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monthly journal for the amusement machine industry



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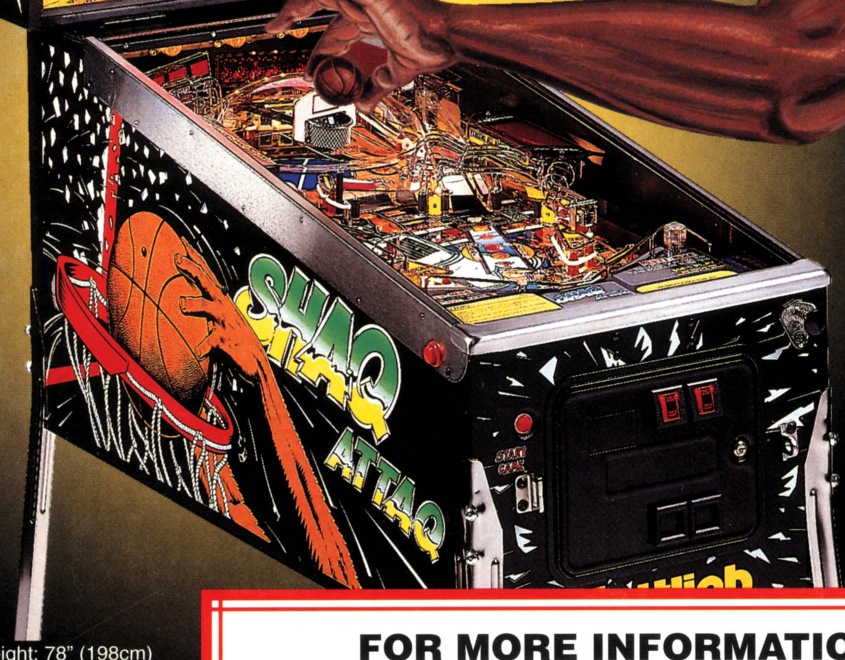

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HOT OFF THE PRESS

KILLER INCOME

Midway Mfg.'s ***Killer Instinct*** debuts at #1 on this month's upright chart. With some exceptions, chart reporting operators who have it out rated it a 10 (meaning power-bucks). But, this fighter has also raised the hackles of a lot of trade folks who alternately dislike its $5K retail price range, its graphic violence and also fear its future appearance on the home screen may prematurely crimp earnings (as some say happened with *Mortal II*). We don't know when *Killer Instinct* will hit the home (most likely on Nintendo's Ultra system), but hope the powers-that-be give operators a good long solo shot.

Killer Instinct is sort of a "litmus test" of a high-priced upright with high play appeal on today's market. For while one chart reporter called it the "best revenue producer we have ever seen," another wrote: "I won't buy one because there is no way it would pay for itself before going to home video." Stay tuned.

HOW STREET IT IS

In their suite at AMOA Expo '94, Namco America previewed an advanced upright video, tentatively titled *Rave Wars*. At the time, Namco promised to deliver texture-mapped 3D polygon graphics, yet offer "street friendly" pricing on this fighting-themed upright. Now it's out, renamed ***Tekken***, and yes it does have lower-cost hi-tech. "*Tekken* is priced for the street operator," declared sales & marketing VP **Frank Cosentino**. "Namco's objective is to produce quality games for all segments of the market. This is the first of many games to come with the street operator in mind."

Tekken contains Namco's new "System 11" board, which it shares with Sony's forthcoming PlayStation home system. A new algorithm function lets players press individual buttons to punch and kick with each arm and leg separately, so gameplay is far more lifelike. Later this year it will be released for Sony's home system. But, said Frank, additional boards inside the dedicated game will give the coin-op version more depth. *Tekken's* cabinet features a 27" monitor (can be positioned horizontally or vertically) and is "kit ready" for future releases, Namco said. N-A's sales team visited 14 U.S. distributors between Christmas and New Year's to promote the game.

PRIME SPOTS

Wal-Mart retail stores are some of the most desirable real estate for American street operators. So when the Arkansas-based chain announced big expansion plans for fiscal 1995, it was very good news for ops. Starting Feb. 1, they'll add 100 new discount stores and 100 new "supercenters" (about 85 of the latter will be relocations or expansions of existing discount stores). Also, 10 new Sam's Club stores will open. Go get 'em!

"BLOCK PARTY"

Blockbuster entertainment center division opened a prototype operation called Block Party in Albuquerque, N.M. on Dec. 19. The huge indoor site features arcade-type games plus attractions like virtual reality and motion-chair theater, etc. All games run on debit cards; play-prices are hefty by industry standards. If the concept succeeds, Blockbuster may roll out many more such fun centers nationwide, very fast. Meantime, merger partner Viacom has nixed Blockbuster's planned "Wayne's World" Florida park which was to house amusements, two pro sports arenas, and more. See our story on Block Party inside.

HOME VIDEO WARS

Overproduction of mediocre home video software reportedly met with very sluggish sales around the globe during the first 10 months of 1994, occurring coincidentally (?) with 1994's worldwide recession in arcade income. However, the Christmas season typically accounts for more than half the sales in the home video business...and, in the final week before the holiday, **Sega** and **3DO** claimed lots of Santas were buying their goods.

Sega trumpeted "robust" Christmas sales and a 55% market share for 16-bit hardware and software in the USA. "Sega will also beat Nintendo, and Atari, Phillips and 3DO combined, in overall annual video game hardware sales," said prexy **Tom Kalinske**, citing independent sales monitoring services. Sega sold over 300,000 CD units for its Genesis system between its introduction in late November and Dec. 14. Genesis is the overall home video game system leader, with well over four million units sold.

"While our industry had sales that took a small slip this year, Sega has grown its market share," Kalinske said. "Overall, the video game industry will have sold nearly eight million 16-bit systems this year, while sales of the much-heralded home multimedia PC CD-ROM will top out at about four million units — so even with a small dip, the video game industry significantly outweighs the computer industry."

For its part, the 3DO Company said pre-Christmas sales of its CD-based 3DO system were nearing a worldwide installed base of 500,000. Prexy *Trip Hawkins* claimed no other hardware system reached this so quickly (i.e., after 15 months on the market).

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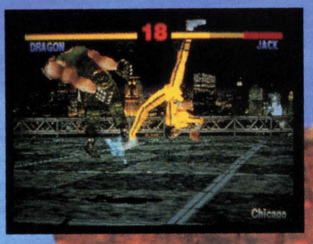



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RePlay

PLAYERS' CHOICE • JANUARY 1995

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

best location videos

	MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
▶	**1 KILLER INSTINCT (Midway) (1)**	**9.23**	**43%**
▶	2 MEGA TOUCH II+ (Merit) (1)	8.47	15%
▶	3 REVOLUTION X (Midway) (7)	8.05	37%
	4 LETHAL II: GUN FIGHTERS (Konami) (9)	8.03	29%
	5 MORTAL KOMBAT II+ (Midway) (13)	7.78	89%
▶	6 PRIMAL RAGE★ (Atari) (5)	7.72	47%
	7 VIRTUA FIGHTER★ (Sega) (12)	7.58	43%
	8 LETHAL ENFORCERS+ (Konami) (27)	7.47	71%
▶	9 SOLITAIRE CHALLENGE (Dynamo) (6)	7.25	18%
	10 NBA JAM: TOURN. ED.+ (Midway) (9)	7.12	70%

\+ *indicates game was produced in both dedicated & software forms*
★ *indicates game was also produced in deluxe form*

best deluxe videos

(sitdowns, cockpits, arcade attractions)

	1 DAYTONA USA (Sega) (8)	**9.56**	**34%**
▶	2 CRUIS 'N USA★ (Midway) (3)	9.31	29%
▶	3 T-MEK (Atari) (5)	8.56	9%
	4 OUTRUNNERS (Sega) (25)	8.38	16%
	Tie RIDGE RACERS (Namco) (12)	8.38	8%
	Tie STADIUM CROSS (Sega) (21)	8.38	8%
	7 AIR COMBAT (Namco) (10)	8.33	6%
	8 VIRTUA RACING★ (Sega) (25)	7.74	38%
	9 SUZUKA II 8 HOURS (Namco) (10)	7.65	20%
	10 CYBERSLED (Namco) (10)	7.38	13%

\+ *indicates game was produced in both dedicated & software forms*
★ *indicates game was also produced in upright form*

best new games

DESERT TANK [deluxe] (Sega)

WING WAR [deluxe] (Sega)

best video software

	MODEL/MANUFACTURER	RATING	DIST.
▶	**1 GAL'S PANIC 2 [V] (Kaneko) (13)**	**8.71**	**6%**
▶	2 SAMURAI SHODOWN II+ [S] (SNK) (2)	8.22	49%
▶	3 RAIDEN DX [V] (Fabtek) (3)	8.10	9%
▶	4 KING OF FIGHTERS '94 [S] (SNK) (4)	7.63	27%
▶	5 SUPER SIDEKICKS 2 [S] (SNK) (8)	7.18	15%
	6 RAIDEN II [V] (Fabtek) (12)	7.09	40%
▶	7 DARKSTALKERS [H] (Capcom) (4)	6.97	56%
	8 DUNGEONS & DRAGONS [H] (Cap.) (9)	6.92	34%
▶	9 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR [H] (Capcom) (6)	6.84	41%
▶	10 AERO FIGHTERS 2 [S] (SNK) (5)	6.81	32%
▶	11 TOP HUNTER [S] (SNK) (2)	6.75	4%
▶	12 STREET SLAM [S] (D.E./Neo•Geo) (2)	6.69	12%
▶	13 WINDJAMMERS [S] (D.E./Neo•Geo) (10)	6.57	13%
▶	14 SAMURAI SHODOWN [S] (SNK) (18)	6.48	64%
	15 WORLD RALLY [H] (Atari) (16)	6.46	32%
	16 BUCKY O'HARE [H] (Konami) (6)	6.33	8%
▶	17 WORLD HEROES 2 JET [S] (SNK) (8)	6.32	28%
▶	18 TWIN EAGLE II [V] (Seta) (7)	6.27	10%
▶	19 NECK 'N NECK [H] (Bundra) (20)	6.25	7%
	20 SUPER STREET FIGHTER II [H] (Cap.) (13)	6.19	69%

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

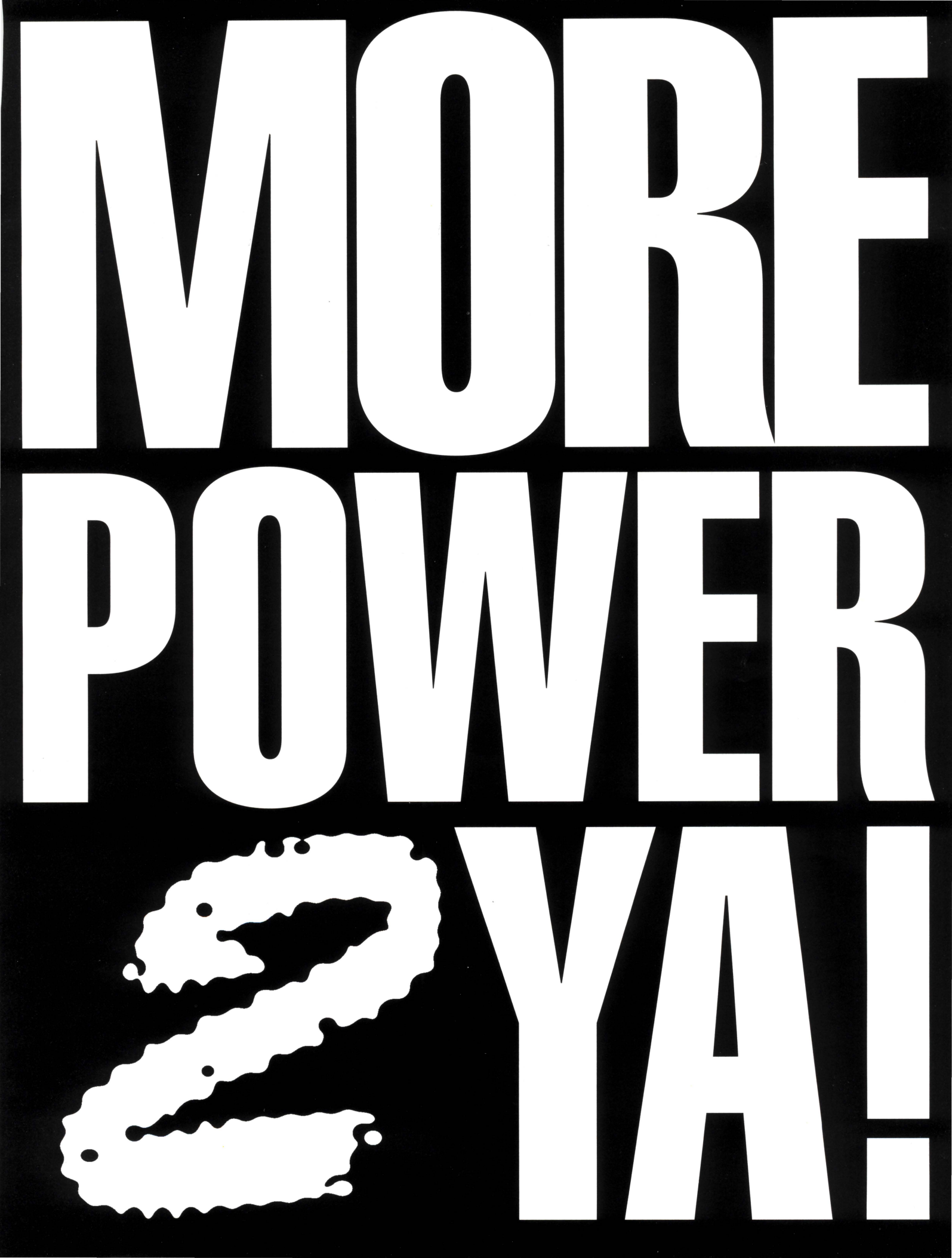
top pinball

▶	**1 ROAD SHOW (Williams) (1)**	**8.12**	**30%**
▶	2 FREDDY/NIGHTMARE (Premier) (3)	8.11	22%
	3 ADDAMS FAMILY (Bally) (34)	8.03	77%
	4 STAR TREK (Williams) (11)	8.02	57%
	5 WORLD CUP SOCCER (Midway) (7)	8.00	37%
▶	6 MAVERICK (Sega) (1)	7.88	10%
▶	7 CORVETTE (Bally) (3)	7.65	31%
	8 GUNS N' ROSES (Data East) (5)	7.63	29%
▶	9 FLINTSTONES (Williams) (4)	7.52	25%
	10 TWILIGHT ZONE (Williams) (18)	7.24	66%

▶ *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.*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ON THE COVER

Capcom supremo Kenzo Tsujimoto heads into 1995 with more anticipation than most. Not only is his "Street Fighter" movie now in theatrical release, but his GameStar coin-op factory in suburban Chicago will shortly enter the amusement biz sweeps with redemptions, pins and probably videos (maybe *Street Fighter: the Movie?*).

Along with his film star Jean-Claude Van Damme, Tsujimoto's GameStar teamsters "in camera" on the cover include sales vets Rene Lopez and Tim Jackson. Lots more on new GameStar inside, along with other forecasting on 1995.

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EDITORIAL

Happy New Year! All thru 1994, RePlay *highlighted tradesters at every level who worked hard and worked smart. We also reported about tougher times for many. But — as so often happens — we believed we were sending one message, yet some readers "thought" they were getting a totally different one. For instance, one interpretation we heard was: "*RePlay *is saying street operators have no future and they'd better get into arcades." Another misperception was: "*RePlay *thinks only computerized ops who buy pricey hi-tech machines know what they're doing; the jukebox crowd is conservative, outdated, and doomed." Honest Injun, we didn't say — and don't believe — any of that. Let's start 1995 right, by setting the record straight.*

1. By their own account, "conventional" street operators are hurting. For example, a while back, we interviewed six ops, chosen at random across the USA. All agreed: old-fashioned operating doesn't cut it today. But since street operators are smart, they're adapting to new realities. More and more ops are heavily into promotions (leagues used to be a nice extra; now they're necessary as breathing). They're into cooperation and consolidation (joint ventures — or buyouts — with competitors; strategic alliances with locations, distribs, or factories; dropping weak locations). They're planning long-term, not reacting day by day. Will the street market come back? We think so, but it will come back "different."

2. Arcade equipment gets all the glamor (and lots of the cash box) these days. And yes, fun centers as a whole have a dazzling future. Does this mean street operators should open arcades, or automatically put arcade games on the street? No! Arcades work best in urban areas. If street ops tried to compete with national chains, most would be heavily outgunned. Besides, the field is already overcrowded; customer traffic is down. If you can sell or run games in someone else's fun center, great — but be wary of owning the deed yourself. Why do some factories act like "only arcades matter"? Because arcades still buy the vast majority of pricey new items.

The point is, street and arcade markets both require attention and product. Both markets are evolving. Stand-pat types in both markets are asking to be weeded out. Survivors in both markets will be "the professionals," and they'll be stronger than ever. We hope you remain in the winners' circle for 1995, and we wish everyone a prosperous and successful year!

Marcus Webb

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JANUARY '95

INDEX

SPECIAL FEATURES

1994 IN REVIEW
The year was dominated by five major stories: recession, reorganization, video ratings, the info superhighway & the steady spread of legalized gambling .....pg. 30

FORECAST 1995
Ponder the future as *Cashbox International* publisher Jack Rodios interviews a tart-talking video game; get an early look at how operators will run networked games with NANI; and see what's doing with electronic payment systems. It all starts on .....pg. 33

ALL ABOUT ACCLAIM
Coin-op division president Tom Petit says Acclaim will exploit its licensed properties & in-house gizmos to make more-affordable hi-tech video games.....pg. 71

THE PARKS SHOW
Doug King, who writes a coin-op column, says coin-op was big at IAAPA '94. And AAMA first VP Randy Chilton says it was an eye-opening experience for operators. Coverage begins.....pg. 87

REGULAR FEATURES

BIG AL'S CORNER 138
BUYERS' BULLETIN 155
COVER STORY 115
DATEBOOK.....154
FRANK TALK.....103
"FUN & FUZZY" 143
GRAPEVINE 150
JAPANESE CHART 142
LATIN MUSIC 152
LETTER FROM EUROPE.....26
NEWS DIGEST 13
NEW PRODUCTS 146
ON YOUR MARK.....24
OPS & COMPUTERS 144
TECHNICAL TIPS.....108
THUMBNAIL SKETCH.....141
VITAL TITLES 153

FROM THE

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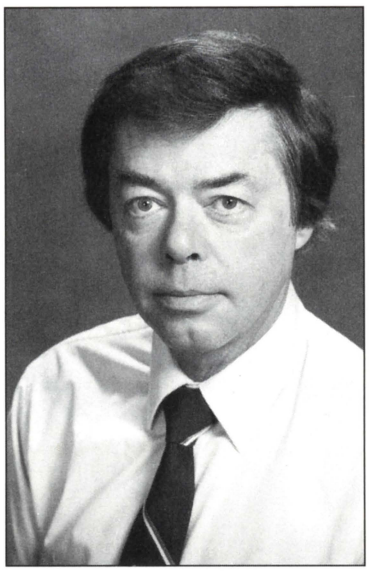

In the pre-electronic era, this business was identified by "three P's and a C" (phonographs, pool tables, pinballs and cigarettes). While the national cash box take saw a few spikes along the way (like when the original Shuffle Alley *came out), the business back then was relatively flat...but it was a "good" flat for most of the fellows who'd built up nice routes with machines made by a mere handful of manufacturers compared to today's headcount. There was competition back then, of course. But there was also a lot more loyalty, brotherhood and even romance for this little industry of jukeboxes and games.*

And then solid state electronics came along in the '70s, creating two of the wildest economic spikes in our history, first with pins and then with the videos that eclipsed the pins. Up the roller coaster hill went the industry. Out of the woodwork came the wannabe video operators. Video games popped up all over the place, eventually even on the home TV set. And then around 1982, the roller coaster peaked and came screaming down the other side to create the greatest economic crash this business has ever seen.

Those who survived, in most cases, were the people that had other machines to fall back on (the program was called "going back to basics"). Few have ignored those basics since the video binge. Yet, many would agree that today's business climate looks uncomfortably similar to those dark days of the '80s (e.g. too many coin mechs out there, heavy competition from other forms of entertainment like the movies and, yes, home video). Now, we additionally have DWI enforcement, gambling competition and the new "high price syndrome" to worry about.

What's the answer? The first time, we had cranes, darts and redemption to get the "cycle" curving back up. But, what's there now? If the high price games aren't your cup of tea, you can still seek and find some of the best product ever (even bar video with some of the new countertop loops). You have *to upgrade your route whether you want to or not, while hoping a new "spike" comes along. Those who won't (or can't) can end up out of business without even knowing it (like those poor guys whose "routes" are little more than worthless old videos that few play anymore.) Even a refrigerator has to be replaced sometime.*



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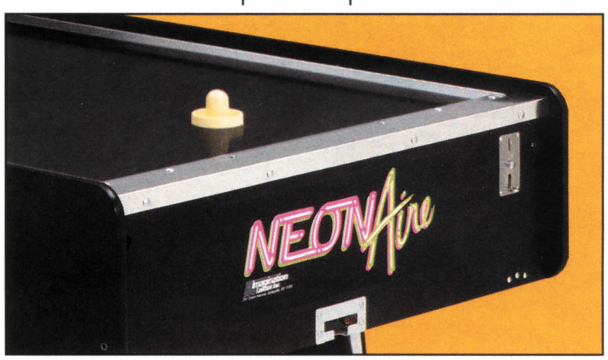

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NEWS DIGEST

JAPAN'S MID-TERM RESULTS: NO ROSES

Sharply slumping sales during the first half of fiscal 1994-5 for the home video game business, and a soft coin-op market during that same period, were reflected in mid-term fiscal reports from major Japanese vidgame factories. Information from several publicly held firms was released in November and December of '94, showing gross revenues way down for the period ending last September. Osaka's *Game Machine Magazine* reported that, compared to last year's figures, Nintendo's worldwide gross income was down 36%; Sega's was down 25%; Taito's was down 22%. Four firms released figures for Japan only (no subsidiaries): Capcom's domestic income was down 45% (their net was down 66%); Konami's gross was down 40%; Jaleco's was down 58%; and Tecmo's was down 43%. "Unsold home game cartridges are piling up in warehouses in Japan, North America and Europe," insiders said. "Stock values of publicly held Japanese companies have plummeted in quite a few cases, in part because the investors prefer slow but steady growth to the roller-coaster gains and losses of the entertainment industry." As powerful new home systems arrived on the world market from several firms for the Christmas sales season, industry leaders frankly predicted a period of "chaos and confusion" for a time in the consumer market, so don't look for Japan's numbers to brighten up overnight.

NEW THIS MONTH IN VIDS & PINS



Sega's *Virtua Fighter 2* begins shipping to the U.S. mid-month. *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* from Sega Pinball debuts at the European trade shows this month, following to the USA in February. Capcom's *X-Men* is slated to arrive on the market this month, follow-ing the industry's first-ever, on-line "electronic debut" last month on CompuServe. Full shipments of Premier's *Shaq Attaq* also begin this month, though sample quantities were available in December (see story elsewhere in this issue). Data East's *Locked & Loaded* came out Dec. 19. If we get word on release dates for their *Tattoo Assassins*, it will appear in "Hot Off the Press." Midway's *Killer Instinct* is now shipping out smartly to locations and word of mouth pegged it as the leading earner in quite a few arcades and street stops nationwide in December. Check this month's Player's Choice chart for official ratings.

NOW THE GOOD NEWS!

Anything to smile about in Japan's mid-term reports? "Although Nintendo's revenue is down, net income remains firm," said *Game Machine*. "Sega's revenue is also stable at around the same level as Nintendo's. Taito and Namco also continue to grow steadily." Matter of fact, Namco's mid-term grosses were up 15%, even though net was down 30%. In an unusual move, privately held SNK Corp. released figures showing its grosses up 10%, due mostly to 82% increases in home video sales. In the USA, hot new titles earned big bucks during their first week of release to the home. Specifically, the Acclaim/WMS title *Mortal Kombat II* made $50 million and Nintendo's *Donkey Kong Country* made $37 million. These figures are comparable to what a hit movie can earn during its first week in theaters. However, such mega-sellers remain few and far between.

VLT UPDATE: TWO CHEERS FOR VICTORY

South Dakota's video lottery terminals (VLTs) were restarted on Nov. 22, following the Nov. 8 vote to save the industry. By mid-December, earnings were reportedly back up to 80-90% of previous levels, tradesters said. That's good news, but "some irreparable public relations damage may have been done to us by this entire experience," one South Dakota insider lamented. "We haven't done a good job of explaining the operator's role in this industry, so there is some public resentment of operators. We're now seeking ways to address this problem."

Public disfavor with operators, of course, could translate into punitive taxes — and all sorts of crazy tax hikes are being suggested in South Dakota these days.

Meanwhile, **South Carolina** voters killed video poker gambling in around 1/4 of the state's counties during their Nov. 8 referendum. Now we hear operators in the shut-down counties are flooding into the remaining counties where gambling is still legal, offering outrageous bonuses and commission splits to bump existing ops from accounts.

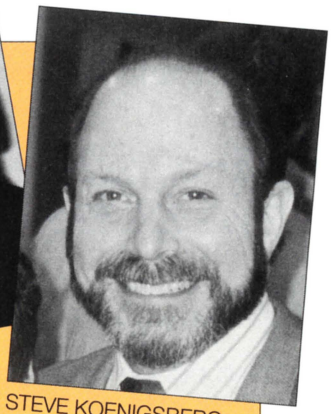
AAMA IS BUSIER THAN EVER!

The American Amusement Machine Assn. has much activity to report these days. For starters, executive director **Bob Fay** is busy negotiating contracts: one would let AAMA and IAAPA co-produce a Hong Kong trade show; another with the U.S. China Corp. covers a possible AAMA sponsorship role in China's Hotelex; a third contract would open a more active AAMA role in the SALEX show (Sao Paulo, Brazil). All three contracts will require separate votes at various times by AAMA's board before plans can be finalized. Fay is also working to help Japan revise its Fuei law; success here would open Japan for more redemption sales.

Back in the States, seven AAMA member factories have reported they are using the association's recommended "parental advisory" notice on vidgame attract screens, or will be using it sometime in 1995. A half-dozen other factories have yet to be heard from in AAMA's in-house survey, so the actual number of participants could eventually go higher. Meanwhile, the entire industry is curious about what stance the new Republican-run U.S. Congress will take on this issue.



BOB FAY



STEVE KOENIGSBERG

Also in Washington, "dollar coins are back on the table with the new Republican-run Congress," Fay said. "A new Subcommittee on Domestic & International Policy has been created, under Congressman Mike Castle, and they will handle this issue. Rep. Castle was a co-sponsor of dollar coin legislation in 1994," Bob advised. "Renewed optimism is running high that we have a solid chance to get dollar coins this year."

In the copyboard wars, AAMA and JAMMA have been very pleased with successful results worldwide of their Anti-Counterfeiting Advisory Group. Funded by JAMMA and administered by AAMA, the two-year campaign has achieved particularly good results in Italy and Mexico, along with strongly continuing earlier progress in Asia. AAG's charter runs through May of 1995 and parties are discussing future direction.

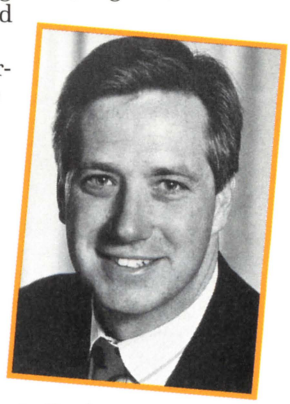


THE SHOWS JUST KEEP COMING!

This month brings us the two biggest European shows (ATEI and IMA), Leisurexpo in Florida, and the National Nightclub & Bar Convention in Vegas. London's **Amusement Trades Expo International** is expected to draw a huge international crowd from Jan. 24-26 to a soldout show featuring 184 exhibitors (including 33 first-timers). Global flavor comes from 37 foreign firms taking their own booth, plus 43 more who'll be represented by local distribs...In Germany, **IMA** boasts 204 exhibitors to its sold-out affair in Frankfurt, from Jan. 25-28. Organizers are billing this show as the "gateway to the East," meaning the new markets in Eastern Europe ... **Leisurexpo** occupies the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Fla. from Jan. 19-21. Mostly arcade-type products, along with food and mini-golf exhibits, will be featured; meanwhile the big seminar program appears aimed at skating rinks, ice cream parlors, and other such locations whose owners are expanding to include coin-op amusements...The photo shows floor action at **Nightclub & Bar Expo.** This year's edition takes place at Bally's Grand Hotel in Las Vegas from Jan. 16-18. Most attendees are bar owners, but you'd better believe some coin-op factories will be there (some in an AAMA booth, where leads will be passed on to appropriate distribs and operators).

NANI WILL HAVE "SIGN-OFF" TEST OF PILOT PROGRAM THIS MONTH

The National Amusement Network, Inc. (NANI) is "on the brink" of getting its network up and running. Their info carrier, Electronic Data Systems, should begin running four networked units during the first week of January in Troy, Mich. In this pilot test, NANI officers will physically operate and play the units and (in general) see how it all works. Once full approval ("sign-off") is given, a larger 50-game test in Ohio and Kansas will follow. NANI is still recruiting operators to participate in the larger test. "It is NANI's mandate that networked games will be sold to operators through distribution, and that will absolutely happen — unless distribution decides to block the program entirely," NANI president Craig Johnson declared. During December, NANI was interviewing candidates for a full time executive director; hiring should happen this month. By the way, Craig says he'll step down from the NANI presidency when his term ends March 1. "I feel very good about what we've done so far and where we are at this point," he said. "I will continue to support and assist the new president, whoever that is, as necessary and am looking forward to NANI's full implementation. It's going to be fun!" Inside this issue, you can read the full text of AMOA's recent seminar on how participating operators will link up with NANI and run programs from their office computers. See page **38.**



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NEWS DIGEST

SEGA CHANNEL SEEKS 1 MILLION SUBSCRIBERS THIS YEAR

The Sega Channel began service in December via 14 cable TV stations, from Pittsburgh to Walnut Creek, Calif. This month another four major markets get the service, which offers a play-all-you-want rotating menu of 50 (mostly older) games at a cost of around $12 per month. Just plug in your Sega Genesis machine and download the game of your choice. Sega's working on a way to let players in different homes compete with each other, too (by phone line connection, is our guess). If they hit their target of 1 million subscribers at $12 per month, that's $144 million in annual grosses for the service! *Popular Science* magazine named Sega Channel one of 1994's outstanding products and technical achievements; early reports are that consumers and TV industry analysts seem to agree. By the way, *USA Today* reported that in December Sega opened a digital studio in San Francisco. It could be used for anything from digitizing actor motion for future games, to creating interactive movies, said execs.

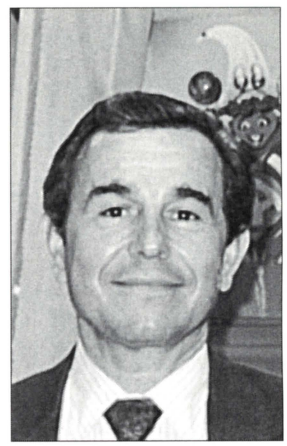
HI-TECH HOME GAMES: NINTENDO & MICROSOFT

Nintendo showed *Virtual Boy,* the first virtual reality system developed and produced for the mass market, at a Tokyo trade show in mid-November. The RISC-based, 32-bit system utilizes two high-resolution, mirror-scanning LED (light emitting diode) displays to produce a 3-D experience not possible on conventional television or LCD screens. The stand-alone unit does not plug into a standard TV set. Unique design eliminates all external stimuli, totally immersing players into their own private universe with high-resolution red images against a deep black background. The 3-D experience is enhanced through stereophonic sound and a new specially designed, double-grip controller which accommodates multidirectional spatial movement. Should hit the market next April along with cartridge-based software.

Microsoft Corp. has struck agreements with 10 companies to help develop its interactive-television technology, code-named "Tiger." The agreements mean the system will be intensively tested this year and should be available to consumers in 1996. Hewlett-Packard Co. and NEC Corp. will design television set-top boxes that consumers can use to interact with their TVs. Microsoft is developing the software for the boxes. Helping to set up the systems will be Alcatel, Andersen Consulting, Lockheed Missiles & Space Co., NTT Data Communications Systems Corp. and Olivetti. Companies that will test the technology are Deutsche Telekom of Germany, Telstra Corp. of Australia, and US West Communications Inc. Microsoft already has announced planned trials of interactive television with Tele-Communications Inc., SBC Communications Inc., Rogers Cablesystems Limited and Nippon Telegraph & Telephone Corp. NEC also is joining Compaq Computer Corp. and Intel Corp. in building computer equipment to run Tiger.

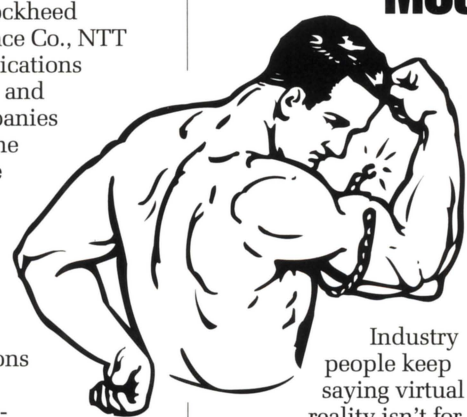
LAZER-TRON "MORE THAN DOUBLED" SALES IN 1994

Redemption is one of the bright spots in today's market, and no place brighter than Pleasanton, Calif., home of Lazer-Tron Corp. This innovative firm went public in 1994, bowing six new titles during the year. Their annual report shows net sales of $15.3 million, with net income of about $1.6 million. Gross profits for the fiscal year rose 34%. The very popular *Aftershock* and *Ribbit Racin'* each accounted for 25% of 1994 sales, with the *Spin to Win* series accounting for a bit larger share of the sales pie. A variety of other titles made up the last 20% or so. The company reported it now employs 57 full time and 73 temporary employees in administration, engineering and development, marketing and sales, manufacturing and quality testing. President



Norm Petermeier said Lazer-Tron will bring out six more "increasingly sophisticated" games in 1995, add a sound studio and video production facilities, and beef up engineering and development resources. (Could there be a Lazer-Tron line of video games in the future?) Anyway, congrats to Norm, Matt Kelly, Ron Cararra, and the entire team!

VIRTUALITY SALES & MFG. MUSCLE GROWS IN USA & ABROAD



Industry people keep saying virtual reality isn't for real, but **Virtuality Group** keeps ignoring them and pushing ahead. Their installed base is now 300-plus in the USA, with about 700 systems in 33 nations worldwide. They just signed their largest-ever single contract, a $1.25 million deal giving a firm called Software 80 exclusive rights for Italy.

The Naples-based company, which has already gotten smashing results with previous units at an amusement park there, will take 40 two-seater VR systems. In the USA, Virtuality Entertainment (Irving, Texas-based subsid) began manufacturing their new Series 2000 VR hardware last September. Current capacity is 12 pairs of systems per month, and increased manufacturing capacity is planned. Also, 16 Virtuality systems were part of the new Block Party fun center in New Mexico (see our profile of Block Party beginning on **page 74.)**

NEW FROM JALECO

ALLEY CATS®

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The Cats are back in town, and they're wilder than ever! Join JALECO in a crashin', smashin',rompin' stompin' good time with ALLEY CATS! Try to knock over all fe-lines of cats to achieve the purr-fect score! JALECO is proud to present ALLEY CATS! As usual, it's more fur- flying excitement than ever before!

DIMENSIONS

WIDTH.....2.42'
HEIGHT.....6.60'
LENGTH (13' ramp)..13.06'
LENGTH (10' ramp)..10.30'

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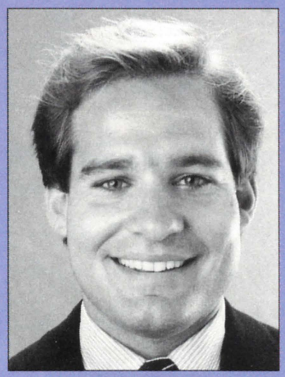
ALLEY CATS GAME IDEA LICENSED FROM UPPER EAST TENNESSEE DISTRIBUTING

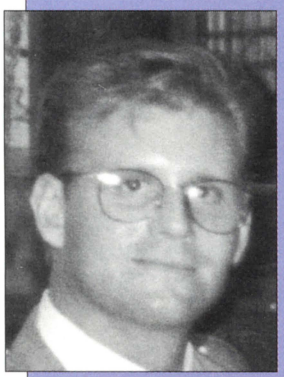
IT'S A HIT!

NEWS DIGEST

HBI BOWS "FUN MERCHANTS"



JEFF WALKER



CHUCK MORTON

H. Betti Industries owns America's largest distributor network (the nationwide Betson chain) as well as redemption factory Betson Enterprises. Now they've created an independent new division, **Fun Merchants.** Headed by VP **Jeff Walker** and national sales manager **Chuck Morton,** they'll develop some product in-house and market it along with the Crompton line of coin pushers, Elaut's *Candy Man* crane, **Big Choice** cranes, Sound Leisure and Nova amusement products, IGS video products, as well as various other amusements to be licensed in the future. Fun Merchants has contracted with **Moloney Mfg.** to produce **Rage'N the Cage** and additional future homegrown goods. For more information (including this month's new release), call Chuck at 502/429-3498 or fax 502-429-6026.

BRITISH TRADE TO TAKE BIG TAX BITE

British tradesters will have lots to talk about at the ATEI this month. *Amusement Business* magazine reports that Her Majesty's Government is going to slap "certain amusement games" with an annual tax of US$393 starting in November of this year. Officials will say this month exactly which machines are affected. BACTA, the British trade group, predicts a disaster that could shrink location coverage, force smaller ops out of business, and cost over 12,000 jobs.



AMOA TO MEDIA TRAINING SCHOOL

Suppose a TV reporter suddenly shoved a camera and microphone in your face, then screamed: "How do you feel about making profits from cigarette vending machines that give cancer to school children?" How would you react? AMOA officers and government relations committee leaders recently got some good coaching on this (and other sticky situations when dealing with the mass media). During mid-November, 1994, several AMOAers attended an intensive two-day workshop at Burson-Marsteller (a leading PR firm) in New York City. It was the group's second baptism by press fire. The "students" practiced giving TV, radio and newspaper interviews as well as impromptu press reports. "We're all getting more relaxed and smooth at this, so the training definitely pays off," reported Frank Seninsky, who provided this photo. Seen here are (seated, l-r) Burson-Marsteller EVP **Gail Quattlebaum,** AMOA government relations chairman **Gene Winstead,** and AMOA President **Tami Norberg-Paulsen.** Standing, from left: AMOA government relations vice chairman **Frank Seninsky,** AMOA Treasurer **Jerry Derrick,** former *Miami Herald* and *Forbes* reporter **Jeff Bloch,** AMOA Secretary **Don Hesch,** and AMOA First VP **Randy Chilton.**

TRADE NOTES

Add **Capcom USA** to the list of on-line vidgame factories. CompuServe subscribers can log on for game tips, codes, company and product news etc. through "Video Game Publisher's Forum B" on the modem data service. By the way, Capcom said it launched its new coin-op *X-Men* via this on-line channel. Their Internet address is 74774, 1402 @compuserve.com.

Brady Distributing is now carrying the BWB Newark Ltd. line of equipment in all their territories. First machine, *Sunset Skill Stop,* has tested well in Florida sites and the first shipment was nearly sold out by early December. Don Tunstall (Orlando branch) can provide more info at 407/578-1238.

Cyplex Corp. seems to be setting up a sort of "NANI for vending machines." Back at the NAMA meeting in November of '94, Cyplex and partners Mobile Business Systems bowed the *VendPro* radio-based system to monitor vending machines for full service vending operations. Their setup lets vending machines send info the operator's office about product quantities and sales, low stock of change, money in the cash box, theft attempts, etc., and even take and verify credit cards. In addition, host computers will create daily route orders for vending personnel, based on the most efficient use of all this data. Call Cyplex at 603/882-8104 for info.

The State of Washington has given its official OK to **Bromley, Inc.'s *Super Rock 'n' Bowl,*** certifying that the redemption game does require authentic skilled play. "Washington State's stringent guidelines regarding redemption games, and *Super Rock 'n' Bowl* receiving approval in this state as a redemption game, confirm that Bromley games are solid investments for operators," said the firm.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OP GRABS NEW BIZ AT BOWLING SHOW

We love operators who turn lemons into lemonade. One of the trade's greatest "lemonade makers" has got to be Florida operator **Paul Virgadamo** (Southest Amusement & Vending, Tampa). Paul is continuing with his aggressive marketing strategy of seeking new customers by specializing in providing "turnkey redemption/arcade operations" to bowling centers...and by exhibiting at bowling industry expos. Paul's firm had a very crowded and popular exhibit booth during a recent regional Bowling Proprietor's Convention & Trade Show (Clearwater, Fla. from Nov. 8-10). "This was our most successful bowling show to date," Paul declared. (He's seen here in the hardhat with his firm's **Jodi Powell** and Strike & Spare Fun Centers' **Kevin Krauss).** "In today's depressed economic climate," Paul said, "amusement equipment is more than ever an integral part of every bowling center's bottom line." Bowling sales alone don't ensure survival, Paul added, pointing out that his company's programs have produced "substantial revenue increases" in every participating center. Way to go, Paul!

DIRECTORY ADDS & CORRECTIONS

Featuring several thousand listings, *RePlay's* annual directory of the amusement machine industry was published last month. But even with the efficiency of computers and faxes, a few errors and omissions are inevitable. Here's some new or corrected info to scribble into your Rolodex, or write in the margins of your Directory issue. Under "national associations," you can contact the **Entertainment Software Ratings Board** (exec director is Dr. Arthur Pober) in New York City at 212/759-0700. In Washington D.C., the **Interactive Digital Software Assn.** (president is Doug Lowenstein) may be reached at 202/833-4372. The **National Kiddie Ride Assn.** is at P.O. Box 104625, Jefferson City, MO 65110-4625; phone is 800/677-6572; fax is 314/636-8525. They provide an insurance program and safety guidelines for members' coin-op equipment. The correct phone number for **Acclaim Coin-Op Entertainment** in San Jose, Calif. is 408/236-3280. Finally, **Oriental Trading Co.'s** proper 800 number for redemption customers is 800/228-8884. (We accidentally published their retail division's 800 number in our Directory.) By the way, Oriental's commercial (redemption) division moves next month to a new address: that's 5455 So. 90th St., Omaha, NE 68127. Regular phone is 402/596-1200; fax is 800/228-1002. Our apologies to anyone who was inconvenienced.

