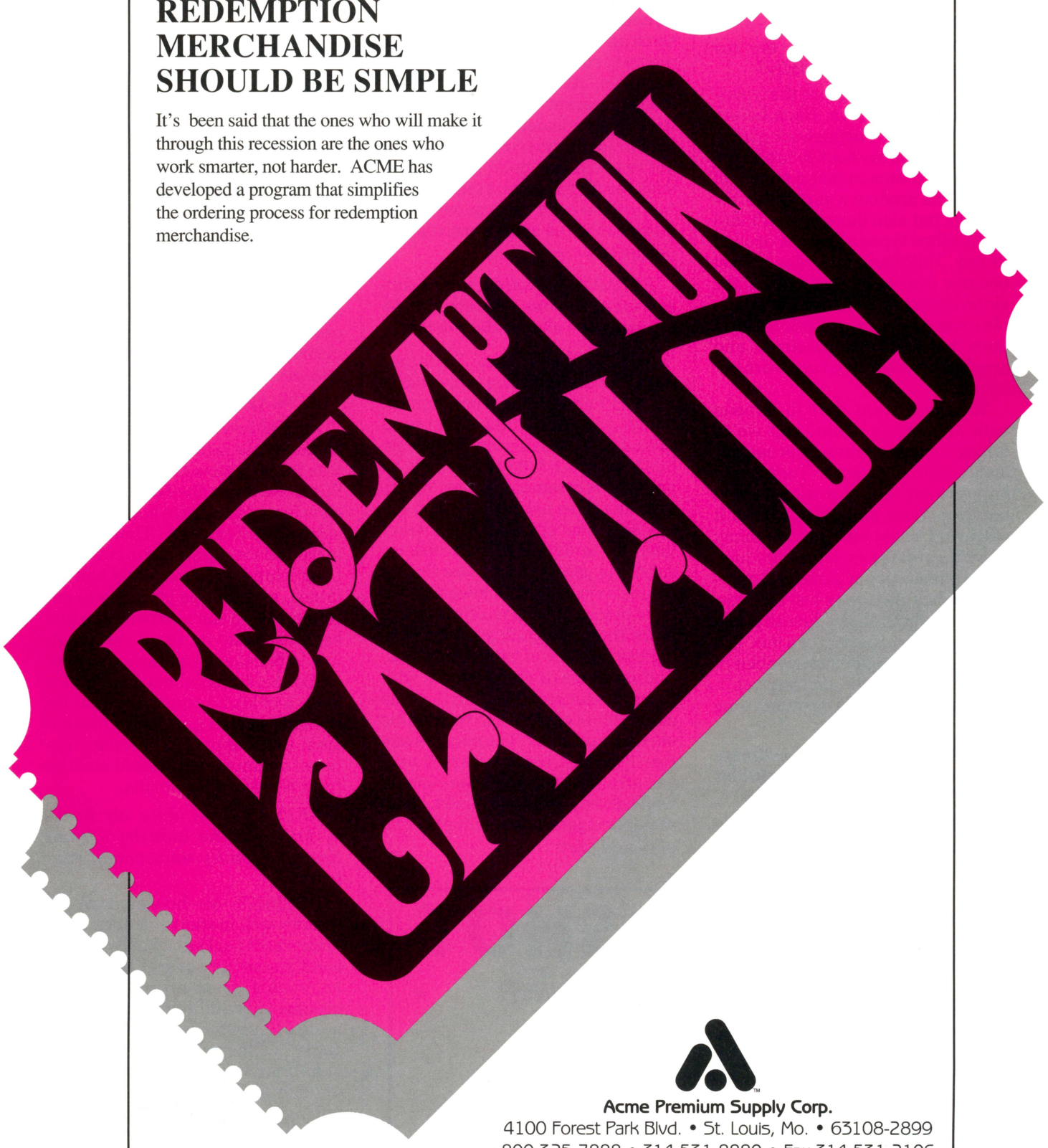

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As you improve, so does your opponent and that keeps it infinitely challenging. That's why air hockey is truly a sport.

REPLAY: How big is the air hockey market, potentially?

ROBBINS: Let me put that question into perspective. Back before video games hit, Brunswick probably put 35,000 air hockey tables onto U.S. locations in just a couple of years. The product was popular, obviously, but also there weren't that many other types of games around to buy. Unfortunately, the market became over-saturated. When the video boom arrived, many of the tables were sold or junked. Most of them basically disappeared, and any that have survived are worn out by now.

We don't want that to happen with air hockey again, and we're taking a conservative approach to make sure it doesn't. Today, I'm happy to say the saturation point is not even close and I don't think it will ever be reached. For one thing, there's a greater variety of product, many other types of games for operators to buy other than just air hockey, and I think that's healthy. Air hockey needs to be part of a mix. We should not see eight hockey tables in every little location, and we won't. Dynamo's approach is more long term.

REPLAY: What's your estimate of the number of air hockey tables on location in America today?

ROBBINS: Very roughly, I'd guess there are probably no more than five or six thousand coin-op air hockey tables on location in the U.S. today. That includes tables made by Dynamo, U.S. Billiards and even some ancient Brunswicks. There is plenty of room for growth with good earnings. At some point, the air hockey market will become a mature "replacement market," like pool or jukeboxes, but again, it has not reached that point yet. When it does reach that point, I think promotion will be even more important to ensure that the sport survives into perpetuity.

REPLAY: You said you are conservative in your approach to increasing the size of the market.

ROBBINS: I sure am! I'd rather see a location with two tables earning $250 or $350 a week apiece, than putting in six tables that earn $100 a week each, even though six tables earning $100 each might be pretty good in some locations! Whenever locations ask my advice, I follow this concept because I want them to be delighted with the results. My greatest surprise during the last two years has been that we have places putting multiple tables on location, or significantly increasing the number of tables, and continuing to make more money with them. Sometimes the fourth table makes 90% of what the third table earned, and so on. The success stories I've seen demonstrate that if you give people a good, well-made, well-lighted, well-maintained, clean attractive game, they will play and play and play.

REPLAY: Is air hockey "new" to today's generation of kids?

ROBBINS: Absolutely. I might add that it's also an entirely different market than it was 10 or 15 years ago. We have a quality table and we have promotional mechanisms in place.

REPLAY: Has there been a perception that this game's appeal was limited to one region of the country?

ROBBINS: Yes, that perception has existed because so many tournament players have come from Texas, Colorado and nearby states. But I think this myth has been disproved now, because the game is clearly successful in so many other regions.

REPLAY: For example?

ROBBINS: When Dynamo first introduced its table, the East Coast was initially slow to show interest. But these days, the New York and New Jersey areas are booming with sales and earnings. There's one large indoor amusement center in Long Island which already has six tables, and they're planning to get 10 more. The same experience has been repeated on the West Coast, too. In Northern California, operator Bob Szabo has about three tables in each of his Keystone arcades. He recently hosted a national tournament and I expect to see some national championship talent emerge from Northern California.

REPLAY: How does air hockey mix with the industry's trend toward "family amusement centers"?

ROBBINS: Air hockey does extremely well in sports centers, mini-amusement parks and family amusement places for several reasons. It has such a strong appeal to all age groups; kids and families will play it. Also, it's a two-player interactive game, and there's always an appeal to pitting one player's skills against another's. Besides, even if you're not highly skilled, air hockey is still a lot of fun! So it fits into the family amusement center atmosphere and it's a good value. Most air hockey games are set on 50¢ per game. That's a good deal compared to most

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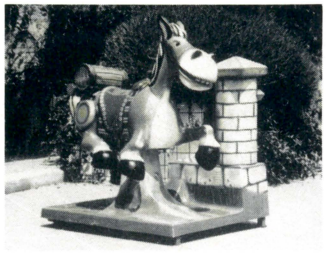

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forms of entertainment, yet is still extremely profitable for the operator.

REPLAY: You're the most visible person in the Dynamo air hockey promotion effort. Who works with you on this?

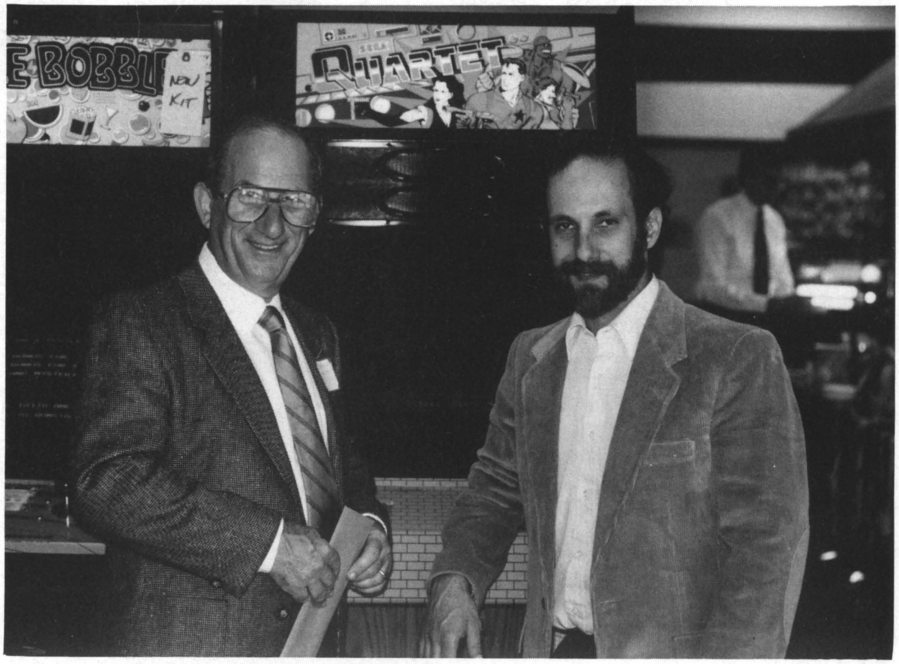
ROBBINS: The whole Dynamo team has really gotten behind air hockey and made it an integral part of their sales effort. I really appreciate what VP Mark Struhs has done in international sales; we probably have tables in 25 countries and in just about every continent. Air hockey has been a means for Dynamo to greatly expand their international sales.

Beyond that are the people who build the games. Dynamo has a great core of people who get the game out, and I want to salute them: a team of about 10 people on the production line who are supervised by Morris Oujesky and Ileana Hocking. They and the folks in quality control have tremendous responsibilities, and they do a great job. Building an air hockey table is not that easy to do properly. Many details must be attended to, and many demanding specs must be met. The difficulty of the task is shown by the fact that so few people are doing it!

REPLAY: What's the tournament program look like now?

ROBBINS: Our 1991 tournament season is greatly expanded over last year's. We have two national tournaments — a $10,000 spring tournament in Fame City in Houston; and a fall tournament whose site has not yet been selected. We're hoping to arrange for international participation from European, Japanese, Australian and Mexican players in the fall event.

In addition to the nationals, we are scheduling a series of at least a dozen regional and state tournaments. The total purse in cash and prizes can run anywhere from $2,000 to $5,000. We're reaching out to new areas that haven't had events before. When we do this, we also tie as many locations as possible into a qualifying tournament program, so that the sport will be stimulated citywide and statewide.



Chip off the old block: Mark with his famous father Joe – the photo was taken when both were working separate products at a Betson open house affair a while back.

By the way, I used to spend most of my time getting the word out that air hockey is profitable and reliable. Well, now the word is out. So I've shifted my priorities and am now concentrating on providing support and promotion for the tables out in the field, and for the operators who are running them.

REPLAY: What other promotions do you put on?

ROBBINS: We do many publicity events to draw media attention to air hockey and get it accepted as a legitimate sport. Recently, for example, Dynamo and American Vending Sales provided two tables for a "President's Party" for VIPs, held on Jan. 19 after the National Hockey League All-Star Game in Chicago. All of the old players were there and some of the current players, along with the media and hockey team executives. They all enjoyed seeing myself and national champ Tim Weissman play an exhibition match. We talked to everyone about the sport, and many people showed great interest. Even professional ice hockey players didn't realize that there was so much technique involved! A similar exhibition was staged at the Olympics Festival in Minnesota last year, arranged by AAMA with tables provided by Lieberman Distributing.

REPLAY: Near-term, can we look for any new technical developments in air hockey?

ROBBINS: At the ACME show, Dynamo's overhead scoring model will incorporate a built-in light that illuminates the table, using a very advanced fluorescent bulb which has just come onto the market. It puts out a really great amount of light for its size. For locations that may have problems with lighting or shadows, this will help eliminate that. Plus, having the table well lit acts as a natural attract mode.

REPLAY: In the broadest sense, what's the future of the market and the sport of air hockey?

ROBBINS: I think the future is unlimited and will probably surprise everyone — even me! There is no reason air hockey can't become respected as a sport, like table tennis or pool. Also, I'm certain air hockey will continue to be a more and more important part of coin-op, especially if the industry continues to move in the direction of interactive games, sports-oriented games and family amusement. It's truly a sport for all ages, and a game for all seasons.

REPLAY: Thank you for your time and your thoughts.

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Tournament Highlights

MERIT TO OHIO — Merit's World Series of Darts held its "Ohio Open" at the Community Civic Center in Tiffin, Ohio Feb. 8-10, drawing players from Canada and all over the Midwest to compete for over $5,000 in cash and prizes. Local operating firm C&J Games sponsored the event, with Shaffer Dist. providing 30 *Pub Time Darts* games. C&J boasts a league base of over 500 players; they recently joined NDA and adopted its SPRE system. This past year alone, they paid out over $30,000 in prize money . . . and next year will be even bigger. Congrats!

MERIT IN MICHIGAN — Over 345 entrants from six Midwestern and Eastern states, plus Canada, competed in the fourth annual "Great Lakes Open," a $4,000 event which took place Feb. 22-24 at the Ramada Inn of Southgate, Mich. Merit's tourney director John Hooten praised the players' "outstanding support" of the program.

ARACHNID TO WISCONSIN — Arachnid's BullShooter darts tour was part of the Waukesha County Expo on Feb. 8-10. A successful $5,000 qualifying event sponsored by the state's Arachnid distributor, Pioneer Sales & Service. Winners like Joe Schmitz and Natalie Hanson (seen here with Arachnid tourney director Dave Schultz, center) will compete in the BullShooter VI finals in Chicago this summer.