REMEMBERING JOHN GUTHRIE, GERALD CIAMBOR & DAN CRAVENS

Operator **John Guthrie** of G&G Amusements (Commerce, Calif.) passed away on Oct. 11, 1994 due to complications following by-pass surgery. He was 62. John worked at this much respected family-run business in the L.A. area for nearly 42 years. G&G was founded in 1953 by his mother, who at age 95 still heads it. John is also survived by his son John Jr.

Elma, N.Y. operator **Gerald Ciambor** died Oct. 25, 1994 at age 56 after two months of illness. He spent 15 years in the restaurant business before opening his JNC Game Room since 1982, later expanding to include mini-golf and go-karts. The company was active in charitable fundraisers for the Blind Assn. of Western New York. Survivors include his wife Nancy, two sons and three grandchildren. "His friendly competitors in the Western New York Coin Machine Operators Assn. will miss this colorful family man," advised association secretary Bill Johnston.

Industry veteran **Dan Cravens** passed away Nov. 22, 1994 of complications from diabetes. He was 53 years old. Dan was parts manager at Century Vending & Distributing in Los Angeles. Services took place at Riverside, Calif. where Dan had lived. Born in San Bernadino, Calif., Dan was a trade member for 20 years, performing technical work for such as C.A. Robinson and Circle International, as well as heading the Games Amusements operations in Hungary for two years after the collapse of the Eastern Communist Bloc. According to his brother, AAMA VP Bill Cravens, Dan had struggled with diabetes for a long time and was undergoing treatment to stabilize his condition when he suffered a heart attack. Surviving family members include brother Bill, mother Jesse and five sons: Dan Jr., Michael, Shawn, Russell and Eric.

RePlay offers condolences to all the families and friends of these fine men. May they rest in peace.

#1 DREAM TEAM

MARVEL COMICS

X-MEN

CHILDREN OF THE ATOM™



In 1961 Marvel Comics introduced the X-Men. For more than 30 years they have remained one of the most popular comics in America. In 1992 an animated X-Men series was launched on the Fox network; viewed in over 23 million households each week. Now Capcom has captured all the action and power of America's most popular superhero team. Produced by the same team that created the Street Fighter II series, the X-Men brings together the characters that players around the world have been waiting for.

From the savage Wolverine to the psionic subtlety of the telepathic Psylock, players can choose from among six of their favorite X-Men or four of their dark opponents, in a head to head combat fight to the finish. With graphics so sharp players will think they're in the animated series, and to complete the illusion, Capcom has even used the actors from the animated series to supply the voices for the game. Giving the characters even more familiarity and recognition.

Contact your authorized Capcom distributor or Capcom for referral and let the X-Men bring their awesome power to your cashbox.

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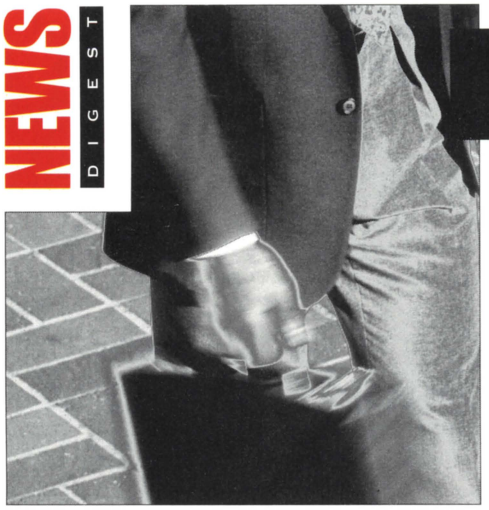
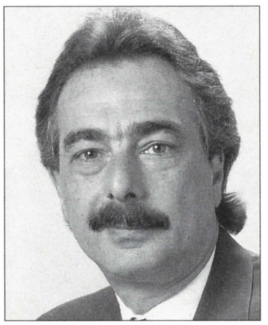
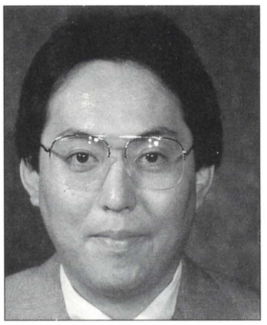


PEOPLE ON THE MOVE



STEVE KAUFMAN



MASAO OHATA

Steve Kaufman has exited from Electronic Arts coin-op division and returned to his previous employer, Premier Technology, where he takes up duties as VP/GM of the amusement division on Jan. 1. EA's national sales top **Frank Pelligrini** advised that he'll step in to fulfill Steve's duties there until a replacement can be found.

Masao Ohata, a former Jaleco exec, is the new director of international business for Time Warner Interactive (Atari). He'll oversee sales and marketing of amusement machines in the Far East and South America, develop new business and partnerships there, etc.

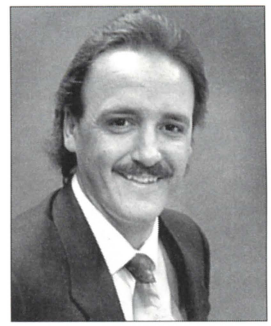
Dave Kristal has been appointed national promotions manager by Valley Recreation Products. The eight-year Valley vet has been coordinator of their fast-growing "Valley Gold" program, and served on the NDA board of directors. In his new post Dave will continue to manage and develop Valley's leagues, tournaments and other promotions.

Valley has also named **Bruce Allen** as VP of manufacturing and engineering, where he'll take full responsibility for those functions at all three Valley plants (HQ in Bay City, Mich.; electronics in Sycamore, Ill.; & wood products in Shakopee, Minn.). Execs praised his vision and leadership, demonstrated in 14 years of success in increasingly responsible posts.

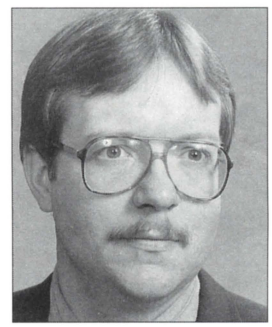
Reggie Moultrie has been promoted to VP of sales at Skee-Ball, Inc., where he's been a leading sales manager for the past two years. His earlier posts included lengthy stints with Vari-Tech and Six Flags. Reggie will oversee sales for both the Pennsy and Arizona offices for U.S. distribution and national accounts, as well as all of the Americas and the Middle East. Company execs praised his "significant contribution to the growth of Skee-Ball, Inc." and said his experience and talents will play a key role in future expansion.

Coin Concepts VP **Gary Warner** has been named to the board of directors of IFECA, the International Family Entertainment Center Assn. IFECA prexy Joey Herd praised Gary's energy and new ideas. Gary recently raised $33,000 by running IFECA's first-ever "silent auction" fundraiser. Congratulations!

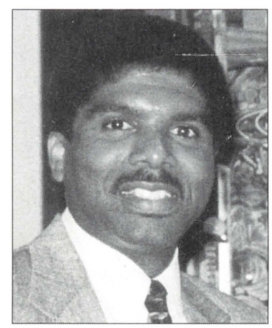
After years of providing expert advice on redemption games, consultant **Bob Snyder** has been awarded status as a Diplomate: Board Certified Forensic Examiner by the American Board of Forensic Examiners. That's an elite group of professionals actively engaged in court-oriented examination and consulting in various areas (including engineering, which Bob Snyder & Associates specializes in). Congratulations!



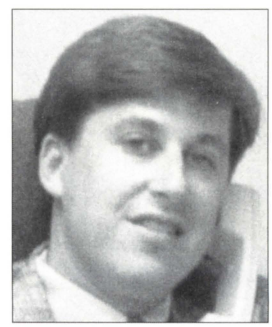
DAVE KRISTAL



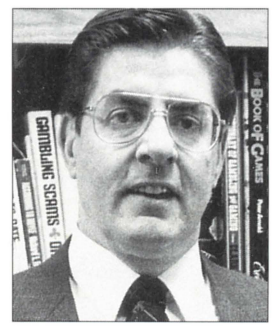
BRUCE ALLEN



REGGIE MOULTRIE

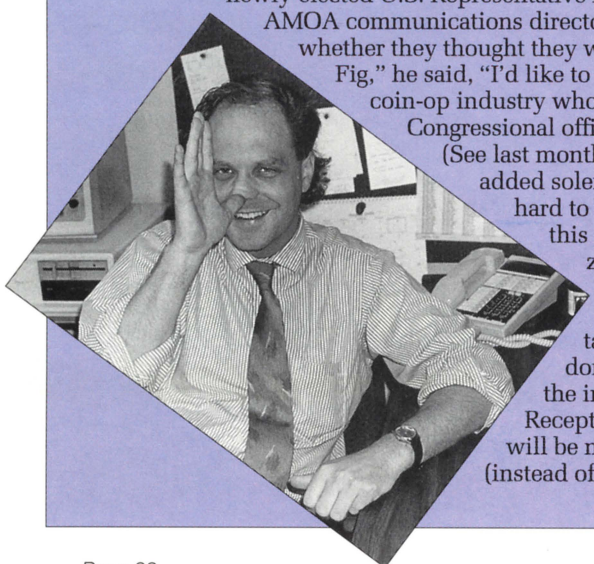


GARY WARNER



BOB SNYDER

REPRESENTATIVE NEWTON SAVORS ELECTION VICTORY



"There's nothing quite like the exhilaration of winning!" declared newly-elected U.S. Representative **Fred Newton** (former AMOA communications director). "Regardless of whether they thought they were supporting Fred or Fig," he said, "I'd like to thank those in the local coin-op industry who helped sweep me into Congressional office this past November." (See last month's issue for details.) Fred added solemnly: "I promise to work hard to represent the interests of this industry and, for all citizens, to work diligently to change the direction of America." His note contained a postscript: "Please don't forget to invite me to the industry's Congressional Reception in May. For once it will be nice to be in front of (instead of behind) the cameras."

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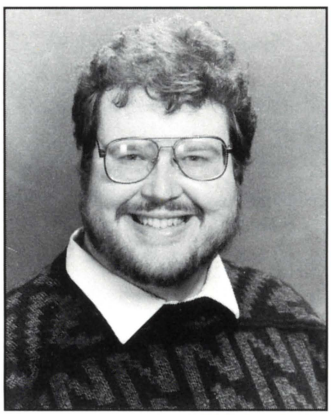
BY MARCUS WEBB



JIM WITTLER, VOICE OF OPTIMISM

Tired of hearing doom and gloom about the business? Call up Jim Wittler, general manager of Betson Pittsburgh. He's sharp, friendly, hard-working. A man whose optimism is matched only by his height (around six foot nine, I think). We called him and got a refreshing dose of his upbeat outlook. It sounded like this:

"We're expecting a statehouse vote on video lottery any time, followed by a citizen referendum in late '95 and VLTs on the street by 1996. We had our largest state association meeting ever in the summer of '94 and confidence is very, very high that VLTs will happen. So this is having a ripple effect and boosting confidence and investments across the board, especially for tavern locations.

"The total number of operators is dwindling a bit, because the larger guys are buying out smaller operators. In western Pennsylvania especially, VLT is getting so close that smaller operators are saying 'I don't want to mess with legalized gambling.' Larger operators, on the other hand, want a substantial-sized route when VLTs come in. So you can see some consolidation.

"Summer was slow for us, as expected, so we did about average. Naturally fall has higher sales volume. We've had a good run with bigger pieces like Sega's *Daytona* and Midway's *Revolution X,* so sales numbers go up from that. They go into places like truckstops and large regional arcades. In truckstops we're also having excellent results with solitaire-type games. Even at summer's end, we were at or a touch below our projections; business wasn't nearly as devastating for us during the first three quarters of '94 as many others seemed to find it, elsewhere around the country. We're having an upturn!

"The good news is lots of activity in sports bars and FECs, plus we have picked up some new equipment for vending and coin handling. Besides the hot videos, we've also had good sales of Rowe jukeboxes. We're having a bit of an influx with new sports bars that have opened in our territory. We've also had a tremendous surge with electronic darts. More operators are getting involved in leagues — they're protecting their locations because they know VLTs are coming. On the other hand, tavern traffic has been at its lowest ebb, in part due to severe weather which has affected collections.

"We've also been very active in pushing the business with receptions, service schools, equipment shows, league banquets and startups, state operator conventions, and positioning ourselves for the fall! I'm looking forward to a very good season."

Now, please notice what Jim did **not** say. He didn't say "everything's going along peachy-keen all by itself." He did not say, "just keep on doing the same old things the same old way, and business will be fine." No, sir!

In plain English, Jim said successful operators are still taking care of the basics (taverns, truckstops, jukeboxes) while also expanding their promotional activity — dart leagues, for instance. He said FEC's are becoming a factor...not exactly a "traditional" sort of location, eh? He suggested that "consolidation" is not a dirty word; it means the same amount of location business is out there, it's just being covered by fewer...and larger..and most important, *healthier*...operators.

Was there anything troubling in this upbeat report? That depends how you feel about gambling. Even if Pennsy OKs operator-run VLTs, it's going to be a headache. But it's a headache most operators are dying to get!

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NEW MARKETS MAY OPEN FOR REDEMPTION

BY CHRISTINE BUTTERWORTH

Once again, we present "Letter from Europe," brought to us by veteran trade journalist Christine Butterworth and her colleagues at InterGame, *a new UK-based monthly.*

Redemption could be the main winner in two new markets opening up in Europe — Italy and Holland.

Italy is to get its own form of "amusement with prizes" and early discussions seem to be focusing on a redemption-style game.

And the same picture is beginning to emerge in Holland, where a large sector of locations is banning the legalized slots and the trade is seeking a non-controversial alternative.

In the case of Italy, the new legislation currently being hammered out right now suggests that it could lead to as many as 200,000 machines coming into the market, as the country's 100,000 bars, cafes, pubs, hotels and restaurants would be prime locations. The talk is of a machine which will not pay out cash, but will pay out prizes to the equivalent of not more than 30 times the value of the coin or coins played as a stake. This would make the machine more akin to redemption than gambling.

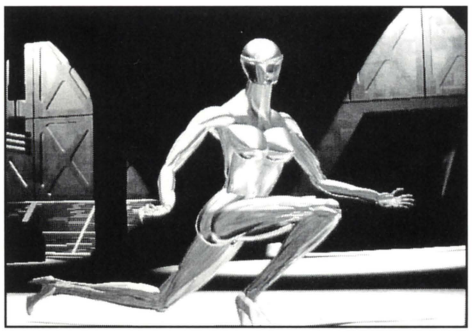
The new law is expected very quickly, according to sources within the Italian trade.

In Holland, the new market could represent 20,000 units. Although AWPs with cash payouts are legal, local councils have the right to veto them in their areas. Most have now stopped them from being located in fast food outlets, or fish and chip shops, where children may have access to them. The industry, desperate to hold on to *some* kind of involvement in such a substantial market, is attempting to come to an agreement with the Dutch government, which would set up a new category of game with "soft" prizes. If not cash, then this could take the form of merchandise.

OTHER NEWS

Following last month's note about the growth in the number of **European video game designers**, more are coming to the attention of the industry. The Japanese manufacturers in particular are queuing up to talk with Bell-Fruit Manufacturing, a slots producer from the UK, who widened its manufacturing base by getting into game design.

Its first game is *Rise of the Robots,* a



beat-'em-up action game between futuristic beasts using graphical techniques. The sound effects and the soundtrack are composed and performed by Brian May, guitarist from Queen.

Meanwhile, Belgium software house Art and Magic, has had its new PCB games start to appear on the European exhibition circuit. *Cheese Chase* and *Stone Ball* are the first two games to hit the market recently, the former a novelty mouse strategy game and the latter a hugely amusing comic football game between Stone Age characters.

The contracting range of equipment for the PCB market in particular is causing concern around Europe, where as many as a million are in use in one form or another. In Eastern Europe and the Northern Mediterranean countries espe-

When it comes to buying jukeboxes these days, there's only one alternative to good planning.



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But we're not suggesting that you just "up & switch" to NSM.

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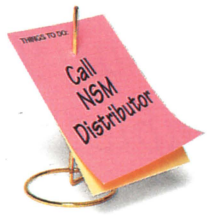
Start by sending for our free booklet, "Technology that works. And keeps on working." It'll give you a good idea of what lies ahead in digital technology ... and why, for those operators who are prepared, it could well mean a more profitable future than ever in coin-operated music.





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cially, operators cannot get the return on dedicated games, which elevates the importance of PCBs.

ITALY

Italian-based monitor manufacturer **Hantarex** — which has been in the Italian version of Chapter 11 — is back in business after a two-month trading gap. It is now producing a 52-inch monitor and is developing 31 Khz and 36 Khz high-definition monitors

ENADA

The Enada show in Italy was another European exhibition to hit the headlines. Last year it did so dramatically as raids took place on manufacturers of copy boards. This led to intensive police work which resulted in operators having to hand over the copies they had purchased from one company in particular. And then widespread under-invoicing exacerbated the problem.

But this year the AAG "industry policeman" had little to do as the show, in Rome, opened to find all of the Italian manufacturing industry had "gone legitimate."

SCANDANAVIA

European attention this month has turned to the Nordic countries, where **charity organizations** have been undergoing some shocks from the independent coin machine trade. Ops in Norway worked through *EuroMat* to defeat Red Cross plans to grab all coin-op profits (they already get a share of the cash box).

In neighboring Finland, a similar monopoly situation for charities is also being overturned. The official government operating company RAHA, is losing its control over non-gambling machines throughout Finland and independent operators will now be able to compete freely. It is thought that it will only be a matter of time before RAHA loses its payout machine monopoly too. Meanwhile in Sweden, the market is opening up to as many as 25,000 video lottery terminals.

VAN EXPO

The Dutch held their annual trade show for the second time this year in November. "Annual", but "for the second time this year?" Yes. For the first time the Dutch trade association, the VAN, ran two shows in a year. Their first was in the usual slot of early January.

The reason for the second show was a change in Dutch laws, due on January 1, which alters the way their slots operate, so the industry needed extra run-in time to the deadline.

Amsterdam was the venue and around 30 companies took part. the dutch trade is very powerful internationally, with Dutch ventures in many eastern European countries, although at home the domestic market is weak for all kinds of "anti-gambling" reasons.

Video games are popular, as is pinball, but jukeboxes are but a small market in Holland.

GERMANY

Kaneko's European office reports that the Japanese company has won the licensing rights to manufacture a video game featuring Jackie Chan and other film stars from the Far East. The new game is due for release in early 1995 and will feature digitized graphics. Also new from Kaneko is a new 32-bit system for release in March to operate in cassette form.

Electronic darts is so popular in Germany that major operator, Nova Darts, part of Nova Apparate, has set up competitions. Anyone who feels like playing in a tournament can call the line from anywhere in Germany to receive a personal appraisal of which tournaments are taking place where.

The new German **Bundestag**, the parliament, has had a petition of over 33,000 names calling for relief from taxation and other restrictions on the German coin machine industry. The restrictions include some crazy building regulations for games rooms.

UK

The British industry is to lose its **tokens**. The government has indicated that it is prepared to consider AWPs (the British form of low-input, low-payout mild gambling machines) without the necessity to have part or all of the prizes in tokens. This will effect around 200,000 machines. ◆



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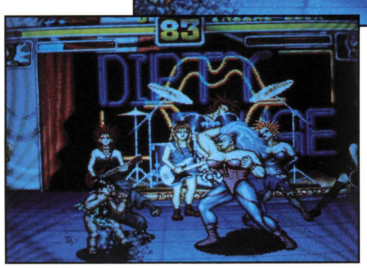

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1994 in Review

five major trends that impacted the coin-op industry... and how these trends combined into a "snowball effect"

As we saw it there were five big stories in 1994: recession, reorganization, vid-game ratings, info superhighway, and legalized gambling. First, let's take a quick look at each. Then, some thoughts on what it all means for you...and for the industry as a whole.

1) A worldwide recession

recession for coin-op and home video.



Only a minority of factories (e.g. Namco, Capcom, Williams/Bally-Midway) reported increased profitability for fiscal '94; most others saw profit margins shrink — in some cases, dramatically. Arcade income was off by some 7% or so, right around the globe. Street operations suffered most of all, especially those heavily into video and/or C-stores. However, most ops who have survived this far, are now "lean and mean" enough to last until good times return. By year's end, there were signs that cash boxes could be getting healthier.

2) The pace was faster

than ever with the trade's ongoing transformation into Big Business.

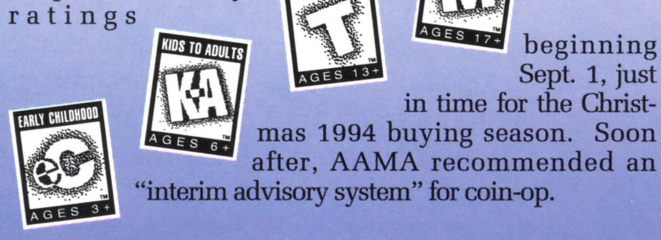


Shakeout, consolidation and (believe it or not) expansion all supported this trend. Goodbye to coin-op video game suppliers Irem and Romstar (the latter is still active, but not in manufacturing); goodbye pinball maker Alvin G. & Co. (closed). Hello "mergers and acquisitions" for Data East Pinball (sold to Sega), Amutec (sold to Coin Concepts), Nat'l. Sports Games (sold to Skee Ball), and TOP Distributing (sold to Mondial). The big got bigger on the manufacturing level as Sega, Namco and Konami opened or planned new arcades, mini-theme parks and simulation centers. Big entertainment and electronics firms like Sony and Blockbuster got into location based entertainment. Big distributors got bigger, too: four dealers opened new branches (Mondial, Central, AMA, CleCoin). Make it five if you count in the new American Coin (Portland and Seattle) which was backed by the late Ralph Winfield (Ralph's Distributing, Canadian Coin). On the operating level, some major operators kept buying up smaller competitors. Some distributors began worrying that surviving mega-ops might have so much purchasing clout, as to reduce dealer margins past the point of viability.

3) Video violence

and game ratings:

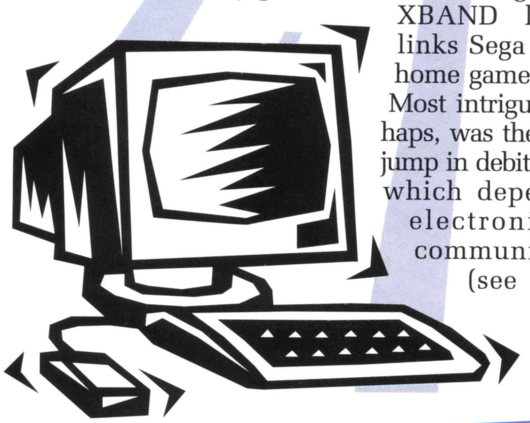
under heavy pressure from Congress, home video adopted "voluntary" ratings



beginning Sept. 1, just in time for the Christmas 1994 buying season. Soon after, AAMA recommended an "interim advisory system" for coin-op.

4) The information superhighway started getting crowded.

We saw the Sega Channel, NANI, Blockbuster, NTN Communications, Telejukebox, and lots more video game downloading plans by major cable TV, computer and teleco firms. Several vidgame firms (Sega, Atari/TWi, Nintendo, Capcom, etc.) and BMI opened permanent, 24-hour, interactive billboards on computer information services like CompuServe, Prodigy, etc. Virtual Worlds simulation centers linked distant gamers by phone for interactive gameplay; XBAND likewise links Sega Genesis home game players. Most intriguing, perhaps, was the sudden jump in debit card use which depends on electronic data communications (see related stories in this issue).





5) Legalized gambling continued its hard-fought — but steady — advance.

VLTs in South Dakota and South Carolina survived their stiffest legal challenges yet. Indian casinos said: "Supreme Court ruling be damned, we'll keep our slots." New casinos (some Indian, some not) will open in Massachusetts, New Mexico and Rhode Island.

If you add up these trends, what do they mean? For the traditional coin machine industry member, it's a tougher business than it used to be. And not just because our business cycle is down at the moment (although that's largely true). But even when the money comes back, we're going to be living in a landscape that's permanently, fundamentally altered. We'll be living with bigger competition, faster buy-earn-sell cycles, and a greater demand for professionalism.

Next, what do these five trends tell us about the state of the industry? Trying to figure out which trends are causes, and which trends are effects, is like asking which came first — the chicken or the egg. It's a snowballing phenomenon, a vicious circle...or in some cases, a benign circle... where all of the industry's major trends reinforce each other in a thousand different ways.

Many examples of this "snowball effect" are obvious. For instance, recession helps drive smaller companies to exit the business, or sell to big companies. Conversely, competition from bigger companies (and from legalized gambling) drives some sectors deeper into recession. The trend toward the information superhighway, and the trend toward big business, both drive each other.

But sometimes the "snowball effect" is less obvious about how trends reinforce each other. For example, did you know legalized gambling is helping to power the information superhighway? Some very big companies are quietly investing millions in schemes to bring on-line wagering directly into your home.

Okay, so what's the bottom line? Maybe this: our industry's universe experienced a "big bang" when computer chips began transforming our products back in the early 1970s. Now, our industry's universe is expanding faster and faster in all directions — from comic book and movie tie-ins, to modem data delivery and global corporate competition. As it expands, our industry's universe is growing more and more complex, all the time. True, you don't have to be a nuclear physicist to understand what's going on. But you do have to pay closer attention than you used to!



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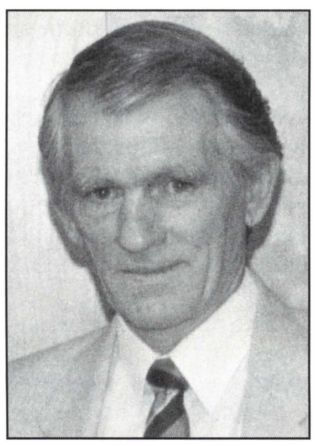
The View from Down Under

AUSSIE-BASED TRADE MAG CASH BOX INTERNATIONAL CONSULTS A SILICON-CHIPPED SOOTHSAYER TO SNEAK A PEEK AT THE FUTURE OF THE VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY

(editor's note: The following "interview" with the esteemed VCB33 — Voice of Cash Box? — computer appeared in the October 1994 issue of *Cash Box International.* We'd like to thank CBI publisher and trade vet Jack Rodios for allowing us to reprint his...er, the computer's bold predictions in the pages of *RePlay.)*



JACK RODIOS

We know where video games came from, but where are they going is what interests most operators trying to keep on top of this business.

We could pose the question, is the future VR, CD ROM, NANI, or something we haven't even heard of yet? But the way new technologies just keep leaping up out of nowhere, who could really answer it?

We decided that only a hi-tech creation could possibly give us some answers so we invested in the latest-model crystal ball, the Virtua CB, version 33.

This brilliant piece of electronic wizardry uses polygon, stop-motion animated VR graphics on triple whammy, 520-bit RISC processors with CD ROM exhaust at 200MHz and three digital signal semiconductors at the top end powering the Level 6 raster images and digital sound system.

It's a pretty mean machine, probably equal in performance to the 1996 range of video games.

We very tentatively turned the beast on and feeling a bit of a dill in talking to a machine, the following took place.

Cash Box: What is the future of video games?

VCB33: Video games and the operation of them will never be the same as the industry has known them over past years. Street operations in particular will have to be completely restructured.

Where in many places the emphasis has been on quantity, on getting more video machines out onto the street, the successful operator of the future will be vastly different.

He will operate a much smaller number of quality games on quality sites and making better profits. There's going to be a bit of pain along the way, but the end result will be a much healthier situation.

CB: What makes you so sure of this? Does that "healthier situation" mean conversion video is dead?

VCB33: The restructuring is already happening all round the world, but no, it will not mean the end of conversion video games by any means, though it will see greatly depleted numbers on the street.

If nothing else expedites this swing away from the convertible video game, the price of new games will.

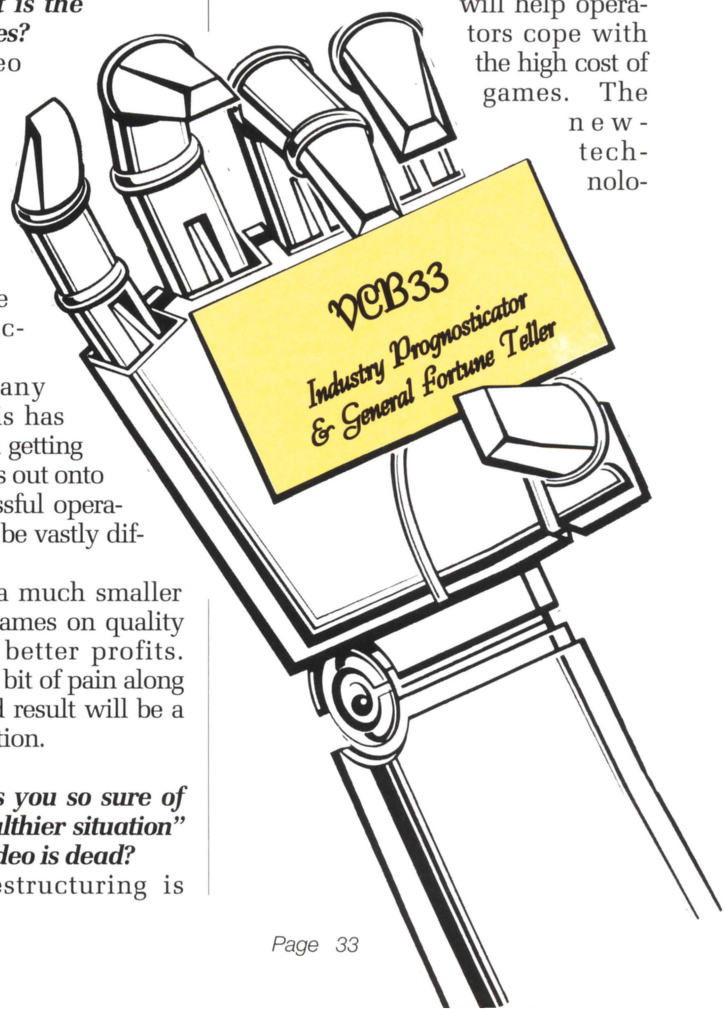
CB: Come on, the price of new video games has already reached a level that is intimidating many operators. Surely prices can't keep going higher?

(This question made it necessary for us to call a technician as the VCB33 blew a couple of circuits when it tried to laugh, but after the tec' cooled it down, got its polygons back in shape, it answered.)

VCB33: Video game prices of new-technology games coming out of Japan, will double within the next three years, both conversion games and dedicated.

CB: You're kidding. How will operators cope with prices like that, they can hardly manage on today's prices?

VCB33: Two things will help operators cope with the high cost of games. The new-technolo-



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gy games will earn a lot more and Japanese prices will be offset considerably by a goodly drop in the value of the yen against other currencies.

On top of that there will be some good, and cheaper games coming out of the UK, Europe, Taiwan and Korea.

But most of the PCB games will still be too expensive for the street operations of today, and it will follow that only systems like Neo-Geo will be able to generate the return on cost necessary for operators of small street locations to keep buying new games.

CB: What about these other new systems like Neo-Geo that we are hearing of?

VCB33: There will be a lot of systems similar to Neo-Geo and they will all help the situation, but it's not going to be easy for them.

Unless the makers of these new systems come up with some very good games, they are going to do it tough getting their mother boards into the market. They have all given SNK a free run for years and SNK has got a huge number of system boards out there.

What's more, SNK has supported the system for several years now and they've got the score on the board as far as operators are concerned, so as long as they keep the games up to their current standard, operators will be hesitant to go to the expense of going into another, untried and costly system.

CB: What about arcades, what sort of changes can we expect to see in them?

VCB33: Arcades are already in the midst of change, the number of upright videos in arcades is being greatly reduced in developed countries right now as they replace them with dedicated video games or in many cases, redemption and novelty games.

The good video games are being presented in swish dedicated cabinets or on big screen units that enable the games to earn much more than when placed in the conventional upright.

CB: OK, simple question, simple answer: Is the future of video a future filled with gloom and doom?

VCB33: No way Jose! To those who can adapt, the future of video games is awash with opportunity and has probably never been brighter.

Who in this industry today would rather have 200 upright videos on the street earning $50 each and depreciating rapidly when he can have 40 machines earning $250, or 20 machines earning $500 in the same time span and all of them holding a decent value?

They all add up to $10,000 for the collection period, but you don't have to be an Einstein to work out the benefits in operating less machines for the same income.

Think about it, a fraction of the locations to service (and keep happy), a fraction of the breakdowns, a longer site life resulting in less rotation of equipment, and so on and so on. The benefits are enormous and make the $10,000 coming out of the quality machines worth much more than when it comes out of 200 upright videos scattered all over a city. It's the way to go.

And if you're waiting to ask, when is this going to be possible? ...Don't ask me, it's much better to ask the guys that are doing it out on the street, right now!

It's happening buddy, it's happening!

CB: OK, where do all these high earning locations come from and if everyone was to go this way and there was a Daytona-type game on every street corner, how could the high takings hold up?

VCB33: A question like that tells me you don't understand the situation any better than a lot of operators. The big machines will make the locations and just as they are doing now, they will make obsolete all those beliefs that a location or an area only has so much money to spend on coin-op machines.

If you look around you now, you will see locations that have only produced a couple of hundred bucks in video earnings for years now gross five or six times that amount on the back of games like *Suzuka* and *Daytona.*

The machines have made the locations. Remember that one...big machines will make the big locations.

And there is no chance that every operator will get into the act. You'll remember when we started talking

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about this, I stipulated "successful operators."

CB: Does this mean that anyone who doesn't go this way won't be successful?

VCB33: No, we're talking video. There will still be other avenues available to operators to make good money. Pinball, pool, music and redemption will all provide opportunity, but the guys who really make money out of video will make it out of the big, quality games. Conventional videos will still serve a purpose for operators with a good mix of equipment, but they won't be getting the big money out of them they have.

CB: What about technology, virtual reality, CD ROM, NANI, all this stuff. Won't some or all of it have a big bearing on what happens?

VCB33: Technology will always play a major part, but it won't be the new technologies that decide whether operators make a lot of money or go broke.

What will be the deciding factor is how the new technologies are utilized by operators. The technologies will be there to be used and the operators who use them will be the big winners.

CB: What about home game systems and multimedia, what effect will they have?

VCB33: The "Super Highway" has got a lot of potholes in it and genuine multimedia is a long way off. The "Great Price War of 1995" will be so damaging to home game system makers that most will wish they never heard of them.

CB: What Great Price War?

VCB33: They'll still be talking about it in the year 2095. So many dollars will be burnt in the push for market share of all the new systems that are coming out, a few big companies will be scarred for life.

Five huge companies, Sega, Nintendo, Time Warner, Sony and Panasonic, plus a few smaller ones, will launch new greatly updated home systems in 1995. Two at most will be left standing when the dust settles, but the cost will be so great, they'll hardly be winners.

The coin-op manufacturing companies with the least exposure to home systems will be the real winners.

CB: How did you come to this conclusion?

VCB33: The companies involved have already spent small fortunes developing these 64-bit, and/or CD ROM systems, but instead of them getting their development costs back on the sale of the system, which would be the way most things work, they will all be selling their systems for less than they cost them to manufacture. On top of this they will have to spend "squillions" on advertising.

They will do this to try and get enough of their systems out there to ensure huge sales of the game, from which they hope to eventually get their profits.

CB: OK, so much for them, back to coin-op and conversion games. What happens to all the existing game makers and emerging game makers?

VCB33: The ones that can produce decent games will still be OK; they'll be getting better prices for their games, and though they will lose a lot of sales in developed countries, they will pick up a lot of new sales in the developing countries. Those that develop cheaper games for the street will also do well.

CB: So what you're saying is that there will be different levels of video operation.

VCB33: Exactly. There will always be room for video conversion games in the more sparsely populated areas and as part of a mixed operation, but the guys in the cities that are getting the bulk of their income out of conversion videos today are going to have to change, either by going to a greater mix of equipment or to a high proportion of the bigger, quality games.

CB: That all sounds very well VCB33, you even sound as if you know what you're talking about, but how much do you really know about operators? About their "street smarts," their ability to survive and overcome seemingly immense obstacles? In short, what do you know about people?

VCB33: "People" do not compute. Figures compute, machines compute, history computes; but people are irrational, erratic and impossible to compute. No one can tell what they will do in any given set of circumstances.

CB: So what you are saying with all this prediction stuff is that you're guessing. If you can't predict how people, in this case amusement machine operators, will handle a particular situation, how can you predict an outcome?

People do not compute...peopledonotcompute...people do not c o m p u t e...peop l e d o n o t c...o...m...p...

The screen of the Virtua Crystal Ball 33 *flickered and shut down without another yelp, leaving this writer pondering whether his investment in the hi-tech machine had gone the way of several other similar investments.*

Was anyone any the wiser on where video games were going as a result of our talking to this heap of silicon or was it still a lottery?

◆

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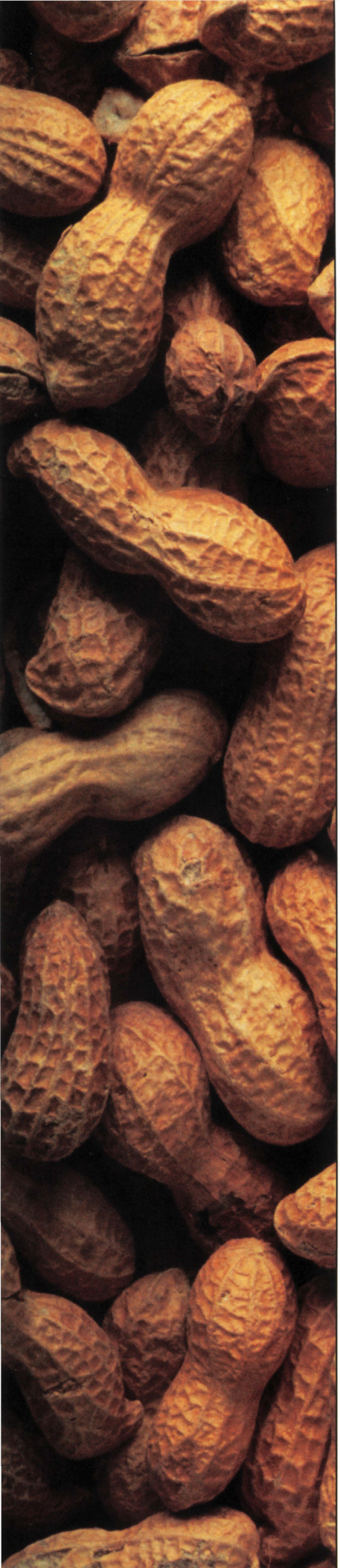


NANI in a Nutshell

IF YOU CAN POINT & CLICK, THEN YOU CAN RUN NANI!

What is AMOA's National Amusement Network all about? First, it's about computers. Thousands of operators already use computer software programs for route management. If you're one of these ops, then you know 95% of what's needed to understand and participate in NANI. If you don't own a computer yet, you'll have to spend $1,000 bucks or so to buy one (a PC clone or MacIntosh will do fine).

You say you don't want to learn how to work a computer? No problem, you can always hire someone who does. It's as easy as hiring a typist or phone receptionist.

Okay, you've got your computer set up on your desk, and you've got someone who knows how to use it. Next, you buy a game that is "network-aware." For about $1,000 over the cost of a standard dedicated video, you will be able to buy an upright that includes a modem, printer, and card reader. Use your office computer to tell NANI where you want to place the game, and when. NANI will take care of ordering a dedicated phone line for the game. You don't have to worry about paying the phone bills, either — NANI will consolidate all your phone charges, debit them against your network game earnings, and electronically transfer the balance to your bank account.

Finally, you use your office computer to tell NANI when you want to run tournaments, on what games, at what play-prices, and details about tournament formats, etc. It's a simple matter of "point and click" with the computer mouse (or typing in keyboard commands if you prefer). You use the same method to tell NANI how to program your games on location for redemption play. Downstream, NANI will even be able to display advertising on your game screens. Ads could come from the local pizza joint, or from big national accounts like Coke and Nike. It's up to you. Either way, it adds up to more money for you...painlessly.

What does the player see on his end? He can choose to play the old-fashioned way, just himself against a friend or against the computer. Or, the player can choose to tap into the NANI network for tournament play, redemption play, etc. Players will use the joystick and buttons to enter their names and other information into the network. This will help you target on-screen advertising. Eventually the player will receive a subscriber membership card in the mail; on subsequent visits to your machines he will simply run this card through the slot instead of re-entering his name, etc. Also, the game's printer will vend prize coupons or discount coupons to players.

Why should you bother? Because NANI gives you a chance to take the proven concepts of redemption and leagues, and transfer these concepts to new types of equipment...such as video. Because NANI lets you charge higher play-prices for this enhanced gameplay. Because NANI lets you monitor game earnings, change prices, get diagnostics, etc., all from the convenience of your own office — without sending a man to the location. Because NANI offers new sources of revenue, such as advertising (and perhaps other services downstream).

What does NANI **not** include? There's no direct, head-to-head, remote interactive gameplay. (At least not yet.) Tournament contests will involve collection of scores by the central network computer at the end of play. Then all scores will be compared and a winner announced. This efficient procedure reduces your long distance phone bills.

NANI does **not** involve direct modem links between your office computer and your games on location. Everything goes through the NANI central computer, which is managed by Electronic Data Systems. You only talk to NANI, period.

Yes, NANI will have a fair amount of information about your locations, your network-related earnings, and your player base...but NANI does **not** involve sharing this information with anyone else. No mailing lists will be sold, for instance. And your private financial information is totally secure.

NANI: What's it all about?

[The most important seminar at AMOA Expo '94 was given on Sept. 21. AMOA explained its new National Amusement Network, a project to link amusement games via modem for tournaments, coupon vending, advertising, security, diagnostics, and more. Key speakers included NANI President Craig Johnson, TVPhone President John Klayh, and two execs from Electronic Data Systems: Bill Graf and Charlie Kandziolka.]

Craig Johnson: Welcome to a session that, from AMOA's perspective, we believe is the opening volley to inform the industry in more detail, about what so many have you have heard for some time: and that is, the formation of the National Amusement Network...What we'd like to do in the next two hours is take some time to present the concept, the ideas behind NANI: why it came to be, where we think it's going to go, and how we think it's going to work.

As we told you, NANI is a partnership between the Amusement & Music Operators Assn. and TVPhone out of Canada. We've formed an alliance with EDS, Electronic Data Systems, to do the processing for the network.