AUDIO DART TOURNEY — The second annual Audio Dart Tournament, in which visually-impaired players will compete on Arachnid's *Audio Darts* games, takes place April 5-6 at the Seville Hotel near the Minneapolis Airport. Call the Braille Sports Foundation at 612/920-9363 for more information.

VALLEY TO SAN DIEGO — Lynch Distributing hosted their first Valley Cup Qualifier in San Diego recently, drawing over 100 shooters who competed on 26 Valley dart games for the right to play in Valley's dart finals (which were held in conjunction with ACME). Tourney director Rick Lynch called the event "the first I've ever run without a service call." Congratulations, Rick and colleagues, for a successful first promotion!

ARACHNID TO WASHINGTON — Feb. 22-24 saw the sixth annual Arachnid "BullShooter" dart tournament hold its Washington State qualifying event at the West Water Inn in Olympia. Northwest dealer General Coin co-sponsored the affair which offered $5,000 in cash and prizes. Winners will travel to Chicago for the "World Challenge of Champions" which takes place over Memorial Day weekend. Seen here in the photo is winning "Cricket" player Kay Davidson with Arachnid's marketing vice president Sam Zammuto.

TORNADO TO TEXAS — Over 450 players competed in the $10,000 Texas State Championship of table soccer, sponsored by Tornado on Jan. 18-20 and held in the Clicks Billiards Hall in Arlington. The location has held weekly tournaments for two years now, and are enjoying huge revenues. The 121% coin-op revenue increase is thanks mostly to the appeal of this game. Player Steve Murray also helps run the events for location manager Tom Barto, who notes that even dedicated pool players are now getting into table soccer sometimes. "Pool revenues are down only a small percentage," Barto added. The tournament also brought new players to the site, he said.

TORNADO'S BIG PLANS — Big purses for winning soccer players are offered in regional and national events leading up to a World Championships for table soccer late this summer, all sponsored by Tornado Table Soccer, Inc. Easter weekend saw a $25,000 event in San Bernardino, Calif. Next comes the $35,000 Masters Open which takes place Memorial Day weekend in Minneapolis. The $30,000 Nationals occur in St. Louis over the July Fourth weekend, while the $75,000 World Finals will take place at the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport Hilton over Labor Day weekend. For more information on these and other upcoming Tornado tournaments in your area, call Dave Courington at Tornado headquarters (817/572-3708.).

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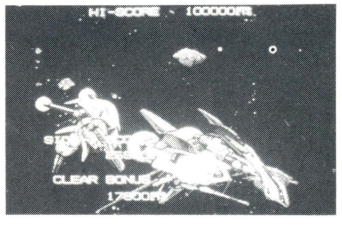

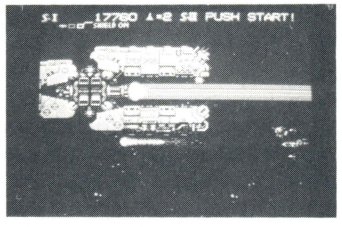

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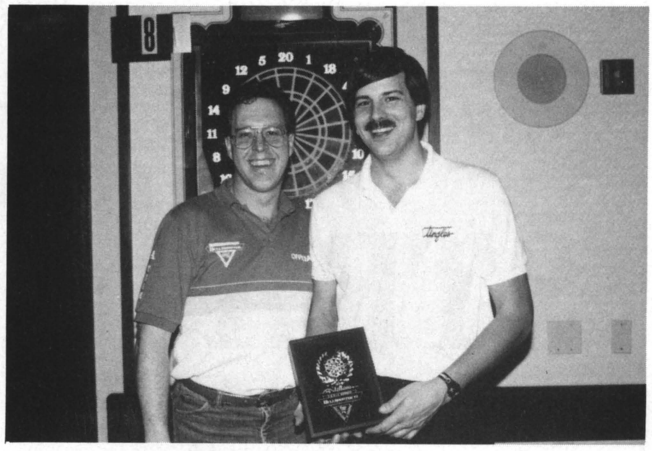
VALLEY TO WASHINGTON — Valley's *Cougar Darts* saw lots of action Feb. 9-10 at the Washington Holiday Inn as more than 80 players from three states competed in a tournament sponsored by Music Service operating company. Winning players competed in Valley's national dart finals, held in conjunction with the ACME show in Las Vegas. Seen here are the women's doubles champs Lanelle Lenz (who took first in ladies' singles) and Kelli Spotts (who placed second in singles).



ARACHNID TO MASSACHUSETTS — The A-Team was in Worcester, Mass. over Jan. 18-20 for the eighth of 16 regional qualifiers, all part of Arachnid's 1990-91 BullShooter VI tour of electronic dart contests. New England Coin-Op Distributing co-sponsored the $5,000 event. Winners qualified to compete in the world finals, slated for Chicago this summer. Seen here at right is singles second-place finisher Frank Denchick with Arachnid's Bob Mills at left.

ARACHNID TO TEXAS — "Everything is big in Texas — including darts!" smiled Arachnid Marketing VP Sam Zammuto after the success of the company's $5,000 regional qualifier held Jan. 4-6 in Houston, co-sponsored by distributor H.A. Franz. Winners qualified to compete in the world finals, slated for Chicago this summer. Seen here is Arachnid's Steve Johnson (center) with Barbie Woytasik and Wade McDonald, who won first place in Mixed Cricket and Mixed Doubles . . . and alone or with other partners, they placed first in a couple of other events, too!

ARACHNID TO OHIO — It happened last winter, but Arachnid pulled in so many people that we'd like to tell you about their big dart tournament success at the Franklin County Fairgrounds. Over 600 players competed! This $5,000 event was the Columbus, Ohio stop for this year's BullShooter tour. Co-sponsors included two regional distributors: Cleveland Coin and Shaffer Distributing . . . which just goes to show that when you work with quality people, you get quality results! Seen here is women's champ Mary Donaker with Arachnid's Herb Healey.

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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. 11th annual int'l. singles & team championships, Riviera Hotel, Vegas. 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.

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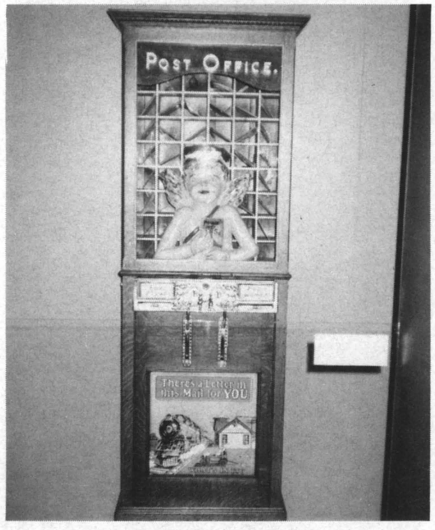
ancient arcade units liven up San Francisco airport exhibit

If the AMOA was in the "trade show business" 75 years ago, a sampling of the machines they would have displayed for operators were on view recently at the United Airlines terminal at the San Francisco airport. Sponsored by their Airports Commission and the American Carousel Museum, these creaky old novelties were lent by the Santa Cruz Seaside company and Ed Zelinsky and provided a peek back into arcade history for travelers waiting for their planes.

All of the units were in excellent shape, a marvel considering that so many dated from the 1910s. A large placard describing the origin of coin-op novelties under the headline "The Penny Arcade: Vending Machines" gave passersby the Commission's idea of our roots. It said:

"The coin machine was invented in the 1880s and 1890s. Their origin was associated with the railway. Coin-operated vending or service machines could be found at nearly every railway station. The earliest type of machine usually showed a steam ship in a glass case that would start to move when a coin was inserted, offering amusement for the spectator and serving as advertisement for the steamship company.



"These machines later became the penny arcade at amusement parks...fortune tellers, games of chance, athletic machines that could measure the participant's grip or strength. Music machines included disc phonographs that were the predecessors of the jukebox. Stereo, flip card or film machines were popular early video attractions.

"The machines in this exhibition come from the Santa Cruz boardwalk and are typical of this popular art form from the turn of the century. Ten cents could buy a half an hour of entertainment of the finest music by noted musicians and bands of the period, the voice of Caruso, a view of scenes of exotic, faraway places or participants in athletic pastimes. The penny arcade was considered an educational experience for the working class, as valuable as the theater or museum."

Thanks to Reno operator (and frequent flyer) Bill Van Anda, these photographs bring a bit of the exhibit to our readers. The machines include the 1907 *Uncle Sam* (which measures your hand shake power), the *Perfume Lady* (a 1912 unit that dispensed lilac water for a penny), the *Electricity is Life* (from 1907), a compact player piano, and more hot fun!

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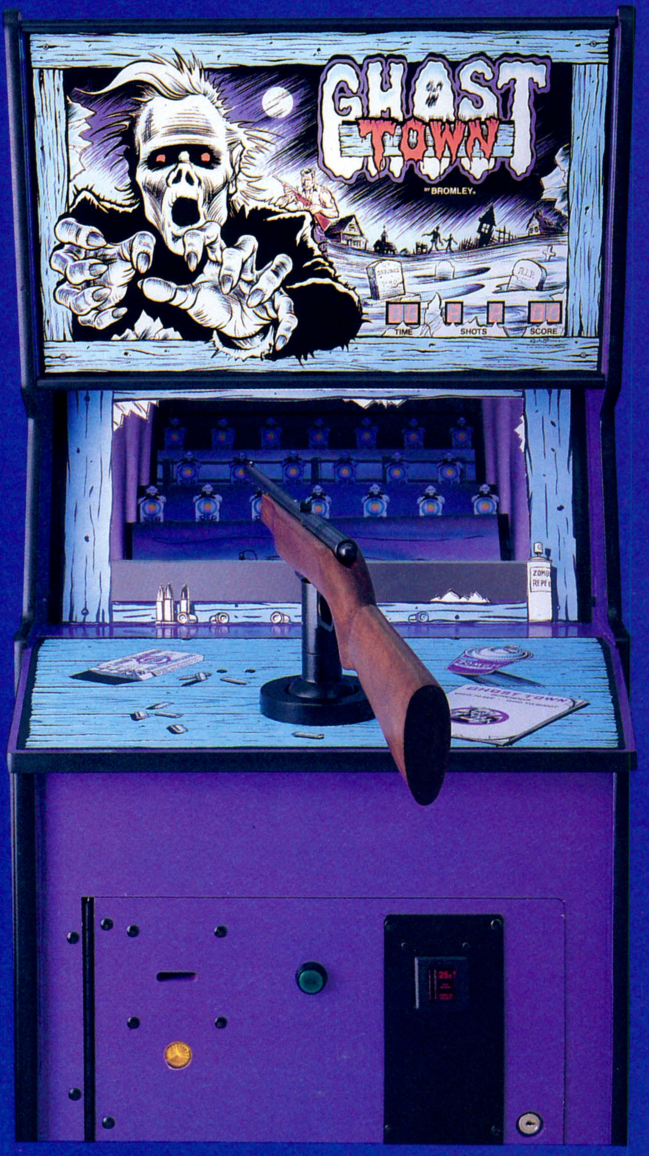

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CATCH THE WAVE!

tide is high with four new redemption titles from Coastal

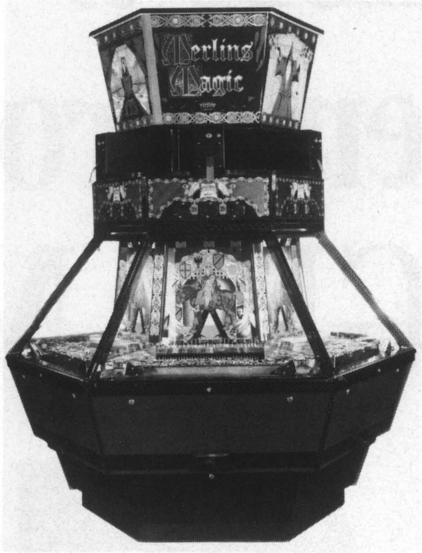
A floating vessel from another era! A circus favorite! A legendary magician! A sharpshootin' cop! Are we speaking in code? Are we speaking in delirium?

No, we are speaking about a challenging new array of redemption games from Coastal Amusements! If you're at all familiar with Coastal's existing product lines, you'll know to expect a "delirium of delight" from players . . . and a "delirium of dollars" in your cashbox.

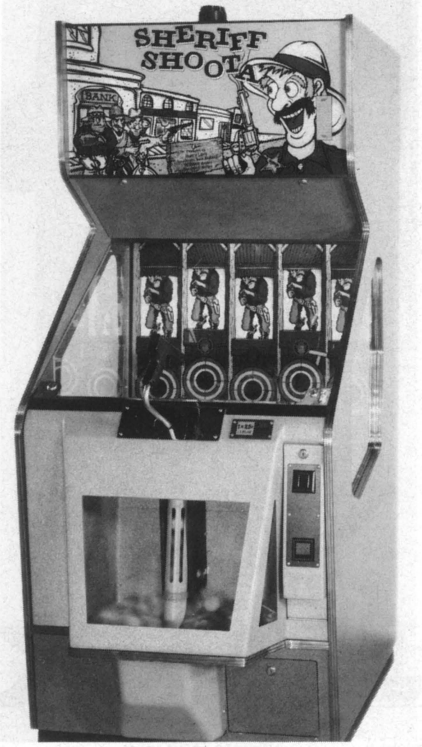
The game's proper names are *Riverboat, Crazy Clown, Merlin's Magic,* and *Sheriff Shoota.* All are loaded with challenging fun.

Chugging down the distributor line, *Riverboat* is a one-player skill

coin pusher with cabinet art reminiscent of the Americana era. Game features include a player-operated skill stop button, ticket dispenser and a full meter system. Many of the same features are included in *Crazy Clown,* which requires the player to use a steering wheel to move the clown in an attempt to catch balls (before the timer expires) as they randomly drop through a pachinko-style playfield. Additional equipment includes a ticket dispenser and attachable seat.