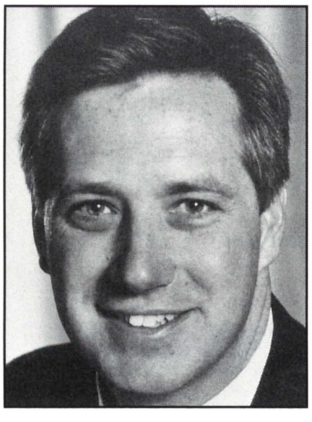
One of the things that's been published on this is: "A reality rather than a vague abstraction on the information superhighway, this first-of-a-kind network will apply today's and tomorrow's technology to the amusement industry." That's why we believe NANI is so important. To begin, here's a tape that gives you an overview of the project.

AMOA Video Tape: "The same imagination that brought the world video games, will someday link those games in locations around the world. Customers will come into your location and match skills with players hundreds of miles away. Teams can challenge each other from one coast to another."

Craig Johnson: As we discuss NANI, some of the commonly asked questions are: why an amusement network, and why would AMOA be involved? Today we're seeing new formats of competition to our industry. Phone, cable and satellite companies, as well as the movie industry, all want a piece — or all — of our industry. We're seeing new delivery formats, new things are done with twisted pair [i.e., existing copper phone lines] every day. Four or five years ago, we thought these functions could only be performed with fiber-optics; now they're being done with cable or twisted pair.



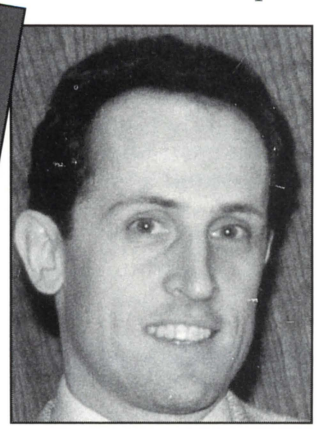
JOHN KLAYH



CRAIG JOHNSON



GENE URSO



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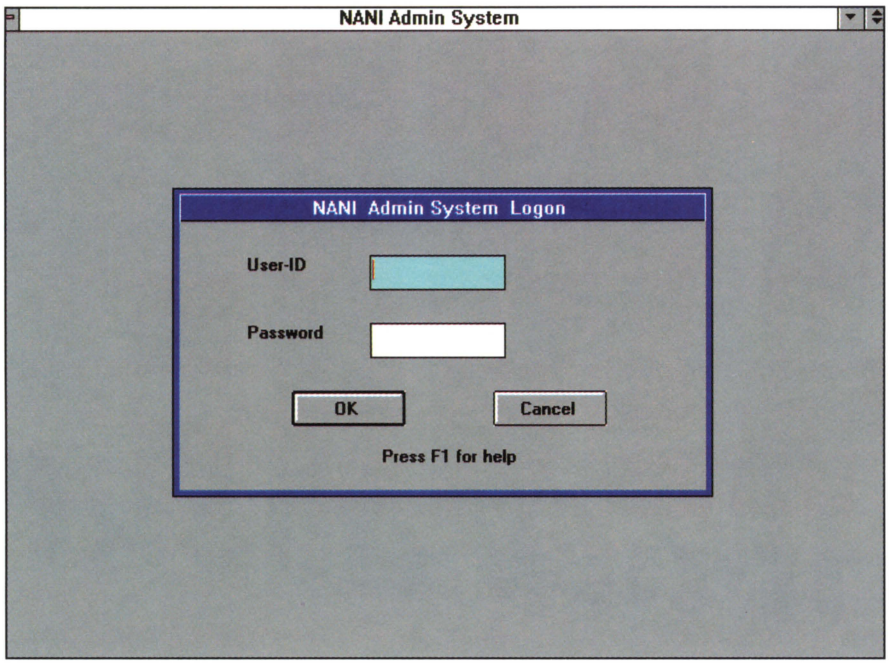


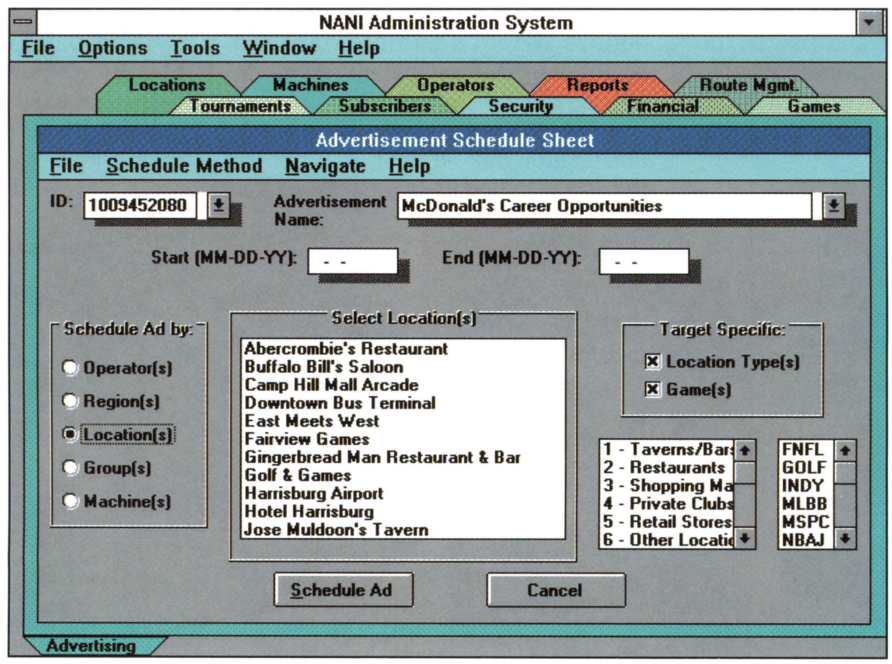
The industry has typically been on the cutting edge of technology in utilizing it in the game world. We need to continue to be on that cutting edge, and continue to be competitive, if we want our industry to grow.

We need equal footing. One of the things that AMOA quickly realized, is that in many cases we are small businesses. And if we're going to compete with these entities that are seeking our dollar, our customer, and our location, we need equal footing with them.

The question was then asked, how could we possibly be on equal footing with these major forces? Some of these companies bring in more money than our entire industry. That's where NANI came from. We knew that if our industry was going to compete and thrive, we needed to increase our revenue...and in order to increase it, it couldn't just be the cash box. We needed new income streams. We needed new areas to supplement that top line.

AMOA at that point decided that someone would have to step up and organize this competitive edge. AMOA, along with their partner TVPhone, believes we have started down that road.

It's important to understand: NANI will not be manufacturing games at any time. We will not be buying games, we will not be selling games. We will not be disrupting the manufacturing or distribution flow of the current industry. Those, along with the operator-owners of this country who are the members of this association, are the people whose businesses we want to help preserve and grow. NANI is forming the network that will allow us, as an industry, to better market our products to the consumer. NANI is a service.



Charlie Kandziolka, (NANI account executive, EDS): In March of 1994, NANI and EDS announced to the press a 10-year strategic relationship that will make the information superhighway a reality. This brings value to AMOA members, through improved management efficiency, decreased maintenance expenditures, larger customer base, and will equip the game terminals with expanded multimedia capabilities. Today we'll take an indepth look at what the multimedia network will provide.

Bill Graf, VP of Entertainment & Messaging, Media Division, EDS: Business publications will tell you that we are a subsidiary of General Motors; that we employ 75,000 people; that we are organized into 39 autonomous business units; that we operate in 30 countries around the globe; that we serve 7,500 customers; that we use and integrate products and services of over 6,000 vendors; that we operate the world's largest private digital network; and that in 1993 we had revenues of about $8.6 billion...One of the aspects of our work with promoting and helping organize World Cup '94 was building a "virtual corporation" over 18 months, then tearing it down in 90 days. Just as we were committed to World Cup's success, we are committed to the success of NANI. But we won't be tearing it down in 90 days! We're looking forward to a long and prosperous relationship with AMOA.

Craig: We've been asked, what do you mean, when you say you're going to interlink games? These games will all plug into the wall and receive AC power, obviously; but in addition they'll also plug into the wall and receive a dial tone through the local exchange network. They'll be connected by phone modem to a system at EDS that will deal with the information we want to take from the games, and information

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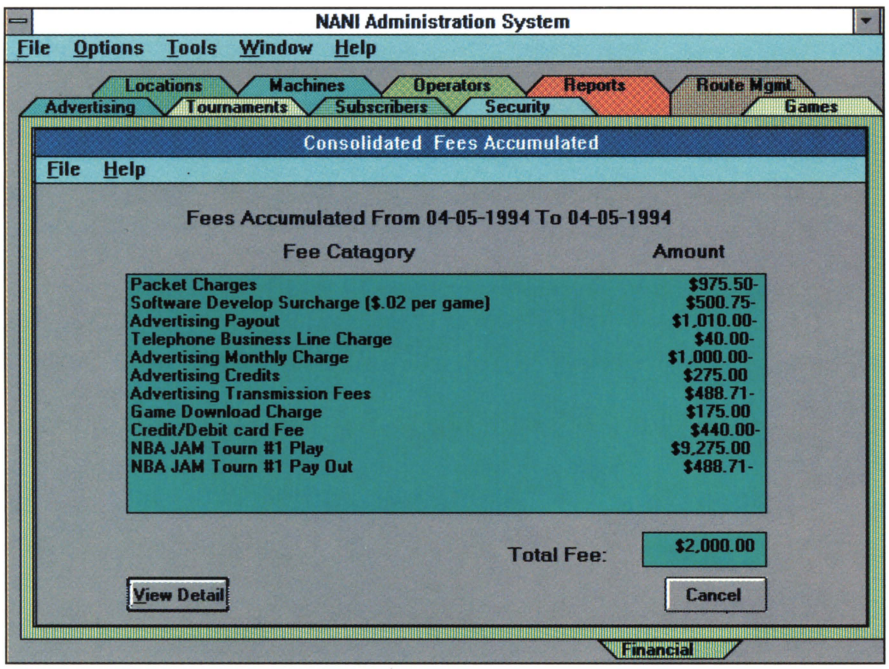

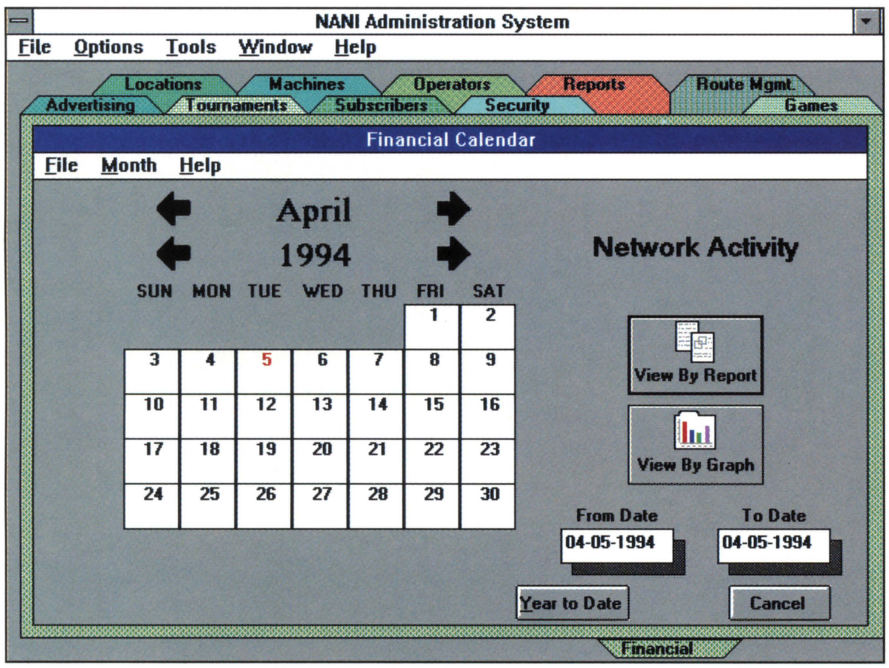

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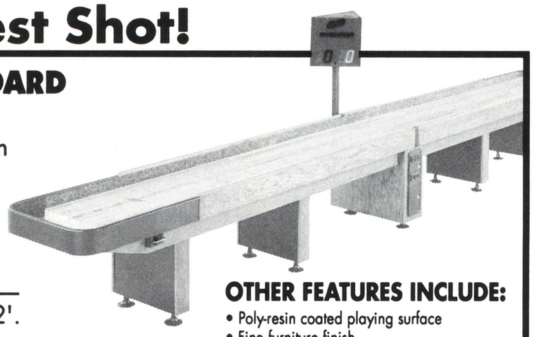

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we want to push down to the games.

Will the network be fully interactive? Can a California player play head-on against a player in New York? No. We don't see that technology as fully perfected today. We do believe that if that technology comes, which we think is obviously eventual, we'll be in the best position to use it, because we'll have the units hooked up.

What will the system do? It will allow us to do two things: first, receive a lot more information from our equipment. We'll have better control of our own destiny, because we'll know when our equipment is earning money. We'll know when our equipment is broken. We'll have exact accountability on the cash box and all revenue streams. We're going to be able to push a lot of things to the game.

We think we'll open up innumerable marketing opportunities: tournaments, leagues, promotions, couponing, advertising, new revenue streams that we've never had. Also, we believe we'll be able to enhance revenue streams we've always had.

By use of the network, you'll be able to design tournaments in your locations. You can do it in one location, or two, or 50. You'll be able to do it across your state, across your town, and across the country. NANI will sponsor national tournaments for all locations that wish to participate nationally. You can team up with other operators, your state associations, to run tournaments or leagues in your own geographical part of the country. You can run them for one evening, one week, or a month.

After pouring hundreds of hours into this project, it became clear we don't have all the answers. We don't really know which promotion will make or break this industry. So the system is designed around total flexibility. When we find a tournament that works, we can all go use it. When one fails, we move on to the next one. When we find a couponing or redemption program that works, we can go after it and enhance the revenue stream. When it doesn't work, we can move on very quickly and efficiently at a low cost to our operations.

Most operators have promoted their equipment at one time or another. They have run a tournament, or

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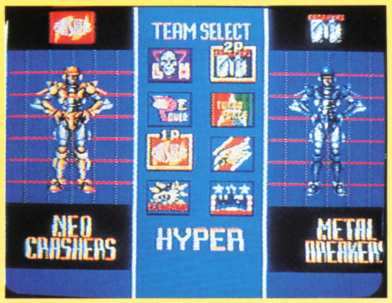





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perhaps given prizes for high scores. These promotions have been reasonably successful, but what does it cost to pull them off? The man-hours to control it become enormous. Spread that over an operation of 100 games, or even larger operations, and the man-hours become unbelievable. This system will allow you to take hundreds of your games, link them, run promotions, and get new revenue streams, by use of the network in a cost-efficient way.

Now Charlie will show you what you, as an operator-owner, will see on the computer in your office as you participate in NANI and design your programs to work with the network.

Charlie: [When your computer calls up the network], the first thing you'll encounter is our security screen. Your system will have security protection. NANI will assign a user ID and password to every operator, which you will enter at the onscreen prompt. That will give you access to the system. Also, each operator will be able to decide which of his personnel should be able to access information in the system. The operator will be able to assign different user IDs to various employees.

The screen shows you different "folders" containing information on different topics: one for machines, one for operators, one for locations, etc. If you want someone to have access to your financial information, you can assign IDs and access accordingly to give you both flexibility and security.

The look and feel of this system is designed so you can operate it out of a Windows environment with pull-down menus, or a DOS environment with the folders. So you can point and click.

NANI will initially set up each operator by taking name, address, phone number and so on. NANI will also take some bank account information, because funds will have to be transferred in and out of locations [to your account]. That way, an operator is registered on the network.

Then the operator must set up information about each location he wishes to include: name, address and other contact data. You then enter data for each piece of equipment in each listed location — including name, serial number, manufacturer and other data needed to help identify each machine and maintain accurate reports on where each game is.

Next, you'll have a "games file" that will allow data to be collected from players [while they stand at the game itself]. We'll quickly get name, address and phone numbers. This allows the player to become a temporary member and go anywhere in the system and play any NANI-linked game. You must do this, to let players get into the system instantly and use it. Longer term, we want demographic information: players' ages, occupations, residence, and so on. This will eventually help us sell advertising over the system.

Once we have taken basic information on the subscriber/player, we'll be able to set up tournaments. Our promotional menu includes two different options: tournaments and redemption.

In the tournament file, you'll have a choice: do you want to create your own tournament, or view a tournament format list? You can pull up a list of formats that other NANI operators have already run successfully, and say "I want to run that tourna-



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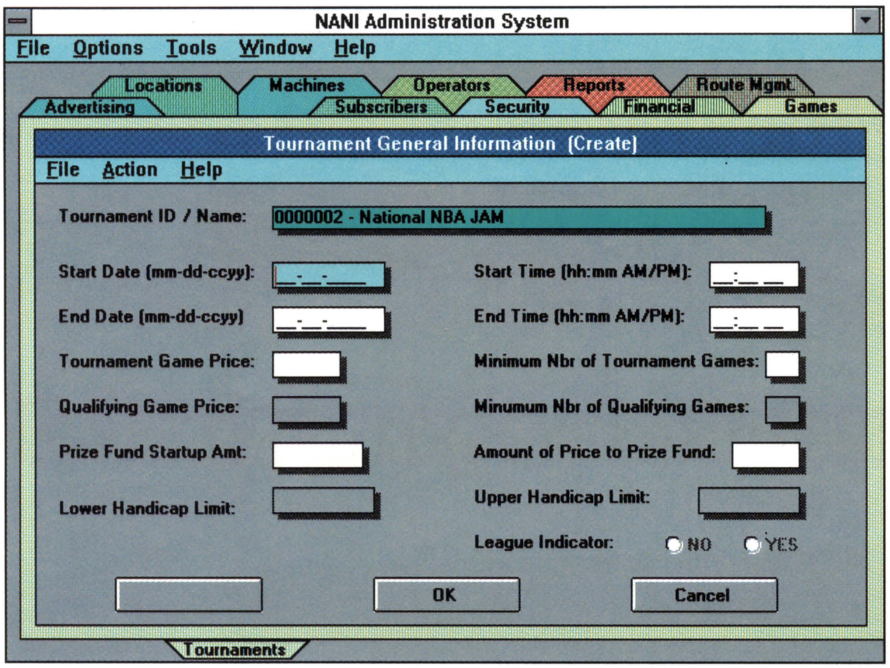

ment format again, on these machines, in these time frames." Again, it's done by point and click.

Assuming you want to create your own tournament, you give the tournament a name, select which game title is to be used for the tournament, and move to the next screen. You enter tournament dates, start time and ending time. You can control it down to hours and minutes.

You set the price of game play: a dollar, 50 cents, two dollars. It's in the operator's control. You set the minimum number of games which the subscriber must play, to enter. It could be one or 20 or whatever. You may also require a certain number of qualifying games at a certain price, which subscribers must first pay for and play in order to establish skill levels and handicaps. You can set the qualifying score. Prices for qualifying games can be the same or different from tournament play. You can determine the amount of the prizes, including contributions from a sponsor.

Additional screens pop up to take more information, and give you more options. Once you've selected the title to be used, you can select simple or complex scoring rules. The game manufacturer will provide playing attributes such as total score, rebounds, three-point shots, free throw attempts, and other fields in which players can compete. You can select and combine any of these features you wish, to determine the final scoring formula for the tournament. You can add, subtract, multiply and divide to create a scoring formula, using all these game factors. In other games, factors may be number of kicks or blocks, blows to the chest or head, or whatever. You can even take feedback from players on location, asking what kind of tournament they want to see, and create it overnight!

Complex scoring formulas can be created. They could say, "If the score is less than X, you don't qualify to enter the tournament."

Another screen lets you establish what the winning rules are. You can set up a prize of $50. Or you can offer different prizes for different phases of the contest. You can offer four prizes or $50 or $100. You can reward players with many small prizes throughout the tournament, or just a few big prizes at the end.

You can customize tournament play in different locations. You can pull up a list of your locations, select which locations and/or which machines in each participating location will be allowed to participate in each tournament.

The redemption menu works much the same way. You can program your route such that if the player wins X points on the game, he's eligible for prizes.

Advertising is another capability the operator can create. He sets up a file about each advertiser, who the contracts are, etc. Another file records



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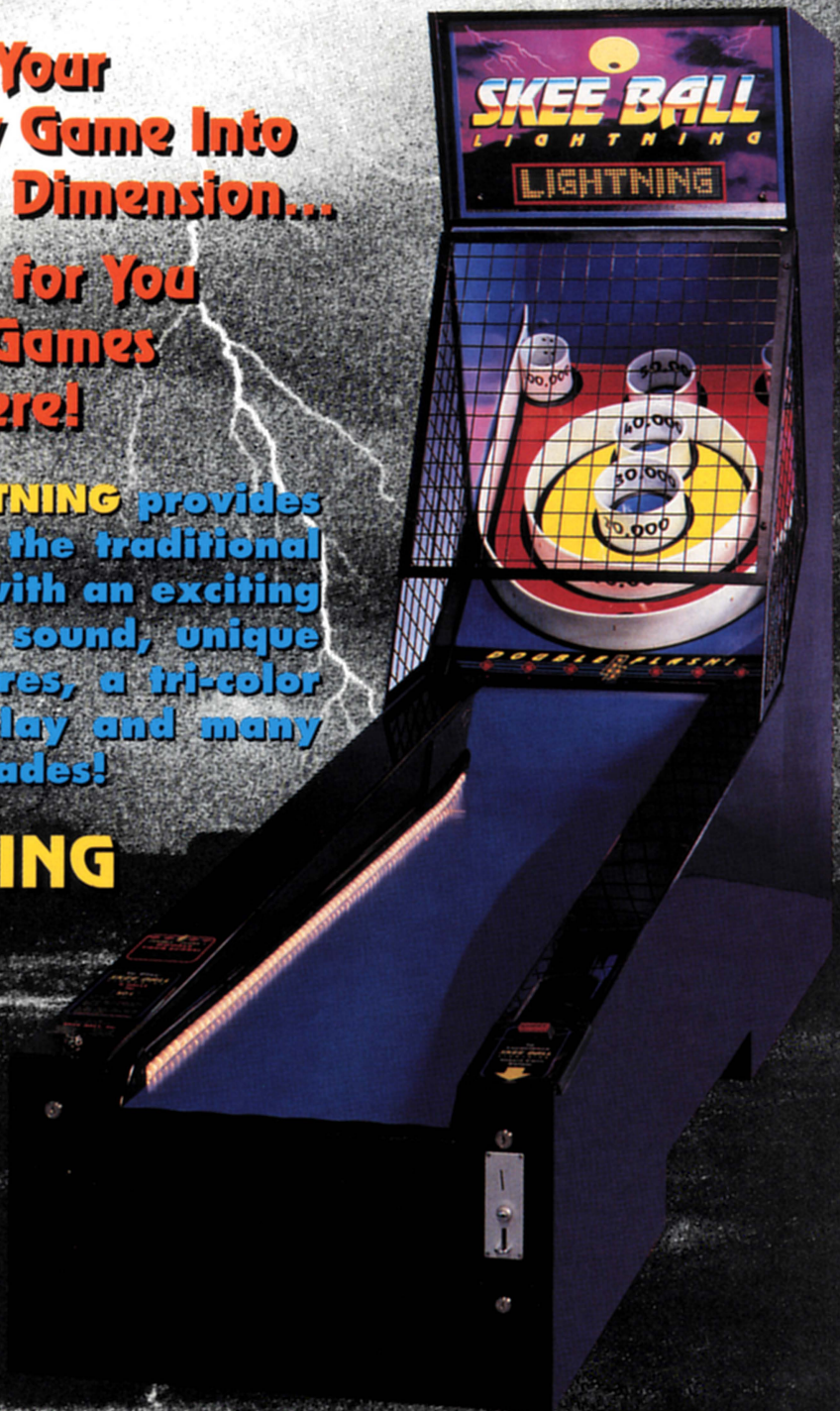

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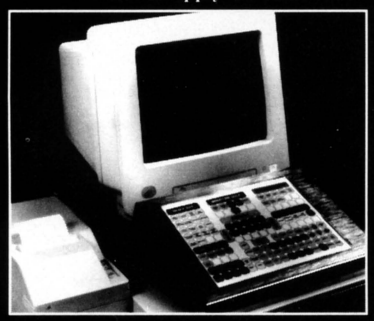

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data such as: is it text, audio or video? National or local in scope? And so on. Based on these parameters, we'll have target codes for advertising to match each operator, location and machine to the proper ads which can come over the network.

An advertising calendar in your computer lets you click on start and ending dates to determine when the ads run. Graphs or text reports will show you when different ads are scheduled to run. Group codes can be created to show you all truck stops, for example, and easily send certain ads to all locations or certain locations in that group.

On the financial side, we'll have information to let you see network activity, operator activity, supporting data, etc. You'll be able to get detailed records of each transaction, where your money is being transferred to, what money was transferred for the day or week. You can select and create reports on all these different data categories. Route management options will link all these functions to whatever route management program you use.

Now let's take some questions.

Q: This seems very complicated. How will it evolve to be usable by the average operator?

A: (Craig Johnson) The system looks more complex than it really is. You may look at it and think, how will I ever come up to speed on all this? But remember, we're not trying to link 50 of your games all together. That would be complicated! Instead, we want to link individual games to a central network, and link the network to the operator's management computer in his office.

This will keep the system reasonably simple, even as we evolve into more than 100,000 participating machines. At this point (mid-September, 1994) we have equipment (games) delivered from Williams to EDS to make sure the equipment functions properly, sending information up and down the lines. Next, we'll go out on test. Then we'll begin massaging and playing with various tournaments that our tournament committee recommends. Gene Winstead is chairing the committee; they're meeting with tournament coordinators, players, league managers, and many other sources to come up with the very best formats for you to use. By the time the full industry can purchase NANI-capable equipment from your distributors, it will have a package of tournaments, redemption and promotion that we believe are proven — both administratively and technologically, and in terms of earnings.

Q: Who will advertise?

A: (Craig Johnson) We hold some of the most valuable real estate in this country, in our game locations. We have over 1.5 million screens that sit idle for many hours. We believe we need to utilize that, and that major firms like Coke and Nike could advertise on our screens. We're building toward that, but it's not an overnight transition. Currently our games aren't capable of delivering the types and formats of advertising that these companies want. So our manufacturers have to build in that capability, as our system evolves.

Q: Will there be a retrofit kit, so existing equipment can be made NANI-capable?

A: (Craig Johnson) To be network-aware, equipment must have our "interface" — a modem connection, a printer, and a card reader to identify the player. It's been our intent from the beginning to make a retrofit available if at all possible. We're trying to do that, but it won't happen if it jeopardizes the progress of the entire program.

Q: What about linking NANI to existing dart league equipment?

A: (Craig Johnson) We've known all along that operators would want to do that. Our intent is to make that possible and we've spoken to our manufacturers about it. EDS has developed a document over 100 pages long, explaining the specifications required to make NANI-aware equipment. So far AMOA has delivered those specs to more than 70 manufacturers, so we know there is real interest there.

Q: What other, new income streams do you see besides advertising?

A: (Craig Johnson) We know we can get some revenue, and you can argue about how much. Coupons and advertising can be done nationally or locally. The customer can be Coke or the local pizza joint.

Q: How about using debit or credit card readers?

A: (Craig Johnson) That's certainly

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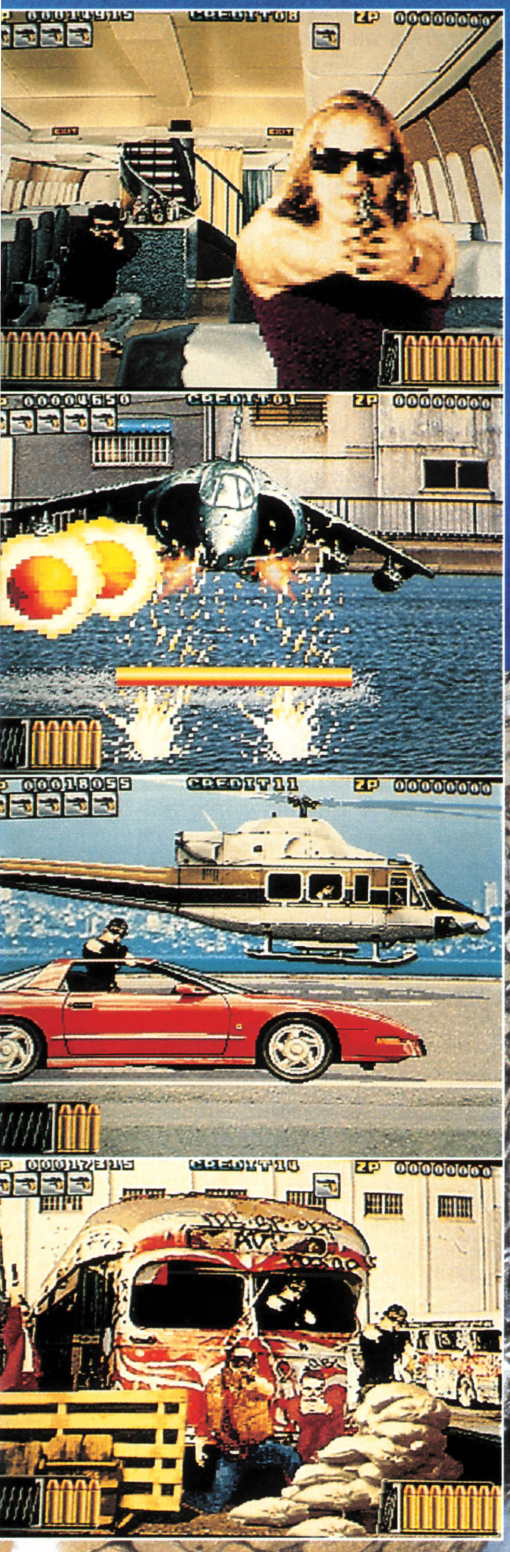

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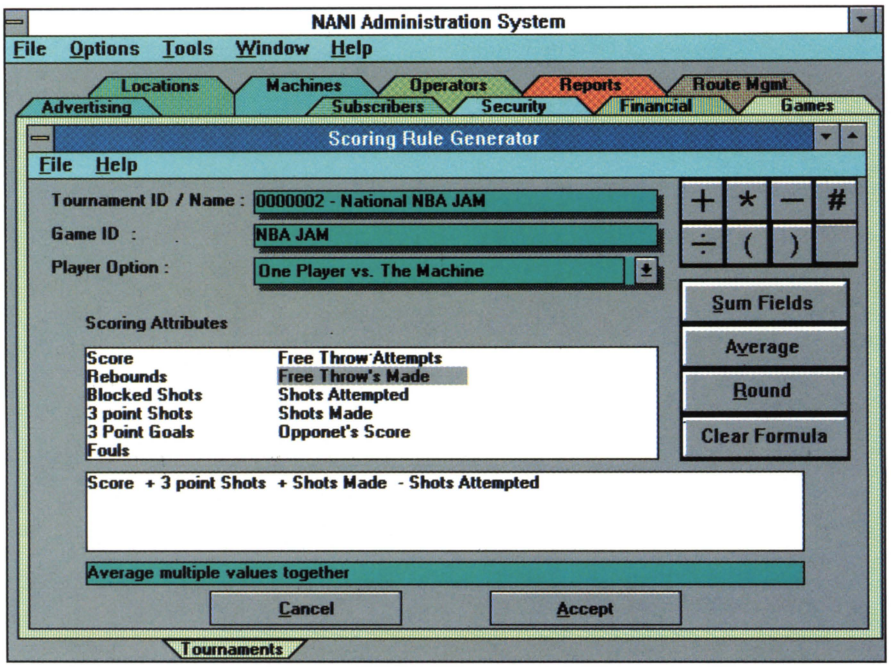

a possibility. Prepaid cards are used a lot overseas, and they're catching on very much in the USA with phone cards, for example. We don't have all the answers, and we want to make our system flexible enough to accommodate those possibilities. Yes, it could be done. And, the funds can be transferred to each operator whenever we run national advertising across the whole system.

Q: Do you foresee multiple game titles being placed in a single cabinet? What about downloading games?

A: (Craig Johnson) Downloading will certainly come about, we believe. It's a touchy subject, because some in the industry fear someone is seeking to put them out of business. Licensing, copyright and many other concerns must also be addressed. The cost of computer storage of games on a computer board is a limiting factor in our industry today, and this impacts multiple game storage. I personally think it's a ways off.

Q: Why is *NBA Jam* the game you're working with?

A: (Craig Johnson) Williams has been very willing to work with us. They brought the game to us, said they'd do the work, provide specs, build the printer, etc. We've been very pleased with their cooperation.

Q: What other types of games can be linked by NANI?

A: (Craig Johnson) Dart manufacturers are starting to see the excitement and some of them are even ahead of us. We believe eventually, most games in our industry can be linked to NANI, including pinball and so forth. Of course, there are potential problems. If you link pinball games for a tournament, how can you ensure they're all equally level, consistently percentaged, and so on? We're working on all these matters. We certainly foresee linking video games initially, with darts following shortly after. Eventually the rest of the equipment will be hooked up, we believe.

Q: Could NANI be linked to the Internet?

A: (Craig Johnson) Whatever the market brings to us, we can put over the network: banking, credit and debit card transactions, any direction we want to go. Once we connect 50,000 or 100,000 units, we become a very attractive medium.

Q: Will advertising begin right away?

A: (Craig Johnson) We had hoped to start with text ads immediately, but Williams' agreement with the NBA precluded us putting ads on that game. We think text ads will start with subsequent games. We think full-motion advertising is at least a full year away.

Q: How does the operator get involved, and what does he have to do?

A: (Craig Johnson) The operator must buy his equipment, provide a phone line, and pay for transactions when the game is in the network mode. That won't happen all the time; players can just play with no relation to NANI or the phone line. We call that "casual play." Operators will pay various fees, depending on whether it's your own prize pool, or if you are involved in a larger group's prize pool. We've always believed tournament play pricing will be a dollar to the player. The overall cost of the network transaction for that individual game will be 12 cents, with costs going down as volume to the network builds. Also, remember that each game played does not have to result in a network transaction.

Q: How will you handicap the tournaments?

A: (Craig Johnson) Head to head competition, simply comparing high scores, often won't work. Some games have very low scores; others would be dominated by a few, very talented, players. That's why we have the flexibility to create tournament competitions, based on many different gameplay features.

Q: Define a "transaction."

A: (Craig Johnson) A transaction is any time a game needs to communicate with the network, to send information up or down.

Q: What if I don't want all my financial information or player lists open to NANI? I sure don't want them sold to a third party.

A: (Craig Johnson) We will never sell mailing lists. Financial information is proprietary to each operator. It is not to be, and never will be, available to anyone else. Now as we want to recruit national advertisers or create redemption programs, we'll need to be able to use certain demographic data and promise a certain number of locations will be involved. But EDS will control your sensitive information; it won't be in jeopardy.

Q: Will players use a card swipe with a membership card?

A: (Craig Johnson) Yes, and it can do many things. Suppose Nike says they only want to advertise to players in a certain age range or geographic region. The card reader can single out those players to receive the ad.

Q: Are there choices so operators can "opt out" of certain ads or programs?

A: (Craig Johnson) Yes, for example we recognize that we can't advertise Coke in Pizza Huts, which are owned by Pepsi.

Q: How can NANI encourage operators to raise play prices or adopt

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somewhat uniform prices, without violating antitrust laws?

A: (Craig Johnson) NANI can't do a whole lot in this area. Our initial dream was that NANI would dictate certain prices for many different programs, but our attorneys quickly ruled that out for antitrust reasons. However, we can publicize suggested prices. And, one of NANI's greatest functions is that the operator can use his office computer to customize prices. Say you want to change pinball prices from 2 to 5 PM in truck stops only. It's a done deal, without having to send anyone out to physically change the prices at 2 and change them back at five. If we do a national tournament, play prices must be consistent across the country — so at that point, we'll prescribe "If you want in, this is the deal."

Q: Is any category of equipment not suitable for NANI?

A: (Craig Johnson) If we're willing to install the needed computer components, NANI could even grow to include pool.

Q: Is there a limit to how many game attributes can be factored into a tournament or promotion setup?

A: (Craig Johnson) It's pretty high. We talked about having 25 or 30 attributes. Of course, if the industry needs more, we can build that. Our initial formation will allow very rapid response and reactions...even though it's taken us three years to get to this point! We've gone slowly and carefully so far, to keep costs down and capabilities high.

Q: What response have manufacturers given you to NANI?

A: (Craig Johnson) Two years ago, Gene Urso and I visited many manufacturers around the country. At first, we got a very lukewarm reception and maybe you can understand why. We've now presented it to the board of AAMA and they understand we just want to be competitive, not put them out of business. So more and more manufacturers are really warming up to this and are very interested in seeing our specs and maybe participating. We've taken the approach that any interested manufacturer is welcome. The Valley dart game shown at this expo is very, very close to being NANI-compatible and they did it without seeing our specs until two weeks ago.

Q: Will NANI help us penetrate national location chains?

A: (Craig Johnson) We're very remiss in not doing more of that so far. NANI should help us in cases where some of these firms don't want to deal with many different operations around the country. Who will be the entity handling national accounts? AMOA can't, and that creates some problems for NANI which is half owned by AMOA and represents all of us. So how do we decide who gets the business? But NANI will open many doors to national accounts.

A: (John Klayh) You have some national location accounts who are visiting this expo specifically to solve the problem of how to coordinate with operators, if the location wants to use your services all across America. They want a simple one-stop arrangement.

A: (Craig Johnson) Yes, those kinds of contracts happen all the time, where there's a national contract making one operating party responsible for multiple locations in multiple states. If I get the national account to agree to let me put jukeboxes into all their stores, but I don't operate in your area, I could contact you and ask, "Would you like to put jukeboxes in these three national accounts?" Then I would tell you: "Here's the structure — you get the service calls from me, because the national account only wants to deal with a single operator." I think most national accounts are starting to recognize that dealing with 10 different entities is not the way to go. Again, we don't have all the answers and we've tried to design enough flexibility so that NANI can work with many different ways of handling these issues.

Q: What kind of security information can be recovered from games on site?

A: (Craig Johnson) The games will have an alarm mode and be able to report when games are open, when certain functions are broken, and so on. We'll start with the most pertinent data and build on it.

Q: Are you telling manufacturers what kind of cost target they must meet?

A: (Craig Johnson) The only component NANI is directly involved with is the interface, which we believe we now have under $1,000.

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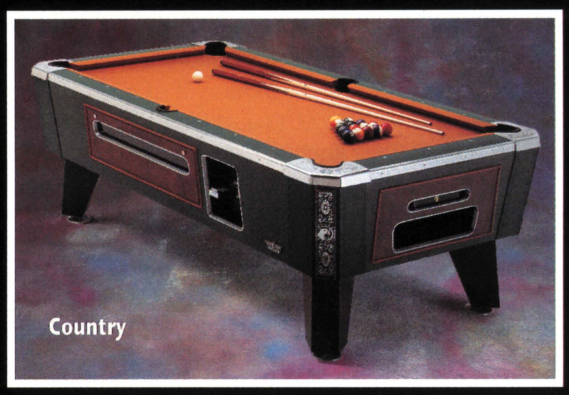

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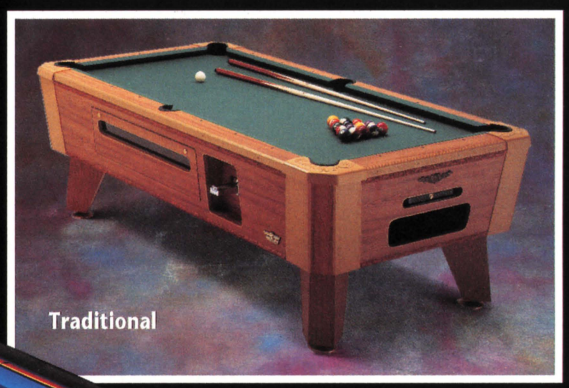

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We're telling factories they must make their games able to feed certain information into that interface. If one factory can do it for $100 and another for $200, that's a matter for the marketplace to react to.

Q: Does a NANI game need a dedicated phone line?

A: (Craig Johnson) Yes, we definitely believe it does. If you have a multi-use line, the network would incur more costs by having to call back in case of busy signals, for example. I don't see that changing.

Q: Do we get a choice of phone lines?

A: (Craig Johnson) No, you buy line service from your local carrier — and you don't have a choice now. You will buy a 1FB line, a normal dial tone. It costs the same as installing an additional line in your business. Our partner John Klayh has said from the beginning that operators should not have to bother with phone lines, so EDS will take the responsibility to make sure the line is ready when you show up to install your equipment. EDS will pay all the phone bill. After all, I don't want 500 phone bills. I want one nice, tidy report saying: you had these phone costs and you earned these advertising revenues, here's the balance. Cash the check and go home!

A: (Gene Urso) Keep this in mind — even if we choose to make a game network-aware, not all games will be sold that way.

A: (Craig Johnson) Right. In a few years, all your games will probably be network-aware. But it won't start in 1995!

Q: Will the operator know the phone number to each game?

A: (Craig Johnson) No, it's a NANI-secured environment. There is no communication directly from the operator to the equipment. When games are connected to NANI, that means they're connected to EDS...a third party whose contract says they are not to release that information to anyone. We cannot allow you to communicate with each game. For example, if we're running a tournament with valuable prizes, we need total assurance that other operators or their employees are not tampering with results and skewing the outcome to "their" winners.

Q: We only communicate with our modem-based dart games from 3 to 5 AM in tavern locations now.

A: (Craig Johnson) Yes, but tournaments and other functions will have different communication requirements. EDS will perform hundreds of communications to my machines, and I will be able to gather all that data with one phone call to EDS. In case of an alarm going off in a game, the game will automatically call EDS, and EDS will call the operator and say "You have a problem with this machine in Joe's Bar."

A: (John Klayh) Part of our agreement with EDS is that if there's a diagnostic problem of some urgency, EDS has the proper phone numbers and will dispatch the information to your parts and service guys. They can fix it and get the game back up on the network. EDS has the capability to

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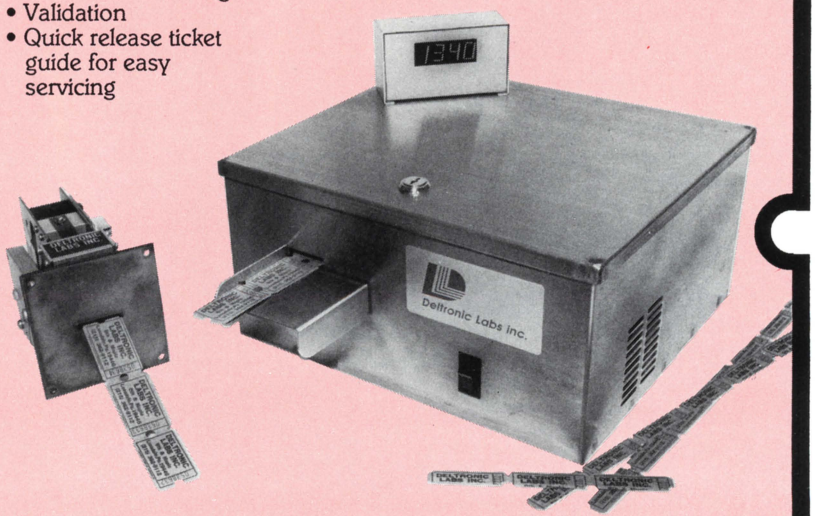

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Q: How much will the modem hook-up cost?

A: (Craig Johnson) The hook-up charge depends on your local Baby Bell. In my market, sometimes I can start new lines for free. Normally it's $79.

Q: In addition to entertainment, can we sell educational software?

A: (Craig Johnson) We want to encourage that, but remember NANI is not selling anything. We run whatever products are brought to us, by the market, that will run on this network. We'd love to be able to run math contests, but we aren't in the business of designing those things. We'll encourage them, but obviously they have to be designed in a way that makes their market presence financially feasible for the operators.

Q: Any way to encourage more manufacturers to provide more games?

A: (Craig Johnson) The biggest control on games will be, how fast can manufacturers push out products? I can't give you a timeline, but I hear there's some scrambling going on to make future product network-aware. In 1995 when EDS flips the switch and the network is turned on, and everybody is welcome to provide software, then will we have five manufacturers providing games, or two, or 20? I don't know. In all fairness, remember that our specs have only been available since around August, so by mid-1995 is a very short time for most manufacturers to make their product compatible. Our projections are that we'll have 100,000 units linked in the first three years, but we don't expect to have 50,000 on the street by the end of 1995.

A: (John Klayh) One thing your industry must do, is recognize how this approach empowers the operators and can cause a certain fear on the part of manufacturers. Once operators understand the NANI system, they must tell manufacturers what kind of product they need to expand their revenue base. After all, you've got more factories involved in the home market because it's more profitable for them long-term. Some of them may even decide to abandon coin-op for these other fields. So you must encourage manufacturers to participate in NANI and profit from this growth. It's very much up to you, the operator, to tell them how you can see this working, and see what you can do to help manufacturers come up with products.

Q: What will AMOA do to publicize NANI and inform the industry about progress?

A: (Craig Johnson) We talk to the trade press frequently and they're doing a fine job of keeping the industry aware of developments regarding NANI. We will have this service up and running by our 1995 convention, I assure you!

Q: Where will NANI be run from?

A: (Craig Johnson) EDS processes data from facilities all over the country. NANI itself is headquartered in AMOA's office, but in the coming months NANI will establish its own, separate offices and operations. Remember, NANI is a stand-alone, separate entity even though it's partly owned by AMOA and serviced by EDS.

A: (John Klayh) The best analogy to understand NANI, is to think of it like a national TV network. NANI is the equivalent of CBS and will provide a certain amount of programming to you. EDS provides a secure environment for your business. As the operator, you are like the local affiliate, the local TV station. You have total control over services and programs — that is, games. You decide which tournament formats to run, when, where, and how much to charge. You have the benefit of affiliation with NANI, but you have control. EDS will process data wherever it's most cost-effective to do the job for you.

Q: How about digitally compressed music? Will NANI provide that kind of data?

A: (Craig Johnson) We think that's coming for the industry, but at this point NANI is not involved with it.

Q: Which companies will offer competing amusement networks?

A: (Craig Johnson) The bigger question is, who's not? We in our industry often think in terms of competing with other operators or locations. Folks, the truth is we compete with movies, records, gambling and every other form of entertainment. Now, many alliances have been announced for major TV, computer, and phone companies to create their own networks. Then in many cases they fell through. However, the competition is coming from every direction in the home arena, but I don't know of anyone who is talking about network amusements in the commercial arena, to the extent that we are. One advantage is that the interface equipment costs more than people want to spend for their homes. In our industry, we don't like paying that cost but we pay it. So let's step up and establish ourselves and win the marketplace.

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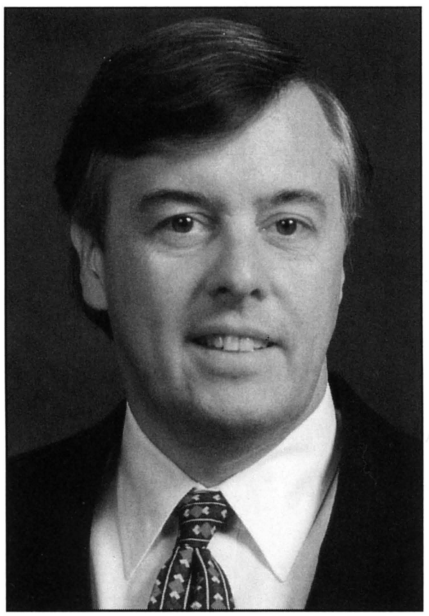

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Not only that...but if you want to raise your play-prices in a way that's painless to the customer, debit cards or value cards could be the answer. Benefits include (1) not waiting for a dollar coin; and (2) saving the expense of currency validation. Besides, it gives increased customer service, it simplifies your operations, and it boosts sales.

We've been getting educated about all this, thanks to a fellow named John McIntosh. He's been involved in transaction processing for several years, and has been on the cutting edge of creating electronic payment systems for several retail industries. For the last year, John's been intimately involved in the design and installation of electronic payment systems for amusement locations. We put together the following "Q&A" to help *RePlay* readers understand these new types of payment options.

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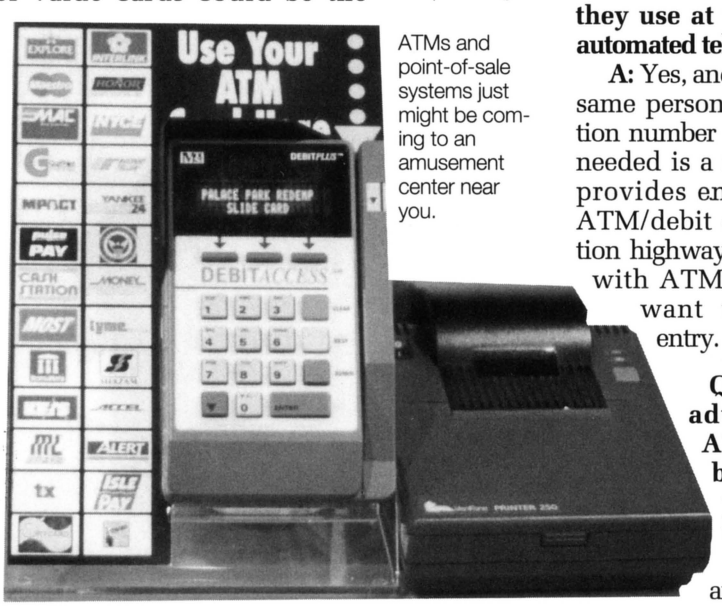

ATMs and point-of-sale systems just might be coming to an amusement center near you.

Q: Does it use the same ATM card they use at their bank's automated teller machine?
A: Yes, and they use the same personal identification number (PIN). What's needed is a network that provides entry into the ATM/debit communication highway, and people with ATM cards who want to use that entry.

Q: I know adults have ATM cards, but do young people have them?
A: Yes, and using one is natural to the younger generation. Recently, during the installation of a pilot system at a park in Irvine, Calif., we were almost badgered to distraction by young people asking how soon they could use the terminals. We were surprised to see how many grade school students have ATM cards and use them expertly!

Q: How many people have ATM cards?
A: That's really a three-part question. First, the current total card base is around 225 to 230 million people. (That's 80 million more than have credit cards.) Second, that number is continually growing, because almost everybody that has a checking account or opens a new one, has access to an ATM card...and several family members may each have cards. Third, the card base doesn't mean much, if you can't access it.

Q: Is it correct to say that your company, Resource Link, is the only ATM/debit network that lets you access the entire card base at one time, from any member site?
A: We're the only such network I know of!

Q: How often will players use ATM cards at my fun center?
A: That depends on traffic, but in one week, a local pocket park did over $6,000 in POS/debit transactions. As ATM usage grows in your area, it will grow in your center. Supermarkets, gas stations and now department stores have led the way by training people to use these cards at their locations.

Q: If I decide to offer cash back, can I limit the amount of money dispensed?
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Q: How hard is it to get and install one of these ATM terminals?
A: It's easy. The stand-alone version of our terminal is simple, inexpensive and uncomplicated. If you have run a credit card terminal, you can run one of these. The requirements are a wall plug for power and a direct phone line for communication. Ours can even double as a credit card terminal, if desired.

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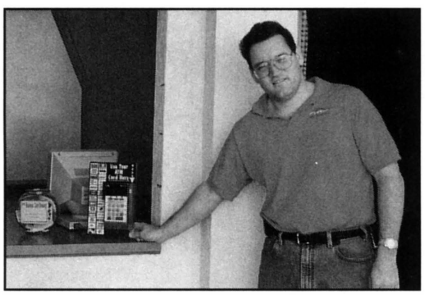
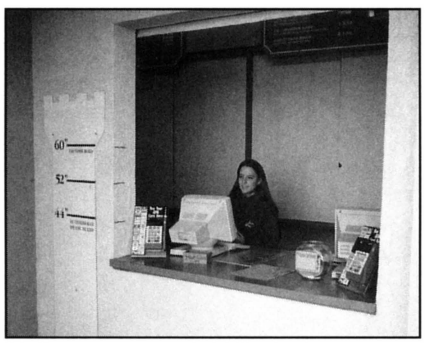
Palace Park Family Entertainment Center in Irvine has had great success with recently installed ATMs.



Palace Park GM John Rouse said customers did $41,000 in transactions in just nine weeks.



ATMs can be used at the ride or gameroom entrances.

A: The simplest, least expensive setup is our stand-alone version. We provide the terminal, communication highway (network), and banking access. You provide the power and phone line.

Q: Okay, say I'm more ambitious than just having an ATM terminal... what's the next step up from there?

A: You can go for an upgraded, integrated system that handles multiple operations like ticketing, sales, redemption, food, time and attendance, inventory, accounting, and other functions along with national ATM/debit access. This is called our POS (point of sale) system.

Q: What about things like value-added cards, like some big city transportation systems use? I've heard some operators have tried these in arcades.

A: That's right. This is the final, top-end option, and it's a totally different system...although it can be integrated with, and added to, ATM/debit and POS systems. This is called a "stored value" debit card system. It vends unique, dedicated cards which are available only at your location, and which are used only at your location...kind of like an electronic token.

Q: How does a value-added card system work?

A: A kiosk or sales person can dispense these cards. Players establish the value of the card by spending cash or by using their ATM or credit cards. They can "add value" or "store value" the same way. Then, every time the player uses this card on one of your games, he runs the card through a special terminal on that machine. The terminal takes away buying power from the card each time that game, or any other game, is played.

Q: So instead of spending quarters or dollar bills, the player just runs the value card through a swipe slot?

A: Right. One key to this system is that you can raise the play-price almost invisibly. You can also achieve a wider variety of play prices, going from 25 cents to 35 cents, 50 cents, 75 cents, 80 cents, or whatever. And, you can collect data on the play-price ratio for that game and all your other games.

Q: Can any of these three systems realistically be used for small arcades and gamerooms?

A: Yes, the stand alone ATM/debit terminals are ideal for small gamerooms or arcades.

Q: At what level of traffic does it become a viable option?

A: I'm going to answer this with another question. At what level of traffic do you want to increase your customers' ability to pay for more games? The ATM/debit terminal is the immediate and viable choice for any fun center. Small gamerooms or arcades can utilize this simple stand-alone version, while larger ones can integrate the same terminal into their POS systems.

Q: We take it the POS system helps improve management efficiency.

A: Ken Kiser, consultant and cash management specialist of RKO Consulting, stated that "The integrated POS system provides an efficient method for conducting transactions and capturing data. This captured data then becomes an important resource for making decisions about account-

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ATMs can also be used at the merchandise and retail counter.

ability, productivity, revenue vs. labor, inventory, sales, customers, etc."

Q: Can you put into a nutshell how accepting ATM cards, or an integrated POS system, or value-added debit cards, can help me?

A: All three are tools to increase your revenue! With ATM, more cash flows into your amusement center. An integrated POS system for one location or a chain is really a must to run an efficient business. Tracking all the events on-site (like ticketing, inventory, sales, redemption, food, time & attendance, shrinkage, etc.) allows for better scheduling, marketing, and cost control. The value-added debit card system allows you to break the game price barrier. Your customers can happily spend more money to play your games, yet they are not nearly as conscious of the price increase as if they had to physically shell out more quarters or tokens with each play. Using this system, you can raise play prices in a way which is painless and almost invisible to your customers.

Q: What "real world" track record with the amusement industry does Resource Link have?

A: Maybe the best example is the simplest. We installed an electronic payment system at the Palace Park Family Entertainment Center in Irvine, California — part of the Camelot Park FEC chain. Customers there did $41,000 in transactions in just nine weeks' time. John Rouse, general manager of the park, said "ATM has really worked for us."

Q: What documentation does the operator get for accounting purposes?

A: We provide detailed and summary statements every month on all the transaction activity that takes place over the terminals. On-line reporting is also available over a modem to your PC. This reporting normally includes just POS/debit and credit cards. It can also include private label card programs, frequent user programs, and other custom applications.

Q: How does the fun center owner get paid?

A: With the POS/debit transaction on the customer's ATM card, or a credit card transaction, the operator is paid by a direct deposit into his bank account. The POS/debit transaction is a guaranteed, on-line, real-time event that will only be approved if the amount of money designated, is actually in the customer's checking account. There are no chargebacks or NSF's with POS/deposit. After approval, the operator puts the cash in the player's hands, and they will spend it in the cash box, in the normal way.

Q: How can I find out more information on these services for my fun center?

A: That one is easy. Just contact me, John McIntosh at Resource Link, and I'll provide you with lots of information, from the simple to the complex. That's Resource Link, P.O. Box 3236, 191 Riverside Dr., Newport Beach, CA 92659. The phone is 714/646-4587.

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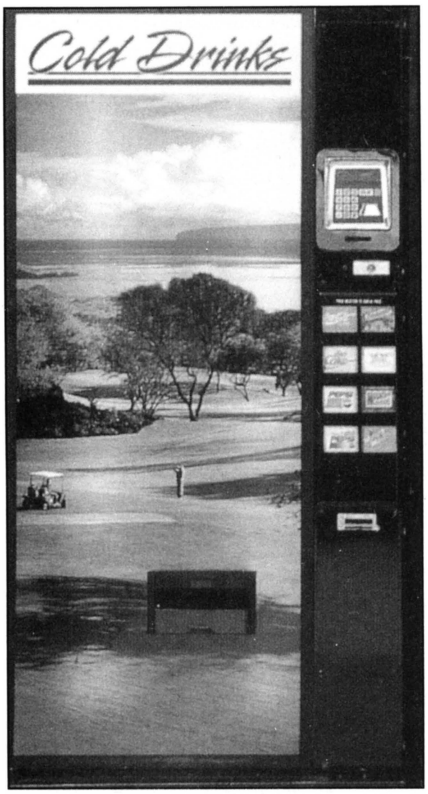

Cashless Vending

FUTURE FANTASY? NO, TODAY'S REALITY FROM DATAWAVE AND USA ENTERTAINMENT

Seems like more and more "futuristic" dreams are turning into working realities these days. Take "coin-op" machines that don't take coins at all...nor any kind of cash. Instead, they take credit cards or debit cards. Great idea, right? No more depending on people to have the right change in their pockets. Sure would help operators promote painless price increases, too. Maybe someday it will happen, right?

Well, think again, because it's already happening. And, the amusement machine industry is already starting to get aboard this hot trend! Some leading American operators have experimented with a debit card system in an arcade or two. Blockbuster's new "Block Party" fun centers use prepaid value cards, and at least one theme park in Southern California has already installed an ATM-type system (please see separate stories, elsewhere in this issue).

But so far, the widest use of cashless machines has occurred in the vending industry. During the summer of 1994, USA Entertainment Center Inc. (Wayne, Pa.) installed credit card vending machines on five golf courses...including one owned by Philadelphia Eagles great Ron Jaworski. Company prexy George Jensen said the company's "Smart" vending machines provide convenient access to beverages and snacks at remote areas on golf courses. These eye-catching, user-friendly machines are drawing golfers and their Visa, Discover, MasterCard and American Express cards at incredible rates, Jensen said. "The cashless society is more than a trend, it is becoming permanent, irreversible reality," Jensen declared. "Our 'Smart' machines are the first credit card operated vending machines in the world. Credit cards are easier to use on the golf course and provide the user with a record for business expenses," he added.

Five Golfer's Oasis units were installed during the first few weeks of use, including the one on Jaworski's Eagle's Nest Golf Course in Sewell, N.J. Others have been installed at the Horsham Valley Golf Club in Blue Bell, Pa., and the Chesapeake Bay Golf Club in Northeast Maryland. Two refreshment centers were previously installed on the Champion's Club at Julington Creek, Fla. Golfers seem to like the machines, too.

USA Entertainment plans to adapt its proprietary (patent pending) technology to other vending machines in the very near future. A refrigerated snack machine for the Golfer's Oasis and the world's first credit card activated copier was scheduled for production in late 1994. Besides golf courses, the factory planned installations in hotels, tennis courts and marinas.

USA Entertainment produces, installs and owns the world's first credit card activated vending machines. For further information contact George R. Jensen, Jr. at 610/989-0340 or 800/633-0340.

Meanwhile, 7-Eleven stores and many other outlets are already offering machines which create and sell "prepaid calling cards" for use with payphones. This type of system has been used elsewhere (such as Japan) for many years. Now it's coming to North America.

A Canadian firm called DataWave is on the cutting edge of this new market. They've launched a series of electronic merchandisers which dispense prepaid telephone calling cards. Prepaid calling cards are projected to be the most profitable business opportunity in the telecommunications industry since the impact of cellular telephones. Telephone companies, long distance carriers, information providers, marketing giants and businesses across North America are now moving swiftly to get a piece of the new and emerging multi-billion dollar market.

DataWave is also moving swiftly to take advantage of this emerging market by re-selling long distance time, through DataWave's own prepaid telephone calling card and linking it with DataWave's electronic merchandiser. By the year 2000, telecommunications experts predict that, in North America alone, the prepaid calling card business will be a $3 billion industry. DataWave plans to capture at least 10% of this market in the next five years. DataWave's wireless technology, combined with transaction processing, enables DataWave's electronic merchandisers to accept credit cards or cash, and activate the prepaid calling card at the point of sale. "The only viable way to sell prepaid calling cards are through our electronic merchandisers because sales through traditional retail outlets are prone to store losses and high inventory costs," explained Brian Harris, VP of Corporate Development. DataWave's technology links the transaction processing companies, card validation companies, prepaid calling card services and the long distance carriers. This vending machine will be integral to the growth of retail sales of prepaid calling cards in North America. No other competitor uses wireless transaction processing, on-line credit card technology to dispense prepaid calling cards. "This is an enormous opportunity for entrepreneurs to take advantage of de- regulation in the telecommunications industry," explained DataWave prexy Clive Barwin. You can reach the firm at 604/251-8903 or 800-388-7031.

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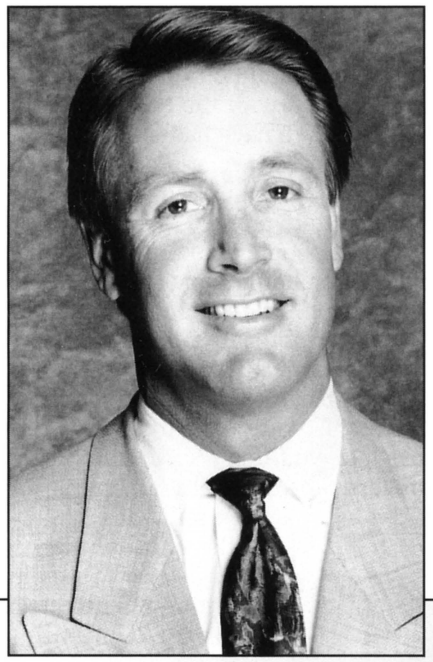
Acclaim Stakes its Claim

TOM PETIT SAYS ACCLAIM'S NEW COIN-OP DIVISION WILL DELIVER "AFFORDABLE HI-TECH" AND PROVEN, SUCCESSFUL CONTENT"



"Where, oh where, are the affordable coin-op video games for average operators and street locations?" In recent years, that agonized question has echoed at trade shows around the world.

Now, industry veteran Tom Petit steps forward with an encouraging answer: "Hold on, affordable hi-tech games are coming...from Acclaim Coin-Op Entertainment!" Backed by a global, multimedia company that's active in everything from TV to movies to comic books, Tom is preparing to deliver on that promise — perhaps as soon as the 1995 AMOA Expo.

"Acclaim is a content-driven company, rich with many popular licenses and properties that we will continue to exploit through a variety of media, on a global basis," he declared. "Our new coin-op division will be 'first in the food chain' to utilize many of these properties...and we'll encompass those proven, successful properties in dynamic games that offer very advanced hi-tech at an 'economically sensitive' price point."

For example: *Batman Forever,* the first coin-op title announced by Tom's company. Parent firm Acclaim Entertainment used its award-winning, proprietary "motion capture technology" to help Warner Bros. create the special effects for the movie of that title, which hits theaters in the summer of '95. In turn, Acclaim Coin-Op will use the same technology to digitize and translate realism from the film into remarkably lifelike video gameplay.

Further, said Tom, Acclaim's coin-op game hardware will maximize their "motion capture" technology, to show it off to its best gameplay advantage. "We will offer 3D platforms with high polygon counts and texture-mapped graphics," he said. "Combined with our proprietary technology, this will give Acclaim coin-op games a uniquely lifelike look. Yet our products will be affordably priced, because we're taking full advantage of some very sophisticated graphics and 3D engineering capabilities that are just now coming on-stream for the commercial market."

Two other coin-op titles are currently under development, and other projects will come on-line in the immediate future. Tom demurred from revealing any details about these additional projects for now. "Let's just say I like them a lot," Tom smiled, "and think they'll offer a unique new look to 3D gameplay, at a price structure that will translate into both segments of marketplace — street locations and arcades."

For the past nine months or so, Tom has been busily recruiting and building his coin-op team, which will work out of offices in San Jose, Calif. (See sidebar for background on the coin-op management team.) Game programmers in San Jose will be dedicated to coin-op; advanced technology and support engineering will be located at Acclaim's headquarters in Glen Cove, N.Y.

About the parent firm: up until now, Acclaim Entertainment has probably been best-known for its successful

Tom Petit: "We plan to offer hi-tech at an affordable price."

Tom Petit signed on as president of Acclaim's new coin-op division in May of 1994, following nine years as president of Sega Enterprises USA. In that earlier post, Tom was one of the first — and strongest — proponents of new technology for coin-op video. Now, he's just as vocal about the gaping need for mid-priced, top-quality video products.

"Our industry has pursued the 3D universe in a pioneering spirit," Tom told *RePlay.* "But the high price we paid to develop that technology, was directly reflected in the escalating cost of the equipment. While these products have meaningful and significant impact, they've also focused on a smaller segment of the marketplace. At the last AMOA Expo, one large company didn't have anything in their booth priced under $10,000. To me, that is a real concern. The street operator has found it very difficult to sit back and watch this trend.

"As this situation has evolved," Tom continued, "I've seen a tremendous void in the middle that continues to widen. What we want to do, as a charter for this company, is be a company for the operator. We want to be able to bring meaningful, hi-tech products to the market at affordable price points. We believe we have secured the technology that will allow us to do this."

creation and marketing of home video game software. Under the labels Acclaim, Flying Edge, LJN and Arena, the company produced million-unit sellers for Sega, Nintendo and CD-ROM platforms. With 270 employees at their 65,000 sq. ft. Long Island facility, Acclaim had doubled its quarterly grosses to $116 million by mid-1994. The firm also maintains branches in Canada, France, Japan, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom. They've recently purchased a comic book publishing house (Valiant Comics) and created a joint venture with America's largest cable TV firm, TCI, to set up a video games TV channel. Chairman of Acclaim is Greg Fischbach, and the president is Robert Holmes.

The launch of Acclaim Coin-op is part of an overall strategy to build and expand markets across multiple platforms and media. "Synergy" is a buzzword of the '90s and Acclaim appears to be moving forward very successfully with this strategy. "License applications will start with coin-op and trickle down to product for the rest of the company," Tom Petit explained. "Lag time from the coin to consumer markets will vary, depending on individual circumstances, but we intend to respect that equation to the best of our abilities with each coin-op release."

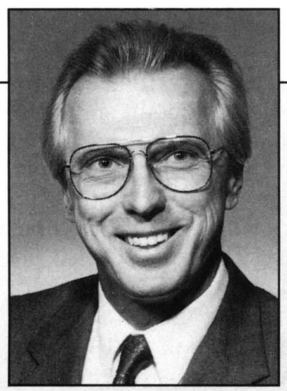
Other elements of Acclaim's coin-op market strategy reflect an equally inclusive approach. "Our mission is to allow all areas of the industry to participate," Tom stated. "For our industry to continue to grow and expand, we've got to create products that stimulate the street operator into purchasing video games in volume again. I say this with full commitment to the arcade and location-based entertainment arenas, who will benefit from our product line as well. Our initial approach will be to offer product which almost every operator in the country can afford, knowing that this type of product can also translate very successfully into arcade venues."

In other words, Acclaim would rather sell a million units for $1, than one unit for a million dollars. "I believe our industry benefits most from products and production runs that are elongated and have some depth and substance to them...not runs of 300 to 500 or 1,000 units," Tom observed. "When an operator can buy a product in multiple quantities, they can penetrate a wide variety of their locations up-front. Through this approach, we will create a broad brand awareness for Acclaim and our coin-op product line."

Hand in hand with this "volume" approach, Petit plans to put a big emphasis on a tight, solid and somewhat exclusive distribution network. Tom pointed out, "Our intention is to create a valuable franchise by way of a strong, consistent line of profitable product. This network will represent our product with integrity and a commitment to build our franchise in the marketplace with the full support of Acclaim. We have had a tremendous amount of interest and support from distribution in representing our company's future product line."

What about some of the revenue-sharing schemes or other unusual marketing strategies and alliances that are popping up between factories and operators, distributors and operators, or factories and locations these days? "If you come up with good product, you don't have to find controversial or unusual ways to sell it," Tom said flatly. "Many of the unusual market strategies we've seen in recent times, are direct result of companies making product that just doesn't translate all that well into this market. True, as our industry evolves, we must look at new ways to expand our business. Acclaim's strategy will be to create a strong, dynamic, consistent line of product that will support a strong partnership with a tight distribution franchise, to in turn support and develop a strong operator base. That's our mission statement!"

Acclaim Coin-Op Entertainment is located at 1190 Saratoga Ave., Suite 210, San Jose, CA 95129. Phone is 408/236-3280. Fax is 408-326-3281.



The Rest of Acclaim Coin-Op's Management Team

VP of research & development at Acclaim Coin-Op is John Pasierb (above), responsible for overseeing the engineering and design of coin-op games. In his former post as engineering VP at American Laser Games, John established an in-house product development department which produced interactive coin-op and consumer software. His resume also includes responsible posts with Bally Mfg. (Scientific Games division) and Midway Mfg. John holds masters and BS degrees in electrical engineering.

Director of Engineering for Acclaim Coin-Op is Robin Seaver, in charge of the engineering department. He was responsible for establishing the parent firm's "motion capture studio" in New York. At the coin-op division, he'll oversee design and manufacturing of home and coin-op games, lead the application of Acclaim's motion capture technology to game development, and help design engineering and tools to support home gaming software development. In his prior post (engineering director for WMS Gaming), Robin set up a product development group of 40-plus engineers and artists and supervised a wide array of engineering, software, support and game development functions.

Acclaim Coin-Op's director of finance and administration is Bob Horjus. He'll head up financial, accounting, customer and technical service operations. His earlier posts include a stint as accounting director at Sega Enterprises USA, CFO for Davis-Lay Inc. and Mallard's Restaurants Inc., and audit manager at Coopers & Lybrand. A chartered accountant, Bob holds a BAS in accounting (honors) from the University of South Africa.

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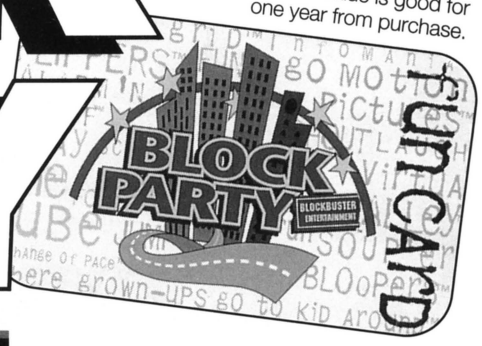


Here's what the "Fun Card" looks like. Value is good for one year from purchase.

In the summer of 1993, Blockbuster's founder and CEO Wayne Huizenga declared a scheme to build "neighborhood Disneylands" all over America. The man had already built a huge chain of 2,234 video rental stores in the U.S. and another 1,000 overseas, all bulging with profits. So, when Wayne speaks — zap! bam! — things happen. Eighteen months (and some $5-8 million) later, the first Block Party opened its doors on Dec. 19 in Albuquerque, N.M.

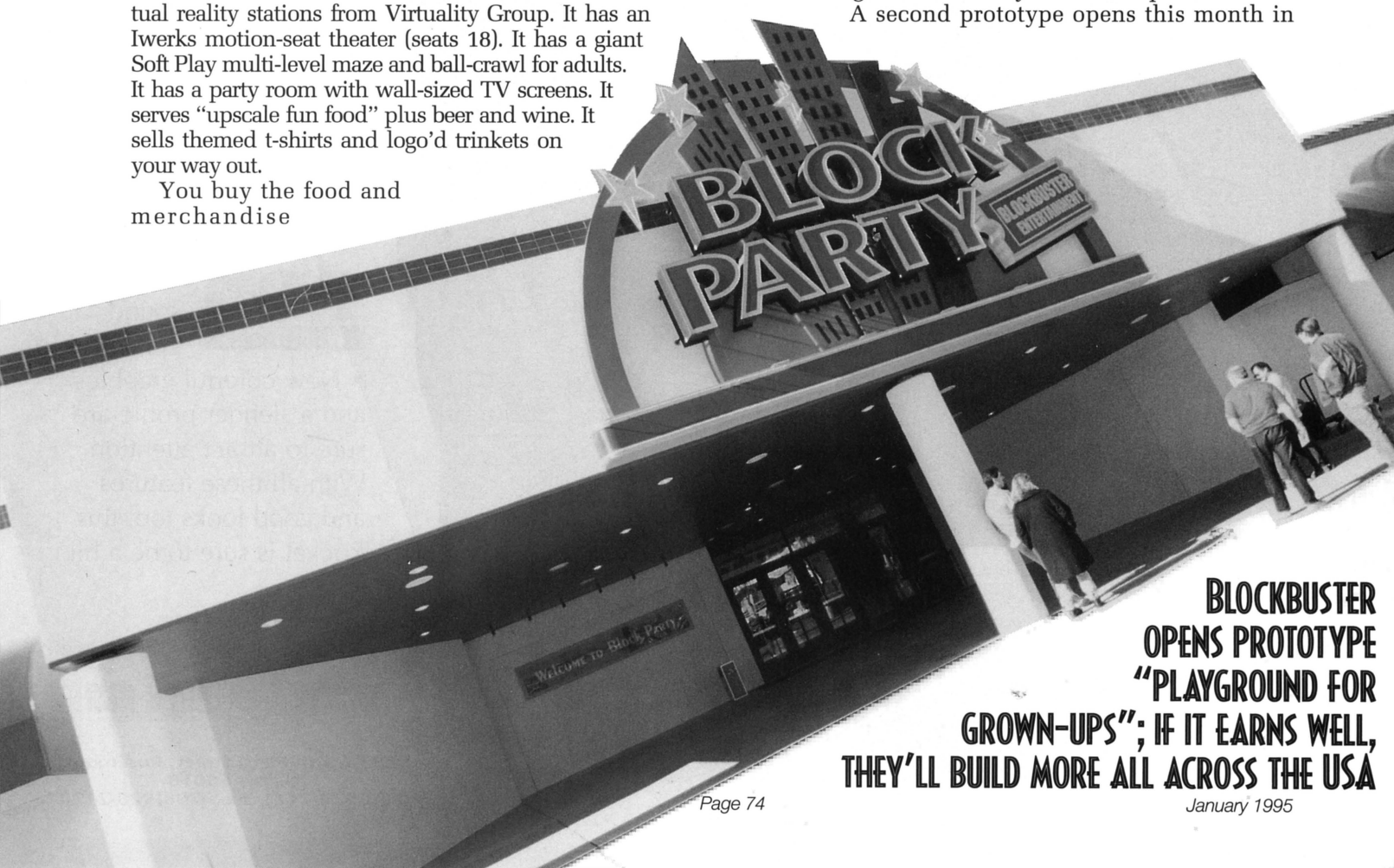
Block Party is a 30,000 sq. ft., stand-alone, heavily themed, indoor mall dedicated to entertainment for grown-ups. It has lots of video, some pinball, and a few sports-oriented amusement machines. It has several immersive virtual reality stations from Virtuality Group. It has an Iwerks motion-seat theater (seats 18). It has a giant Soft Play multi-level maze and ball-crawl for adults. It has a party room with wall-sized TV screens. It serves "upscale fun food" plus beer and wine. It sells themed t-shirts and logo'd trinkets on your way out.

You buy the food and merchandise with cash or a credit card, but you pay for all the entertainment with an electronic debit card, purchased upon entry. Entertainment prices range from 50 cents for *Pac Man* and *Cruis'n USA* to $3.25 for the maze or the Iwerks movies.

The target market is young marrieds, dating couples and Baby Boomers with money to spend...people who want to relax and do something active (or interactive) but not strenuous for a couple of hours. You're supposed to be 18 to enter, but Block Party doesn't demand proof of age.

Is Block Party really a "neighborhood Disneyland"? Close enough. And, if it earns like Wayne's team hopes and believes it will, they will greenlight the concept for large-scale rollout by the second quarter of 1995.

A second prototype opens this month in



BLOCKBUSTER OPENS PROTOTYPE "PLAYGROUND FOR GROWN-UPS"; IF IT EARNS WELL, THEY'LL BUILD MORE ALL ACROSS THE USA

Indianapolis; three more centers could open later this year.

"Blockbuster's model has always been if you get something they like, roll it out as fast as you can and discourage the competition," said Fred Brooks, VP of the entertainment center division. Target sites are "second-tier" cities with populations of a half-million or so: too small for theme parks, but large enough for the local population to provide steady repeat business. "We've been hit on by every major mall owner in the country," Fred advised, "but right now we're saying 'let's wait and see.' We're using our Albuquerque prototype as a laboratory to experiment and learn what the public wants, what it likes, how much space is enough, and fine-tune elements like lighting, signage and so on."

Brooks is a 13-year veteran of Disneyland, with additional years at Circus World, and he's a co-founder of Wet 'N' Wild. He works with other very smart and experienced guys like games & facility support director Stephen Thomas (a 20-year vet of Celebration Station and Chuck E. Cheese); operations director Ray Duvall (from Blockbuster's video rental store division); and foods director Bill Gallagher (a pro from Fuddrucker's and other "fun food" places). They all report to the big guy, Blockbuster Entertainment Center Division President Bill Burns, himself a 24-year Disneyworld veteran.

Block Party was planned, down to the last detail, by this savvy team based on their decades of industry experience, plus polling results from "focus groups" of people who fit the target audience profile. The execs always knew they wanted a big arcade, and they still believe arcade-type machines will be their top moneymakers. But in addition, the focus group research convinced them to offer beer and wine, and to create the giant maze. (Apparently lots of moms & dads look on wistfully, and a bit jealously, as their kids romp through similar, smaller mazes at McDonald's or Discovery Zone.)

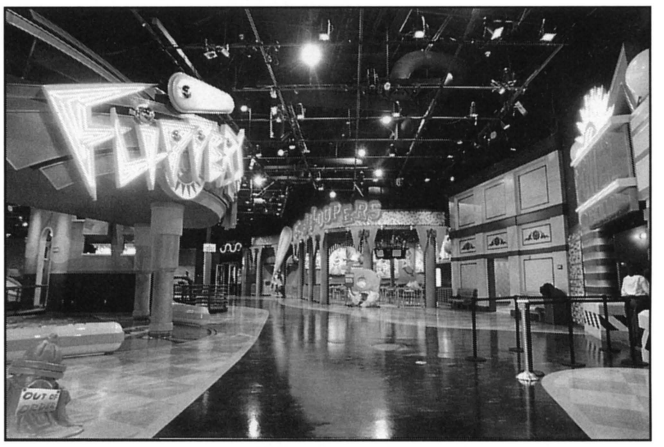
Games chief Stephen Thomas plans to buy machines for Block Party's arcade segment on a national account basis whenever possible. He selected each of the 160 games himself. "I had a very tough time finding enough video titles," he said. "We have at least one of every major new title, and we're also using several classic older games because grown-ups remember them and still enjoy them. Also, women will play the older puzzle-type and sports-themed games much more readily than newer fighting videos." Lowest price for a vidgame is 50 cents; top vidgame price (say, for a linked, moving simulator) is 90 cents. Thanks to debit card technology, prices can be changed at the touch of a button.

Steve's got a good track record with that debit card system, supplied by Xico (pronounced "Cy Comm"). "We've had it in our Gold & Games center in Florida since June," Stephen said. "With a debit cards, there are no break-ins because you have no cash in the machines. There's no collection downtime. You can be very flexible with pricing, going up or down in increments, or changing prices at different times of day. And there's plenty of data-collection features to tell us which games are being played, by whom and for how long."

Prexy Bill Burns and his crew have enjoyed plenty of support, and little or no interference, from corporate headquarters on this ambitious project. "They gave us a lot of rope," smiled Fred Brooks. "We'll either hang ourselves or be very successful." Obviously Blockbuster is betting on the latter outcome. Reportedly, Wayne Huizenga's original idea was to spend $1 billion on fun centers worldwide, but now Viacom — senior partner in their recent merger — must also approve. The rest of the industry, meanwhile, will watch Block Party's results with intense interest!



Customers walk in and make their first stop at "Infomania," a hi-tech ticket counter that sells debit cards. If you give them a Blockbuster video card you get another $3 of buying power (and Block Party gets your name, address, etc. from their sister store).

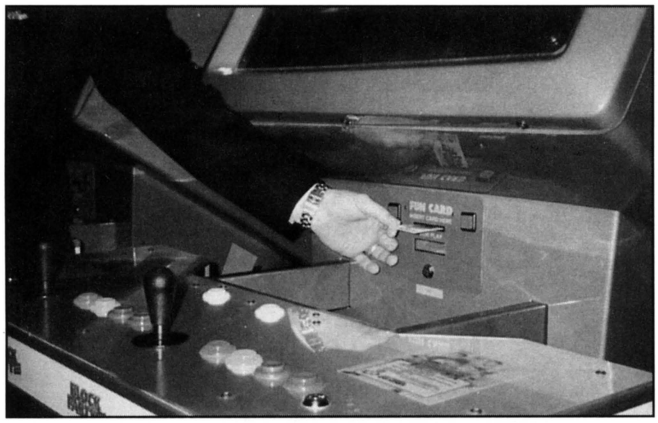


Disneyland is built around a "main street" and so is Block Party. Here's a view down that central corridor — merchandise shop and arcade area to the left, maze and food and party room to the right. Iwerks motion theater is down at the far end.



The arcade is designed to give you the feeling you're on a pinball playfield. Notice pins and videos grouped around mushroom-bumper columns, inside.

(additional photos on page 76)



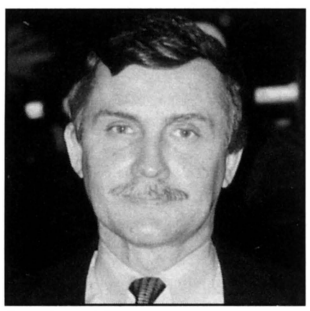
Debit card system's LED display flashes two messages: "Insert FUN Card" and "Price is $0.50." After you insert your card in the slot, the LED screen shows original card value; a cash register sound effect is heard; and new (reduced) card value is shown as card pops up for retrieval. You're coined up & ready to play.



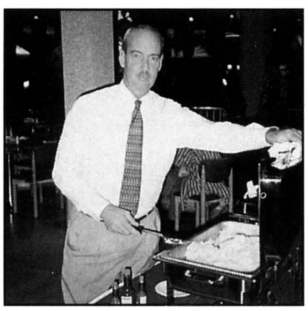
Eight linked *Suzuka 2's*, six linked *Daytonas* and a partridge in a pear tree. Actually, four *Dynamo Hockey* tables and six basketball-toss games join the selection of pins and videos.



This party room can be used as a lounge, restaurant extension, or (as set up here) rented out for business conference use or private parties.



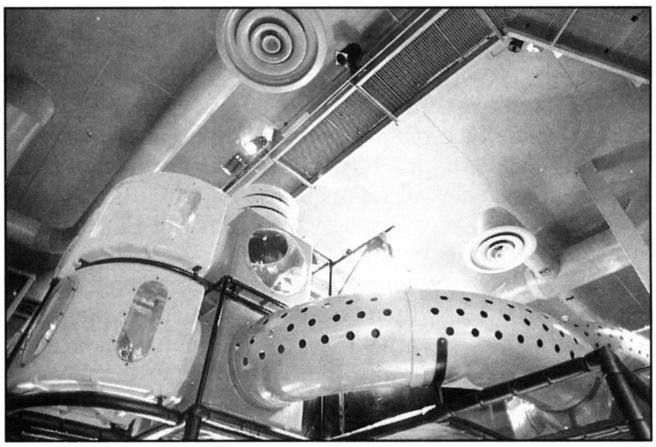
Stephen Thomas is director of games & facility support.



Bill Gallagher is director of food services.



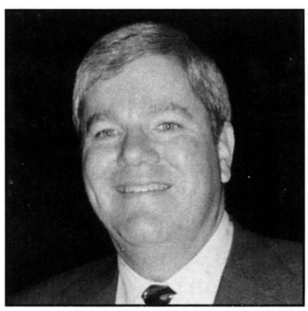
A few virtual reality stations are on hand, at right. "VR has come a long way but it's not quite there yet," said BP execs. "It's a buzzword, but without it you're vulnerable to competition."



This giant multi-level maze was built for Block Party by Soft Play. Adults told BP they really, really want it!