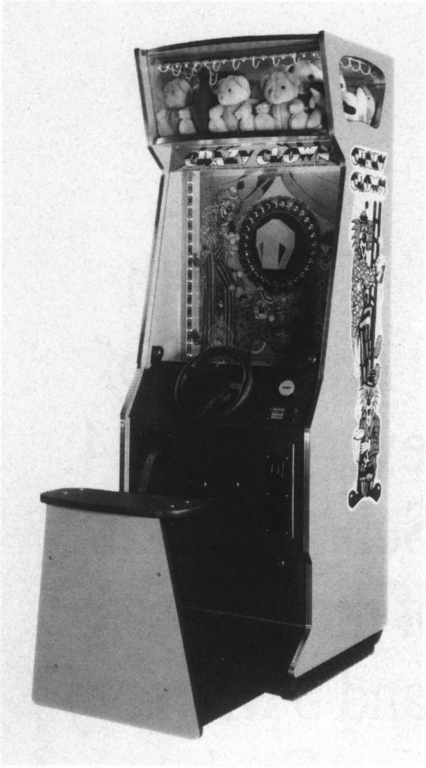


King Arthur and his knights could all play *Merlin's Magic* — a true six-player skill piece. Features include oversized playfields, dual bonus chutes and three coin entries per station with an optional ticket dispenser for each one. And Coastal is aiming to please with *Sheriff Shoota,*



which consists of a unique ball delivery system which allows the player to shoot ping pong balls into any one of the five randomly selected score targets. Each hit scores and at the end of the game, the player is issued tickets based on the number of scored targets. Utilizing a western bad guys theme, this game is sure to hit the target!

Coastal's on top with these games. For more information, contact the firm at 800/253-3258.



Crazy Clown *(above) asks the player to turn a steering wheel to move the clown and catch balls before time expires. Balls randomly drop down through a pachinko-styled backfield.*

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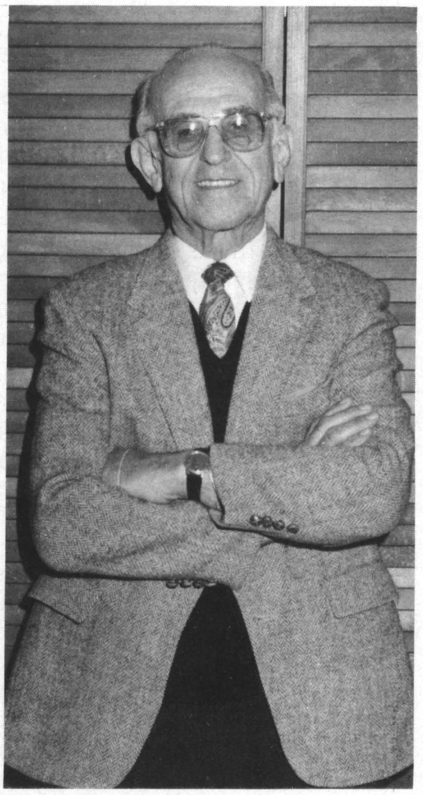
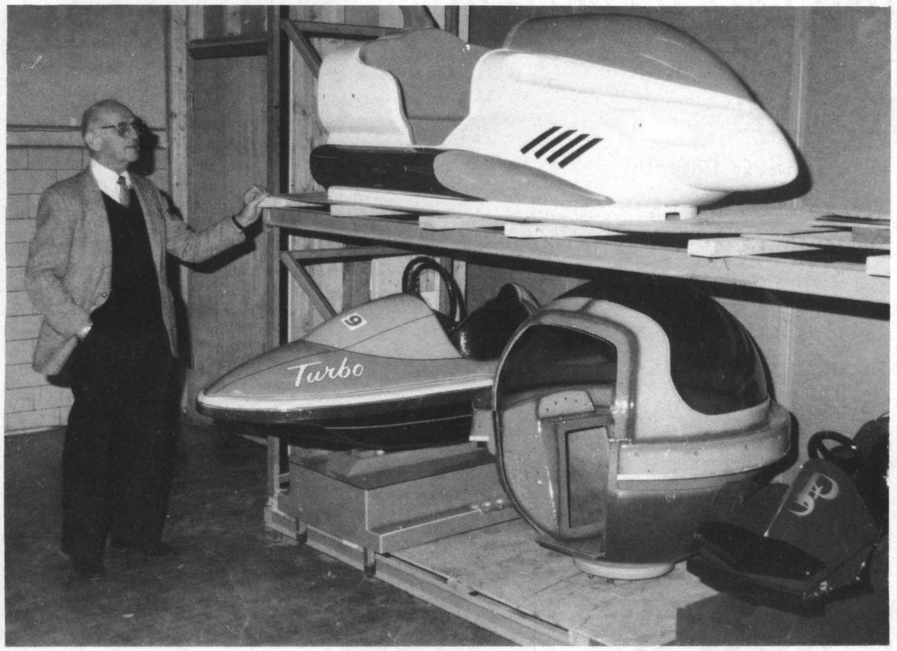
BOB VERSMAN

Kiddie Rides USA prexy marks 20th anniversary in coin-op; will supply growing ride market with American-made product



Foreign manufacturers have dominated the kiddie ride market for years. Italy, Britain, Australia and other countries have been "where the action is" if you wanted an exciting, dynamic helicopter, or space shuttle, or train on tracks. But importer Kiddie Rides USA (Davenport, Iowa) says this year, they're going to supplement their line of quality imports with their own U.S.-made rides for the first time in many years.

The move comes as company founder and president Bob Versman is celebrating his 20th anniversary in coin-op. "Kiddie rides are a long-term, profitable investment," Bob likes to say. "It's not a flashy, get-rich-quick kind of product. But thanks to the success of family amusement centers like ShowBiz Pizza, operators are waking up to the value of this product. We sold kiddie rides in 1972 that are still operating — and earning — today!"



Some guys are lucky to own a boat. Bob Versman has lots of them (the coin-operated, small versions).

Bob and his brother Dan entered the coin-op business in 1971 after a prior career in the family baking business. They first contracted for the manufacturing of, and sold, the *Kiddie-Rama.* This was a coin-operated cartoon-viewing booth for kids, which showed 8 mm Disney cartoons and others, Bob explains. Auto dealers and department store salesmen used to use the viewing booths in their showrooms and on the merchandise floor . . . to distract children long enough to make a sale to their parents! The Versman brothers sold thousands of the machines until 1978 (and they still have a couple of units sitting around the warehouse, Bob admitted).

In 1975, Bob and Dan were showing their cartoon viewer at the ATE in London when they saw some attractive British kiddie rides and realized they would make a profitable product, too. They began manufacturing their own rides out of a Denver plant.

"It didn't last long," Bob recalls of the venture. "We soon discovered we could buy them cheaper than make them." Manufacturing challenges aside, the ride business appealed to Bob. The brothers soon be-

came a premier importer-exporter of kiddie rides, from and to the world market. Their "royal" list of clients included two kings: Burger King . . . and the King of Morocco!

As stated, this is Bob's 20th year in the business. He's 78 and seems hale and hearty, and says he has no plans to really retire. His brother and partner Dan passed away in 1981, but the business remains a family affair because Bob is leaving more and more of the company agenda in the hands of his Denver-based VP (and son-in-law) Stuart Heller.

Don't break out the gold watches yet, however. Bob goes to his Davenport office (where the games are warehoused) seven days a week. "Very seldom do I take a Sunday off," he smiled. "Maybe if I want to watch the NCC Playoffs! Otherwise, I come down at 10 AM and work to six. I have no hobbies and am used to long hours and hard work."

So here's a salute to the "grand old man of the kiddie ride business."

One look at the ride inventory built by Kiddie USA.

Bob Versman observes this 1991 business anniversary with 12 employees and a growing market to enjoy at the office, and three kids and seven grandchildren to enjoy on the home front. And, at this fall's AMOA, he'll finally be able to point with pride to rides designed and built by Kiddie Rides USA!

For more information about the company, call them at 319/326-6467 (Iowa) or 800/448-6888 (Denver).

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★ = *significant crossover activity*

POP

★ 1. ***SOMEDAY,*** *Mariah Carey, Columbia 73561*
2. ***RESCUE ME,*** *Madonna, Warner Bros. 19490*
★ 3. ***ALL THE MAN THAT I NEED,*** *Whitney Houston, Arista 2153*
4. ***ONE MORE TRY,*** *Timmy T., Quality 15114*
5. ***ALL THIS TIME,*** *Sting, A&M 1541*
6. ***WICKED GAME,*** *Chris Isaak, Reprise 19704*
7. ***COMING OUT OF THE DARK,*** *Gloria Estefan, Epic 73666*
8. ***I SAW RED,*** *Warrant, Columbia 73597*
★ 9. ***HOLD YOU TIGHT,*** *Tara Kemp, Giant 19458*
★ 10. ***ROUND AND ROUND,*** *Tevin Campbell, Warner Bros. 19748*

POP PICK HITS

RHYTHM OF THE HEART
Rod Stewart - Warner Bros. 19336

HIGHWIRE
Rolling Stones - Columbia 73742

VOICES THAT CARE
Voices That Care - Giant 19350

SIGNS
Tesla - Geffen 19653

BABY, BABY
Amy Grant - A&M 1549

CW

1. ***MEN,*** *The Forester Sisters, Warner Bros. 19450*
2. ***LITTLE THINGS,*** *Marty Stuart, MCA 53975*
3. ***DOWN HOME,*** *Alabama, RCA 27787*
4. ***I'D LOVE YOU ALL OVER AGAIN,*** *Alan Jackson, Arista 2166*
5. ***WALK ON FAITH,*** *Mike Reid, Columbia 73623*
6. ***DON'T TELL ME WHAT TO DO,*** *Pam Tillis, Arista 2129*
7. ***I MEAN I LOVE YOU,*** *Hank Williams, Jr., Warner/Curb 19463*
8. ***LOVING BLIND,*** *Clint Black, RCA 2749*
9. ***I'M THAT KIND OF GIRL,*** *Patty Loveless, MCA 53977*
10. ***THE EAGLE,*** *Waylon Jennings, Epic 73718*

COUNTRY PICK HITS

ROCKIN' YEARS
D. Parton/R. Van Shelton - Columbia 73711

DRIFT OFF TO DREAM
Travis Tritt - Warner Bros. 19431

I GOT IT BAD
Matraca Berg - RCA 27107

FANCY
Reba McEntire - MCA 54042

HEROES
Paul Overstreet - RCA 27807

R&B

★ 1. ***ALL THE MAN THAT I NEED,*** *Whitney Houston, Arista 2156*
★ 2. ***HOLD YOU TIGHT,*** *Tara Kemp, Giant 19458*
3. ***ALL TRUE MAN,*** *Alexander O' Neal, Tabu/Epic 73627*
4. ***WHATEVER YOU WANT,*** *Tony! Toni! Tone!, Wing/Mercury 5904*
★ 5. ***ROUND AND ROUND,*** *Tevin Campbell, Warner Bros. 19748*
6. ***MR. DEE JAY,*** *Kiara, Arista 2183*
7. ***SHORT BUT FUNKY,*** *Too Short, Jive/RCA 1434*
8. ***NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO,*** *Diana Ross & Al B. Sure!, Warner 19455*
★ 9. ***ALL I WANT IS YOU,*** *Surface, Columbia 73684*
10. ***POWER OF LOVE,*** *Deee-Lite, Elektra 64912*

R&B PICK HITS

ALWAYS
Carmen Carter - Arista 2133

ANOTHER SLEEPLESS NIGHT
Shawn Christopher - Arista 22148

YOUR LOVE PART 2
Keith Sweat - Elektra 64894

THIS HOUSE
Tracie Spencer - Capitol 44652

IF MY BROTHER'S IN TROUBLE
Jeffrey Osborne - Arista 2213

CDs

1. ***THE IMMACULATE COLLECTION,*** *Madonna, Sire/Warner Bros. 26440*
2. ***INTO THE LIGHT,*** *Gloria Estefan, Epic 46988*
3. ***THE SOUL CAGES,*** *Sting, A&M 6405*
4. ***SERIOUS HITS...LIVE!,*** *Phil Collins, Atlantic 82157*
5. ***SHAKE YOUR MONEY MAKER,*** *The Black Crowes, Def American 24278*
6. ***RAZORS EDGE,*** *AC/DC, Atco 91413*
7. ***NO FENCES,*** *Garth Brooks, Enigma/Captiol 93866*
8. ***PUT YOURSELF IN MY SHOES,*** *Clint Black, RCA 2372*
9. ***MARIAH CAREY,*** *Mariah Carey, Columbia 45202*
10. ***TO THE EXTREME,*** *Vanilla Ice, SBK 95325*

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5. **Here I Am (Come And Take Me)**
   UB40
6. **Another Deal Goes Down**
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7. **Someday**
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LASER JUKE™

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The Art of Entertainment

the Big Ticket

Many times I have been asked the question, "What do you think about billiard tables for my family entertainment center?"

Those of you who read my article in the March *RePlay*, already know the answer. The machine mix of the most successful arcades are interesting and varied. This mix attracts *all types of players.*

Yes, billiard tables may definitely be part of your family entertainment center, and really add something special.

Before you make a purchase or rental, you have to make sure you have room for a table or two. Regulation tables are eight or nine feet long. A well-planned pool room must offer sufficient room to make the players comfortable, plenty of room between tables and wall (to allow for the stretched shot), and as much as three or four feet for the cue to extend behind the player.

I would suggest a small area, perhaps separated from the rest of your facility, with several windows. This provides both an attractive display within your facility (a skillful player is a delight to watch) and privacy for the pool player to concentrate.

A modest start is recommended because of the overhead — tables, cue sticks, balls, etc. — and the space requirements. But in the right facility, billiard tables, like redemption games, have an excellent return on investment. In an attended facility, billiard tables may need a new cloth once a year (a modest maintenance expense), but the table itself should last and continue earning for seven to ten years.

As part of your "modest" start, it is not necessary to purchase expensive cue sticks. But you should provide sticks of varying lengths. Depending on the height of your customers, you may want to provide sticks of varying weights. But then, the expert players will probably carry their own sticks.

Billiard tables are run two ways: coin-op or timed play. The decision is the operator's. Different areas of the country can demand different prices for play. As I've said before, look around at other facilities in your area to see what they charge and how they charge. Coin-op $1 play certainly is reasonable. Timed play can demand even more. The cost of play should be high enough to discourage all but the serious player from participating: serious players do not waste time, and time is money in your facility. Serious players are also more careful with the equipment.