Handsome generic cabinets were built to Block Party's own design and specs by handsome Greg Sullivan & Kim Cook of Skee Ball, Inc.'s National Sports Games division, seen here with BP's Steve Thomas.



Bill Burns is president of Blockbuster's entertainment center division.



Fred Brooks is VP of Blockbuster's entertainment center division.

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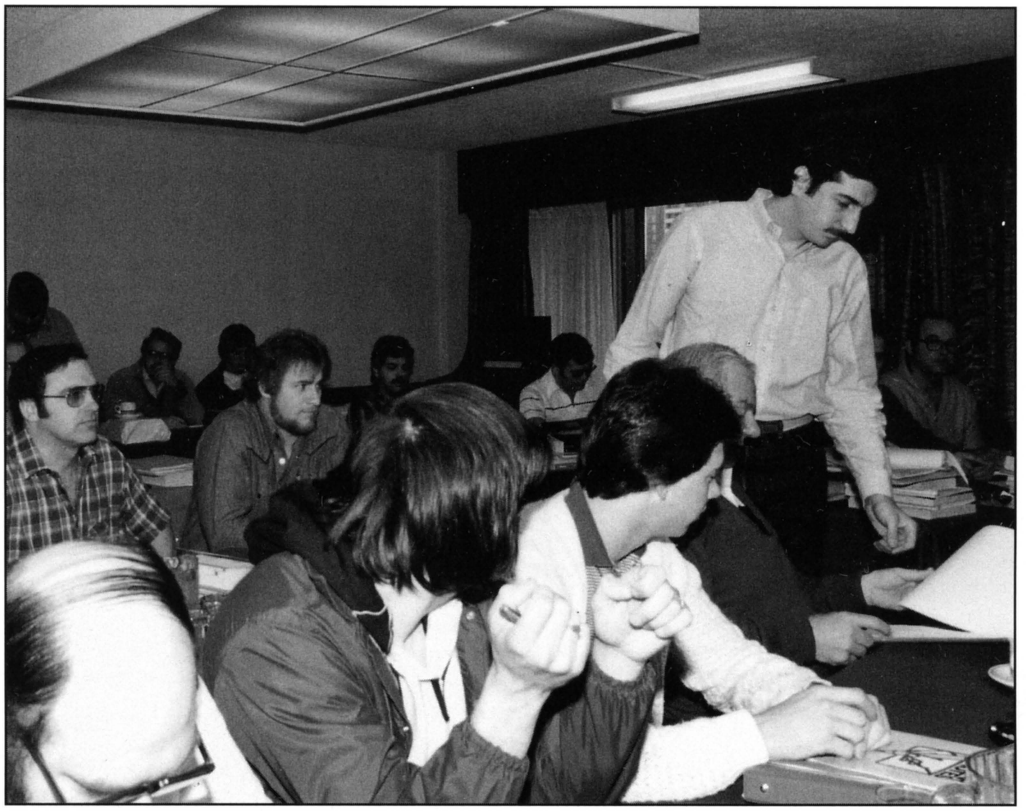

"Techfest" Looks Hot

RANDY FROMM TO OFFER A FULL PROGRAM AT ACME '95: LECTURES, DEMOS, DISPLAYS, "JOB SHOP" & MUCH MORE!

Technical seminars have pulled larger and larger crowds at recent trade expos worldwide. So why not go all the way, and offer a really slam-bang "tech program to end all tech programs"? The 1995 American Coin Machine Expo (ACME) takes place in Reno, Nev. from March 23-25...and ACME will do exactly that. Of course, who better to head up this extravaganza that coin-op technical guru (and *RePlay* columnist) Randy Fromm?

Pictured above, technical wiz Randy Fromm instructs a group in one of his classes.

It's called "TechFest." Staged in a quiet section of the main exhibit floor, accessible to all showgoers, TechFest will present: a stimulating new program of lectures by Randy Fromm! Special presentations! (Like Vic Fortenbach's educational session on all types of ticket dispensers.) Live troubleshooting demonstrations by major factory experts! Displays and exhibits by suppliers of parts, diagnostic tools, and equipment! An employment "job shop" bulletin board! Multiple video theaters, presenting nonstop tech training films in English and Spanish! A special area featuring service department reps from major factories! Technician Certification Program! And more, more, more!

By the way, if you're one of the component makers or other suppliers who would like even more action from the trade's technical community, you can locate your booth near TechFest. Great way to grab their attention, yes? (Indicate your wish to do so on your space application.) Also, factories who want to feature their service department in this TechFest subsection, can request a 6x8' area with 6' draped table, two chairs, and ID sign for just $250. Finally, exhibitors can put their main booth elsewhere in the hall and a smaller "satellite" booth near TechFest (same price and dimensions as the service area above). Contact ACME show management for all these options.

"I'm quite excited about this program," Randy Fromm said. "For the first time at a major trade show, coin-op technicians will get the special recognition they deserve — not only as the trade's first line of defense against equipment malfunctions, but also as the personnel who have more contact with locations and customers than anyone else. Our coin-op techs make the industry hum with excitement and enthusiasm...especially in an era where each day provides new technology, and new challenges. Your participation in TechFest '95 will allow you to communicate directly to service personnel, and show operators and technicians from around the world that your company cares about service."

Call ACME show management at 708/333-9292 for more information.

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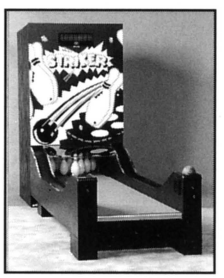

STRIKER

Classy, Creative & Compelling

'FRED FLINTSTONE'S MEMORY MATCH' AND 'SPEEDBALL RALLY': YOU'VE GOT TO SEE COASTAL'S NEWEST GAMES TO APPRECIATE THEM!

Visit the booth of Coastal Amusement Distributors at any big trade show, and you're sure to be impressed. They always offer an "emporium" of flashy, handsome, and exciting redemption games — nifty twists on everything from ball poppers to kiddie karaoke and physical skill games. Two of their latest titles really should be seen in person, before you can truly appreciate them...but we'll try our best to do justice to them, in words!

Fred Flintstone's Memory Match debuted at the IAAPA "Parks" show in November of '94, where it helped Coastal win the award for Best Coin-Op Exhibit in its class. The handsome game features the full cast of the famous cartoon series, under a worldwide license agreement with Turner Home Entertainment and Hanna Barbera Inc. (owners of the Fred Flintstone registered trademarks).

This "concentration" style memory game comes in a colorful upright cabinet with 25" monitor, professional graphics, and actual voices of the Flintstone actors. Players insert a coin or token to go from attract mode to gameplay, which opens with a random display of Flintstones characters behind nine open doors. The player has a moment to study the display and memorize each character's position. Then the curtains are closed on each door and a main curtain opens, displaying a single character.

"Can you find me?" the character asks the player. Players must remember the correct on-screen location and press the corresponding button. If he succeeds, the character says "You found me!" If not, the character says "Sorry, try again."

Locating five characters in the allotted time sends you on to the bonus round, which features "multiples" of the same character (Fred might be in windows 1, 3 and 5 for example). Pushing the wrong button now, or waiting till time's up, ends the game. Four levels of bonus round play are on the menu, challenging the player to find four, then three, then two, of the same character...and finally just one. Game ends automatically after successful completion of the fourth round. Tickets are vended based on award schedule displayed prior to gameplay.

Speedball Rally is one of the most compelling rolldown games on the market. Themed around an auto race, players race against the big 60-second digital timer (displayed on backboard). Object is to roll as many balls as possible down the colorful playfield, into a spinning wheel. Different slots in the wheel represent segments of a 100-mile journey that the player is trying to finish. A sweeping "second hand" on the backboard counts off mileage segments.

The timer not only adds excitement, it also forces faster gameplay and helps the unit earn that next quarter or token faster. More exciting elements include great racing sounds, voice dialog, flashing "runway lights" on the playfield that also measure progress on the 100-mile course, and shifting "gears" and speeds on that rotating target wheel. Players who rack up 100 miles are awarded bonus tickets as a multiple of the seconds remaining on the timer. For even more excitement, you can link multiple units for an optional "progressive jackpot" display.



For more information, contact your authorized Coastal distributor! For referral, phone the company at 908/905-6662.



SHAQ ATTAQ!

PREMIER CITES RECORD NEW EARNINGS FOR PIN THEMED AROUND INTERNATIONAL BASKETBALL STAR



Nothing like a sports celebrity — no, a sports *phenomenon* — to grab the attention of old and young alike, both in the USA and overseas. Take Shaquille O'Neal, better known as "Shaq." Premier did, putting his name and likeness on their newest Gottlieb flipper game, *Shaq Attaq*. "Pinball players become basketball giants" when slamming the silver ball on this game, said the company.

Premier added: "We have shattered all earnings records with this new piece."

Premier's game got its official U.S. debut on Dec. 8 when Premier bowed the unit to a distributor meeting, held in Orlando, Fla. On hand for the event was Shaq himself — "proving that *Shaq Attaq* is a real slam dunk," Premier execs said with a grin.

The game is designed to give players all the action of real, live basketball. Under the "stadium dome" on the upper playfield is an actual moving basket. Players time the ramp shot, which sends the ball airborne and through the actual basket! The crowd roars! *Shaq Attaq* challenges players to a game of "horse," a free throw match, and all the basketball favorites. Meantime, a coach guides the player and suspense builds as the seconds tick down on the game's shot clock.

Shaq Attaq was engineered by the same team which created such titles as *Freddy Krueger* and *Rescue 911*. "Gottlieb's commitment," noted President Gil Pollock, "is the development of the highest quality pinball product with a broad player appeal. Gottlieb games have continually proven to have longevity of earnings. We bring this level of excellence to the operator at the most economical price of any pinball manufacturer. We haven't forgotten who the operator is...and we certainly know how to make the operator's life easier."

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Lazer-Tron's Full House

FOUR NIFTY NEW GAMES FROM THIS CREATIVE FACTORY

Take a pirate, a pog, a caveman and a baseball player...what do they have in common? They're all themes of new redemption skill games from Lazer-Tron, the creative California redemption manufacturers. *Pirate's Gold* is a pachinko-style unit: players try to guide coins through pins on a playfield that's slanted nearly vertical. Six target holes are also on the slanted playfield; when you hit them, you get tickets. Hit all six, you get a jackpot. The game's "play till you win" feature ensures that every player is a winner. If the player's coin does not go into one of the targets, nor into the treasure chest at the bottom of the playfield, then the coin will be returned to the player to be played again! Fully operator-adjustable, this UL listed game includes vivid graphics and great sound effects.



POGGER

Pogger is a four-player rotary merchandiser. Players win "pogs" (TM), milkcaps, slammers, and kini's. For every pog that comes off the playfield, another one is automatically deposited (face-up). One prototype unit in a SoCal arcade earned the kind of weekly money that smash hit videos usually just dream about. Great sounds and light-



PIRATES GOLD



POGGER

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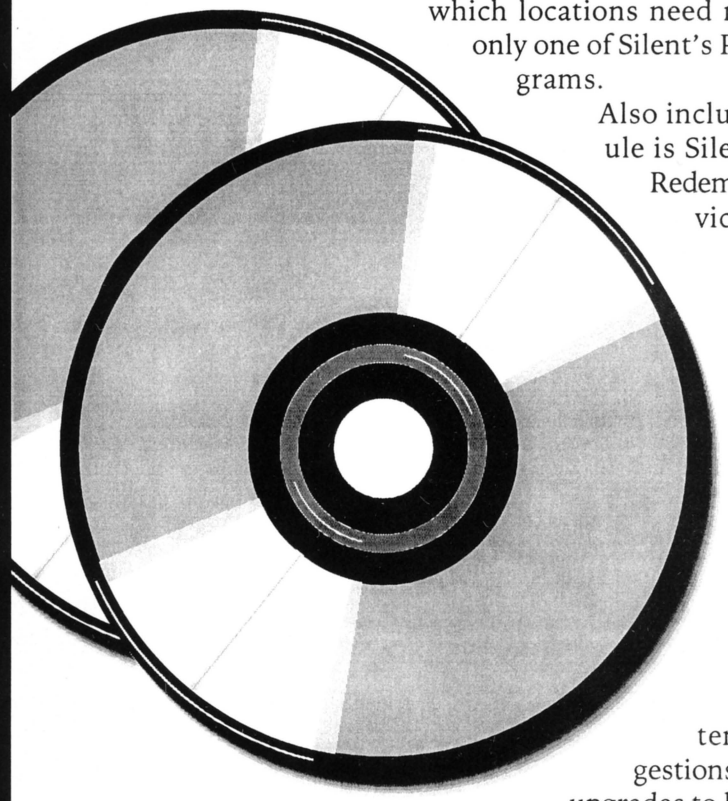

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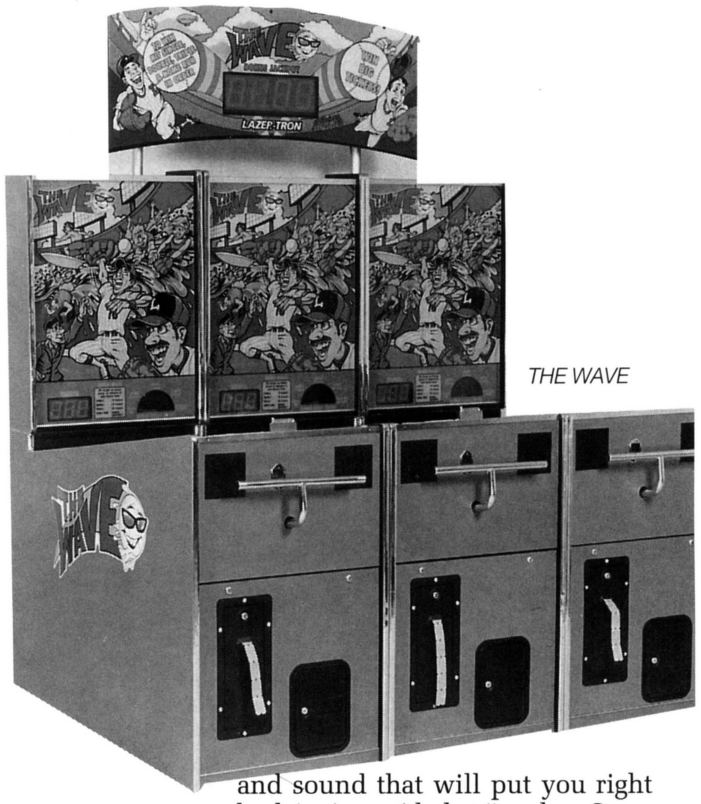

THE WAVE

ing add to the fun. By the way, Lazer-Tron can provide the merchandise for this one.

The Wave is a skill-oriented, coin sliding game with big league baseball theme. Players try to guide coins down a vibrating playfield which is laid out like a baseball diamond. Target holes represent single, double (twice as many tickets), triple (three times as many tickets) and home run (jackpot). If players make these targets in order, they can win thousands of tickets in a larger, progressive jackpot in a feature which is patented by Lazer-Tron. Real major league baseball sounds and adjustable skill level rounds out the game.

The Flintstones Bedrock Games is a two-player ball-toss unit with a touch of "group race" action. Dolls of Fred and Barney are mounted on the backboard; the faster and more accurately you throw your balls into the buckets, the faster Fred and Barney move up the backboard track. You can even make the other player run backward by tossing their balls in the middle bucket! (Using Lazer-Tron's own color recognition device, the game can tell which color ball is thrown into each bucket.) The UL-listed game features colorful graphics and sound that will put you right back in time with that "modern Stone Age family." By the way, multiple units can be linked for two, four, six or more players.

How good are Lazer-Tron games? Well, the company doubled its sales in 1994. That ought to tell you something! For more information, contact your local authorized distributor. ◆



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The Solid Gold. Not a new era in coin-op music. But ready for it.

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Using computerized, state-of-the-art equipment (and some proprietary software), CCP actually purchases the operators' coins right at their plant. There's a small fee, of course, but Continental says its prices "significantly undercut" the charges made by regular banks.

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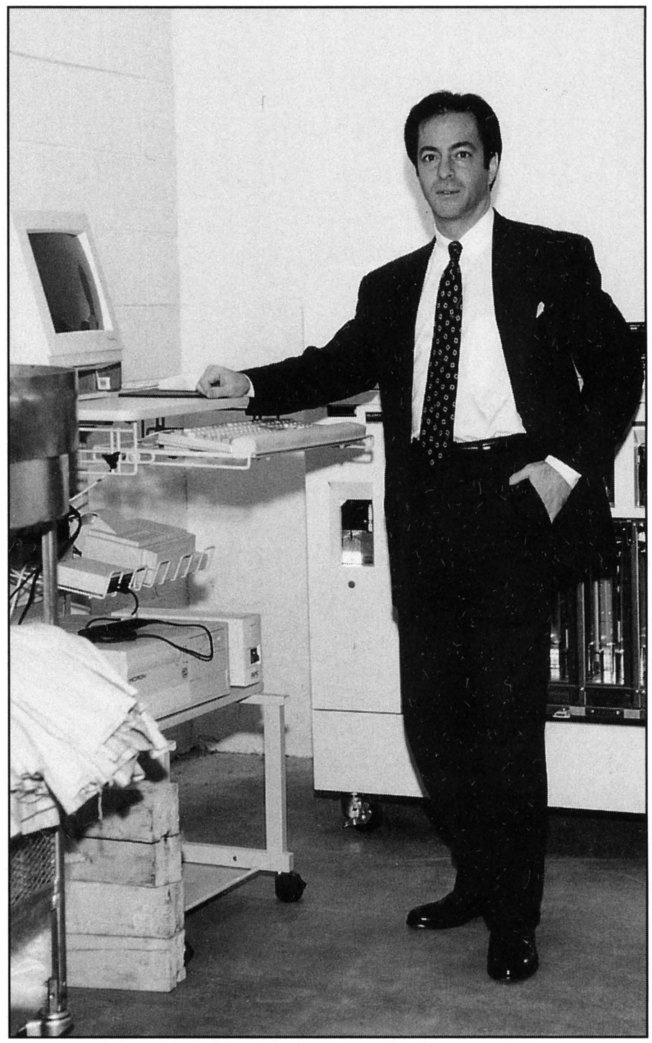

Continental Coin Processors prexy Bruce Korman with his state-of-the-art, computerized coin processing equipment.

No wonder CCP says they've cornered 75% of this kind of business in their existing East Coast sites (Buffalo, Rochester and Albany — all in New York State, obviously). "Companies just don't need to count coin anymore," said CCP president Bruce Korman. "We cut all non-productive overhead that operators can spend counting coin. And, we take away the frustration caused by institutions that don't tailor their coin processing to meet the customers' needs."



A machine in Continental Coin Processor's new Los Angeles plant can process 10,000 coins per minute.

Keep your ear to the ground, because you're gonna be hearing more about these guys. Continental Coin Processors of California is located at 1434 W. 11th St., Los Angeles, CA 90015. Phone is 213/745-2000; fax is 213-745-2005.

BY DOUGLAS KING

PSHOWS '95

COIN-OP WAS A MAJOR ELEMENT OF THIS YEAR'S IAAPA EXPO

[Editor's note: Douglas King is a freelance writer and amusement industry consultant. His company, King/Wheatley Creative Design, is based in California.]

It could be called the greatest show on earth. It has 800 booths, over 20,000 attendees and exhibits of the latest and greatest in game equipment. Step right up, come inside. It will amaze you, it will astound you, it will wear you out: It is the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) annual trade show.

Hundreds of game manufacturers and distributors attended this year's show, held Nov. 1-4 at the Miami Beach Convention Center, and many noted that this was their best show in years. So who was there, what were they showing and why did they have such a good year?

First stop was Sega, who for reasons unknown dropped out of attending last year's show, only to come back strong this year with their showcase of an eight-player linked *Daytona USA*, as well as the new *Desert Tank*, *Wing War* and the staple *R-360*.

Michael Getlan of Amusement Consultants says he likes the *Daytona USA* linked game, because it offers his customers head-to-head competition, but would only purchase one per location. Getlan also likes *Wing War* and says it is doing good business for him.

Those who rode *Daytona USA* commented that they thought it was a good game and great simulation of movement. It was agreed the graphics were more important then the motion. Luckily, *Daytona USA* has both, great graphics and motion.

One rider (Bill Ericson of Manager of Design & Construction for Edison Bros. Mall Entertainment Division) said he liked the fact that it was based on NASCAR instead of Indy/Formula One, and said the game had the feel of a real NASCAR race, with the bumping and grinding, hoods rippling from high speed contact with concrete walls, cones flying from the 205 mph force of a speeding stock car, and dramatic flips and crashes when one slams head-first into the far wall of a tight curve. Man, that's got to hurt!

Sega's main competitor in the racing game category is Namco, who showed off their full-scale version of *Ridge Racer* and linked two-person cabinets of *Ridge Racer 2* and *Ace Driver*. It would seem that Sega has the lead in this race, if the number of show atten-



At the Sega exhibit: Sega's *Daytona USA* draws a crowd; Sega's *Desert Tank*; *Daytona USA* racers, start your engines!; Showgoers enjoying Sega's *Virtua Cop*.

dees standing around watching the action can be a determiner. There was definitely larger crowds cheering on the drivers and waiting for their turn to drive the *Daytona USA.*

All told though, racing games are still extremely popular. What kid doesn't want to blast down the road behind the wheel? (Even if the road and the wheel are "virtual.")

Namco also showed off the new software for *Galaxian 3,* an awesome alien shoot-'em-up adventure which will keep me paying $3-$5 a play, because it's fast, it's full of action with multiple targets and levels, and most of all, it's fun! It may have a big price tag and may not be for every location, but for those that can use this unit, they should.

Other video favorites include Atari/Time Warner Interactive's *T-Mek, Primal Rage* and their licensed title *Cops.* Williams/Bally-Midway showcased *Killer Instinct* and *Cruis'n USA.* Then of course there were the new virtual reality (VR) titles, which I will talk about later.

T-Mek wasn't drawing the largest crowds, but there were always enough people to fill the eight seats during each game. I for one enjoy this game, with its head-to-head competition, numerous choices for players, and fun gameplay.

Cops seemed to be popular and offers players both a driving and shooting game in one cabinet. *Primal Rage* is a fighting game that will have to contend with the brute force of Midway's *Killer Instinct.*

The buzz on *Killer Instinct* is hot, hot, hot, and did I mention hot. *Killer Instinct,* being delivered at the end of November, is considered the one game that everybody needs to have. Getlan says this is his favorite video game on the floor.

Killer Instinct and *Cruis'n USA* always had crowds around them and I don't think it was only because of the lovely model standing nearby. *Cruis'n USA* has been very well received by operators who note that it a driving game that players don't need head-to-head competition to enjoy. Rachel Davies, East Coast Sales Manager, says of *Cruis'n USA:* "It is a game for entertainment centers, not necessarily individual arcades. Operators integrate these bigger pieces to draw traffic. The players will initially come in to play *Cruis'n,* then move on to play other titles."

Okay, now lets talk about VR. For the first time, there were actually some good VR products, aside from the ever present Virtuality. Most impressive was Greystone Technologies' *Cue-View,* a pool simulation game where the player has the point-of-view of the cue ball. Many people were sticking their heads into this game, and with a coin box and dollar-bill acceptor, this should make a nice addition to many Family Entertainment Centers who can pay the hefty price tag.

The gameplay is simple enough. You are the cueball. Line up your shot, push the button and feel yourself being hurled toward the rack of balls. After the break, chose your next shot from a bird's-eye view, then return to your position on the felt and blast away. Players can also control the strength of their shot and the English they wish to use. I must say, the physical dynamics of the balls knocking around were impressive.

Virtuality showcased both their

IAAPA WINNERS

Disney World exec to serve as "parks" 1994-5 president; top awards go to Namco, Coastal, Bob's Space Racers and others

Ted Crowell, VP of Walt Disney World Resort, will serve as president of the International Assn. of Amusement Parks & Attractions (IAAPA) for the next year, the group announced during its 76th annual convention and trade show (Nov. 1-5, 1994). Terming the honor "the highlight of my career," Crowell expressed gratitude for being recognized by his peers. Larry Cochran (Six Flags, New Jersey) will serve as IAAPA vice president. From the coin-op realm, Alter Enterprises' Bill Alter was elected to serve on the IAAPA board, representing the Allied Industry Council.

During the trade show, IAAPA honored many coin-op and amusements firms for outstanding performance in expo display and product innovation. Namco-America took first place for product innovation (arcade and coin-op equipment division) with *Ace Driver,* while their "strategic ally" Evans & Sutherland took first place (also in the product innovation) for best "technology applied to amusements." Bob's Space Racers took a first place award for best display in the general "games" category, and was first again in the displays & sets division. Bob's had a third award, winning first place in the general games division of product innovation. Play-by-Play topped the display awards in the novelties and gifts division, and took another first place award in their category for product innovation, followed by Dan Brechner in the number two slot.

Coastal Amusement Distributors was number one in display of arcade and coin-operated equipment, followed by Machine-O-Matic in second place. Show Biz International won second place honors for best display of show production and entertainment (Iwerks took first). Zamperla took first place among kiddie ride and attraction makers in the product display category. Under product innovation: Skee-Ball took a second place award in the general games division; Smart Industries took first for revenue and admission control devices, and second place for equipment and supplies. Congratulations to all the winners!

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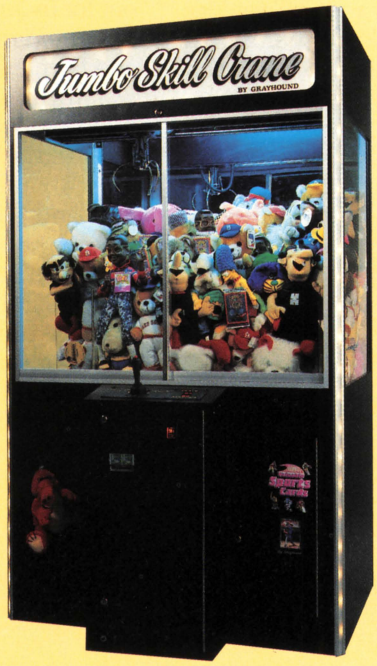

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stand-up and sit-down versions with new software including *Zone Hunters*. This booth, as usual, was always full of lookee-lous and buyers alike. Operators may find it easier to buy units now with the opening of a Dallas manufacturing and distribution office. Also, expect prices to continue to drop sometime in 1995.

So what's the deal with VR? Is it finally ready for FECs or is it still a loss leader? Gary Isner, president of Enchanted Castle, feels that VR will remain a loss leader for at least another 18 months. By then we can expect all new titles from Virtuality and probably a couple of completely new products. As operators, it will be important to keep your options open and be prepared to buy when the prices come down below $20,000.

Had enough of video? So, it seems, has the industry. Everyone agrees that video is losing its strangle-hold on the games industry and is a little lackluster overall. Video game manufacturers will continue to produce game product, and some will stand-out from the rest (especially those high-sticker-priced, top-end games produced by the majors). But overall, the traditional joystick games are slowing down in popularity, worldwide.

Redemption, on the other hand, is growing rapidly. This is due to the increasing growth of FECs in the international market, especially Asia and South/Central America. In the United States, redemption manufacturers are finding that many arcade owners are unfamiliar with the operation of redemption equipment. Well, operators better learn quickly if they are going to stay competitive and retain their customers, not to mention increasing their customer base.

Internationally, redemption still has some hurdles to leap. In Japan, technically redemption equipment is illegal under the Fuei law, which disallows the dispensing of tickets. Luckily, most foresee this changing in the near future.

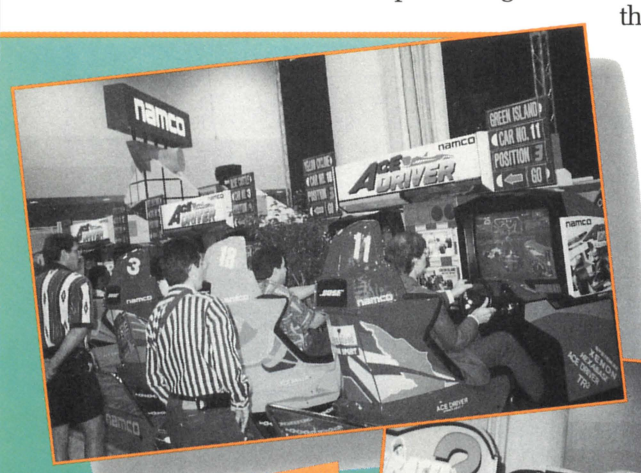
Lori Treankler of Baytek concurs that the '94 IAAPA show was good. "This show was much better than last year for us," she said. "Sales are up as well." Treankler sees new markets opening in Asia and in the U.S. with the continued growth of new FECs.

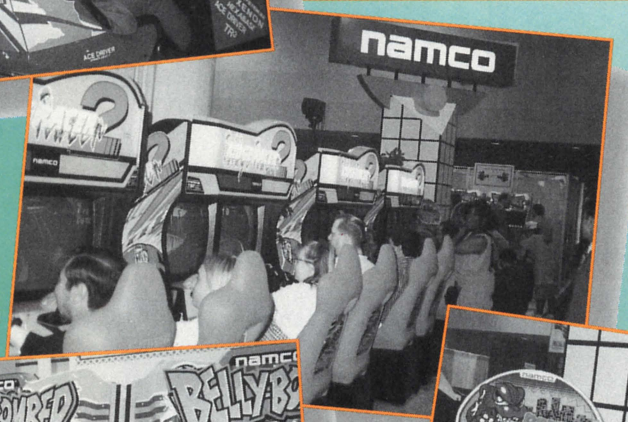
Games that were popular at this year's show included Lazer-Tron's *Flintstones' Ball Toss,* Skee-Ball's *Skee Ball Lighting* (which is also doing well for those who wish to update their original Skee Ball games), Jaleco's *Alley Cats,* and coin pushers in general, which remain a solid backbone for any redemption game operation. Other games to look-out for include *Rage in the Cage* from Betson, *Pirates Gold* from Lazer-Tron and Purple Star's *Blast-Off.*

Judging by the buzz at IAAPA, the industry is definitely evolving from arcade-based entertainment to full-blown Family Entertainment Centers...and with this evolution, operators are relying more heavily on redemption games. For their part, park owners and managers are becoming more sophisticated, and are more knowledgeable and particular about the types of games they are going to buy. Manufacturers and distributors can't pull the wool over park operators' eyes. These folks are looking for



Premier/Gottlieb's L.J. Greene and Pau Wiederaenders flank their company's new *Freddy: A Nightmare on Elm Street* pinball.









At the Namco exhibit: Namco draws crowds with *Ace Driver*; Namco's *Ridge Racer 2*; The Namco "Diet Plan": *Belly Bomber*; Namco redemption piece *Godzilla Wars*.



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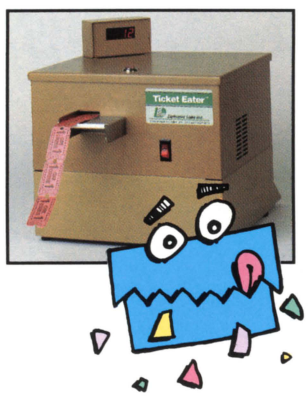

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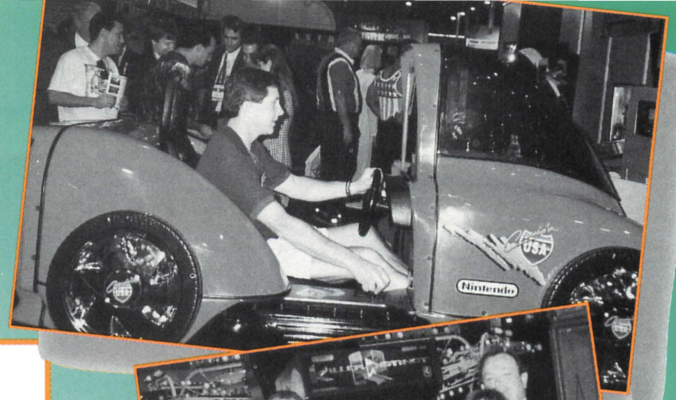
better product in every regard, and now they know what they want... what they want it for...and how much they are willing to pay.

To wrap things up: standard cabinet video games are slowly becoming less important to operators of FECs, who now must look towards larger video simulators and redemption to entertain guests. Linked games are hot as people want to play against their friends and other real opponents, not computers. Namco, Sega and Atari are offering a great selection of both racing and shoot-'em-up titles that will keep players smiling and dropping dollars well into the New Year.

Killer Instinct is the one hot product this year. If you haven't ordered one yet, what are you waiting for?

VR...well what can we say about VR? The games are getting better, the hardware is coming down in cost. Check out *CueView* from Greystone. If it doesn't fit in your mix right now, wait another six months or so for Virtuality to drop its prices again, and then join the fun.



At the Midway exhibit: Midway had a cool cruisin' vehicle with their *Cruis'n USA* driving simulator; Jim Roberts (2nd from left) of James Industries visits Midway's hot new *Killer Instinct* and the firm's Rachel Davies, Christina Woss & Joe Dillon.



Redemption is big. New FECs abroad, as well as in the United States, are pushing the redemption manufacturers harder and harder for great product and you know what? The manufacturers are responding. There is a lot to know about operating redemption equipment, though, and the uninitiated will need to learn quickly how to operate the equipment, at what pay-outs, with what type of prizes and how to maintain the equipment.

In conclusion, (no really I mean it this time) this segment of the games industry is healthy and, as far as redemption is concerned, growing. The growth of FECs in foreign markets is helping many companies have record years. New games (both original titles and licensed titles) are becoming bigger and better...bigger being the operative term.

In the coming months and years, more operators will need to change the focus of their operations from arcade style to full-service family entertainment centers, offering a wide mix of machines and entertainment if they hope to be around in the coming months and years.

Redemption is strong and operators certainly have their choice of equipment, from rolldowns, to coin pushers to ball tosses. You name it and someone is probably manufacturing it.

The IAAPA show was a great success for all concerned—with the exception of most attendees' feet—and many of the games exhibited on the floor will be great money earners over the next months.

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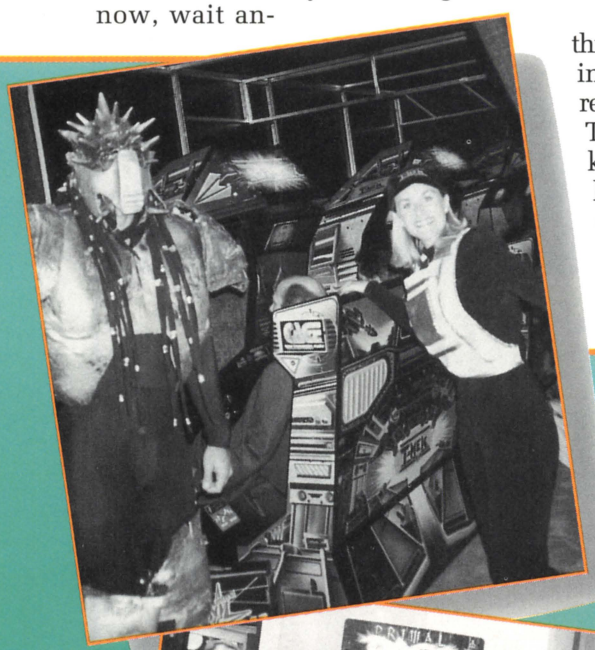
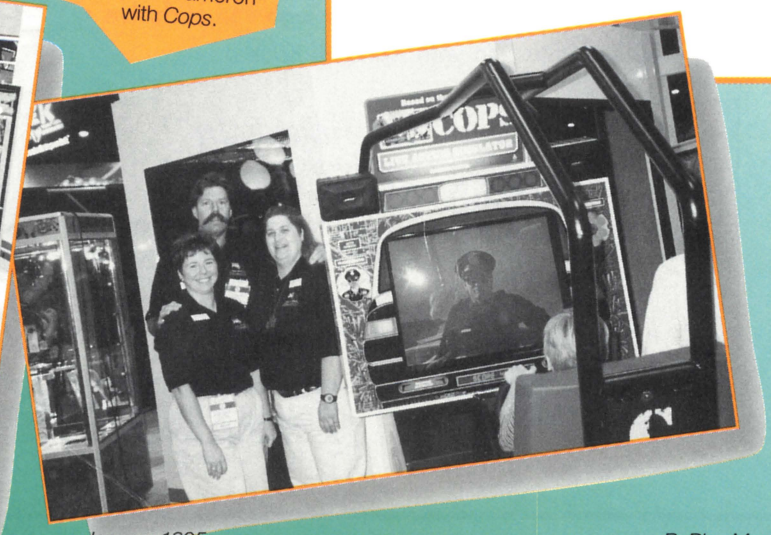
(see additional photos to follow)





At the Atari exhibit: Atari offered beauty and the beast with *T-Mek*; Atari folks with *Primal Rage* (from left): Tom Keil, Carole Cameron and David and Ann Smith; Atari's Jackie Sherman, Paul Shepard and Carole Cameron with *Cops*.



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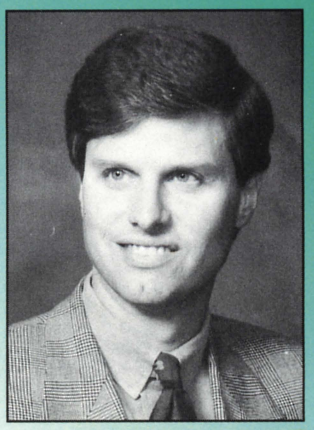

By Randy Chilton

a recent trip to IAAPA, and places beyond, sheds some light on the true nature of the FEC phenomenon

I don't really like the term "FEC." For those of you who have been living on a different planet, FEC stands for family entertainment center. I didn't know what an FEC was, so I asked a large street operator turned FEC operator to define it for me. I learned that an FEC was a location that offered three or more activities under one roof. It was then that I realized that I was an FEC operator! Our arcades are located in large street locations such as theaters, bowling centers and miniature golf courses. These places also may have other activities such as soft play centers, pool rooms, batting cages, restaurants and sports bars, therefore they can now be called FECs.

What I still don't know is where this new trend is going. Will FECs become the latest "here today, gone tomorrow" industry category, which we've seen so many times before? Or are FECs a natural evolution towards bigger and better facilities in which to showcase our products? Whatever the case may be, it's apparent these new industry players are bringing enormous pocketbooks to the table, and distributors are selling equipment to these new operators by the semi-truck load. The orders are huge — it's not unusual to see up to $1,000,000 spent on an installation — and the machines are generally paid for in cash.

If Chilton Vending were to purchase $1,000,000 worth of equipment for one location, our share from that location would need to be $19,231 per week. As a rule, we project to get our initial investment back in the first year, whether it's a large installation



Left: At the Skee-Ball exhibit: Skee-Ball's new *Skee Ball Lightening*; Skee-Ball's (from left) Dennis Keeny, Mark Kane and Jeff Hudson in front of the company's *Operation Vortex*.





Right: Baytek's Lori & Larry Treakler (front), Lisa Basten and Dean Bekeyser (back) with the company's line-up of fine rolldown games.


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or just one jukebox. For the purpose of example, let's assume that all the equipment is on a 50/50 split. That means the location is going to have to gross approximately $40,000 per week, or $2,080,000 per year (it doesn't matter who owns the games, an operator or the location, the costs will be the same for maintenance, reinvestment, etc...)

Are these locations really performing at this level? Perhaps even more? If a location can sustain this volume over a long period of time then this new operator will not only prosper, but we will see this category expand. If not, even the biggest investors will certainly bow out, and probably quicker than small operators would, due to the fact that the major players entering into this industry have professional analysts and accountants measuring every step of the way. If it doesn't make economic sense, they will be gone as quickly as they arrived.

I have been watching these FECs develop for a couple of years now and I'm still not exactly sure what to make of it. The recent IAAPA show in Miami did provide an interesting experience. There were the usual select few games that all street operators will buy. And yes, everyone was complaining about the price of the equipment. (Rather than complain — it won't do any good anyway — an operator can work on increasing his income through increased pricing and then renegotiating commissions on a particular high priced game; then the numbers work out about the same. Keep in mind, FECs are buying these games by the truckload.) There was also the National Amusement Network (NANI), which will be in our locations beginning in 1995. This has more potential for the operator than any product we've ever had the opportunity to legally operate.

But something was different at IAAPA. Many of the same manufacturers were there, but a lot of the games were not the same. They were bigger, better, more exciting, and yes, more expensive. *Much* more expensive. It has been a long time since I have seen attendees at an amusement convention standing in line for up to

Over at the Betson booth (l to r): Betson's Bill Seibert and Neal Rosenberg.

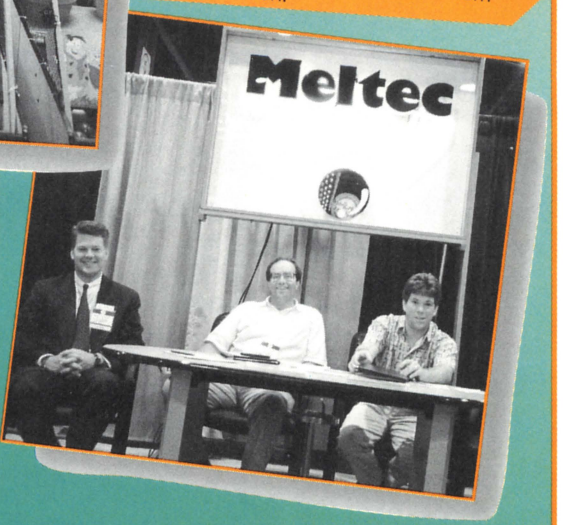


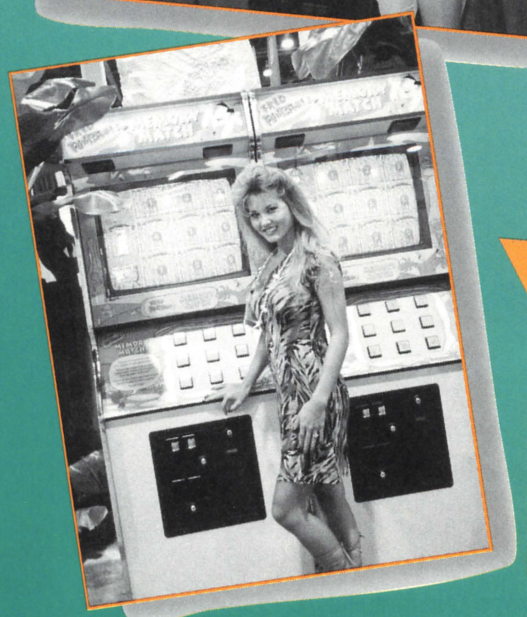
Below: Coin Concept's (l to r) Jeff Lankiewicz, Gary Warner, Art Warner and Mike Pszcola with *Triple Play*.