Many of the operators who ask me about billiard tables, follow my positive answer with a second question: "Won't the tables attract an element of players who will downgrade my facility?"

I can imagine the picture they have in mind: pool halls and speakeasies, right out of a B movie from the 1940s or 1950s. The game of billiards and the people who play it have come a long way. Today, billiards is a legitimate sport. Many people attribute the improved image of the game of billiards to Minnesota Fats, whose notoriety helped popularize the game. (Besides, any sport beloved by Mozart and Mark Twain — both avid pool players — can stand up proudly with every other coin-op game we've got!)

The 1986 movie *The Color of Money* showed both sides of the question: the downside pool hall as a local hang-out, and the upside appeal of the sport of billiards. A skillful game of billiards is a real attraction. By the way, Paul Newman won an Oscar for his acting in that film, and pool table manufacturers and league organizers say it helped spur a boom in "yuppie pool playing" and "billiards boutiques" which is still going on today.

Yes, billiard tables add another dimension to your family fun center. They may be played by members of the family — adolescents and dad — who otherwise might not be in your customer base. Operators of family fun centers should at least *consider* adding pool tables. As I said last time, create "new revenue" by offering a variety of games to attract a broader player base.

And of course, keep thinking redemption!

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FRANKFURT CRANKS

EasternEuro prospects buoy IMA

by Martin Dempsey

IMA, Germany's 12th international trade fair for amusement & vending machines took place in Hall 5 at the Frankfurt Messe Jan. 23-26. A total of 204 exhibitors from 17 countries took a total of 22,000 square meters of exhibition space. Most of the exhibitors were from Germany, followed by Spain and Britain.

Thousands attended the four-day event, which was made even more successful by the new additional market in the former territory of East Germany, the possibilities of trading in Eastern Europe and the approach of 1992. It was a vibrant show, indicating the strength of the industry in Germany even in these changing and unreliable times.

The opening ceremony took place at 10:00 AM Jan. 23 where speakers included Paul Gauselmann of VDAI and Dr. Horst Waffenschmidt, a Parliamentary Secretary of State for the Federal Minister of the Interior, who said: "The opening of the market in central and eastern Europe, the German reunification and the approaching European domestic market have served to further intensify the interest of the presenters and visiting trade specialists in the IMA."

According to Gauselmann: "The slot machine branch can look forward to a brighter future with stabilized general rulings after years of legal uncertainty, immense tax burdens and legislative restrictions." He emphasized that this branch had undertaken self-regulatory measures and now hopes that the legislators will grant them a fair chance.

Dr. Horst Waffenschmidt of Germany's Interior Ministry, opens IMA the morning of Jan. 23, flanked by two of the nation's true heavyweights, Paul Gauselmann (far left) and Ullrich Schulze (forward at right).

MARKET

The German market is buoyant at the moment for a number of reasons, including the addition of the former territory of East Germany, which has created an extraordinary demand for used equipment. It is now impossible to acquire any large quantities of used equipment, all of which has recently been going into the east where the market for amusement machines is growing and changing so quickly that no sooner has this happened than the demand from the east is changing to a requirement for new equipment also.

Sports-oriented games such as table soccer, electronic darts, billiards and snooker are also coming to the fore in this market, mainly because of the unrelenting efforts in promoting them. The other main sector that is undergoing many changes is the jukebox sector, where the move continues toward compact discs.

The considerable growth of the use of amusement, gaming and vending machines and the corresponding development of the exhibition is due mainly to electronic innovations that have made possible what would have been considered impossible, only a short time ago.

The show had a diversity of stands, including exhibitors with coin counting and handling equipment, spares and accessories, tools, printing, decor and all the other equipment and services necessary to play an active part in the fast moving amusement industry in Germany.

VENDING

Germany is one of the world's biggest users of vending machines. But even so, there are considerable areas that remain underdeveloped. The vending section in the show has always been an important one and this year was no exception.

The assortment ranged from beverage to quick snack machines to catering equipment that delivers a complete menu. The producers are working toward perfecting their

systems in order to provide technical and hygienic quality while placing more emphasis on the enjoyment factor of dining. Different eating habits, flexible break times and the desire for round-the-clock service have contributed to the growth of vending machines and products.

CASINO EXPO

This is the second year that Casino Expo has been run in conjunction with IMA and the area for casino equipment has been expanded to facilitate larger stands for existing exhibitors and some new exhibitors. All the requirements for a casino were on display including card and roulette tables, gaming machines, and even a company that specializes in operating casinos on a sharing basis.

ENTERTAINING

The show had a very high entertainment content with a larger-than-life Bart Simpson and an even larger puppet master, on stilts, along with puppet, touring the show throughout the week. Food and drink were provided on most stands and some of the larger stands went to extraordinary lengths to provide facilities for their sales people and potential customers, including the provision of numerous private consulting rooms supplied with refreshments.

One of the social highlights of the show was the Nova Reception and Awards Dinner, which was held at the Frankfurterhof Hotel on Wednesday evening. It helped to evaporate the worries of the times and the pressures of the day, even if only on a temporary basis.

It was an evening of unwinding in a relaxed atmosphere where Nova suppliers, customers, employees and friends enjoyed themselves and I am certain clenched some deals that had evaded them during the day. This and other similar informal exchanges of views and expressing of opinions are at least as important as the formal business, conducted during the official opening hours of shows.

MEDIA

There were many TV and radio interviews and the Gauselmann Group stand, the biggest at the show, had its own theater which featured many different types of entertainment including can-can dancers, interviews, discussions and debates, all of which were relayed to monitors located on the outside of the stand, attracting visitors to see their vast range of equipment and services.

The show attracted the usual selection of trade journalists but succeeded in attracting far more from national and local press than any other similar event. The press facilities were outstanding and made the task of reporting on the event a pleasure rather than a chore.

OVERSEAS VISITORS

As many international firms had recently advised their executives against traveling to Europe because of the international political situation, it was inevitable that the attendance of both U.S. and U.K. exhibitors and visitors would be affected. However, some did travel and found it worthwhile. People I met during my visit included Alan Willis, Secretary of BACTA. In addition to attending the show, Alan was also attending a Euromat committee meeting and a Euromat presidium meeting which were held in the Marriott Hotel, Frankfurt. We understand that the main business of the meetings was to make arrangements for the AGM of Euromat, which will be held in Brussels on the 23rd of May.

Jim McCann of Kimble in Southern Ireland visited the show; John Conway and Aideen Forde of Meter Controls International in Northern Ireland, showed their equipment on a number of stands involved in the pool and snooker sector and Alan Meats of Associated Leisure exhibited a HGM pool table on the stand of his Austrian agent.

Mike Nevin and Pat Bronson from Atari Ireland went to the show to support their distributor Nova; Bob Deith from London, fresh from the reorganization of his company; Steve Bierrum of Konami, assisting his German counterpart; Tony Lynch of Coinmaster, also supporting his distributor; Ian Jamieson and Steve Boushakra of Euromax, who were on the IGOA stand and of course my esteemed colleagues from both Coin Slot/EuroSlot and Amusement Business in Britain.

The 1992 IMA will be held from Jan. 22-25.

Herr Bart Simpson salutes the camera from Bally Wulff's display of Data East pinballs. Apparently the Simpsons are getting to know our German brothers and sisters (how come their Bart is bigger than ours?)

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Putting Challenge at the Bally Wulff stand got a lot of attention from "professionals" (and those who thought they were). There's an enormous interest in sport games in Germany at the present time.

NSM's Rupert Mosinger explains the features of their Soundmaster wallbox which offers CD play and was actually a unit he himself pioneered many years ago before CD became a market reality.

Peter Von Schlippe and Steve Bierrum of Konami showed a selection of videos including Overdrive, Whistles & Bells and Par T Golf. Richard Dunn (by the way) has returned from Frankfurt to London.

Bill & Roseanne Harris with Derek Lynch and a guest at their Royal Bell exhibit showed a full range of fruit machine coversions which can be reprogrammed for most countries.

John Conway & Aideen Forde of Meter Controls International of Northern Ireland showed their computerized system for pool and snooker tables. They actually appeared at three different IMA exhibits.

NSM's Ulli Kuennecke with an illuminated display showing the steps needed to establish a successful game promotion. The firm has a huge number of dart games out now, as well as a presence in pool & soccer.

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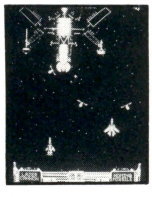

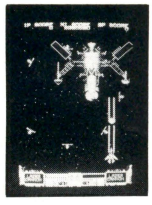

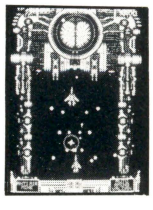

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DUTCH TREAT

Holland's Van Expo hits the spot

by Martin Dempsey

The 15th Van Expo took place Jan. 8-10 at the MECC, Maastricht, in the south of the Netherlands. Although it is considered by many as a domestic event, it had a very international flavor, with equipment from most of the leading manufacturers finding its way to the show, albeit through the hands of Dutch distributors.

The fact that the show clashed with ATEI in London and that it was held away from the larger cities with international airports, all but guaranteed the lack of any large numbers of overseas exhibitors or visitors. I attended the show on the last day and having spent three days at ATEI in London, found Van Expo a welcome relaxing change.

It is an exhibition with a style and pace of its own — a very relaxed atmoshphere where the exhibitors all make a contribution to a fund that provides lavish hospitality for the visitors. Food and drink is supplied throughout the three days at no cost to those atttending the show and it helps to create a convivial air that makes doing business a pleasure.

The event was both a social and business occasion, with much of the floorspace taken up with tables and chairs, for the benefit of weary visitors, having difficulty deciding which equipment to purchase (there was a large and varied selection available). The setting for the show, the quality of the stands and equipment and the attention to detail by organizer Anton Zondag, gave the amusement industry in the Netherlands both a professional and memorable show.

The 24 exibitors showed a selection of equipment covering a complete spectrum from gaming (which was cetainly the biggest section) to snooker, pool, jukeboxes, soccer tables, pin tables, pushers, darts, kiddie rides, coin counting & handling equipment, computer software and hardware and, of course, spares and accessories.

The impressive Van Expo stand of Janshen-Hahnraths displayed equipment from such suppliers as Barcrest, Williams pinballs and Deith Royals interchangeable video games. More Van Expo photos next page.

This is the first time the show was held at this venue and everyone seemed happy with the arrangements. Maastricht is relatively easily accessible by road, rail and air and even though it does not have the well-known attractions of some other cities in the Netherlands, it has its own unique character. Attendance at the show was strictly trade only — arcade owners and site operators, with no one else allowed in.

The gaming legislation in the Netherlands is the most recent and arguably one of the best in Europe, having come into effect in 1986 after many years of very hard work by a united industry led by the trade association VAN. Gaming machines are allowed in arcades and bars and non-gaming equipment is allowed in many different locations, subject to local planning laws and by-laws.

Gaming and non-gaming equipment may be mixed and this is actively encouraged in some areas. The exact size of the market for both types of equipment is difficult to ascertain as no up-to-date statistics are available, but it is certain that the size of the market has grown considerably in the past five years, since the introduction of the new legislation.

This forward-thinking and exact legislation has helped those in the business to plan their development and has also created a lot of extra activity in other ares of the industry, resulting in an increase in the availability of amusement equipment at the same time.

Most exhibitors were from the Netherlands and are involved in the manufacture or distribution area, with many firms manufacturing games under licence from overseas companies or acting as their distributors. This well-organized event is an indication of the professionalism that exists in this small but efficient market for amusement and gaming equipment.

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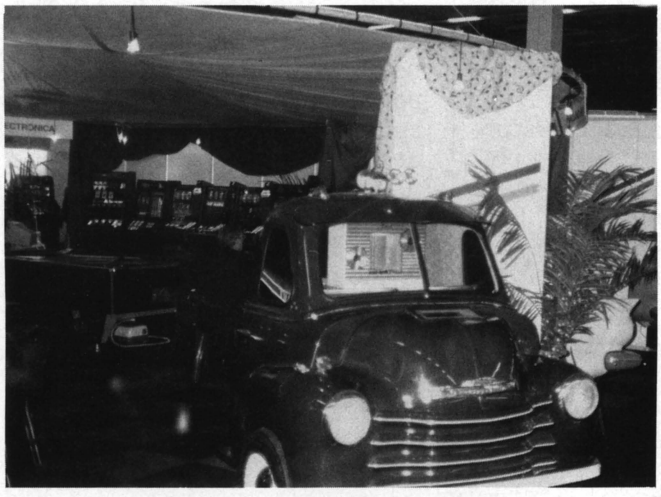
Eurocoin International showed off an extensive range of equipment, including NSM jukeboxes, Rene Pierre pool tables, Gottlieb pins and other videos, gaming units and spares.

Judith de Jonge of Halland Snooker with one of their pushers. They distribute both Crompton and Harry Levy products and are also agents for Riley snooker, Brunswick pool & ABF soccers.



The latest jukebox-in-a-car from Holland Horeca. They specialize in off-beat styles of music machines and also supply a complete range of other equipment to the trade.

P.C.A. van der Maade of Zuid O Matic with the Wellow dart game from Associated Leisure in Britain. This is a new product for the company, using steel darts (a version is available for soft tips).

Marcel Geerdink of Twentse Automaten Centrale with a Maygay fruit machine. In addition to Maygay, they distribute pins and jukeboxes and have been a Wurlitzer dealer for thirty years.

Roger Thomas and son Maxwell in action on the J&R Biljarts stand. This company specializes in the sale and hire of pool tables, snookers and soccers, all popular in Holland at this time.

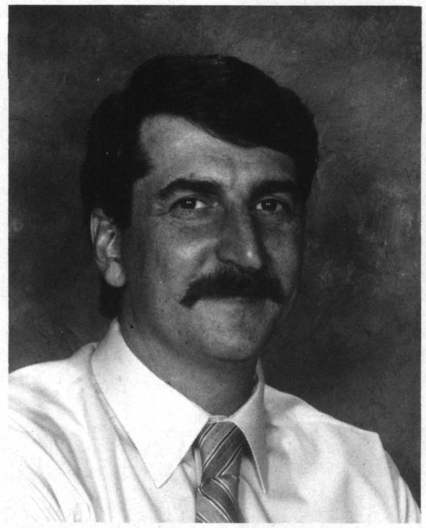
TECHNICAL TIPS

PINBALL'S HIGH VOLTAGE POWER SUPPLY

by RANDY FROMM

There are lots of electronic repairs that can be made in the field. Finding a bad logic board or power supply doesn't automatically mean a trip back to the shop for a replacement board. Nowhere is this more true than with Williams pinball machines. In a previous issue of *RePlay Magazine* we looked at how easy it is to repair the Williams solenoid driver circuits (see "Do It Yourself Logic Board Repair," Nov. 1989.) This month, we'll look at the power supply for the score displays and a common failure that you can repair on location.

The score displays used in the Williams pinball are gas discharge display tubes. These displays glow by ionizing the small amount of gas that is inside them. It requires approximately 200 volts to fire the

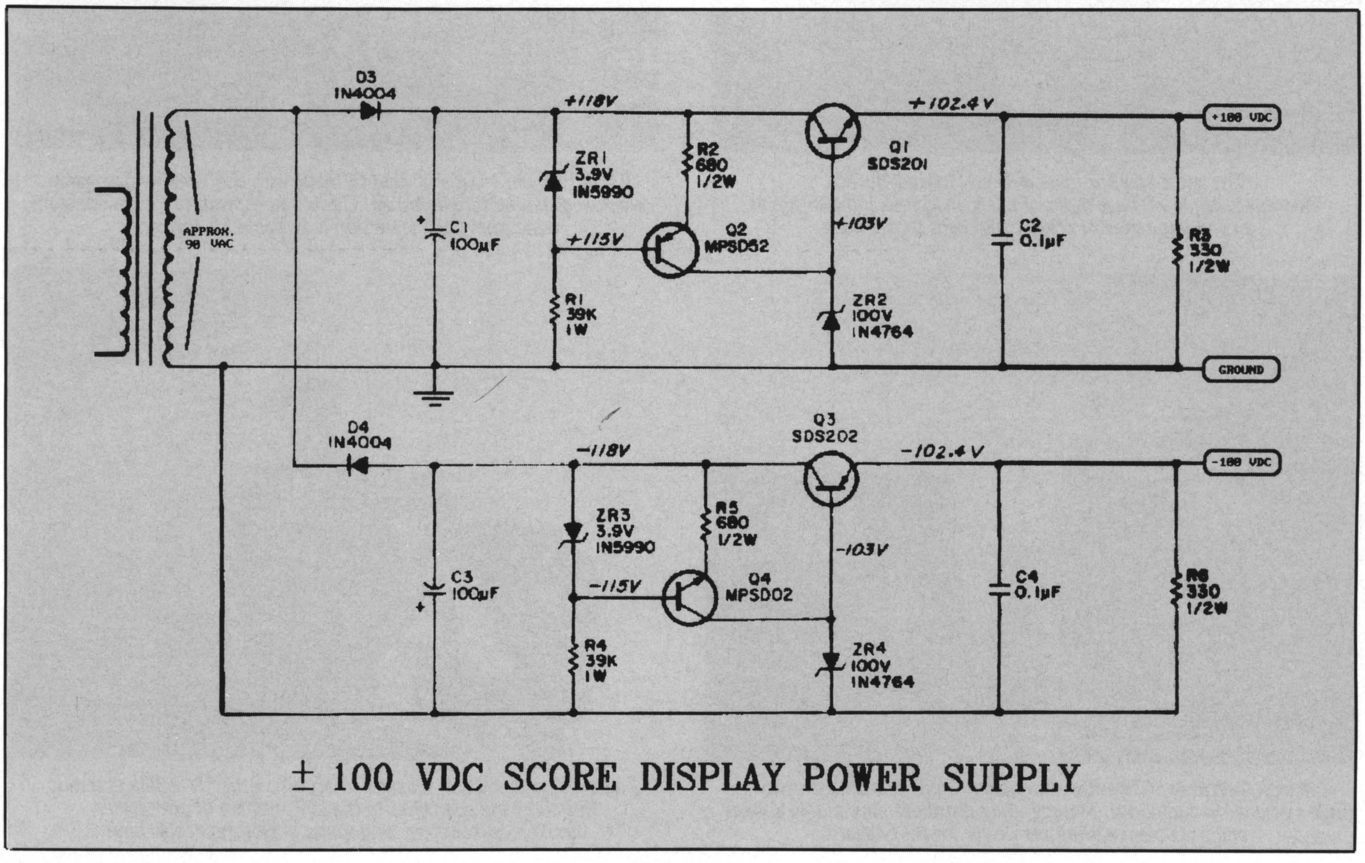


tube. The power supply for the score displays is actually a "split-supply" made up of two, nearly identical power supply circuits. One of the circuits has an output of + 100 VDC while the other provides an output of the same voltage but the opposite polarity, -100VDC (see figure 1).

Notice the similarity between the two circuits. To create the split-supply, the NPN transistor in the positive supply (Q1) becomes a PNP in the negative supply (Q3). Q2 and Q4 are also of opposite polarity. The diodes and capacitors are turned around as well.

The power supply design is simple. There are only 10 components in each of the two circuits. The power transformer in the game has a secondary winding with an output of approximately 90 volts AC. This transformer output is used to power both the + 100 VDC and -100 VDC power supplies. Since the two circuits are all but identical, let's look at the + 100 VDC power supply.

Diode D3 rectifies the alternating current output of the transformer, converting it to direct current. This is one of the few places we see a half-wave power supply (one with



± 100 VDC SCORE DISPLAY POWER SUPPLY

to the base of the transistor, the base voltage is pegged at 100 volts and the output of the power supply is regulated accordingly. In actuality, there is a .7 volt difference between the base voltage and the outfiltered by capacitor C1. This "filter capacitor" is used to provide a constant flow of DC to the voltage regulator circuit that follows. Although the AC output from the transformer is only around 90 VAC, the voltage across the filter capacitor is now around 118 VDC. This apparent boost in voltage as it changes from alternating current into direct current is perfectly normal. We see it in virtually every power supply. It is a function of the difference in the way we measure an ever-changing AC voltage when compared to a DC measurement.

The main 117 VAC power from the wall receptacle can vary quite a bit (fluctuations of plus or minus 10% are not uncommon) so before the power supply is sent out to the score displays, its output voltage must be regulated. This is done for a couple of reasons. A change in voltage would cause a visible change in the brightness of the score displays. Also, excess voltage would considerably shorten the life expectancy of the score displays themselves.

The entire voltage regulator circuit for the + 100 VDC power supply consists of ZR1, ZR2, Q1, Q2, R1 and R2. But, the main circuit to consider here is made up of Q1 and ZR2, because this is where the problem usually lies. Q1 is the main regulator transistor. It's called the "series-pass regulator." This transistor takes in the unregulated, filtered DC at its collector terminal and spits out 100 volts of regulated DC at the emitter.

How does the transistor "know" how much voltage to put out? The base is the controlling element of a transistor and the base voltage of the series-pass regulator transistor will determine how much voltage comes out of the emitter. That's the job of the zener diode, ZR2. A zener diode is a "regulator diode" and each zener diode has a very specific voltage rating. In this case, ZR2 is a type 1N4764 with a zener voltage of 100 volts. By connecting ZR2 just a single rectifier) in coin-op electronics. For something as simple as a score display, full-wave rectification (using two or four diodes) just isn't necessary.

The rectified output of the D3 is put voltage at the emitter, but this is negligible.

If you are working on a Williams pinball where all the score displays are out, start by checking the output of the + 100 VDC and -100 VDC power supplies. You will undoubtedly find that one of them is much too low in voltage. The common problem in this power supply is failure of ZR2 or ZR4, the 100 volt diodes. When the zener diodes fail, they usually drop way down in voltage, thus a 100 volt zener diode might suddenly become a 20 volt zener diode. Since the zener diode controls the series-pass regulator transistor, the output voltage would drop to around 20 volts as well.

Although a good zener diode will often test just like a conventional rectifier (when you use a digital multimeter on the "diode" test setting) a voltage shift may not be readily apparent unless you perform a "power-on" voltage measurement. With the game turned on, carefully measure the voltage across ZR2 and ZR4. Just put one meter lead on each end of the component. It doesn't even matter which lead you put where. All you're interested in is the voltage across the zener diode. A good diode will measure at close to 100 volts. A bad zener diode will probably be much lower. If you are unsure if the zener diode is good or bad, you can try swapping ZR2 with ZR4. If the problem moves to the other power supply, the zener diode must be bad!

If you throw a couple of 100 volt zener diodes in your parts box, you can make this repair in the field. It only takes five or ten minutes to replace. The 1N4764 is a 100 volt, 1 watt zener diode. When replacing zener diodes, you must use the same voltage rating but you may use a higher wattage component as a substitute. For example, a 1N5949A is a 1.5 watt zener that may be used as a substitute for the 1N4764.

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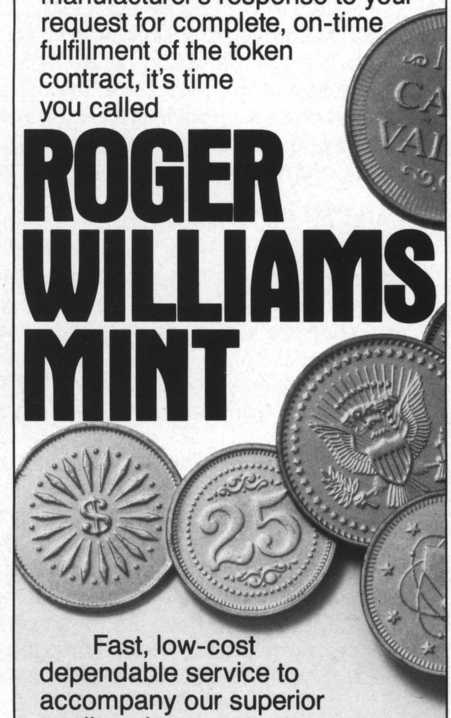

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GRAPEVINE

international

JAPAN GAMBLING BUSTS — Japanese police in Osaka and Kanagawa staged their usual series of crackdowns on illegal video poker and video slot machine gambling all through 1990, according to Japan's *Game Machine Magazine.* In Osaka, 109 locations were raided and 635 people arrested. Seized were 443 machines and 39.5 million yen (well over $100,000 U.S.). In Kanagawa, it was 539 people arrested in 94 locations; seized were 1,031 games and 67.3 million yen (about a third of a million dollars in U.S. currency). Oddly, Tokyo police said nothing about any crackdowns in that city, where most of Japan's illegal gambling takes place. *Game Machine* said Tokyo police were "less intent" on solving these types of crimes . . . but that the image of the amusement industry is hurt by gambling, since authorities and citizens lump both activities into the same category.

CAPCOM BUYS ARCADES — Japan's Capcom Co., Ltd. has joined Namco, Sega, and Taito in owning and operating arcades in Japan. Japanese manufacturers do own arcades (indeed, many factories grew out of operating roots). Capcom bought all shares of stock in Unika Co. of Tokyo, which runs 31 arcades, for a total of 2,400 million yen (that's over $1 million in U.S. currency). This from Japan's *Game Machine* magazine.

ATEI FOR '92 — The big London trade show moves to a new site and date next year. It will take place Feb. 4-6, 1992 at the ultra-modern Earls Court 2 exhibit center. Show organizers said the date, a month later than the traditional timing, will give tradesters more time to "recover" from the holidays (and maybe also better weather). And the new site means ATEI can give exhibitors more space . . . something they've been crying for, but couldn't get at the old Olympia Hall venue.

midwest

1015 ***UNDRAPED!*** "The March 1991 issue of *Playboy* gives a lot of exposure to an original Wurlitzer *1015* as well as the March Playmate, Julie Clark," reported Rick Botts in the March issue of *Jukebox Collector.* Did *Playboy* magazine discover Miss March during the last Rowe dealer meeting? Rick says she hails from Naples, Florida . . . where Rowe last gathered its distributors!

LASERJUKE WINNER — Operator Jim Jansen (J&J Ventures, Effingham, Ill.) is seen at left holding the keys to the Pioneer *Laserjuke* he won in a give-away sponsored by Audio Visual Amusements (St. Louis). With Jim are (l-r) AVA's Pete Entringer, Pioneer's Dave Drouillard (holding CD disc) and Jim's son, Jack Jansen. Congrats!

GEORGE HAYDOCY is the new national sales manager for NSM-America. The 30-year industry vet will shortly assume full responsibility for U.S. sales, said officers of the American subsidiary of this giant German firm. NSM termed his reputation as a salesman "legendary" (he sure sold a lot of NSM jukes at CleCoin). George says simply: "I'm not a salesman; I'm an operator at heart and always will be." George began as an operator in the 1950s in Cleveland; then was a partner in a Florida operation in the late '60s. He ran service and maintenance for the 2,000-unit G.O. Coin Service route in Ohio during the '70s and then later joined Penn Ray, the famed supplier. "I have done just about everything on the operator side of the coin," George said. Then he did sales, managed some large accounts and other major responsibilities from 1978 to 1987 at Cleveland Coin. Most recently, he was a sales pro for Seeburg as they developed and established the CD jukebox concept here in the States. "I can't say I agree

with all the rules that were broken, but I respect the guts it took management to try," he stated. "I intend to make good distributor relationships my first — and top — priority here at NSM-America." Good luck in your new post, George and congratulations as you begin helping NSM in its new U.S.-style marketing campaign for 1991.