Below: Meltec's (from left) Brad Danielson, John McEwan and Pat Adams take a break from the action.





Above: Lazer-Tron brought their *Flintstones' Ball Toss* to the show.

Left: How could anyone forget *Fred Flintstone's Memory Match* (Coastal Amusements) with this lovely spokeswoman.



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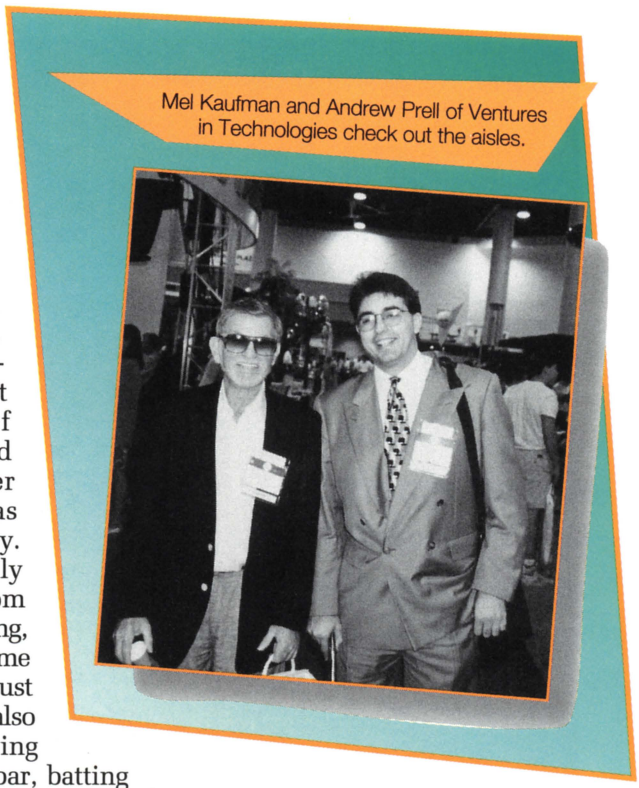
one hour to play a game. Another thing I noticed, the attendees walked a little faster, stood a little taller, and were overall very upbeat about their industry.

After the show, two of us drove to nearby Ft. Lauderdale to see first-hand the Blockbuster Golf and Games facility that I had been hearing about. With Blockbuster's reputation for aggressiveness, I thought I had better pay attention. This may be something I'll have to compete with soon.

It was a nice location. In general, most of the games were simulators, in multiples, probably a total of 60. Instead of quarters or tokens, they had a debit card system. Besides security, the biggest benefit I could see to this was that it allowed them to price games at various levels; some cost 25 cents per play, some 35 cents, 60 cents, and a number of other price levels. The area was well lit and well supervised. (There were three birthday parties going on.) It was a good example of what a well-operated entertainment center should look like. It was quite refreshing, actually. However, there was really nothing in the gameroom that I wasn't already doing, or could be doing with some effort. Nothing magical, just good business sense. We also went to the driving range, snack bar, batting cages, and it was all very first-class. They even had nicer driving-range ball than I was used to.

We are not talking about two industries here. All of us are members of the same entertainment industry. The traditional operators who count their successes in terms of decades, and not months, have enjoyed that longevity by sticking to the fundamentals of the economies of their business, and by providing a valuable service. I'm betting that the street operators who were here when the "megasize" FEC operators arrived will be here long after they are gone. But let's not close our eyes to the warp-speed changes that are occurring today in *our* industry. ◆

All photos by Douglass King.



Mel Kaufman and Andrew Prell of Ventures in Technologies check out the aisles.

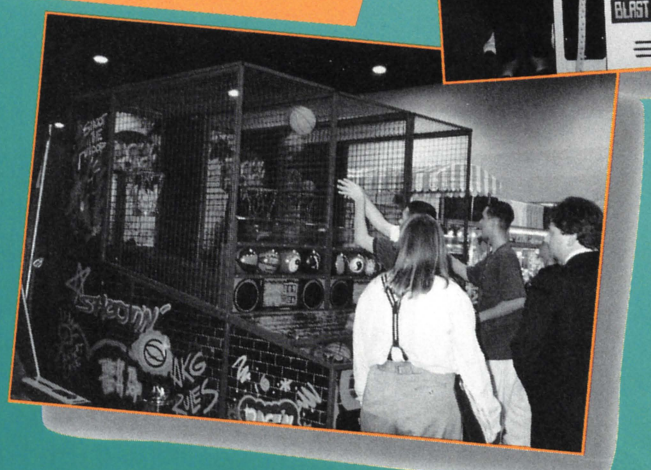
Below:Smart Industries' John Caltrider (l) and Mike Smith with *Big Bertha*.

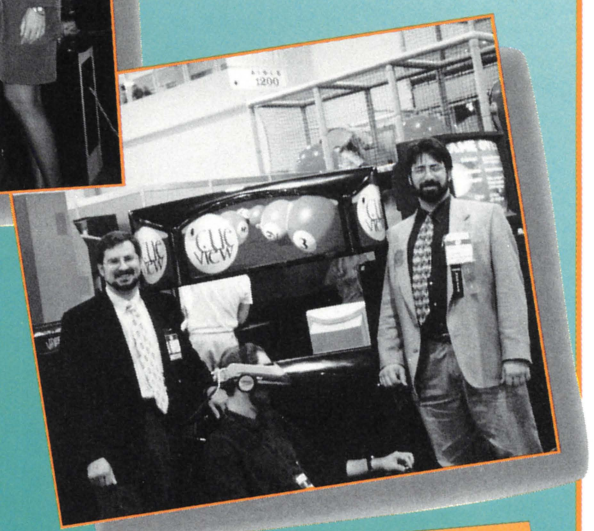




Right: Purple Star's *Blast Off* redemption piece with (from left) Todd Bertram, Nancy Smart and Nancy Hart.

Below:The Fun Merchants (H.Betti Industries) showed their *Rage 'N the Cage* basketball game.





Above: Greystone Technologies' *CueView* and the firm's Bruce Heck (l) with Michael Getlan of Amusement Consultants.

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THE TEMPLE OF DOOM?

BY GLENN ANDERSON

I was working in the shop, cleaning up the old parts. When I got to a stack of video game boards, an old header fell out. It was *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom.* Indiana Jones. Indy.

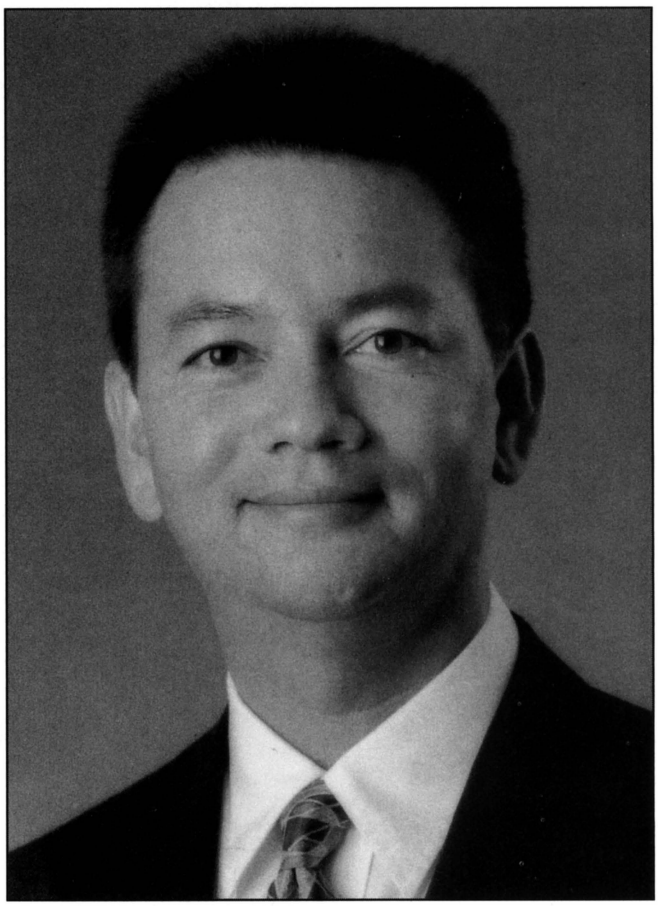
I met Indy once. It was at Honolulu International Airport. He was on his way to Japan to search for more clues. He looked tired; his mind was thousands of miles away. I offered to buy him a drink and we got to talking.

It all started in Indiana. He met some operators on their way home from seminars at Notre Dame. They asked them if he could help them find the mission. The coin-operated amusement mission.

The operators knew there must be a mission, but they did not know where it was, nor did they know what rewards and treasures it had inside. They just knew they had to find it and Indy could help. Thousands of operators were already looking for the mission with little success, so Indy could hardly resist an adventure like this.

Indy had been on the trail for over a year. Chicago, Silicon Valley, Seattle, Las Vegas. He found pieces of the mission but could not put them together. He was confused and still searching.

What he found could confuse anybody. He started with route operators. They said they didn't know what the mission was. The operators had heard rumors they were going out of business soon, but no one would tell them how or why. They thought the distributors might have the answer, but were not telling them because some of the distributors were operators — their competitors. Some operators were also becoming distributors to compete with the distributors competing with their operators...these operators wanted to buy wholesale too. If they couldn't compete, some tried to become manufacturers. Indy was certain the operators did not know the mission.



Operator Glenn Anderson (Microworlds, Inc.) is an AMOA board member as well as president and co-founder of the Amusement and Music Operators of Hawaii. An astute observer of changes in the industry, Glenn has shared his thoughts with *RePlay* readers in previous issues.

So Indy went to the distributors. While some distributors wondered about the mission's existence, others wondered how long they would be in business if there were going to be fewer operators. They thought maybe the manufacturers knew. However, because some manufacturers were becoming operators, the distributors didn't really trust them. When manufacturers operate, they certainly

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ESSAY
GLENN ANDERSON

don't need distributors to distribute the games to themselves. So some distributors distributed, some operated and some tried to manufacture. Indy didn't think the mission was here.

Next, Indy tried the manufacturers. They could not tell him much because of competition. Fear of having another company beat them to the market made the manufacturers very secretive. They knew they had to sell games, but did not tell anyone how many games. Some games were good, some were not. This was a secret too.

As the price of games kept going up, some wondered if this was because the manufacturers were operating. By selling games to their customers/competitors, were they increasing business or increasing competition? If the manufacturers knew anything about the future of operators and distributors, they were not saying. They might have known about the mission of arcades, but they would not talk about this because they had arcades themselves.

So Indy went to the big arcades. Some had amusement equipment owned by operators. Some were wholly owned by operators. Some were owned by distributors. And some arcades were owned by manufacturers. Either no one among them knew the mission, or no one would talk.

Finally, Indy paid a visit to the programmers. They must know who and what they are programming for. Would they know the coin-operated amusement industry mission as well? The programmers were kept in dark rooms in separate cubicles. They worked on games but didn't know who the games were for. They may have been for home game systems or home computers. The programmers just weren't sure.

Indy was confused and I couldn't help him. In fact, he couldn't find anyone who could. But he could not give it up. It was too much of a mystery. When you put all the information together, nothing fit. It just didn't make sense.

Big companies were coming out of the woodwork to announce their missions. Movie studios interacting with games. Cable TV game and interactive channels. Video rental stores downloading games on demand. Movie theaters with simulators and interactive games. Casinos with games. Manufacturers with chains of arcades. More manufacturers opening arcades. Virtual Reality. FECs.

Big business was ready to cash in, and the industry was very impressed with their numbers...and their bankrolls. How could the operators compete with all that?

But there were thousands of operators. No one was sure where, but just because they did not associate didn't mean they weren't out there. Billions of dollars were being spent in coin-op and there were billions more to be spent. Distribution channels were already in place. Somewhere out there were entrepreneurs and managers, and a huge network of resources. There had to be a mission. Someone had to know.

I was startled by a loud noise. That old *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* header had slipped through my fingers and fell to the floor. Indy. He was in Japan by now; in Osaka, Yokohama or Tokyo. Perhaps searching for clues. I wish I knew.

I remember what he told me before he left. He though he knew what the missing piece might be. Trust. Manufacturers and distributors believing in operators. Operators believing in each other. Distributors that distributed. Manufacturers that manufactured. Indy couldn't find trust, he could only find drama. Without trust there is only drama.

I wish I had that mission. I'd like to think I could be a part of that next big arcade. I am part of a great team: The girls in the shop; the guys on the road. Hard working and professional. Waiting for change and willing to learn.

But for now I'm concentrating on being an operator. I'm cleaning the shop and tightening up my books. Getting ready. I'm hoping Indy will find the mission and bring it all together again — for all of us. And if he doesn't, I might be operating pay phones or water cleaners. I might be distributing computers or vacuum cleaners. I'll just keep on working as hard as I can and see what happens. If you need to find me, call AMOH or AMOA. I'll be there. I'm an operator.

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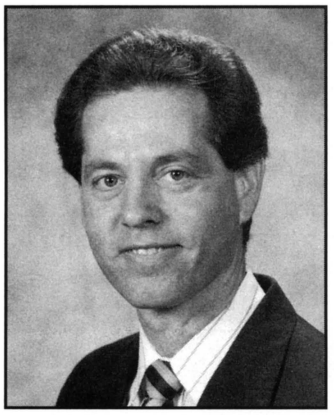
FRANK TALK

BY FRANK SENINSKY



OUR 25TH ANNY PARTY CREATED SURPRISE BENEFITS

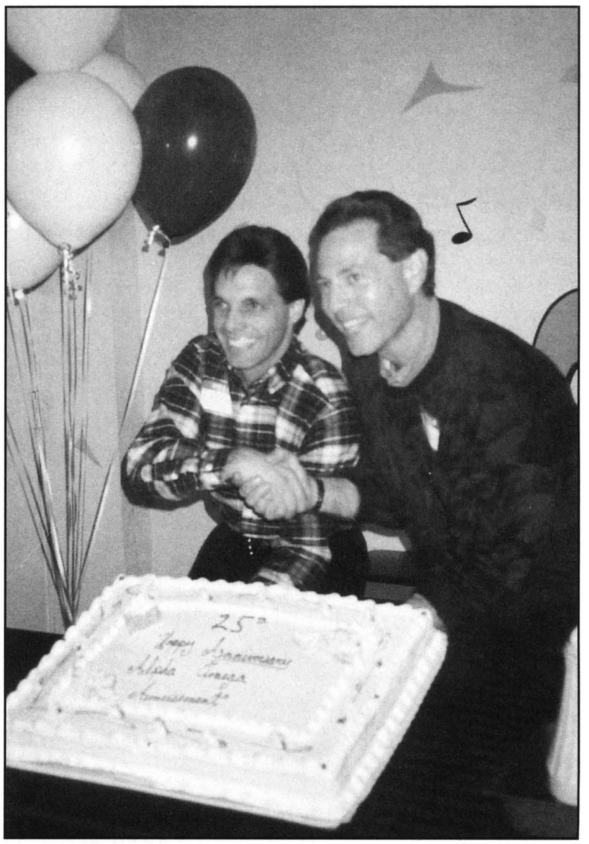
We celebrated our 25th anniversary at Alpha-Omega Amusements on Nov. 15. Naturally, we chose the most fun (and fitting) site for the party: Sports 'N' Games, a family entertainment center. This flagship 35,000 sq. ft. facility in East Hanover, N.J. is owned by Dimitri Miaoulis and Bob Hershey, who picked up the award for America's best-run FEC from *Tourist Attractions and Parks* magazine during Leisurexpo '94.

It was truly a wonderful event. Attending were about 300 people including their families and children. We invited manufacturers, distributors, industry members and friends, along with our own corporate "family" of employees and friends — outside suppliers and team members like lawyers, accountants and bankers.

We kept it low-key (the only ceremony was cutting the cake). We wanted everyone to be able to relax; ride the bumpercars and train ride; experience *Lazer Storm, Bowlingo,* batting cages and two separate softplay units; play the 110 games with their kids; and have fun. It worked beyond our wildest dreams. I was truly surprised when so many non-industry guests came up to me and said, "Until visiting this party I didn't really know what you do. I haven't played with my kids like this in years, and these games were so much fun." Our bank's loan committee said we could ask for a bigger credit line anytime!

Planned as a simple celebration, our party turned into a very successful marketing event for our company and our industry. (Even my parents finally got their first clear idea of what we do! Now, my own family has respect for me — I'm not just a guy who fixes pinballs at colleges anymore.) Maybe more of us should run private, corporate parties around the USA several times a year, so people can really appreciate and understand us.

The industry VIP list included Betson's Bob Geschine and Bob Boals, Skee-Ball's Mark Kane and his crew, WMS's Joe Dillon and Rachel Davies, Coin Concepts' Art and Gary Warner, Coastal's Joe Tunney, Rowe's Joel Friedman, Broadway Arcade's Steve and



Alpha-Omega Amusements' president Frank Seninsky (left) and sec./treas. Joe Camarota congratulate each other on 25 successful years in coin-op.

FRANK TALK

BY FRANK SENINSKY

Sondi Epstein, Fun Expo's Michele Lieberfeld, AMOA's Bill Treger, and many more (including around 20 of our other FEC customers and a dozen prospective FEC customers — a nice surprise). We also received an overwhelming batch of congratulatory letters from Sega, Namco, Atari, and coverage from just about all the trade press.

Toward the end of the evening, someone asked: "What are you going to do, now that you've completed 25 years in this industry?" My first reaction was: "Tomorrow morning, I'm going to start working on the next 25 years." I still feel that way — I look forward to the next 25.

As many know, Alpha-Omega Amusements has been running gamerooms and supplying larger amusement sites in 10 states (mostly around the East Coast) for many years, and in recent times we've expanded to work with major facilities in additional states: Louisiana, Mississippi, Ohio, Missouri, Nevada, New Mexico and North Carolina. We're going to go further with this; as a major part of our future strategy, we plan to create a national, broad-based route. We will be able to service and supply coin-op games to large installations everywhere. More facilities and planned across the country. We have our management and technical teams in place, and we're ready for the challenge!



A-O's gala anniversary event was coordinated by receptionist/secretary Patti Policastro and comptroller/office manager Karen Nagel.



Steve & Sondi Epstein (Broadway Arcade) with Frank Seninsky. These folks have worked closely for years on the ultra-successful PAPA tournament promotion.



Industry leaders came to celebrate. From left, WMS veep Joe Dillon, Betson sales director Bob Boals, WMS rep Rachel Davies, A-O prexy Frank Seninsky & sec./treas. Joe Camarota, Rowe Sr. VP Joel Friedman.



Alpha's business allies and support team came to enjoy the festivities. From right, United Jersey Bank loan officer Jerry Merola, Betson CFO Bob Geschine, Laraine Geschine, and Alpha's attorney Ira Meislik.



Alpha's Silver Anniversary party took place at Sports 'N' Games in E. Hanover, N.J.

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HERE IS A COMPILATION OF THE INDUSTRY'S BIGGER SHOWS IN THE U.S. AND ABROAD

U.S. SHOW DATES:

JANUARY 19-21:
Leisurexpo '95, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. For more information, contact Al Barry at 305/448-7976.

MARCH 23-25:
ACME '95, Reno/Sparks Convention Center, Reno, Nev. For more information, contact William T. Glascow, Inc. at 708/333-9292.

APRIL 20-22:
NAMA Western Convention and Trade Show, Reno/Sparks Convention Center, Reno, Nev. For more information, contact the NAMA at 312/346-0370.

MAY 20-23:
AMOA/AAMA Government Affairs Conference, Washington, D.C. For information, contact the AMOA at 800/937-2662.

JULY 27-29:
Billiard Congress of America Int'l Trade Expo, The Sands Expo & Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. For more information, contact Frank Zdy at 619/278-3877.

SEPTEMBER 21-23:
AMOA Expo '95, New Orleans Convention Center, New Orleans, La. For more information, contact the AMOA at 800/937-2662.

OCTOBER 7-10:
Intl. Family Fun Center & Miniature Golf Show (Fun Expo '95), Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. For more information, call the Fun Expo at 914/993-9200.

NOVEMBER 15-18:
International Assn. of Amusement Parks & Attractions 77th Annual Convention & Trade Show, New Orleans Convention Center, New Orleans, La. For information, contact the IAAPA at 703/836-4800.

INTERNATIONAL SHOW DATES:

JANUARY 25-27:
ATEI show, Earls Court 1, London, England. For more information, contact Peter Rushbridge at 44-71-713-0302 or fax 713-0446.

JANUARY 25-28:
IMA '95, Frankfurt Fairgrounds, Frankfurt, Germany. For information, contact Blenheim Heckmann at 49-211-901-9134 or fax 901-9127.

FEBRUARY 8-12:
Taiwan Amusement Exhibition (TAE '95), CETRA Exhibition Hall, Taipei, Taiwan. For more information, contact Creative International PR Consulting at 886-2-746-6860 or fax 746-6875.

FEBRUARY 21-23:
Blackpool Amusements, Wintergardens, Blackpool, England. For more information, contact First Leisure Corp at 44-253-25252 or fax 751204.

FEBRUARY 22-23:
AOU Show, Makuhari Messe, Chiba, Tokyo, Japan. For details, contact Mr. K. Kirtani at 81-3-3253-5671 or fax 3253-5688.

FEBRUARY 24-26:
Welcome '95, Istanbul, Turkey. For information, contact Knights Management Services at 44-323-44-2747 or fax 84-0014.

MARCH 6-9:
International Leisure Expo, World Trade Centre, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. For more information, contact Trade Shows International at 44-905-613256 or fax 724768.

MARCH 7-8:
AmEx trade show, Green Isle Hotel, Dublin, Ireland. For more information, contact MD Associates at 353-45-21190 or fax 21438.

MARCH 10-12:
Svet Zabavy, Prague, Czech Republic. For more information, contact King s.r.o. at 42-2-249-11681 or fax 249-14249

MARCH 15-17:
Asia Pacific Family Entertainment Centers Conference, Pan Pacific Hotel, Singapore. For details, contact AIC Conferences at 65-222-8550 or fax 226-3264.

MARCH 16-19:
ENADA Primavera, Rimini Trade Fair Centre, Italy. For information, contact Knights Management Services at 44-323-44-2747 or fax 84-0014

MARCH 31- APRIL 2:
Polish Amusement Exhibition, Warsaw Sports Centre, Warsaw, Poland. For more information, contact Eugeniusz Wiecha at 42-3-153-9510 or fax 258-8467.

APRIL 27-29:
5th Annual International Exhibition, Katowice Int'l Fairgrounds, Katowice, Poland. For information, contact George Herman at 818/222-6161 or fax 222-6165.

APRIL 27-30:
Hunia Show '95, Olah Gabor Sports Hall, Debrecen, Hungary. For more information, contact Reka Makray at 36-52-348613 or fax 347562.

MAY 10-12:
FER '95, Pabellon de Cristal, Madrid, Spain. For details, contact FER at 34-3-416-1466 or fax 415-0095.

MAY 11-13:
International Leisure Expo, Athens, Greece. For more information, contact Trade Shows International at 44-905-613256 or 724768.

JUNE 7-8:
Asian Amusement Expo, Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre, Wanchai, Hong Kong. For information, contact William T. Glasgow, Inc. at 708/333-9292 or fax 333-4088.

JULY 19-20:
Exposicion Internacional de Maquinas De Entretenimiento (EXIME), Exhibimex, Mexico City, Mexico. For more information, contact William T. Glasgow, Inc. at 708/333-9292 or fax 333-4088.

SEPTEMBER 13-15:
33rd Amusement Machine Show (JAMMA), Makuhari Messe, Chiba, Tokyo, Japan. For information contact JAMMA at 81-3-3438-2363 or fax 3438-2721.

SEPTEMBER 15-17:
International Leisure Expo, Prague, Czech Republic. For more information, contact Trade Shows International at 44-905-613256 or fax 724768.

OCTOBER 4-6:
Amusexpo, Espace Champerret, Paris, France. For details, contact Sepfi-Technoexpo at 33-1-4756-2108 or fax 4756-2110.

OCTOBER 11-12:
A.L. Previews, Novotei, Hammersmith, London, England. For more information, contact Howard & Wikberg at 44-71-387-2021 or fax 388-9663.



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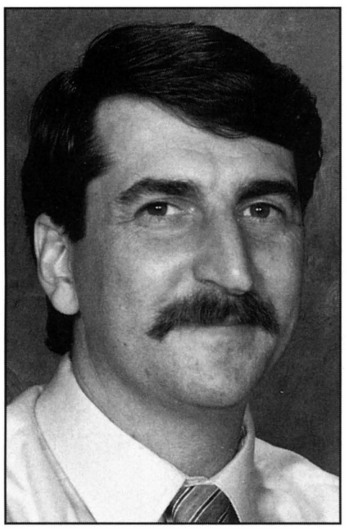
TECHNICAL TIPS

BY RANDY FROMM



OFF WITH ITS HEAD ...OR NECK BOARD, ANYWAY

Part of the Arcade School is a hands-on monitor lab. Students are encouraged to bring in all their bad monitors for free repair. Naturally, we get lots of monitors to work on. Some people bring in boxes of junk monitor chassis to work on. In general, about half are salvageable. The other half are unrepairable; not because we cannot find the cause of the problem but because the chassis has been cannibalized to such a point that it isn't practical to repair it.

I can understand borrowing parts from one monitor to fix another. If you're stuck for a diode or transistor or even a high voltage unit, I see nothing wrong with stealing parts off a good monitor to verify what you need to fix another one. A tag or note affixed to the monitor will let you know what needs to be replaced and a quick call to Wico will bag the parts for subsequent installation.

But what's the deal with the missing neck boards? It happens again and again that students bring in monitor chassis that are missing the neck boards. Most are indiscriminately lopped off with varying lengths of wire hanging off them. There are so many bad points to this practice, I scarcely know where to begin. Perhaps a good place to start is to consider what the neck board does in a monitor and take a look at the various voltages and signals it needs to do it.

GATEWAY TO THE CRT

The monitor's picture tube or CRT (for cathode ray tube) uses an electron gun to create the glowing images on the phosphor covered screen of the tube. The electron gun requires quite a few signals and power supplies to make it work. It is the job of the neck board to couple the signals and power supplies to the electron gun in the picture tube. It is, in a way, the gateway to the electron gun in the CRT. Along the way, the neck board also amplifies the video signals and even protects itself from high voltage charges with tiny, built-in spark gaps that safely discharge accumulations of static electricity to the grounded metal chassis.

To make things simple, here's a list of the signals and supplies that are somehow involved with the monitor's neck board:

Heater Voltage
Screen Voltage
Focus Voltage
Video Output Power Supply
Ground
Red Video Drive Signal
Green Video Drive Signal
Blue Video Drive Signal
Blanking Signal

Heater Voltage — For the electron guns to work at all, they must be heated. The orange glow you can see in the neck of the picture tube is the "heaters" at work. The heaters are powered by a low voltage winding on the flyback transformer in the high voltage unit. Just a few turns of wire are all it takes to get enough voltage. The CRT heaters are designed to work on 6.3 VAC RMS (To put it in perspective, that's the same voltage rating as a #44 lamp.)

Because they are being driven by a pulsed, high frequency source, the heaters are actually being driven by narrow pulses of a somewhat higher amplitude (voltage.) I mention this only because when you measure the heater voltage, you may read up to 10

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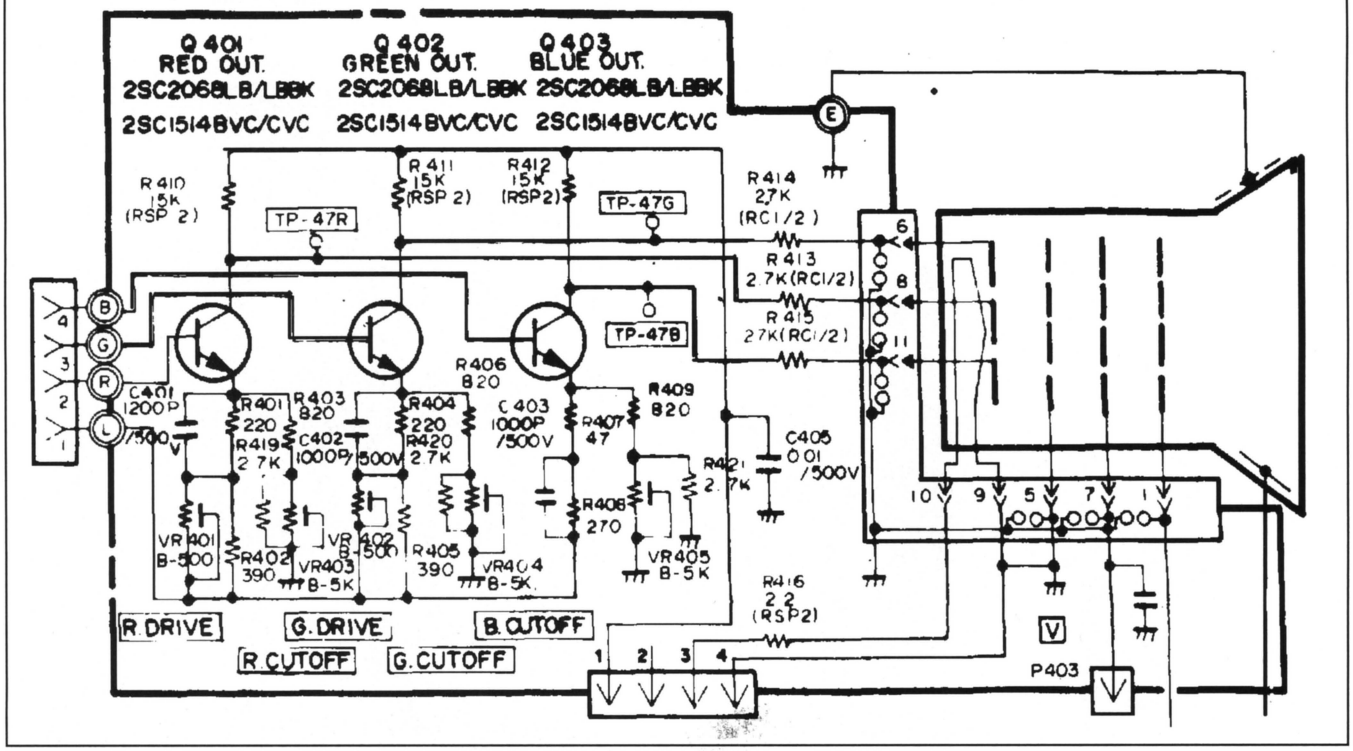
THE WELLS-GARDNER K4900 NECK BOARD



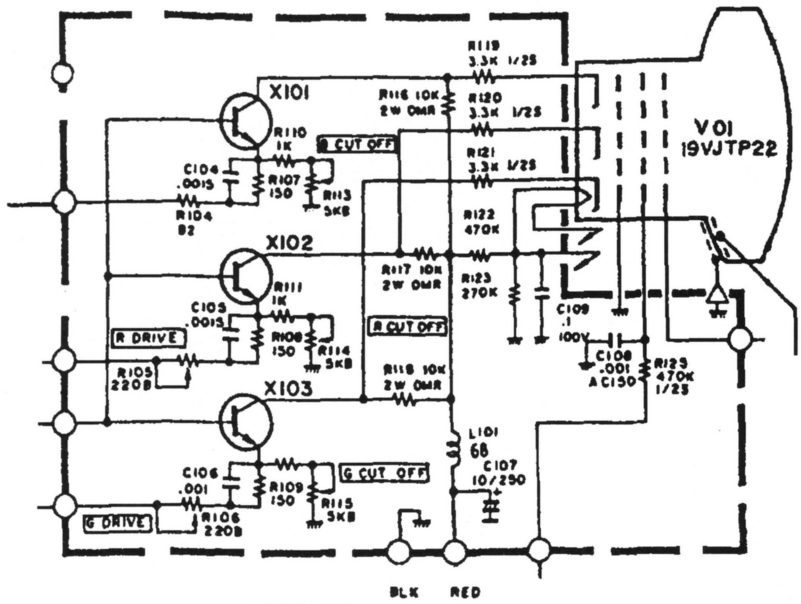
volts AC depending on how your meter responds to the 15,750 hertz operating frequency. If it interests you, try measuring the heater voltage on a few working monitors and see what you get! Remember...the output of a transformer is AC, so be sure to set your meter correctly when you make this measurement.

Screen Voltage — Another part of the electron gun assembly in the picture tube is called the "screen grid." It's also known as grid #2 or "G2." The screen voltage determines the brightness of the picture; the higher the voltage, the brighter the picture. The screen voltage comes from a winding on the flyback and is rectified within the high voltage unit by a special diode. You cannot see this diode as it is sealed with the flyback in epoxy plastic. The screen voltage is adjustable (generally around +200 VDC - +900 VDC) by a high voltage potentiometer unit that is usually built-in to the high voltage unit.

Focus Voltage — The focus voltage is also adjustable (as high as +3 KVDC - +9 KVDC.) Like the screen voltage, it is derived from a flyback high voltage winding and diode combination.

Video Output Power Supply — The three, video output transistors often get their power from a flyback derived power supply that is somewhat higher in voltage than the B+. For example, a power supply of +175 VDC to +190 VDC is not uncommon. In other cases (most notably, Wells-Gardner's K7000 series) the video outputs use the B+ of +123 VDC. As a technical note, this power supply does not so much "power" the three video output stages but rather biases the "cutoff;" the level at which the electron guns cease to emit sufficient electrons to create a discernible picture on the screen. It is when the output transistors are fully saturated (fully turned on) that the cathode voltage is at its lowest and the electron gun is fully energized. For example, a simple test of an electron gun can be performed by ground-

THE ELECTROHOME G07 NECK BOARD



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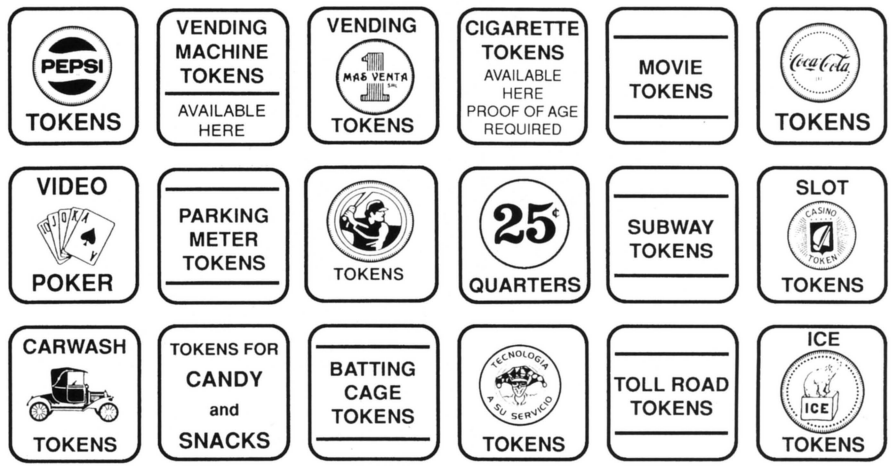

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ing the collector (the metal tab) of the video output transistor. The gun will be fully turned on when the cathode voltage is ZERO!

Ground — Ground is ground. Do I really have to go any further here?

Red, Green and Blue Video Drive Signal — After being processed by transistors and/or an integrated circuit on the main chassis, the three video drive signals are carried by wires to the neck board where we find the three video output transistors. There is one video output transistor for each color in most monitors. The video output transistors control the cathodes of the electron gun assembly.

Blanking — All three electron guns are turned off or "blanked" during the retrace intervals. Blanking is accomplished by obtaining samples of the horizontal and vertical deflection signals, and capacitively coupling them to a blanking transistor or to a video amplifier integrated circuit. In some cases, the amplified blanking signal is used to control the three video output transistors directly. In other designs (such as the K7000) the blanking signal simply controls the video IC, assuring that the video drive signal to the three output transistors is effectively shut down during retrace.

NOT ALL ARE CREATED EQUAL

"So, if all neck boards require the same signals, can I swap neck boards between monitors? "

First of all, why would you want to? I've worked on lots of monitors and it has never occurred to me, even once, to swap a neck board as part of troubleshooting. Naturally, I'm not talking about replacing a smashed neck board with one of the same type. I'm talking about swapping neck boards because you can't figure out if the problem is in the neck board or on the main chassis (or CRT.) Some people cut the neck board off a good monitor, do the same with the bad monitor and splice the wires together to see what they get. While this does serve to narrow down the problem, it's a brute force method that is unnecessary. Swapping wires between red, green and blue can easily isolate video problems. Other faults can be determined in additional simple ways as well.

The practice of cutting and splicing the wires is especially bad, as the focus and screen wires are usually cut along with the others. These wires carry a lot of voltage and are specially insulated. In fact, the focus wire connects to a specially insulated area of the CRT socket where it cannot arc to anything else (including you!) You cannot cut and splice these wires and expect ordinary black electrical tape to provide adequate insulation.

As to exchanging the neck board from one type of monitor with that of another, I can't believe anyone would presume that it would work, but I see it again and again at the Arcade School. Someone will have a GO7 chassis with a Wells-Gardner neck board. How they figured out which wire to connect to where I don't know. You would think anyone smart

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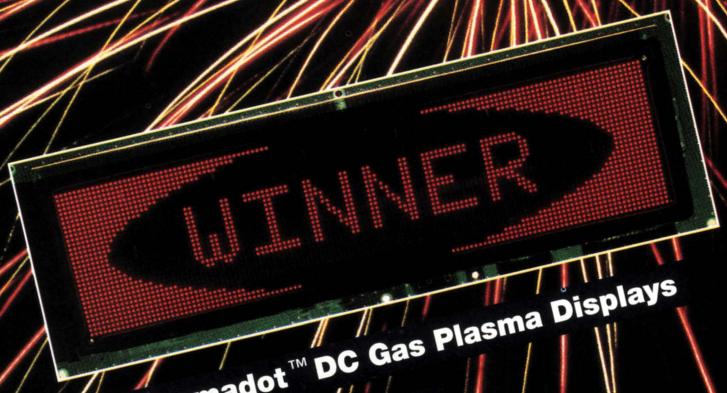

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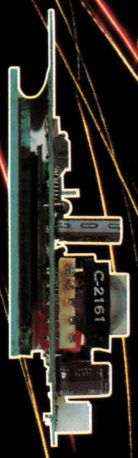



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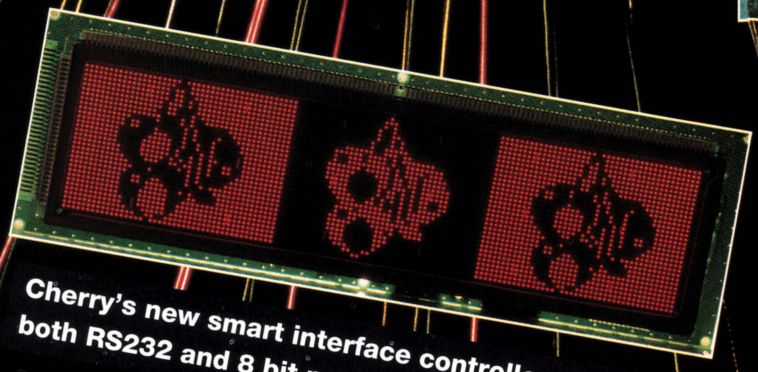

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enough to transplant a neck board would be smart enough to know that you can't actually do it!

As an example of incompatibility, let's take a look at two, common monitor types (Electrohome GO7 and Wells-Gardner K4900) and see how they differ. Specifically, there is one main point of incompatibility; the blanking signal and how it controls the three video output transistors.

The GO7 uses a simple and obvious method for blanking. The video output transistors are configured as "common-base" amplifiers. Instead of coupling the video drive signal to the base of the output transistor (as you do with the "common-emitter" amplifier; the most common form) the video drive is coupled to the emitter instead. Notice that all three of the video output transistor base leads are tied together and connected to the collector of X304, the blanking transistor. The blanking transistor is a ground switch that activates during the retrace times. Naturally, this grounds the base leads of all three video output transistors, effectively shutting off the transistors regardless of what the video drive signal is doing.

Now let's examine the K4900. In this case, each video drive signal is clearly coupled directly to the base of the associated video output transistor. This is a common-emitter amplifier. How can we turn off all three electron guns now? Notice that all of the emitter leads are common to a signal line marked "L" for "luminance." Luminance means brightness. On Wells-Gardner monitors, the control for this is known as "black level." To turn off all three electron guns, blanking transistor Q202 is turned off and the voltage at "L" is allowed to rise so that the emitter voltage at each of the output transistors is no longer .7 volts lower than the base voltage. This drives the transistors into cutoff, shutting down the electron guns.

Clearly, these are two radically different ways to accomplish the same blanking function. Just as apparent is the fact that these neck boards cannot be compatible.

If you want to learn more about monitor repair, you will want to attend this year's ACME show. It will be held in Reno, Nevada. The dates are March 23-25, 1995. This years ACME show is going to include an exciting new program geared expressly for technicians and other coin-op service personnel. TechFest at ACME '95 will present a stimulating new program of lectures, presentations, demonstrations, displays, PCB repair tools and supplies, an employment "Job Shop", multiple video theatres presenting non-stop tech training films and much more! I will be there demonstrating monitor troubleshooting techniques as well.

For more information about ACME, contact William T. Glasgow and Associates at 708/333-9292. Tell 'em Randy Fromm sent you. It doesn't cost much to attend and you can come away with a great deal of technical training and information in just three days.