BIGGER AUCTIONS are promised for 1991 by U.S. Amusement Auction Co, now going on its ninth year in the business. USAA's Ric Stephan said used game prices were up from last fall in this year's first three auctions. The firm's Indianapolis auction in February drew a record crowd with over 500 games on the block. Ric termed USAA's first-ever California auction "a huge success" and said they'll come back to the Golden State in May. Dallas is set for April, and USAA's first-ever East Coast event will take place in New Jersey (run in conjunction with the state's AMOA as a fund-raiser). See the USAA schedule in our Blue Pages or call Ric at 812/333-9939.

northeast

STAR*TECH DATES — Yes, the trade's leading technical publication is offering two-day fix-it seminars on everything from power supplies to monitors and tools & equipment. Dates and places for upcoming sessions are: April 27-28, Orlando. May 11-12, Eastern Distributors (Philly). May 18-19, San Diego. June 8-9, H.A. Franz (Houston). June 22-23, St. Louis. July 12-14, Music Vend (Seattle). July 27-28, Virginia Beach. Aug. 17-18, Mountain Coin (Las Vegas). Advance registration is $250 per person (10% discount for multiple registrations from the same firm). For information call them at 609/662-1080.

southeast

NOW, THAT'S PROMOTION! At the Celebration Station family amusement center in Baton Rouge, La., they have three miniature golf courses, lots of coin-op games, a redemption prize counter, and . . . a beautifully-presented unit of Betson's *Mad Dog McCree.* The staff went to some trouble to surround the game with real cacti and Old West props as a steer's skull, kerosene lantern and some old spurs. "The excellent collections prove that the effort is worth it," commented Betson's John Margold.

Now Playing...

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The worlds **first** and **only** interactive, realistic laser video game!

Be part of the action... rescue the mayor's beautiful daughter! Save the town from Mad Dog and his evil band of bad guys!

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One coupon per customer

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ADVERTISING HELPS — By the way, Betson has prepared "camera-ready" advertising art for operators who want to promote their Betson *Mad Dog* games. If you bought one of these laserdisc units, the ad materials are free. "Since this is a unique game with the ability to draw new players into a location, we thought it would be a nice idea to give our customers a vehicle to reach potential new players," said Betson's John Margold. The ad has an optional "free game" coupon which may be used at the operator's discretion. Copies are available — free! — from Betson (800/524-2343 in New Jersey), Betson Pacific (213/388-9338 in L.A.), or from their authorized *Mad Dog* distributors.

THEME PARKS ARE OKAY — IAAPA, the "parks" association, suggested in their March issue of *Funworld* that major theme parks don't get hurt much, if at all, when the U.S. goes through a steep recession. The magazine asked Harrison Price of Harrison Price, Co. to review attendance trends in 12 major parks during the 1975, 1980 and 1982 recessions. His findings: parks lost only 2.6% in 1975 (vs. a 22% auto sales drop that year). Also, Harrison said parks lost only 4.6% in 1982 (much of it in "destination markets" — places requiring a trip and overnight stay). Park attendance actually held steady in 1980, the analyst said. By the way, local attractions and "pocket parks" may actually perform better in recessions, Harrison said. You can get a copy of the March publication with Harrison's full report by contacting IAAPA at 703/836-4800. By the way, you might also ask them for their new videotape on "hospitality," which is a training session for park personnel. It's available in several languages and costs $50 for association members; non-members pay $100.

southwest

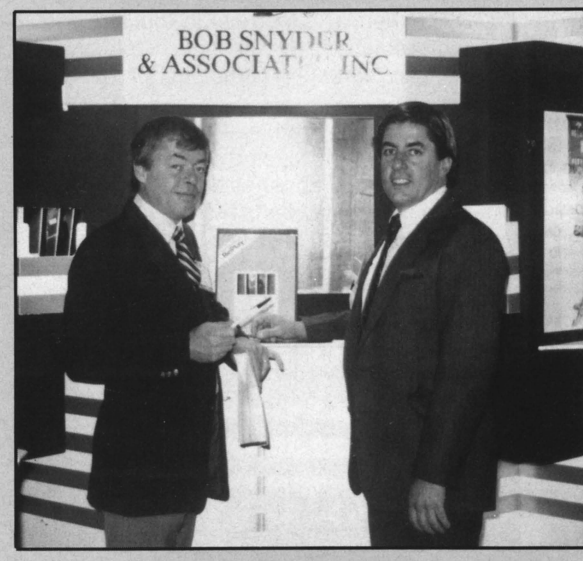
YAMAMOTO RESIGNS — A mid-March fax from American Sammy Corp. (Torrance, Calif.) advises that their president Mike Yamamoto has resigned for personal reasons and to pursue other interests. The fax said the firm accepted his resignation "with reluctance," wishes him well in the future and appreciates his many contributions to the firm.

SPACE AGE HAS GAME — Space Age Electronics proudly announced its appointment as exclusive sales agent for a new video game, *Hard Head 2,* which has been in development for over a year by Sun A Electronics, Inc. of Korea. "The game has eight comical stages and has enjoyed powerful earnings on location," said Space Age prexy Carl Fleischman. You can reach him at Space Age Electronics, 26524 Golden Valley Rd., Suite 507, Saugus, CA 91350; 800/822-0280.

CRANE OPS TAKE NOTE — On March 12, Amusement Assn. of California execs Jerry Monday, Dave Jackson and Bob Snyder met with a group of state and local California law enforcement heavies in San Diego toward ironing out laws affecting prize machines. The meeting, called by the AAC and attorney Bob Baxley of the San Diego Bar, took place in the Bar's office on Seventh. Law people participating were California's Dep. Attorney Gen. Gary Schons, San Diego County's Dep. DA Cliff Dobrin and San Diego City Attorney William Newsome III. Present from "our side" were Randy Fagundo, VP of Sugar Loaf Creations (parent of San Diego Toy Co.), Bruce Kociemba and Barry Watkins, joining AAC's people.

The reason behind this meeting on crane operations was the confiscation of 40 of San Diego Toy's cranes around four months ago and the subsequent charges. All 40 of those machines have been returned and the city, county and the state have all declined to pursue this case. Now, they've agreed to sit with the crane operators to iron out the language in a new San Diego law on prize machines under study (a law that could clearly influence the country and state). A load of information was dropped on the lawmen at this meeting, and now they're waiting for further proposals from the AAC on how prize games should be regulated before putting that new San Diego law into the hopper. Such things as claw adjustment and bookkeeping procedures will be reviewed. The whole point of this is to get a workable set of laws to allow operators to run prize machines without looking behind their backs; something California and its cities and towns wants as well . . . AAC members will receive a copy of the proposed San Diego law as it now exists and are invited to suggest ideas. Non-members can call Jackson at 818/772-0393.

BOB'S DOING FINE — By the way, well-known industry friend Bob Snyder is recovering nicely from his recent heart attack. That's great news . . . we need you, Bob! The man from Walnut, Calif. is a dedicated jogger, but we understand that monitoring all that legislation and legal activity can be stressful, even for a former law enforcement officer who runs a successful consulting firm. Bob, may all your future EKGs be healthy and happy ones!



That's Bob in action at one of his trade show exhibits chatting with our Publisher Eddie Adlum.

KEY, KEY & JAY — No, that's not the name of a law firm! It's the name of a family who's rather special to all of us around here . . . our VP of Production Key Snodgress and her husband Jay welcomed their very first child, daughter Kimberly Key Snodgress, into the world on March 5. Little Kimberly weighed in at 8 lbs., 1 oz. and her mom and dad are very, very happy and doing fine. We here at *RePlay* join all of Key's friends in the industry in wishing her our very warmest congratulations. Seen here is a pre-birthday celebration during one of Key's last days in the office. From left: publisher Eddie Adlum and wife Tippy; staffers Carolyn Lokken, Key Snodgress, Marcus Webb, Sigurd Tippel and Debbie Anderson. The dog on the desk is Key's.

. . . the popular C.A. Robinson & Co. veep Hank Tronick is back at his Pico Blvd. desk but using that familiar cane after so many weeks recovering from hip surgery. Look for him at their April 5 post-ACME open house. C.A. also holds forth April 3 in San Francisco, and as has become a custom in the Golden State, Betson Pacific holds its respective open houses the same way.

THE BLUE PAGES

BUYERS' BULLETIN

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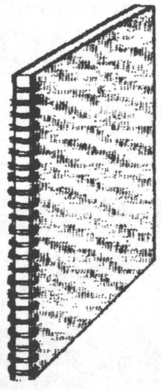

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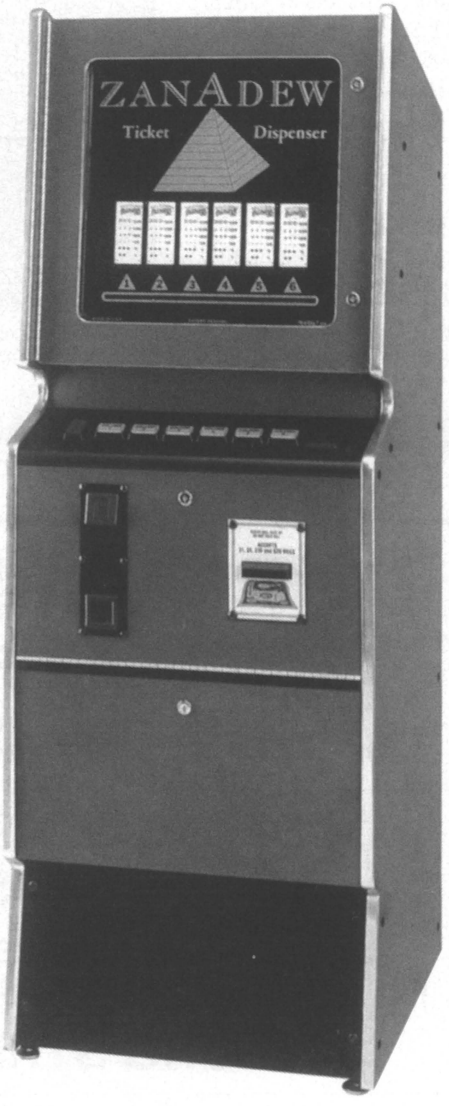

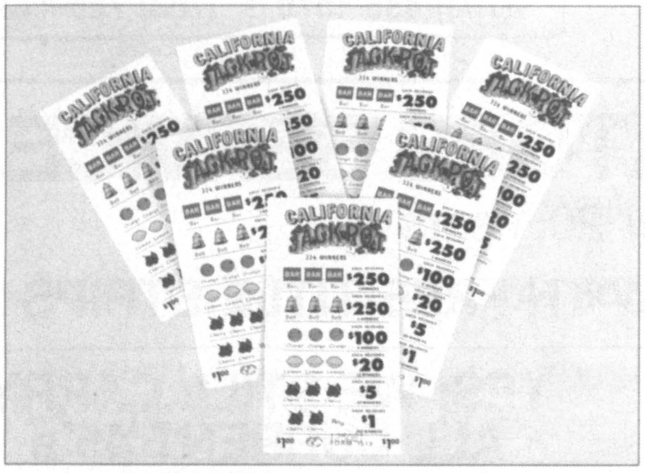

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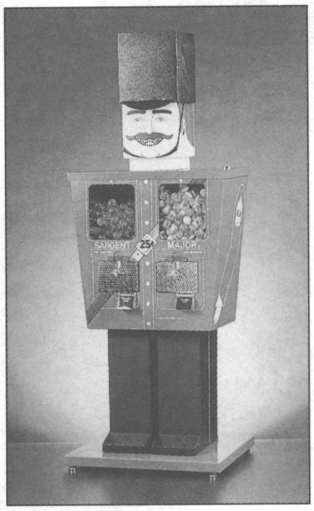

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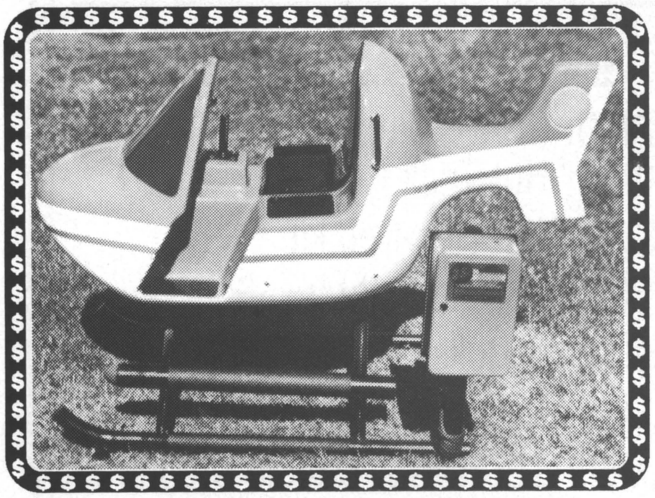

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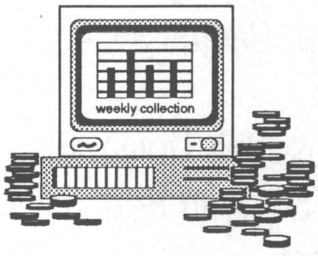

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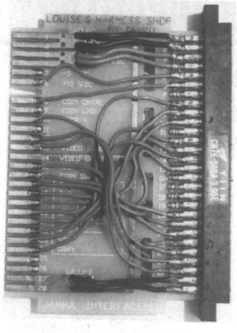

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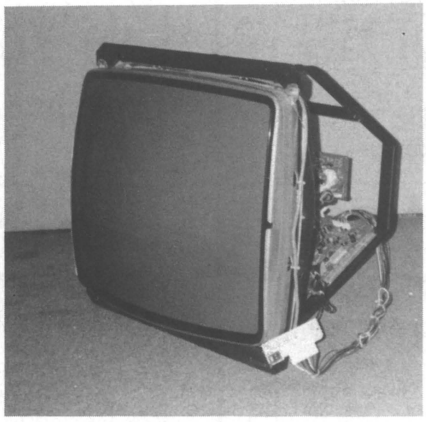

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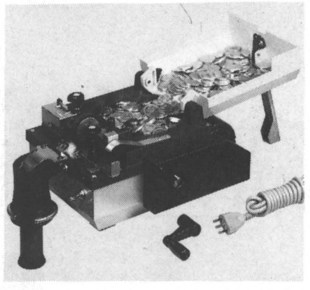

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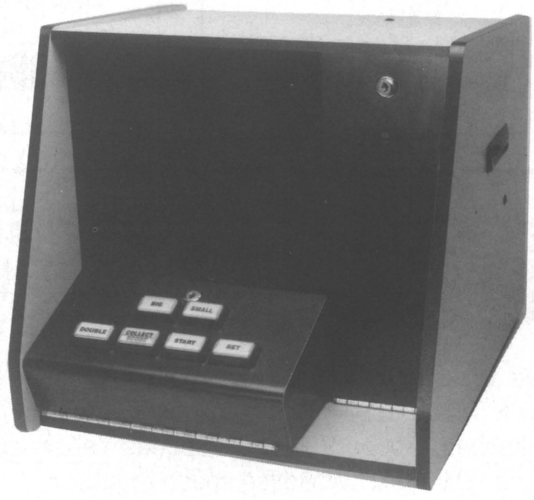

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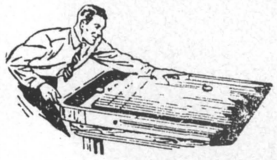

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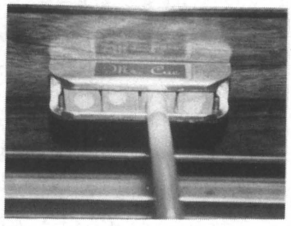

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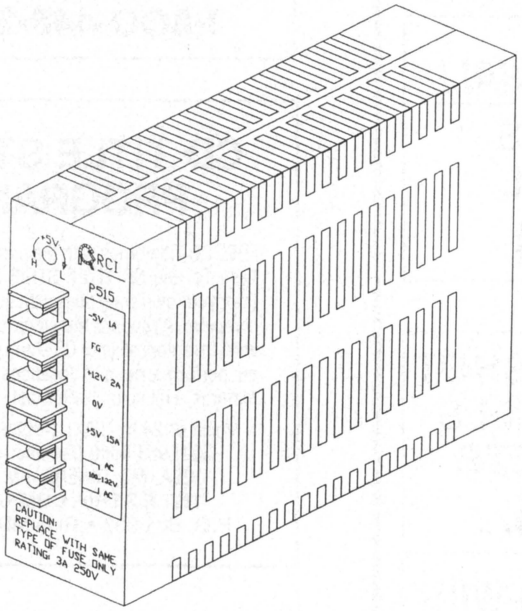

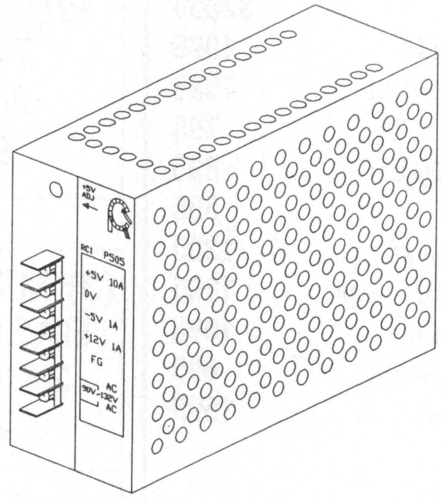

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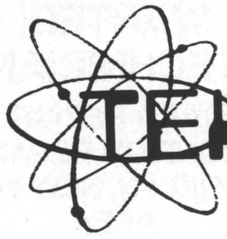

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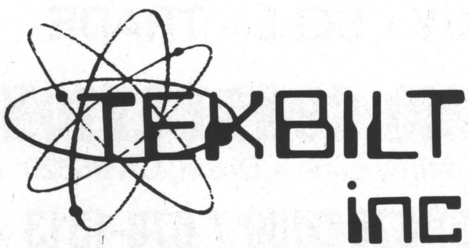

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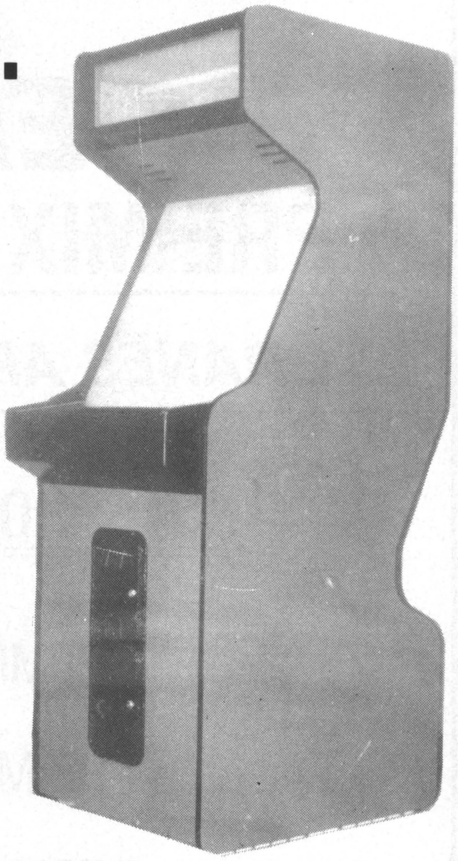

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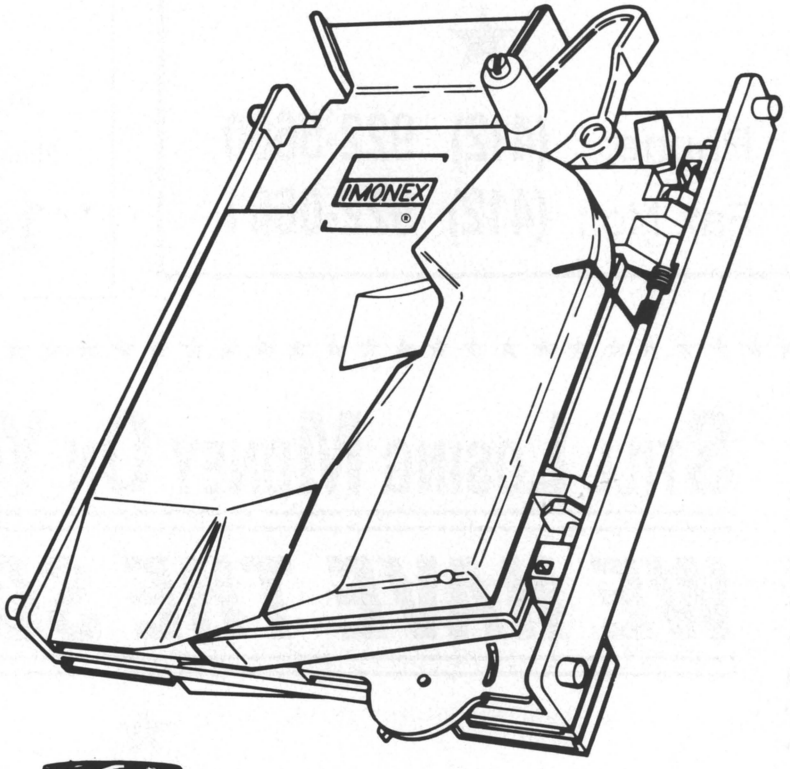

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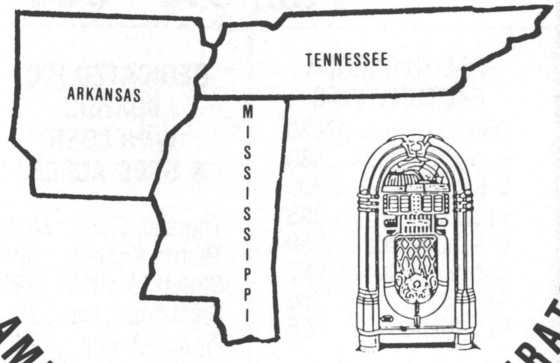

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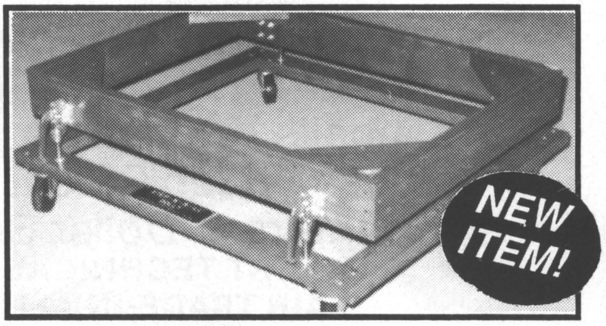

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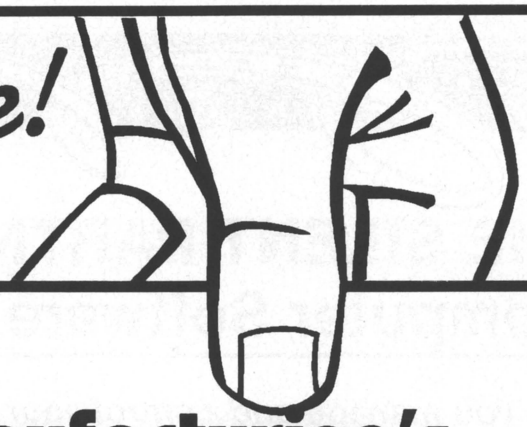

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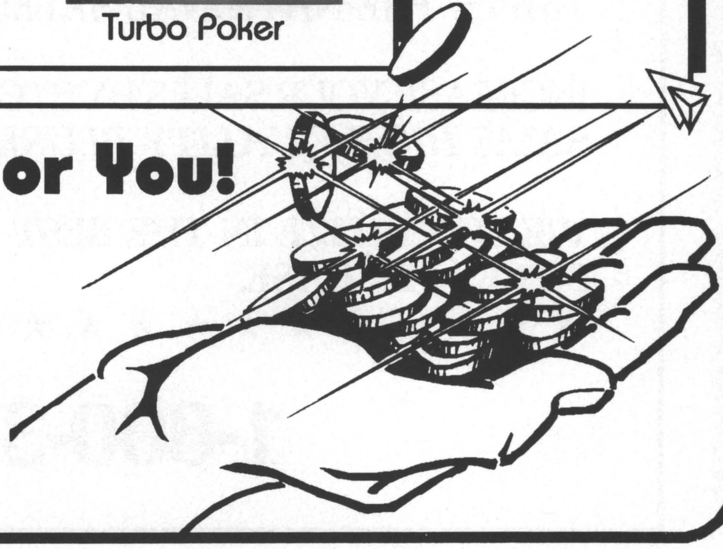

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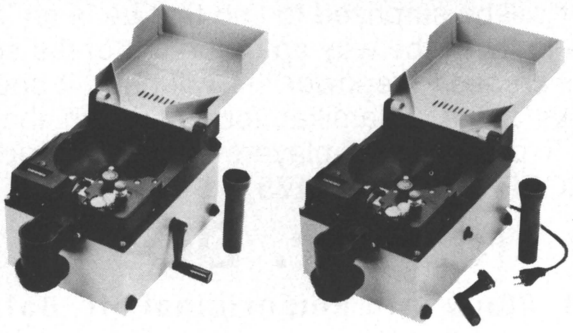

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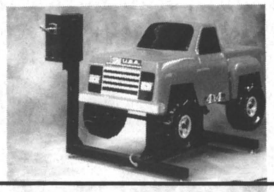

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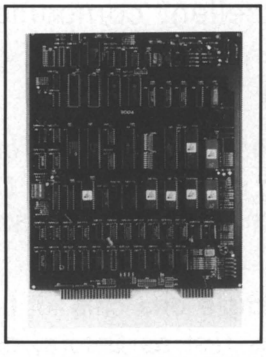

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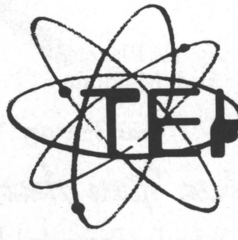

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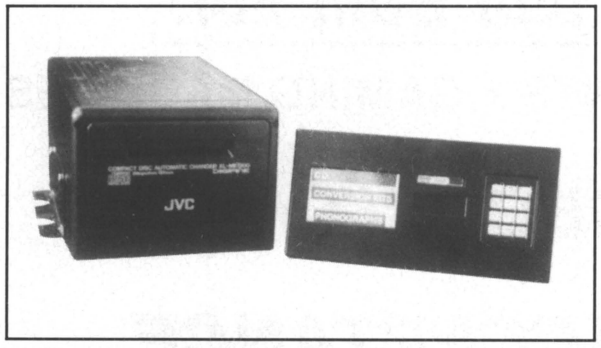

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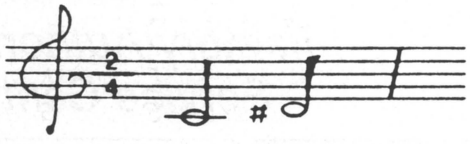

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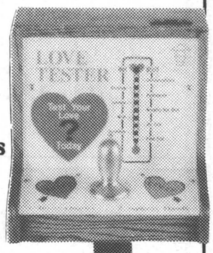

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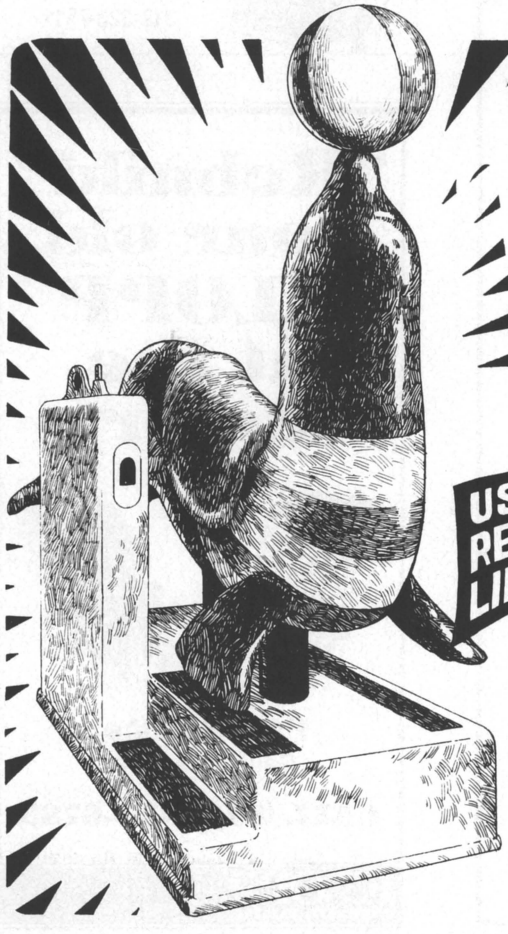