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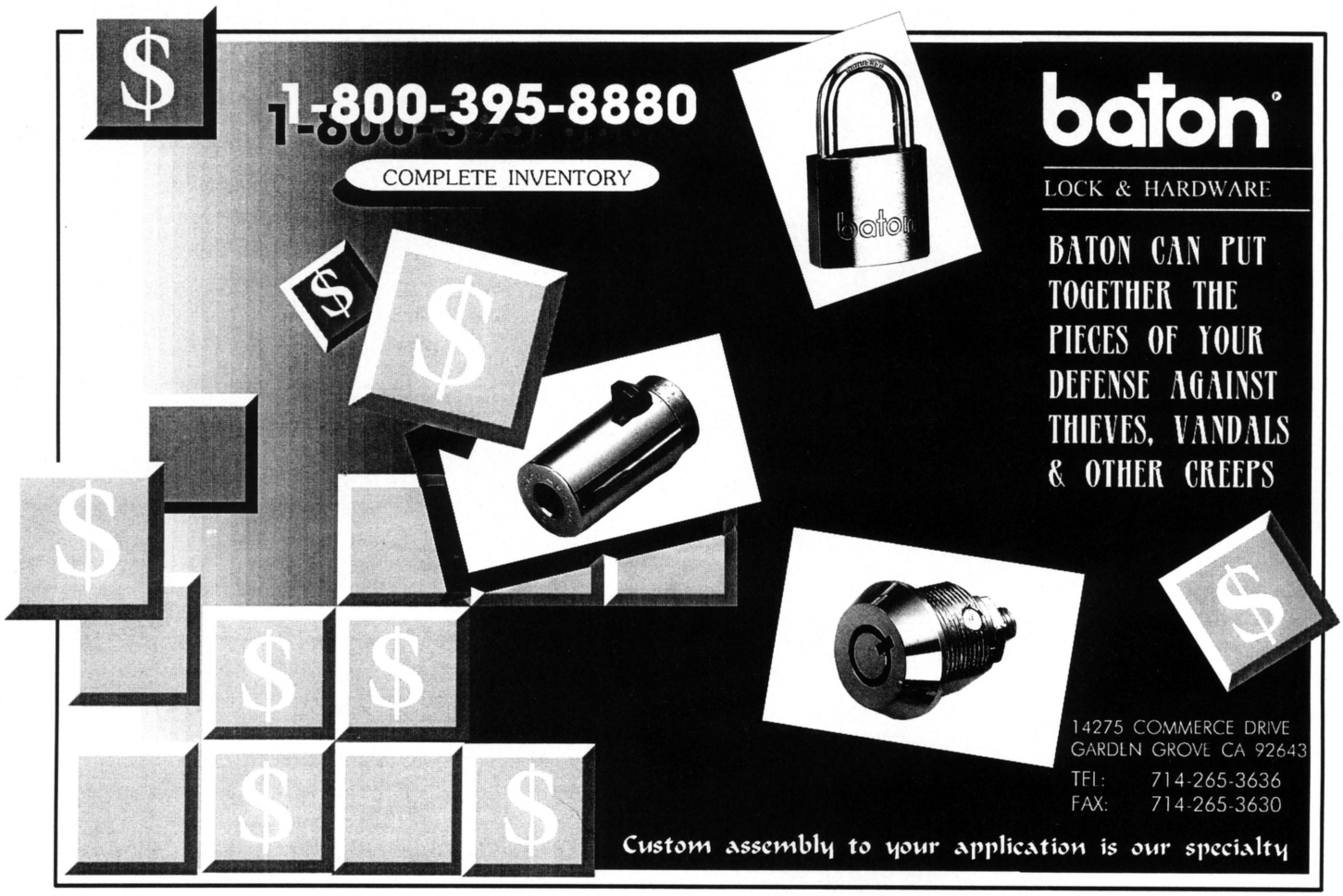


COVER STORY



Getting Ready to Launch

GAMESTAR'S MASSIVE MANUFACTURING PLANT GEARS UP TO DESIGN & BUILD PINBALL, REDEMPTION, AND POSSIBLY EVEN VIDEO; FORMER WILLIAMS PREXY MIKE STROLL IS NEW GS PRESIDENT

Touring GameStar's new 100,000 sq. ft. factory in Arlington Heights, Ill. is like visiting a busy shipyard during the halcyon days of the super ocean liners. The structure is up, and the builders are merrily hammering, riveting, and welding away. A picked crew is carefully charting the course for her maiden voyage. By all indications, she's going to be a big, beautiful ship.

When GameStar steams into port at ACME '95 in a couple of months, she'll carry their second redemption game; along with a prototype of their first pinball — if everything goes according to schedule; and maybe some other surprises. Their first redemption game was *Goofy Hoops,* marketed under the Romstar label by people like Rene Lopez and Tim Jackson, who are now with GameStar.

And, GameStar will have a new captain at the helm: former Williams skipper Mike Stroll is back in the industry after ten years. He's taking control of the new organization from Takahito Yasuki, who is now directing all of his energies once again to Romstar. Stroll and the rest of the crew are expected to give this Japanese-owned company a distinctly American style and direction, both in terms of product and marketing.

Like those luxury liners of old, GameStar's watchwords will be "excitement," "quality" and "service," says VP Rene Lopez, who helped guide the birth of the new firm. "We recognize that our customers will demand the highest standards from us as a new pinball manufacturing company to arrive on today's market," Rene said. "We know our quality must be the best in the industry, and we're taking all the steps to assure

GameStar's VP Rene Lopez and sales director Tim Jackson in front of the 100,000-sq.-ft. Chicagoland facility that's about to start building pinballs.

that this will be so. Our first pinball will undergo every needed procedure to ensure quality and reliability."

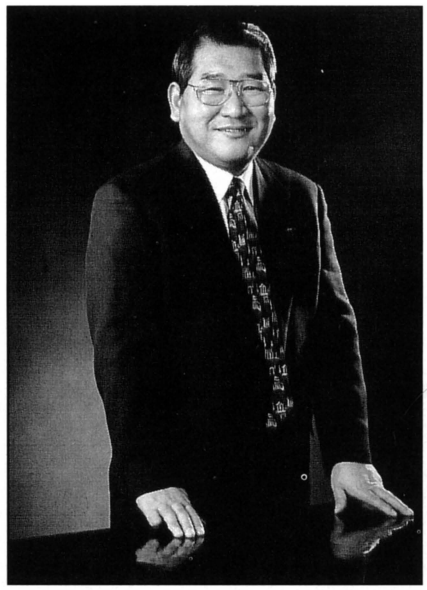
GameStar's debut pinball machine will probably bear the name *Magic*. At presstime, the GameStar executives were reluctant to specify the exact release date. Reason being, they are ultra-sensitive to the operators' so-often-heard complaints about breakdowns in new pins out of the crate. "We do not want to hear those complaints!" Lopez flatly stated.

GameStar's intent is to release three pins during its first fiscal year. In the one year (plus) time that GameStar has been getting its plant and personnel together, the new company has traveled a challenging road to get to this point. Setting up a brand-new pinball factory is about as hard as creating, say, a new automobile plant from scratch. As previously reported, GameStar is financed chiefly by Kenzo Tsujimoto's Capcom Ltd. (Japan), with minority ownership by Yasuki's Romstar (as many trade people know, there have been cordial relations between the two Japanese trade figures for many years).

GameStar was actually "born" a couple of years ago when Yasuki suggested the purchase of an existing pinball company...or, failing that, the creation of a single pinball "team." Either way, Yasuki suggested, today's market requires a serious in-house commitment to R&D. Marketing boutiques that simply license and represent product — which had largely been Romstar's mission — were having increasingly tough times, he pointed out.

A good case can be made for in-house R&D, but why another pinball factory? "Pinball is one product you can't send electronically over a wire in multimedia, or play on a home system," Rene Lopez pointed out. "It is a classic coin-op product that endures. Cycles of pinball popularity go up and down, but it always remains a staple...and, it translates very well into the world market. Recent flippers have almost priced themselves out of the average street location. We think GameStar can find and build a solid market for our pins, by offering product at a very competitive price that's aimed right at the street. And," Rene declared, "we won't flood the market by overbuilding."

Capcom's Tsujimoto is man of vision, ambition, and plenty of resources. He quickly approved the pinball idea, just as he has pursued various other big new projects in recent times. The most obvious example was financing and co-producing *Street Fighter: the Movie* — the vidgame version of which appears on this month's cover. (This game should be built early in 1995, considering that the movie broke during the Christmas season, but we're not sure when the coin-op will actually be released.)



Capcom Chairman KENZO TSUJIMOTO



The second redemption unit from GameStar was tested under the name "Fortune Falls," but this vertical pusher could be actually sold under a different title.

In the course of events, Tsujimoto eventually agreed to go beyond a single design team to create a full-blown new company with pinball as its lead product, backed by complete manufacturing facilities. The Romstar team of Yasuki, Lopez and sales pro Tim Jackson got to work setting up the new firm, while continuing Romstar's mission of representing Capcom product in Latin America.

The fledgling firm was named "GameStar" to signal its U.S. identity. After all, if they were going to build pinballs, they would have to be based in Chicago, where the flipper people, components and history are. Accordingly, GameStar grabbed a large existing facility in Chicagoland and began modifications (everything from employee lunchrooms, to a second floor in one section to add more square footage).

GameStar recruited three "stars" from Williams/Bally-Midway: Mark Ritchie is GameStar's director of engineering. Python Angelo is a lead designer. And Bill Pfutzenreuter is a key software designer. A new pinball talent, onetime operator Bryan Hansen, rounded out the team.

WMS filed suit, claiming their former personnel's contracts precluded divulging any company trade secrets for one year. GameStar's response: we are being extremely careful to design our own hardware systems, components and software from the ground up...with plenty of original patents to boot. GameStar was obliged to spend considerable time and resources on these issues for a while, but Lopez believes this process actually strengthened their position by forcing them to "go the extra mile" in devising totally new proprietary systems, obtaining patents, and setting up proper security. The legal front has quieted down for now.

While crafting its pinball facilities, GameStar also brought in some income by producing last year's successful redemption game, *Goofy Hoops*. This novelty basketball-themed item was represented by Romstar — its last U.S. sales and marketing job, in fact. This kept GameStar's profile a bit lower as it continued preparations, but also got the designers' feet wet and kept Rene and Tim solidly in the sales loop with distributors.

"This business changes every five minutes," Tim pointed out.



The GameStar Sales & Service team – Tim Jackson, Ed Schmidt (in front) and Frank Lowney, Daryl Williams and Bill Smyczynski.



The administrative staff of GameStar – Purchasing: Glen Dalles, Vince Massei, Larry Siuda, Lisa Brown & Katie Goldberg; Human Resources: Sheryl Witt & Ann Ruzanski; Accounting: Kumiko Tessin, Steve Oliver, Gary Splittstoesser& Joe Menolaschino (not pictured, Jackie Green and Karen Tobin).

"Distributors know that, and they require manufacturers' representatives to stay up to speed, every second. They also want us to stay in touch at all times. We have done that, week in and week out...both when we had product to sell, and when we didn't.

"Also," said Tim, "since GameStar provided service for *Goofy Hoops,* distributors have already enjoyed a positive experience with the new company. So although many of the strongest distributors already have exclusive pinball commitments for the immediate future, we already have made some good progress in establishing GameStar's dealer relationships, and believe various factors are going to allow us to broaden and deepen those relationships in the future."

While still wearing their "Romstar" hats, Tim and Rene did their usual bang-up sales job on *Goofy Hoops.* In a few months, they moved as many units as other redemption games sell in a year (or more).

But it's pinball that really anchors GameStar's unique status, as walking through the new factory quickly shows. Forget about dark rabbit-holes cluttered with drafting tables and smudged blueprints. GameStar boasts row after row (after row after row) of gleaming CAD/CAM computers where designers, mechanical engineers and electrical engineers are already busy creating, modifying and revising their sophisticated designs with the touch of a button. Chairman Tsujimoto's sizable investment in GameStar is quite evident in these linked terminals. It seems the elements are in place for smooth sailing.

Capcom's investment is also clearly visible in the sound department. Here, a team of talented musicians and sound effects artists are busy using state-of-the-art digital sound boards, computers, and other electronic equipment to compose scores and sounds for the first few pinball titles. A modern digital recording studio is already operating as well, allowing the team to record voice cues and dialog. The resulting music and voice tracks don't sound like they've been filtered through a computer, either — they have the clean, "live" quality of a CD recording. Flipper fans have something to look forward to!

At this writing (mid December), GameStar's accounting department and sales and marketing department were staffed with only a skeleton crew. Large complexes of desks, phones and offices testify to GameStar's plans to get up to full strength — very quickly — then sell and market the heck out of its product line.

Only one small production line was physically up and running in the new GameStar factory as we went to press; it was for redemption. As mentioned, GameStar will bring its second-ever redemption title to ACME. The working title on test was *Fortune Falls.* It's a sort of "vertical pusher" in an upright-style cabinet. A coin-shooter element is also incorporated, as players use a large "spoon" to catapult a token at the trays of moving coins.

"It's got that come-and-get-me feeling that hundreds of coins are just about to spill into the hopper,"



The Creative Group: Mary Fasone, Hugh Van Zanten, Manny DeLa Torriente, Scott Pikulski, Jeff Powell, Python Anghelo and Jeff Busch (not pictured: Paul Mazur).



The Engineering staff of GameStar

But running GameStar is clearly a full time job by itself, demanding a hands-on leader who is physically present on a daily basis...who makes decisions, establishes policy and procedures, guides the overall strategy of the company, etc. At presstime, Mike Stroll was in the process of moving to Chicago from his Florida home. Company execs were optimistic that the man who took charge of Williams Electronics in the late 1970s, will also bring discipline and regularity to GameStar, establishing an orderly and supportive environment where these creative and hardworking folks can do their best.

In all, GameStar is a bold, ambitious response to a fast-changing market. Backed by industry professionals at every level, they're ready to take the risk of believing in themselves and their industry...and putting their money where their mouths are.

"I firmly believe the industry needs something new," Rene Lopez said. "We need exciting product from companies that are fully committed to coin-op. Operators are looking for something fresh and different to wake up the players. They are ready to consider new sources of product, new manufacturers — as long as those sources perform at the high levels required to please today's demanding players.

"Despite all the distractions — like home games, theme parks and the information superhighway," Rene continued, "good street operators and arcades can still make a lot of money if they are given creative, quality product at reasonable prices. Focusing on coin-op, respecting the operators and distributors, and delivering quality, has been the winning formula in the past. We have full faith that this approach continues to be a winner. That's our goal at GameStar."

GameStar is located at 3311 No. Kennicott, Arlington Heights, IL 60004. Phone is 708/797-6100, fax is 708-797-6219.

smiled Director of Engineering Mark Ritchie. "This game is performingly nicely — and reliably — on tests in a local arcade."

Romstar, now located in the same San Jose, Calif. building as Capcom USA, still represents Capcom's product South of the Border, and Yasuki still works out of that California office as he has all along. He still travels extensively to meet those responsibilities, as he has all along.

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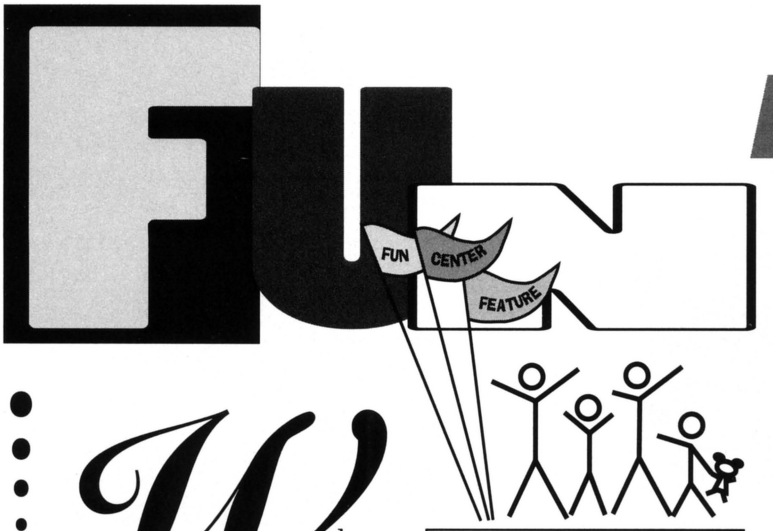
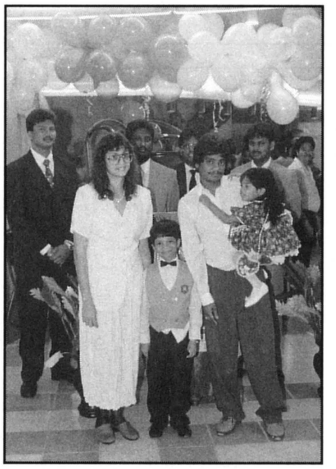


Trinidad and Tobago's first lady gives her blessing as Funcity brings redemption games to Caribbean isles

When was the last time HillaryClinton showed up for the dedication of a new arcade? That's the equivalent of the triumph enjoyed by Funcity Entertainment Centers Ltd. on Nov. 13, 1994. Cutting the ribbon at the grand opening of their new 8,000 sq. ft. arcade was Mrs. Noor M. Hassanali, wife of the president of the Island Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

The occasion was historic for other reasons, as well: this was the first-ever introduction of redemption games to the country. Funcity's mall-based site caters to a broad demographic base, from toddlers to seniors. (It even offers a day-care facility so parents can drop off the littlest kids while they shop at other mall stores.) Spacious layout, appealing design and a friendly staff complete the package.

"We believe we have proven ourselves the leaders in the family entertainment industry in the Caribbean," declared Funcity execs. The company began on a shoestring six years ago, with a half-dozen videos at a single location. Today, Funcity boasts over 30 locations and hundreds of games in Trinidad alone. What's the secret of their success? "Dedication, commitment and teamwork," said Funcity's founder and managing director, Anthony Bhopa.



The new Funcity center is a family place, and it's pretty much family-run and -owned as well. Front row: Simone and Anthony Bhopa with their kids Hollis & Camille; back row (l-r) is marketing mgr. Joseph Pooran, admin. dir. Sylvester Williams, GM Mushtag Ali and ops mgr. Ricardo Cedeno.

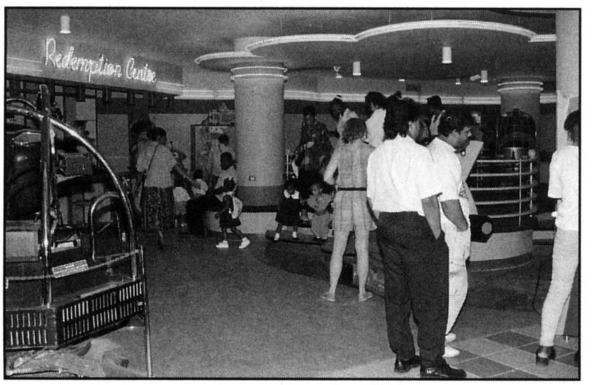


Balloons, flowers, games...and the First Lady of Trinidad and Tobago. That's Mrs. Noor M. Hassanali, wife of the president of the Island Republic, speaking at the new center's grand opening.

It was hard to tell which was bigger on the Nov. 13 opening: the VIP guest list, or the smiles on the Funcity team's faces. In addition to Mrs. Hassanali, the event was attended by prominent businessmen, local media, and members of the Inter Religious Organization of Trinidad and Tobago. "This in itself is a sign of better things to come," said Funcity marketing manager Joseph Pooran.

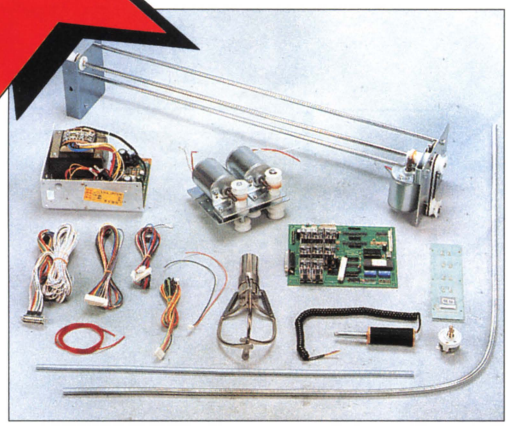
Funcity execs thanked three industry friends for their loyalty, honest support and generosity in helping guide and grow the business. These three friends are Sun Enterprises' Rafael Cambo, James Industries' Gabriel Alba, and Brady Distributing's Jeff Ryan. "We wouldn't be where we are today without these remarkable individuals," declared Tony Bhopa. "Other industry members can gain great value from their insights and assistance."

For the future, we understand Funcity has already identified three new Trinidad locations for similar fun centers. At presstime, negotiations were nearly complete for a few more Caribbean Island sites, where similar arcades are planned.



Pastel colors, neon accent lighting and spacious, multilevel floor layout create a relaxed, entertaining atmosphere for families at the Funcity center. Notice all the moms and preschoolers!

NEW



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SPOTLIGHT
SPECIAL

MARY HITS BULLSEYE

In under three weeks, operator Mary Lavine of Madison, Wisc. replaced 19 location-owned pool tables with her own units

It would take a lot of gumption for any operator to walk up to a bar owner and try to sell him on the idea of replacing the perfectly good pool table that he already owns outright, with an operator-owned table...along with the understanding that all further revenues would be shared. That's just what Madison, Wisc.-based operator Mary Lavine did. Her success story is one that every operator should hear.

It all began with fairly large investment. Mary, president and owner of 11-year-old Bullseye Inc., went out and bought 19 brand new pool tables. And these weren't just ordinary tables, but the new (more expensive) Valley *Image Series* tables. She then proceeded to visit almost every bar in or around town that owned and operated their own pool table. When she walked out of last one, she had replaced 19 location-owned tables with her own. And last we heard, Mary said she had "a good idea" where the remaining six will go.

No, she didn't promise them the



Mary Lavine, president & owner of Bullseye Inc. in Madison, Wisc. with some of the 19 new tables she used to replace location-owned tables.



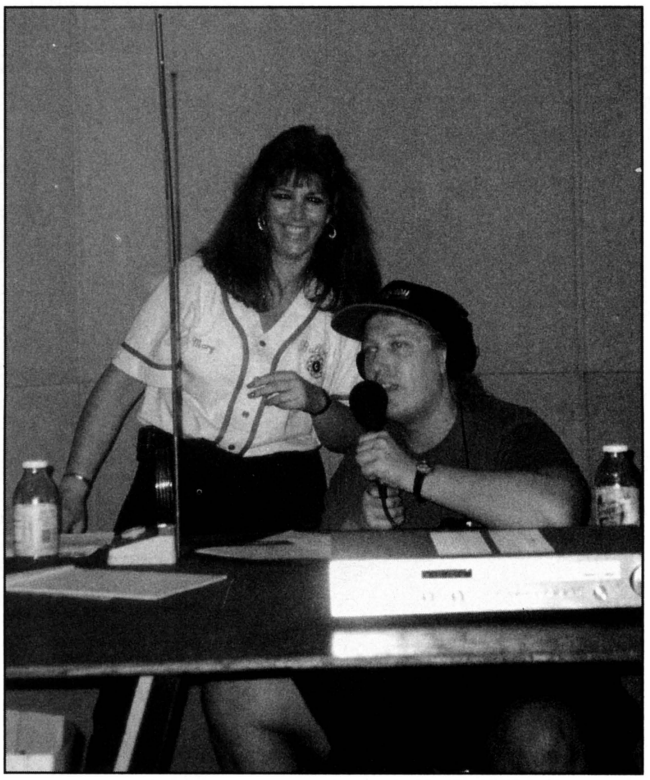
Mary's Bullseye trucks cover all her locations in the seven-county area.

world and give them an outrageous split. She did give an exceptional table and promised to back them up with top maintenance, but no other concessions were made. She maintained the same 50/50 split she has with most all of her approximately 200 other locations in the seven-county area where she operates some 400 tables.

"I can't say it was easy. But to be truthful, it wasn't that hard either," said Mary, who has been up against her share of challenges in the past and didn't see this one as that much different. "I started out as a little Jewish girl going to Catholic school...I've always bucked the system," she laughed.

She did it — converted locations from a 100% take of the cash box to 50% — by explaining to them that they'd make more money her way. "First, I showed them the beautiful new table they could have in their establishment if they allowed me to install it," Mary explained. "I dazzled them with one of the new 'upscale' Valley models, the Traditional model from their *Image Series."* She also agreed to buy their current table ("typically a little tattered") at a fair price, which she planned to refurbish and put back into service.

Then she showed the establishment owners her projections for the level of income she would generate by raising the price per play to 25 cents. She further convinced owners that this process would be fairly painless for players. "Everybody knows that you pay a little more to rent a nicer car," she told them. "It's not much different."



Mary pulls out all the stops when it comes to tournament promotions. She's pictured here with a popular local radio station DJ.

Next, Mary told location owners that she would install a strong league program, which would increase the number of players, how often they come to play, and how often they played when they came.

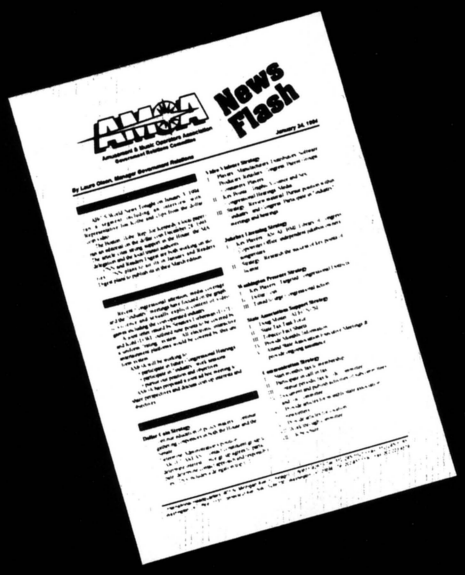
The end result for the location, Mary contended, would mean a substantially bigger cash box and — even after she took her share — they'd be making more. On top of all that, the additional pool-playing traffic would significantly increase the establishment's food and beverage sales.

Mary was happy to report that it all came to pass, without exception. She had the new tables installed within less than three weeks, and shortly thereafter, pool table revenues increased. The establishments also told her their food and beverage sales increased, and that they were indeed making much more than they did when they owned their own tables.

Naturally, other operators were astonished at the sheer size of Mary's initial purchase, especially since the new Valley table were fresh on the market and of the more expensive variety. "The guys were calling me saying, 'The rumor around town is that you won the lottery and are buying all these new tables, putting them in the best bars and making us look bad'," Mary said. "These tables are so beautiful, you just have to look at them to know that they're gonna do great."

However, Mary's pool table run didn't stop there. She reported that, "With these new tables, a number of bar owners are calling me saying, 'Don't you love me?...aren't you going to give me one of those fancy tables?'" Many operators who install new equipment worry about just this kind of reaction. When an expensive new piece goes in one location, others will want the same treatment, whether their establishment can support it or not.

But Mary looks at this kind of "me too" reaction as an opportunity. "I can install a new pool table, even these more expensive tables, in just about any location around — I just have to negotiate things



Each month — generally the last week — AMOA members receive either by FAX or mail a report on issues impacting the coin-op industry. The report , called AMOA "News Flash," is compiled jointly by AMOA's Washington office and AMOA's Government Relations Committee.

Insightful and informative, AMOA "News Flash" updates members on the status of legislation and regulations impacting the industry. In short, a monthly insider hotline to the inner workings of the nation's capital!

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accordingly," she explained. "I may have to require some healthier concessions on the establishment's part, but most of them can understand that."

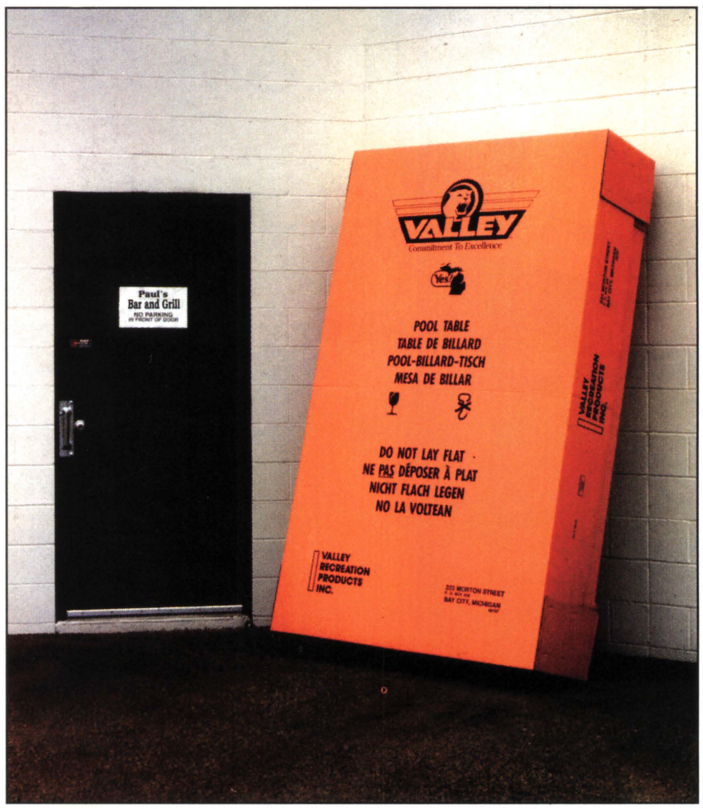
Randy Wilson, owner of Wilson's Bar & Grill in Madison and one of the recipients of Mary's "new table run," said that the charismatic operator's reputation for promotion has become larger than life and that she's always the first to try something new. "I've got people from beer companies and Seven Up calling me, asking me what she's doing for promotion," Randy said. "She's unbelievable."

In one bar, Mary said the patrons actually stood up and cheered as the new table was being installed. "My guys called me and said, 'Can you believe that? A standing O just for putting in a pool table!'"

It's obvious that Mary's location-table replacement program goes a little deeper than just sticking a new table in the corner and hoping it earns more. For starters, she will make a "production" out of merely installing the table. "We make a scene," Mary said. "We drive the truck up to the bar and get the patrons interested in what we're doing. Then I have the guys leave the bright orange box the table comes in out back where people can see it." Next, she does a remake of the pool table area. She installs a new pool light, new cues, often new pool cue racks and chalk holders. In many cases, she will install new coin-op equipment simultaneously.

Mary said she chose the Valley *Image Series* tables, and in particular, the Traditional model within the three-model series, because, "to me, it's what Madison is all about; you know, a simple, kind of elegant table. Everybody ooh's and ah's over it. It's not just a new pool table, it's a remodeling plan." On top of that, she quipped, "Hey, he (the bar owner) can brag that he's got the best table made and the most expensive model they can make...and he didn't have to pay a cent for it."

Mary advises that operators put new tables into the best possible locations first, then let other location owners go take a look. She also makes a practice of sharing revenue increase figures with other location owners. This last step typically clears up any skepticism the prospective location owner may have had, she said.



Mary makes a practice of leaving the new pool table box out back for a time "for all to see" whenever she installs a new table.

She also explained the mass 25-table purchase as simple economics. "It's what you have to do," she declared. "You have to be competitive. You have to update. Your players are changing, it's a whole new ball game out there. You can't just throw a pool table into the corner of a bar anymore and expect it to make money. You have to stay a step ahead of the rest. You have to break new ground and promote, promote, promote!"

Well-organized, continually growing league play is the cornerstone of Bullseye's growth, according to Mary, and she keeps the leagues "hot" by continually promoting them. She also takes advantage of every bit of support provided by the league association in which she is a charter holder, the Valley National Eight-Ball Association (VNEA). She now has close to a 4,000-player base, runs $15,000 radio campaigns and employs 13 people to keep it all clicking. She uses location names in her radio commercials and print ads, and her league staff helps oversee it.

Mary runs men's and women's leagues, 9-Ball, 8-Ball and Scotch Doubles for pool players. She also runs table soccer, air hockey and an exceptionally large dart league program. In fact, she was the first in her area to run dart leagues, the first to run 10AM morning leagues for the third shifters, and the first to get involved in table soccer and air hockey leagues. And now she's working on setting up senior and junior leagues. Those who know her say the new junior and senior leagues will work, too. ("She can promote anything and make it work," said one of Mary's location owners. "No one thought the morning league thing would work and it's going on its third year.")

Mary's rationale for her league success is simple: "We promote fun, a good time. You get a shirt, you get a drink, you shoot some pool...this league thing is better than a dating service."

A powerhouse of energy, "Bullseye Mary" — as she's sometimes called — rarely sits still. "We do all kinds of benefits and parties where we give away shirts, drinks, food, we even have corporate sponsors," she enthused. "We do a lot for our players."

She also enlists the help of local radio stations to do live broadcasts from her bigger events. One early morning tourny, believe it or not, brought in over 500 players. Mary challenges nay sayers to actively promote their leagues, "and just see what happens."

"The average player doesn't think they're good enough or they're afraid to ask for sponsorship," she said. "So you have to go up to them, get to know them, ask them to play on your

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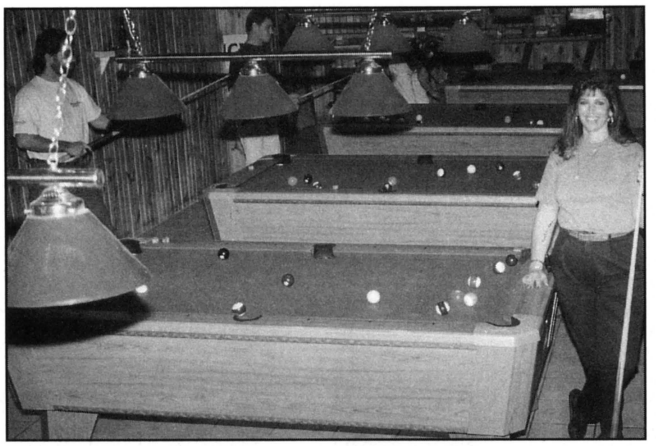


One of the new locations that was a beneficiary of Mary Lavine's recent new pool table run" around the Madison area.



Mary poses with one of her league teams — Jan's Friendly Bennett's.

league, get the bartenders and owners involved...and it will take off."

It's a commitment Mary takes to heart. She recruits players everywhere she goes. Out to dinner recently, she talked the waitress into joining. In the hospital for six days last summer, Mary successfully recruited three nurses into her leagues. She even uses personal ads in local papers. "I have one ad that reads, 'Looking for a couple of guys to play on pool leagues. Meet babes. Drink beer. Have fun.' You'd be amazed at the kind of response I get!"

Mary also pours over the numbers regularly — how many players, how many teams, how many games, what type of game and bracketing works best — looking for clues to increase league participation and table collections.

"Here's a tournament tip that it took me years to figure out," Mary relayed, "Go with the eight-player bracket, you'll have a lot more revenue when you've got eight playing continuously than when you've got 64 sitting around awaiting their turn."

League programs like the VNEA's, of course, do increase table revenues substantially. But they're also the primary reason for the establishment's fatter tills. The more traffic, and the longer that traffic sticks, the more beverages and food that gets sold. And even a small percentage increase in the establishment's till will convince even the most skeptical location owner.

How does Bullseye keep all the stats for 4,000 people straight and still have time to be out converting location-owned table accounts? Mary tells us that they have an excellent computer-based management system that is updated religiously.

"We use Valley's *League Machine* automated scoring system and management system," Mary said. "And it'll do everything a guy would want it to...but that guy has to make certain that all the information gets in the system, that the information is correct to the letter, and that what comes out of the system makes it back to the players on a regular basis."

The new tables, the installation "theatrics," strong leagues backed by strong promotions, this combination is really the formula to Bullseye's success. And the reason they've been able to convert so many dyed-in-the-wool "I want my own table" location owners.

But Mary cautions that everything must be kept "fresh." Her advice is to take care of your accounts with a new "treat" every six months to a year, "no longer."

"Don't wait for the location owner to call you up and tell you a thing or two," she advises. "I recover my tables more than anyone else I know...I want them to look great every day of the year...and every week, cues are checked and repaired or replaced."

Mary claims that the money spent on new equipment and continual refurbishment pays off almost immediately, and helps to keep the pool table the highlight of the location. As testimony to her claim, she notes that she made up the extra cost of the *Image Series* tables over standard tables "in a few weeks...in some cases, in the first week." And because she maintains her tables well, "We'll be selling these same tables to homes in 10 years; we'll still be making money off of them!"

According to Mary, a key to success is understanding players and owners. "It's a love triangle of sorts," she philosophizes, "the bar owner-operator-player relationship, all three have to work together to click." This requires understanding the motivation and expectations of all three parties. So Mary takes the time to involve herself (more like immerse herself) in her profession and her marketplace.

She's a member of the AMOA, WAMO and the VNEA. She plays in her own pool leagues four nights a week and in her dart leagues at least once a week. And she takes the time to visit with the bartenders, waitresses and bar management every chance she gets. In sum, she understands all sides of the "love triangle" and makes certain that all parties are happy with the relationship at all times.

How Mary got started in all this deserves more than a simple mention. Mary Lavine moved from Trenton, N.J. to Madison when she was 18 to attend the University of Wisconsin. She worked as a waitress in a local bar where she joined her first league, a shuffleboard team. The league owner ran off with the cash mid-season. "So I asked the bar owner what we were going to do (Terry Volk, now with Jackpot Games as well as Bullseye Inc.) and he said the guy was an independent so we were out of luck," Mary recalled.

She picked up the pieces, pro bono, and learned first hand what league organizing was all about. She also learned how to get her foot in location doors, occasionally getting it bruised. "I'd call up Terry, crying, saying that I was never going back there and tell him how bad they treat-

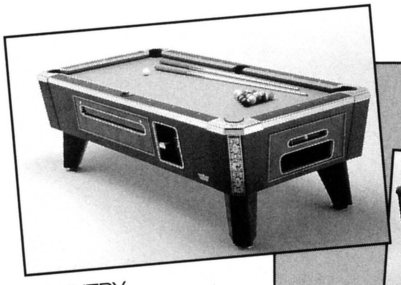
ed me, and he'd say, 'tell 'em thanks a lot and you'll see 'em next week'," Mary reminisced. And as hard as it was, that's just what she did.

As time went on, Mary got more and more involved in coin equipment and leagues. After working for Terry Volk for almost ten years, she started Bullseye Inc. in '83. She borrowed money from "everybody she knew" to start electronic darts when they were a new coin-op concept in the area, "and I was the only kid doin' it." Bar owners knew her from her league work over the years so often she "got a break" and was allowed to install in their establishments.

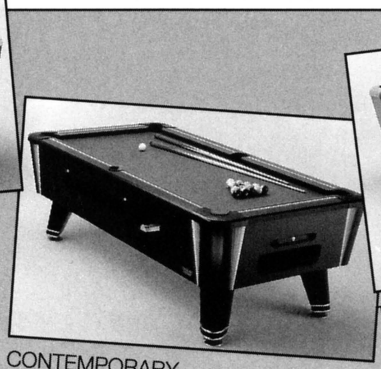
Now she's celebrating her twentieth year in the business and her eleventh year as president of Bullseye. She's operated "most everything and anything with a quarter slot," — cigarette machines, cranes, jukeboxes, video games, table soccer, darts and air hockey in addition to pool tables. Her deep and long time involvement in darts has earned her the moniker "Bullseye Mary," which doesn't bother her a bit.

She's learned not to shy away from anything over the years, and not to be ashamed of having to raise prices to make a decent living. "When I went up to 75 cent play on my Valley pool tables, I got some people who squawked," Mary said. "But I wanted them to squawk at me, not the location owner, so I made sure I was around my location as much as possible during the transition period. And within a few weeks the increase was no longer even remembered."

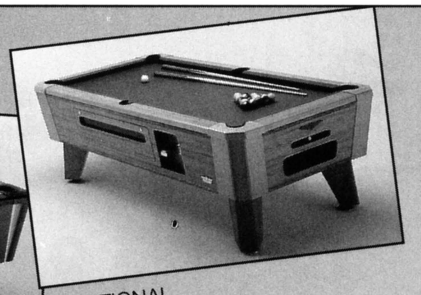
According to Mary, operator prospects for the future are better than even for those who are willing to keep their operations fresh and aren't afraid to try new things. "Some operators keep saying, 'Oh the bar business is bad, bars are closing,'" she said. "Well, I say: yes, but new bars are opening up. It's a new crowd. A younger crowd. And they want to have fun just like everyone else. Find out what's fun to them and give it to them. And I love it!" she exclaimed. "I'm in the business of selling fun and I'm having a ball!"



COUNTRY



CONTEMPORARY



TRADITIONAL

A DIFFERENT LOOK DOES THE TRICK

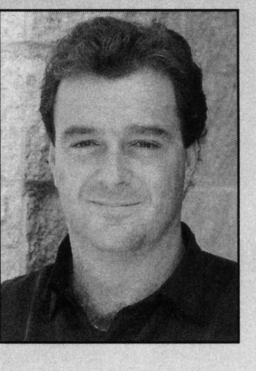
Bullseye Inc.'s Mary Lavine did accomplish an amazing feat in replacing so many location-owned pool tables with her own. Location-owned tables are hardly a new concept — in fact, it's all but accepted practice in some parts of the country — but Valley's new *Image Series* tables might be the product line that kicks off a new "convert 'em back" trend. In fact, others in the industry have already experienced similar success with this "upscale" table line:

Dave Hutchingson
Tri County Distributing
Orlando, Fla.

"Hutch" bought seven of the Country model tables four months ago. He installed them in Rodeo, a hot county bar in the area at $1 play, replacing the location-owned tables. He told the location owner, "Let me put in one of my tables for a month. I'll give you the key to the cash box, and at the end of the month you tell me if you'll sell me your old tables or not." At the end of the one-month period, the location owner accepted the deal without hesitation.

Hutch said the players voted with their quarters. "They're putting more quarters in these tables, they must like them." He feels that they will recover the full cost of the new tables in a year or less.

When asked if he'll be buying more "upscale tables" and doing the same thing, Hutch didn't miss a beat: "Absolutely! Other bar owners will see what I have out there now and their interest will blossom. But you've got to be the first one out there to be able to offer it to the locations."



Chris Vecchione
Mondial Distributing
Philadelphia

Chris says that the fancier tables are going over "big" in their distribution territory and that the black Contemporary model is the table of choice on the East Coast.

"My sales of the Contemporary have been extremely good...it's a good price and it matches the themes of a lot of the bars out here," Chris reported. "It kind of matches the hottest selling jukebox...they look like a set, and the bars love it."

"These tables represent a big difference from what other vendors are carrying," he added. "I'm able to offer my guys something no one else can. In return, my operators can offer their locations something no one else can. Sales are beginning to snowball. I've got one customer who doesn't buy anything but the Contemporary table now. I know he and others are converting locations from owning their own tables, I just don't know what percentage."

Valley Recreation Products began offering their *Image Series* line — tables that reflect location decor — last spring. There are three models: Contemporary, Country and Traditional, and their names pretty much imply what they look like. Interested operators should contact their Valley distributor or, for information and referral, Valley Recreation Products, 333 Morton St., P.O. Box 656, Bay City, MI 48707; 517/892-4536 or fax 517-892-6513 (Canada/Int'l: 517/894-6175).