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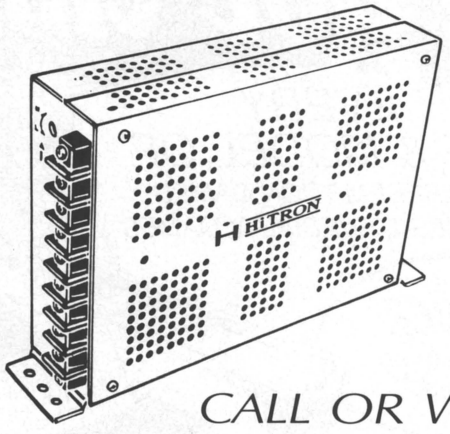

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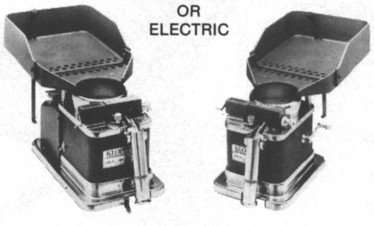

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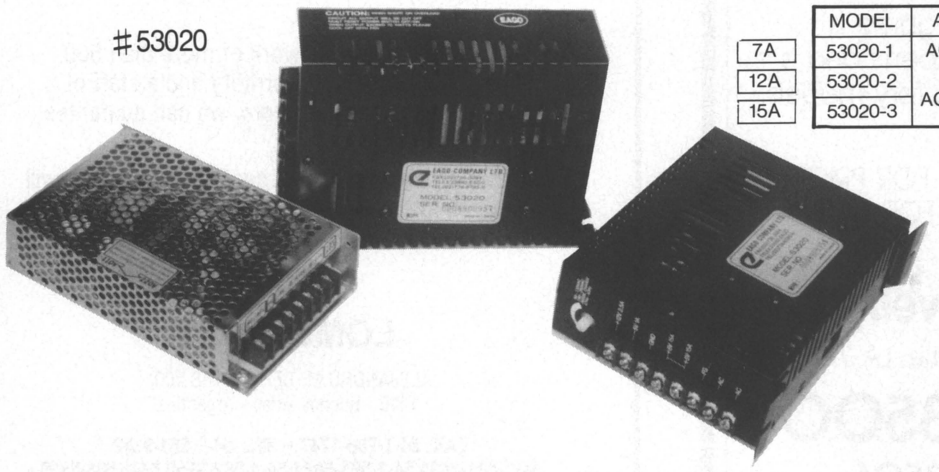

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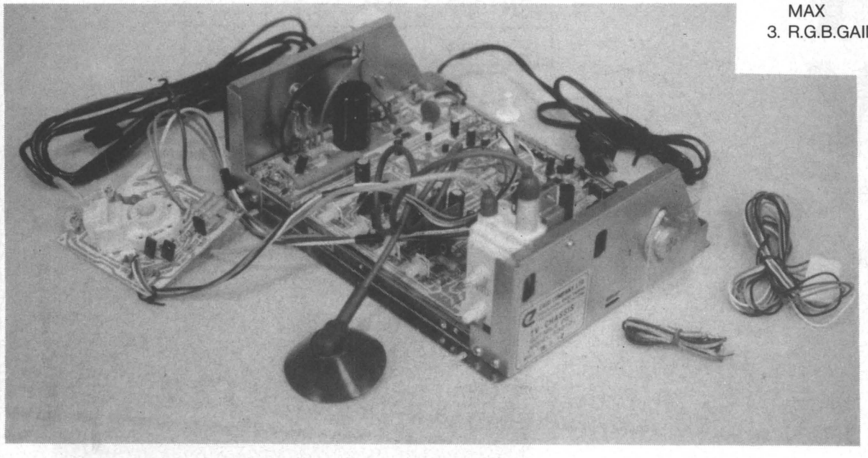

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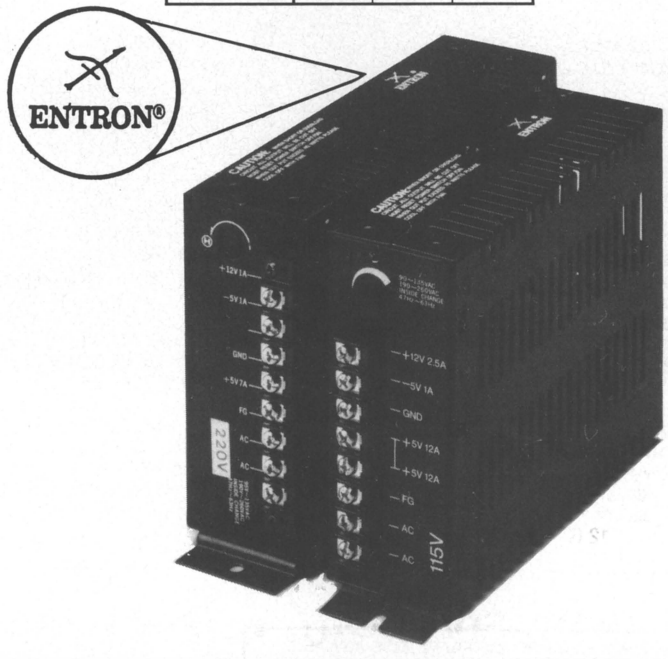

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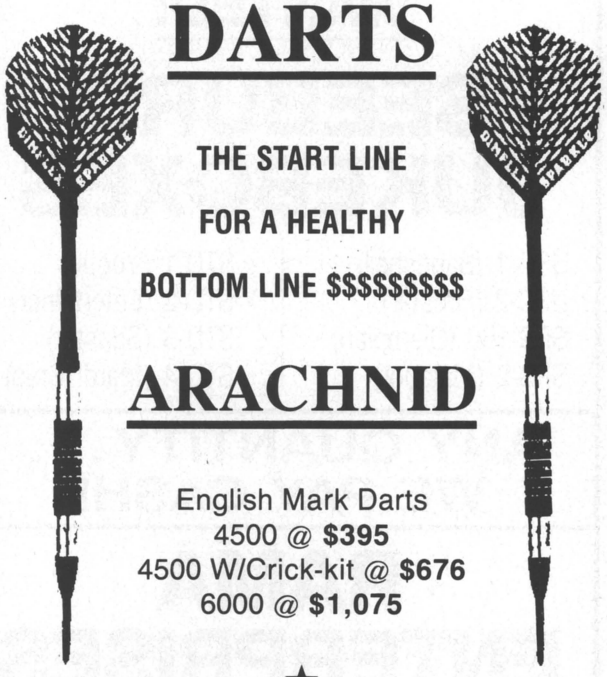

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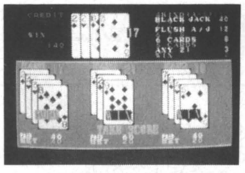

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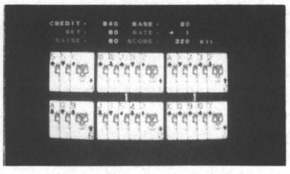

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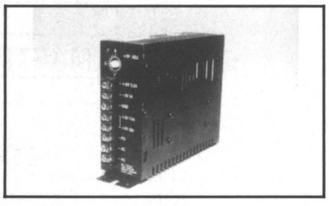

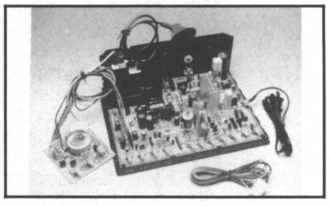

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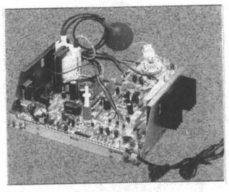

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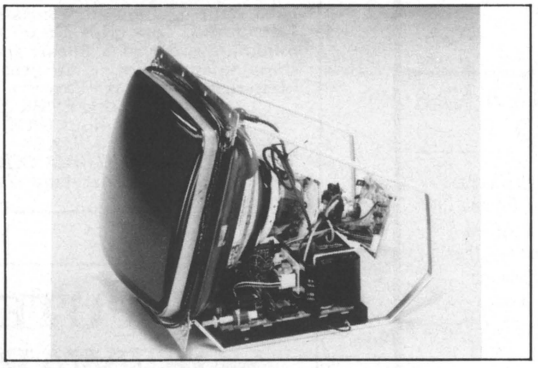

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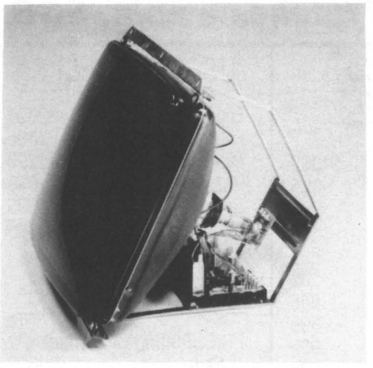

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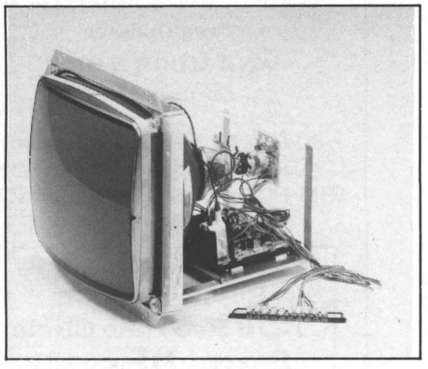

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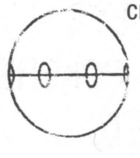

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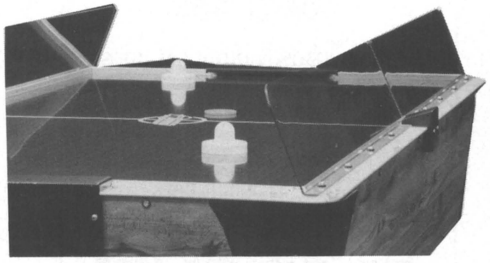

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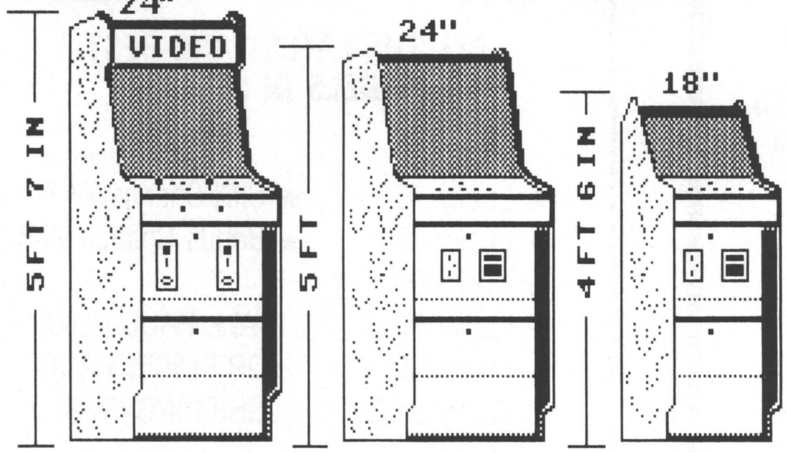

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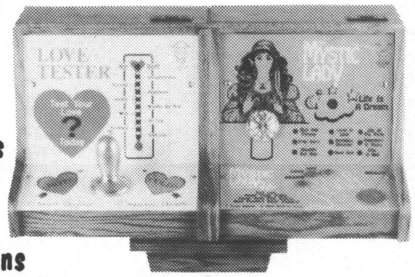

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INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

A.L.D. pg.16
AMOA 120
Acces 103
Ace Novelty Co. 26
Acme Premium Supply 99
American Sammy 115
Arachnid 107
Atari ..... cover 4
Atlas Distributing ..... Toss-in flyer
BRW Systems 34
Bally Midway ..... cover 3
Baton Lock & Hardware ..... ACME 10
R.H. Belam Company, Inc. 101
Betson Enterprises 75-76
Big Ten Electronics 114
Bob's Space Racers 54
Bonita Marie ..... ACME 8
Bromley Inc. 109-110
CPC Services ..... ACME 4
Capcom ..... 38-40, 45, ACME 9
Clever Devices 20
Coastal Amusements ..... ACME 5
Coin Concepts 97
Cointek 89
Competitive Wholesale Corp. ..... Toss-in flyer
Data East 21-22
Deltronic Labs 93
Design Plus 30
Deutsche Wurlitzer GmbH 17
Doyle & Associates 37
Dynamo 67
Eagle Company 92
Electro Games Industries 33
Entron Enterprises 18
Fabtek 60
GaMCO 59
Happ Controls 68
Hecon Corp. 56
Hoffman & Hoffman 42
I.C.E. 9
Imperial International 69
Irem 15
Kaneko 85
Kiddie Rides & More ..... ACME 12
Konami ..... ACME 7
Kramer Mfg. 82
Laramie Interests 43
Leisure Entertainment 71
Leland Corporation 5
Leprechaun ..... ACME 6, ACME 13
Loewen-America/NSM-Lions 24-25
Henry W.T. Mali Co. 20
Mayoni 18
Merit Industries 35
Mid-South Convention 123
Namco ..... 29, 95, ACME 14
Nintendo 57-58
PMI 12
Pioneer Laser Entertainment 117
Plush-4-Play 61
Pop-a-Shot 100
Premier Technology ..... cover 2
Prizes! 87
Progressive Game Distributors 52
Romstar 49
Rosette 19
Rowe International ..... 11, 63, 81, ACME 3
SNK Corporation 47, 112
Sega Enterprises 7, 53
Skill Games 62
Smart 50
Star Track, Inc. ..... ACME 11
Stella 91
Strata 55
Tecmo 105, 125
Van Brook of Lexington 54
Van Sickle & Co. 86
Vari-Tech 28
Roger Williams Mint 131
Yamate ..... 73, 119, ACME 15

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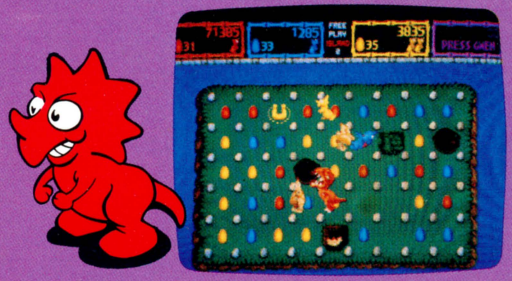

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