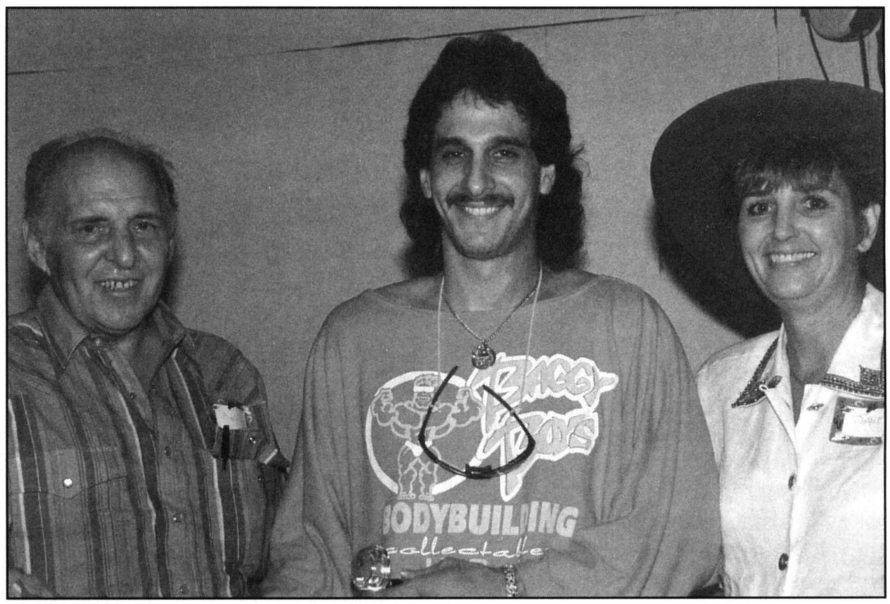
OPEN HOUSE

DENIM & DIAMONDS

classy cowboy theme highlights a huge open house held Oct. 1 by Birmingham Vending Co. in Orlando

Ten-gallon hats were all over the place as Birmingham Vending Co. (Orlando, Fla.) employed a "denim and diamonds" theme for its post-AMOA open house, held on Oct. 1, 1994. Emcee Jane Hutchinson, who just happens to be BVC's western Florida sales exec, did most of the decoration and hosted 410 guests to the event!

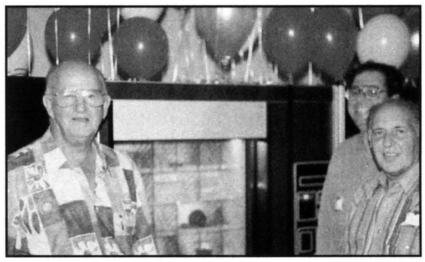
How'd they pull such good attendance? Operators came from all over the region to attend. In fact, Larry Vaughn and Dick Gershman from BVC's Miami office chartered a bus for customers from that city. Miami ops rode four hours to the show, enjoying refreshments and "telling tall tales about jukebox earnings on the Rowe Diamante CD machine...all true of course," smiled BVC's Chuck Arnold.



BVC's Orlando chief Charles Caplan (right) & western Fla. sales pro Jane Hutchinson (left) present diamond ring door prize to Bob Diaz (center).



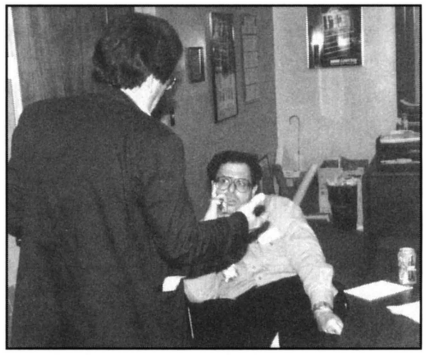
Mr. & Mrs. Ed Canadex with the current Rowe CD-100 jukebox. Distribs call Ed "one of the best operators in Jacksonville."



BVC president Al Toranto, left, with Orlando branch chief Charles Caplan. That's Rowe VP Joel Friedman in the rear.



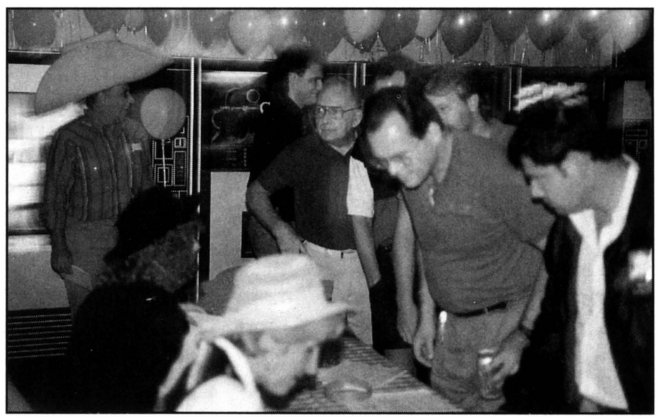
Another diamond doorprize winner! That's Irene Cavanaugh (at right) with BVC's Charlie and Jane.



BVC's top juke salesman, Larry Vaughn, chats about Rowe's new Eagle wallbox with the factory's Joel Friedman.



All aboard! Miami ops get read for a 4 and 1/2 hour ride to the Orlando offices of Birmingham Vending for the open house.



Miami operators, just off the bus, register for door prize drawing.

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PLANET EARTH ENTERTAINMENT



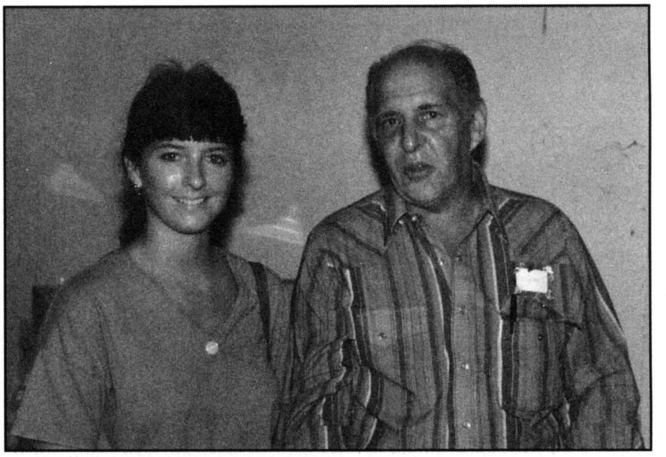
The Waltons — the coin-op brothers, not the TV show. That's Steve (Data East) at right with Pete (Smart Industries) and the latter's new basketball game.



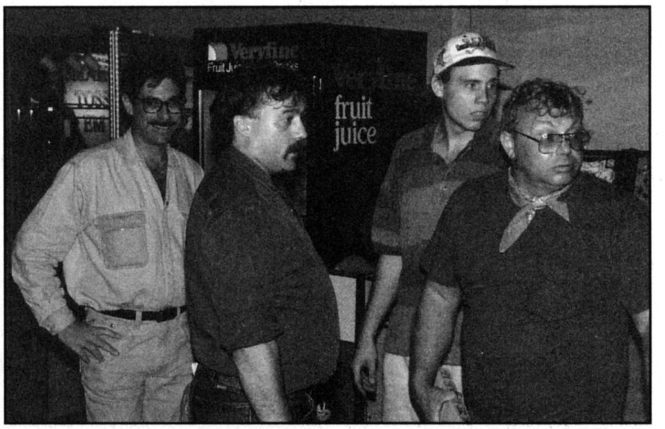
Who wins the doorprize? Charming young lady at right hands winning ticket to BVC cowgirl Jane Hutchinson.



Rowe's Joel Friedman grins approval as a couple of cowhands show off their "Diamante" shirts in front of Rowe jukebox of the same name.



Happy birthday, Teri Quin! So says BVC's Charlie Caplan.

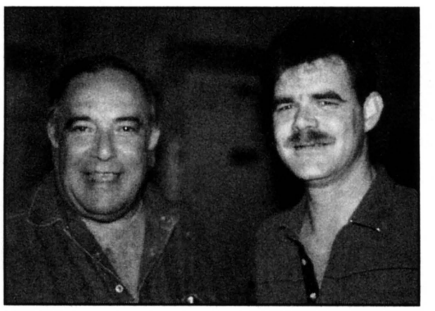


BVC's Richard Gershman (Miami) with three BVC-Orlando staffers: sales rep Kevin Dunn and technicians Gerrit Boele & Gunter Rast.



From left, Rich Holley (SE Game Brokers), BVC's Jane Hutchinson, Jeff Passman, and Bob Matthews (Fla. Music Entertainment).

"We had a great year," enthused BVC president Al Toranto. "Our customers are the best." The party featured food, new games, elaborate redemption, darts, counter games, pool tables, flippers — and extravagant door prizes including real diamond rings and a real diamond bracelet. BVC's Orlando topper Charles Caplan thanked the factory reps for "helping us sell a ton of equipment." Branch VP Steve Toranto called it "our best open house ever at Orlando," while company GM Gary Gouse confirmed that sales covered the full spectrum of equipment shown.



BVC's assistant manager David Sandlofer inspects new goods with Falgas' Peter Kauffman.

OPEN HOUSE

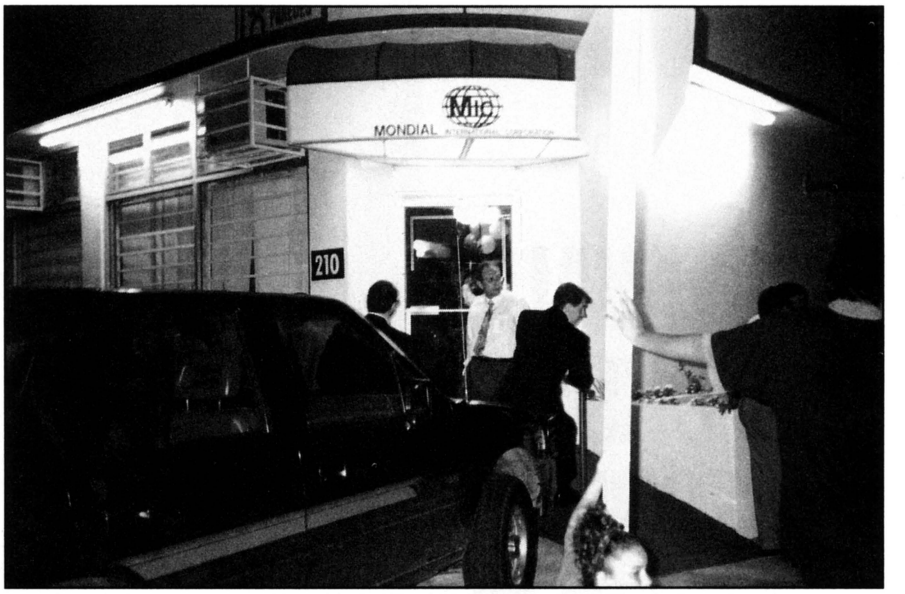
MONDIAL'S P.R. PARTY

international distrib opens new Puerto Rican branch with a bang

One of the 1994's best parties on the island of Puerto Rico took place Oct. 28 as Mondial International celebrated the opening of its new branch office in Hato Rey. Over 150 local operators and a crew of U.S. equipment suppliers helped welcome Mondial to the new site. Guests enjoyed a lavish buffet and open bar, plus trade talk with Mondial's export manager Fernando Galeb and branch manager Ivonne Rivera.

"Operator interest, plus all the great food and drinks, kept the party hopping well past midnight," Fernando reported. Also on hand was Mondial EVP Dick Sarkisian, who flew in from the company's New York headquarters to cut the ribbon at the new office. "The Puerto Rican market has always been good for us," he declared. "That's why we decided to open an office here to support our customers even more. I expected a great turnout, but this crowd is bigger than we hoped!"

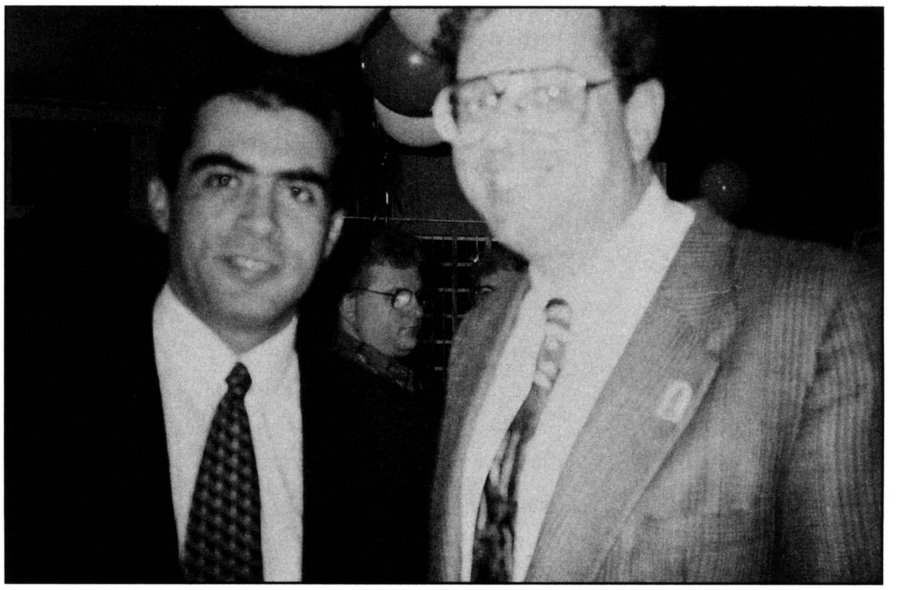
Address and phone for the new branch are: 210 Avenida Eleanor Roosevelt, Hato Rey, PR 00918; 809/250-6729. Fax is 809-250-8876.



Hato Rey, P.R. is the site of this handsome new Mondial International office.



Premier's L.J. Greene with Taito's Carlos LaGuardia at the gala open house.



Mondial's Fernando Galeb with the ever-present Rowe VP Joel Friedman.

OPEN HOUSE

STONEWALL JACKSON WOULDA LOVED IT

First Choice Coin holds post-AMOA Expo open house

Asked the secret of military success, General Stonewall Jackson replied: "Be there firstest with the mostest." The gang at First Choice Coin (Denver, Colo.) is always "first" by definition. This year, they held their post-AMOA open house on Friday, Oct. 14. "We had one of the biggest turnouts in years — probably over 100 people," said Gus Pantelopoulos. "Customers came from all four corners of the state, as well as New Mexico, Wyoming and Nebraska. Sales were very good and we wrote quite a few orders. Everybody was tickled with the results." Several reps from major manufacturers attended, too. First Choice provided a tasty smorgasbord of food, catered and cooked by Jeri Tessmer (wife of manager Dennis) and Bobbi Malish (secretary at the distributorship). Door prizes were provided by First Choice and some of their manufacturers.



That's Boulder Boardwalk's Eric Christensen in the rear with Amusement Investors' Chuck Queen in front, playing Sega's *Daytona USA*... still a super-hot driver.



From left, Jets Video Ltd.'s Matt Pascal, Boulder Boardwalk's Eric Christensen, 1st Choice Coin's Dennis Tessmer, WMS's Bob Lentz, Amusement Vending's Norm Pozner, Jets Video's Don Marcellus, and Amusement Investors' Chuck Queen.



Thumbs up!" is the verdict on Midway's *Cruis'n USA*, according to Jets Video's Matt Pascal.



SNK's marketing honcho Heh-Kyu Lee checks out the competition's goods.



GV-2

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OPEN HOUSE

SNAP, CRACKLE, SELL

flood? what flood? water's only a memory as Greater America (Des Moines) holds open house

Like the song says, "I can see clearly now, the rain is gone." It was a beautiful fall day as the once-flooded Des Moines, Iowa office of Greater America Distributing hosted its post-AMOA open house on Oct. 28. "What a difference a year makes!" exclaimed GAD president Steve Wolf. The facility was hit with five feet of river water during the awesome floods of 1993. But today the place is still there. It's been remodeled and rebuilt...and business is stronger than ever.

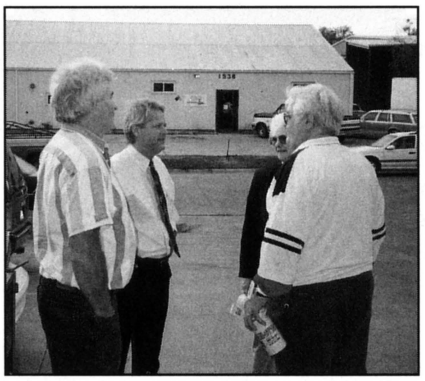
GAD-Omaha employees joined the crew in Des Moines to host a good-sized group of operators to the fall affair. Although the route can demand plenty of attention from operators on a busy Friday afternoon, over 90 customers attended. Many factory representatives were on hand to answer questions and show off their newest products. To show its appreciation to its valued music, game and vending customers, GAD provided plenty of food, drink and door prizes. Sales were strong, but the real order of the day was fun...and GAD thanks all for contributing to a fun, successful time. (*RePlay* thanks Rowe's Dave Hall for these photos, too.)



Here's part of GAD's Des Moines warehouse after the great flood of summer 1993.



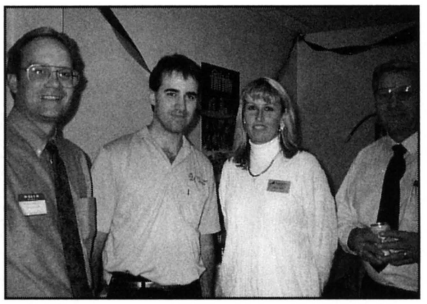
GAD's rep Dick Kincaid & controller Don Thompson, with prexy Steve Wolf and wife Nancy; Omaha-based service manager Jerry Waldeck; Cindy Hedblom with husband Jim (Des Moines GM) and his service manager Cass Nemmers; Omaha GM Joe Petersen; and sales rep Ted Neis.



J&J Enterprises' Jerry Grader with GAD's Jim Hedblom and Rank Vending's duo Mert and Don Rank.



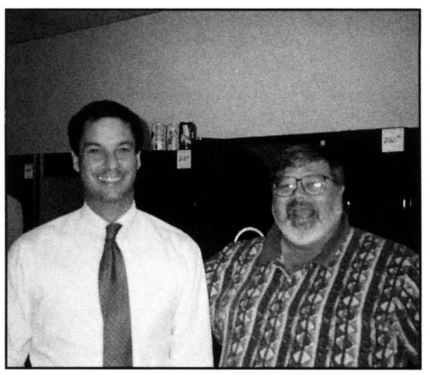
From left, Rowe's Dave Hall with Tavco's Pat Hulsey and GAD's Steve Wolf.



New Image's Howard Smoyer, Amuse-O-Matic's Dave Knupp, Purple Star's Nancy Hardt and GAD's Steve Wolf.



J&J Enterprises' Jerry Grader with Greater America Distributing president Steve Wolf.



Bob Bassman (Bassman Vending) with Lon Fjetcand of Totem Food Service.

OPEN HOUSE

TASTY DAY IN SALT LAKE CITY

Struve shows new stuff to fullsome crowd

Struve Distributing's post-convention open house and product showing caught a better than usual turnout of street and arcade operators this year, as this veteran machine dealer's customers from Utah, Montana, Idaho and Wyoming came in to inspect the newest coin-op goods on the market that might pump up their respective bottom lines.

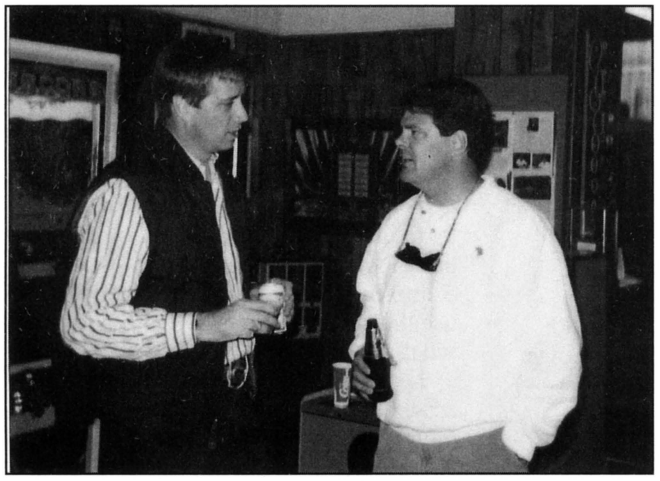
Sales Manager Kent Larsen also served up a good number of manufacturer reps to share product knowledge with machine buyers...while everyone also enjoyed a fine buffet luncheon. As the day wound toward its close, it was gratifying as always to see pickup trucks going back home with "new toys" strapped in the back for the players.



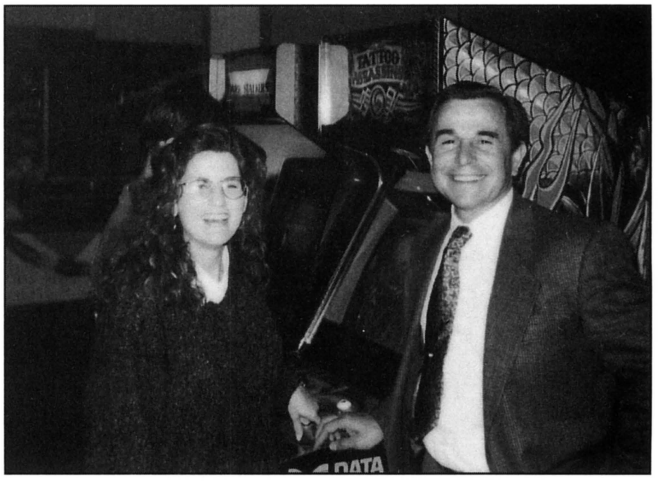
Struve sales manager Kent Larsen with Taito's Anita Platacis at the latter's Cyberscore System upright. This video system made its U.S. debut this fall.



Jackie Larsen and Lilian Taylor (Struve) chat with Ravens' Beckie Flatness, in from Montana.



Past AMOA prexy Craig Johnson (Tataka, Salt Lake City), at left, chews the industrial rag with Jeff Flatness.



Among the factory people at the Struve party were Kris Montgomery (Data East) and Norm Petermeier (Lazer-Tron).

BIG AL'S CORNER

BY ALAN FOSTER



DO OR DIE IN '94

What a year! Do you want to remember 1994 as a prosperous year? Or do you even *want* to remember it at all? It seems this last year was a do or die type of year. I don't have enough fingers on my hands to count all of the arcades and fun centers that I know of that closed their doors in '94.

What happened? Did they overexpand? Was it bad business management? Was it the economy? I could go on and on with reasons for failure, but each business that closed had its own problems. If you did close your doors last year, at least you gained some knowledge and hopefully learned from your mistakes. All is not lost though, if you enjoy the business, you can always try again.

The bright side to '94 is that many businesses did survive. Many owners rode out the storm and even made a profit. What did they do or know that the other owners didn't? How did they keep their doors open while so many others had to close? Was it luck, location, ingenuity, marketplace or even common sense? The answer, all of the above. To survive in today's market you need all of these elements and more. But there is one more secret: Each and every one of us has all of these elements already. Those who know how to control these elements can succeed in any type of business climate.

LUCK (DEPENDS ON ATTITUDE)

How do you handle a situation? If something bad happens, do you learn from it so you won't do it again? Or do you keep making the same mistakes over and over again?

LOCATION

In this business you need to be accessible to your customers. Instead of closing due to slow business, why not move? I know many operators who moved across town or even across the street, and their profits went up.

INGENUITY

You wouldn't be where you are today without ingenuity. How many times have you had a machine break down, and you or someone you know came up with a temporary solution to keep the machine running? Think about it. Apply the same principle to your business next time you have a problem, and you'll be amazed how easily problems can be solved.

MARKETPLACE

I hear it somewhere every day, "The market just died or got too slow." So guess what, create your own market. Use that ingenuity, and you'll come up with some ideas that will have customers banging your doors down. I've written several times on how to create your own market. If you come up with some unique ones, let me know.

COMMON SENSE

We all know what this is. But when you combine it with luck, location, ingenuity and marketplace, you have a success formula that you can use in any situation.

1994

If you closed, learn from your past experience and come back this time better than ever. If you survived, congratulations. No matter what the competition or economy does, you will survive if you use the skills and talents that made you what you are today!

Let's make 1995 a year to remember. And feel free to write with your comments or questions to: Alan Foster, Big Al's Corner, P.O. Box 901382, Palmdale, CA 93590-1382.

Downward Trend

by John Ryan

MID-TERM RESULTS PROMPT MOST JAPANESE VIDEO GAME MAKERS TO REVISE YEAR-END REVENUE AND PROFIT FORECASTS

FISCAL RESULTS OF PUBLICLY QUOTED VIDEO GAME MAKERS

	9/94 MID-TERM	9/94 MID-TERM	3/95 ORIGINAL YEAR-END FORECAST	3/95 ORIGINAL YEAR-END FORECAST	3/95 NEW YEAR-END FORECAST REVENUE	3/95 NEW YEAR-END FORECAST PROFIT/LOSS
Nintendo	166,097	26,663	410,000	62,000	340,000	52,000
Sega	151,071	8,419	360,000	23,500	341,000	18,000
Taito	45,894	1,430	95,000	3,200	96,100	3,100
Namco	36,141	516	80,000	2,550	80,000	2,400
Capcom	24,476	1,405	90,000	7,900	46,400	3,400
Jaleco	2,600	-810	14,500	410	8,100	-710
Tecmo	2,390	-350	11,800	560	9,080	20
Konami	10,500	-5,400	38,000	1,000	30,100	-14,500

(All figures in millions of yen)

Of the publicly-quoted Japanese video game manufacturers, only Taito has revised its year-end forecast for revenue upwards. Apart from Namco, who has left its forecast for revenue unchanged, all other makers have revised their forecast for year-end revenue and profit downwards.

Nintendo revised its forecast for year-end revenue downward from 410,000 million yen to 340,000 million yen. Sega then followed suit but left its forecast for year-end revenue 1,000 million yen above Nintendo at 341,000 million yen.

Konami, Jaleco and Tecmo all recorded losses in their mid-term results. Both Jaleco and Konami had to dispose of dead stock in their American home video game divisions.

NINTENDO

Nintendo reported mid-term revenue of 166,097 million yen, down from 36.2% from the same period a year ago. Net income was down 18% to 26,663 million yen. The widespread collapse of prices in the American and European home video markets caused the fall in revenue. It also lead to the export ration falling to 38.5% from 59.1% a year ago.

SEGA

Sega's mid-term revenue was down 24.7% to 151,071 million yen and income was down 47.1% to 8,419 million yen. The breakdown of revenue was as follows:

	9/94	Change from 9/93
Coin-Op	26,217	-4.3%
Consumer	84,585	-39.8%
Operation	36,547	+16.4%
Others	3,719	

While revenue from the coin-op business overseas increased due to the success of *Daytona USA*, the stagnant domestic market dragged coin-op results down. However, operation income grew as a result of the opening of large-scale locations like "Galbo" and "Joypolis." Sega's operation income was larger than that of the both Taito and Namco. Sega's export ration fell from 68.2% a year ago to 59%.

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TAITO

Taito's mid-term revenue was up 0.4% to 45,894 million yen, but income was down 22.1% to 1,430 million yen. The breakdown was as follows:

	9/94	Change from 9/93
Operations	31,110	-1.9%
Coin-Op	8,274	-1.9%
Karaoke	4,045	+25.7%
Consumer	2,185	+1.8%

While the coin-op business was down due to the overall market slump, the growth in the karaoke equipment business lead to the slight increase in revenue. The export ratio increased slightly to 3.1%.

NAMCO

Namco also reported an increase in revenue, but a fall in profits. Revenue was up 14.9% at 36,141 million yen, but profits fell 29.1% to 516 million. Namco blames the drop in income on the expenses it incurred from its issue of convertible bonds in July. Revenue from location operation accounted for 51% of the total at 19,919 million yen (up 6.5%). The export ratio increased slightly to 8.4%.

	9/94	Change from 9/93
Operations	19,919	+6.5%
Coin-Op	9.764	+8.8%
Consumer	6,216	+66.2%

CAPCOM

Capcom's mid-term revenue was down 44.5% at 24,476 million yen while profit plummeted 82.9% to 1,405 million yen. The breakdown is as follows:

	9/94	Change from 9/93
Coin-Op	6,419	-6.7%
Consumer	14,716	-57.1%
Rental	1,487	-12.6%
Operation	1,255	

Capcom blamed the fall in revenue on the poor sales of *Dark Stalkers,* of which much had been expected prior to release. In spite of the release of potential hit software in the consumer area, such as *Super Street Fighter II,* the slump in the domestic market lead to disappointing sales.

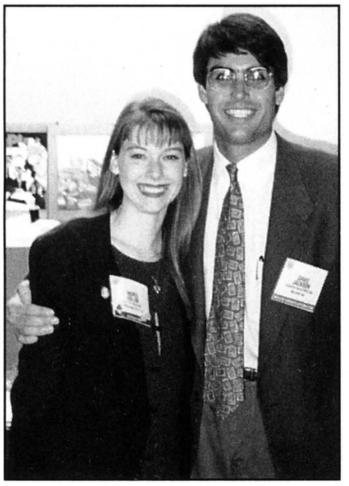
KONAMI, JALECO, TECMO

Konami suffered a large loss in the first half of the year and it appears worse things are to come in the latter half with the company forecasting an overall loss of 14,500 million yen. The company also posted a loss in its consolidated results in the previous term. Konami blames the loss on disposal costs of dead stock in the American home video market.

Jaleco also had to dispose of consumer game inventory in the U.S. The situation was not helped by the deterioration in the coin-op games market. Tecmo blamed the overall recession for poor results in its coin-op, consumer and operations divisions. With a latter-half recovery unlikely, Tecmo is forecasting a loss in its consolidated accounts for the period ending March 1995. ◆

THUMBNAIL

SKETCH



Operator David Jackson with gal pal Ingrid Adlum

DAVID JACKSON

STREET OPERATING IS "THE TOUGHEST JOB YOU'LL EVER LOVE" SAYS YOUTHFUL BOSTON STREET OPERATOR

Like the fictional Charles Foster Kane, operator David Jackson had the option to go into the family's publishing business: His father owns two daily papers in the Boston area. But having grown up in the shadow of coin-op equipment throughout most of his life, Citizen Dave found the amusement machine business that fell under the umbrella of parent company Jackson Industries more to his liking. And so begins another chapter in the saga of one of Boston's most diverse and well-known family-run street operations.

The story actually begins in 1929, when David's grandfather, Herman, started the family businss, which has pursed various concerns. In 1957, David's father Warren Jackson took over, and formed Jackson Industries. In the mid-1970s, industry legend Si Redd (who was then a distributor in the Boston area and a very close friend of the Jackson family) introduced Warren Jackson to the coin-op business.

"Si put got my father into this business nearly 20 years ago," explained David Jackson, who is now vice president and sales manager of Action Jackson Amusements. "He was very close to the family, especially the kids. Si actually gave my father the name, Action Jackson."

While David's father still comes in every day, it's David who primarily runs the business, along with VP and service manager Justin Magee. "We handle pizza and sub shops, fraternal organizations, bowling alleys, skating rinks, hotels, colleges, even a few military bases," David said. "But half of our business is bars and taverns; the other half compiles a mix of everything else."

All the equipment Action Jackson Amusement handles is amusement oriented: pool tables, jukeboxes, pinballs, videos, cranes, sports games, and the like. "We were one of the first operators in the area to put basketball games in bars," David pointed out. "They were extremely popular at first, but they fell off dramatically about six years ago.

"We also have a lot video games, although I hate to admit it," he continued. "Video is really down. I get very apprehensive whenever I place an order that includes more video games; the home market has really taken from the coin box wth respect to video. We just got into redemption this year. It's new to us and we're testing it out in a few sports bars, restaurants and bowling alleys. Right now, we have about a dozen pieces, including some *Skee Balls* and Bromley *Wheel 'Em Ins.*"

All counted, David has over 1,000 pieces scattered across New England. "People call it a large operation," he said, "but considering the area it's really about medium-sized. It's all relative anyhow."

So how's business in Beantown? "Unfortunately, the numbers are down, especially in bars and taverns," David reports. "But by and large you won't hear me cry. If you rate the individual locations, you'll see they're down. But our company is growing; we're continually adding more locations. Again, it's all relative."

David attributes this decline to a number of competitive elements. While home video erodes the coin-op market, plenty of bars in region are now subscribing to an interactive trivia game service — where players in different parts of the country can compete — with some bars that charge for it and some that don't. But one of his biggest competitors is the Massachusetts State Lottery.

"It's (the Lottery) in three-fourths of all the bars out here, and they just added Keno," he said. "This is really, really hurting us. If a guy comes into a bar with a $20 bill, he can only stretch that bill so far. I don't gamble, but a lot of people

who do are not going to put their money in a pinball or video game when they can take a chance at winning a lottery game. The Massachusetts Lottery is the most profitable in the country; now they're talking about introducing casino gambling in our state, which raises many mixed emotions."

Of course, tough local drinking laws have been a factor in bringing down the bar business in general. "Back when I first started, you could see bars were packed in the afternoon, sometimes even in the morning," David said. "Today, day hours are almost extinct."

But there are still some things that only operators can provide. Pinball have been a steady earner for Action Jackson Amusements, although the high cost of the equipment continues to be a drawback. "I really don't think they'll replace pinball; you can't create a home version," said David, who added that countertops have created their own small niche in bar locations. And of course, David always stresses service and keeping in touch with his customers.

"It's essential to be in touch with locations," he said. "I spend half my time on the road and half in the office. Not only do I like to be in on finding new locations, but I also want to see the final result of everything."

Ever since his graduation from the University of Colorado at Boulder in 1986, David has found nearly all his waking hours consumed by the business. He regularly averages 10-12 hours day on the job — and that's if he doesn't have any location-oriented zoning or licensing hearings to attend at night. He's also constantly in touch with his customers, and spends a good amount of time compiling information on the company's computer system. "I enjoy this business," he confessed. "My days just fly by!"

"When I graduated from college, I wanted to run off with some friends who had planned a big getaway to Australia for the summer," David recalled. "But my father called me up and said, 'get back here, it's payback time.' I had grown up in this business — moving machines, that sort of thing — and out of all the other companies I could have gone into, I really enjoy this, and I figured I should do what I like. In fact, I still have a few mint-condition classics like *Asteroids* that I go down to the warehouse and play whenever I need a quick escape."

It's a fun business. But to friends who envy his career, David says "the grass is not always greener on the other side." He assures civilians that coin-op is a tough and uncertain business just like anything else. "If you want to know where this industry is going, just don't look at the last 50 years," he said. "There are going to be a lot of big changes in the next five to 10 years. I can feel it in my bones." ◆

TOP HITS OF JAPAN

from Game Machine Magazine, January 1, 1995

TOP 25 VIDEO COCKTAILS

	Model (manufacturer)
1	Virtua Fighter 2 (Sega)
2	Samurai Shodown II (SNK)
3	Virtua Fighter (Sega)
4	Crazy Cross (Konami)
5	Bubble Symphony (Taito)
6	V Goal Soccer (Tecmo)
7	The King of Fighters '94 (SNK)
8	Quiz 365 (Nakanihon)
9	Gunbird (Psykyo/Jaleco)
10	Puyo Puyo 2 (Compile/Sega)
11	Dragonball Z2 - S.B. (Banpresto)
12	Hat Trick Hero '95 (Taito)
13	Super Real Mahjong P. IV (Seta)
14	Great Sluggers '94 (Namco)
15	Super St. Fighter II Turbo (Capcom)
16	Mahjong Prof'l "Kiwame" (Athena)
17	Raiden DX (Seibu)
18	Golfing Greats 2 (Konami)
19	Shanghai III (Sun)
20	Darius III (Taito)
21	V-Shoot (Namco)
22	Fantastic Journey (Konami)
23	Space Invaders DX (Taito)
24	Raiden II (Seibu)
25	Run & Gun (Konami)

TOP 15 UPRIGHTS & COCKPITS

	Model (manufacturer)
1	Virtua Fighter 2 [deluxe] (Sega)
2	Ace Driver [deluxe] (Namco)
3	Sports Fishing (Sega)
4	Ridge Racer 2 [twin] (Namco)
5	Virtua Cop (Sega)
6	Point Blank (Namco)
7	Daytona USA [twin] (Sega)
8	Daytona USA [deluxe] (Sega)
9	Wing War [twin] (Sega)
10	Ridge Racer 2 [std./del.] (Namco)
11	Virtua Fighter [deluxe] (Sega)
12	Desert Tank (Sega)
13	Out Runners (Sega)
14	Final Lap R [standard] (Namco)
15	Lethal Enforcers II (Konami)

TOP 5 FLIPPERS

	Model (manufacturer)
1	Star Trek: The Next Gen. (Williams)
2	Tales from the Crypt (Data East)
3	Royal Rumble (Data East)
4	Addams Family (Midway)
5	Jurassic Park (Data East)

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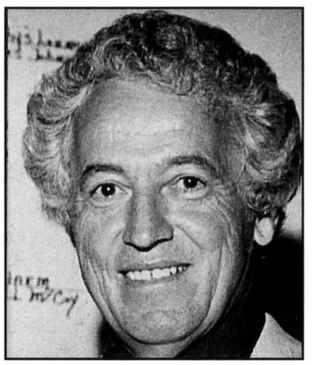
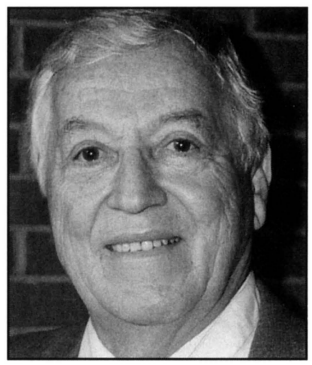
LIGHTNING SKEE BALL

Back When My Hair Was There

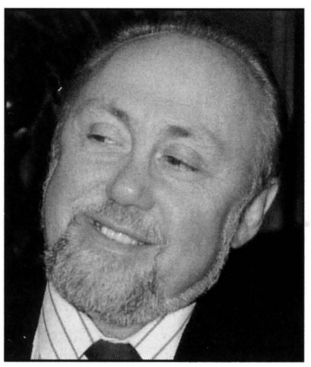
A FUN & FUZZY "THEN & NOW" LOOK AT SOME OF OUR BETTER-KNOWN TRADESTERS



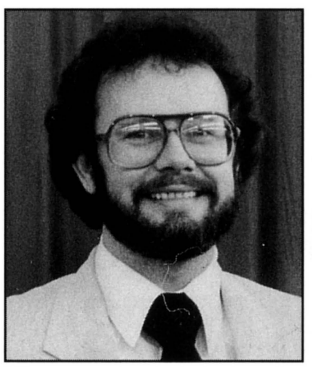

JOE DILLON, sales veep at Williams, etc., effected that suave, "old Seeburg" look back when he crunched numbers for that music box maker before getting into games.

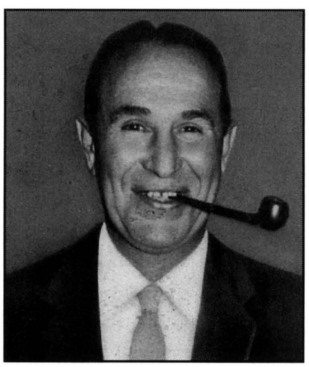
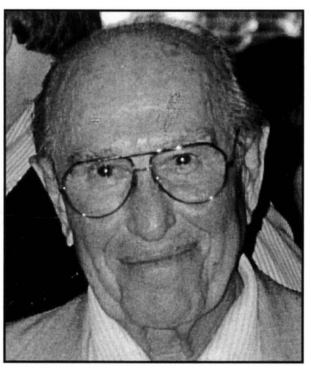
BOB NIMS clearly takes the cake (and the comb) with this sporty 'do. The New Orleans veteran is more "on line" today as he now works the VLT biz as well.

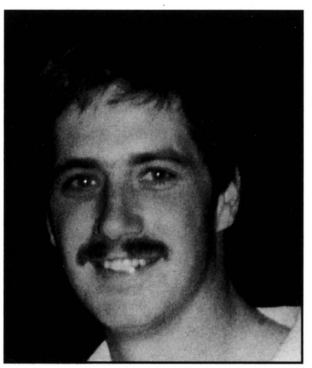
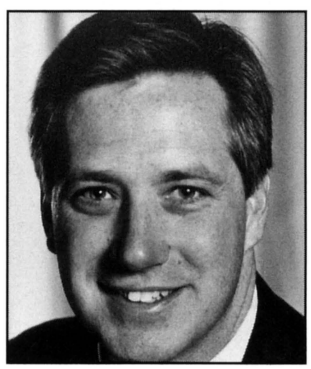
KEN ANDERSON, Sega's popular sales top, relocated his curls from the temples to the chin over the years. We prefer his new "Santa" look. How 'bout you?



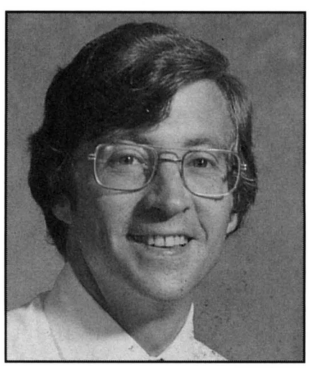
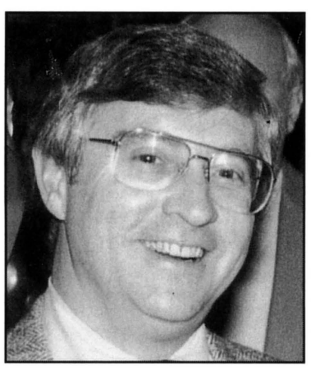

BILL RICKETT had to change his passport photo since the days he pioneered Dynamo. It's amazing what a man's face will do if he locks his razor in a safe!

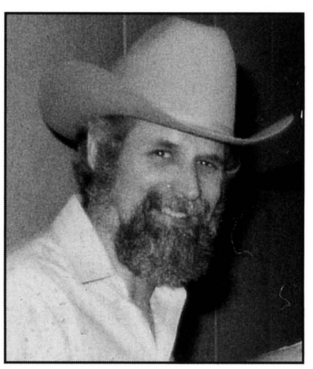
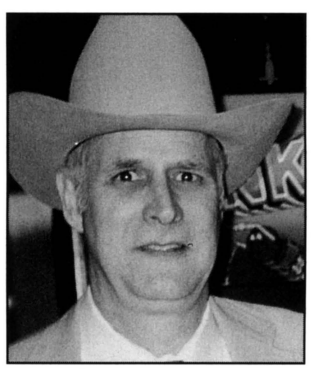
SOL LIPKIN, American Shuffleboard legend, sported a pipe in his pre-Beatles days, but only a wee bit more fuzz on the dome than in present times.

CRAIG JOHNSON, the youthful Salt Lake City operator who went on to become AMOA's president, now prefers trying to "grow" his NANI video game network.

JON BRADY had that "seventies businessman look" which, like most others, has been "modified" for the more serious nineties. Ah, youth!

JIM GILDART'S hirsute metamorphosis (as in, he shaved) was fairly recent, though you'll never get the Stetson off this San Antonio dealer without a crowbar!

OPERATORS &

COMPUTERS

FROM PEBBLES TO COMPUTER CHIPS



BY DIANA LUKIS,
A COMPUTER TRAINER AND CONSULTANT FOR THE AMOA.
SHE DEDICATES THIS ARTICLE TO THE MEMORY OF HER BROTHER, JIM, AND "THE HUMMINGBIRD WHO FLEW AWAY."

In the beginning there was no microprocessor chip. There wasn't a potato chip or even a Chip from "My Three Sons." There was dirt, pebbles and Bam Bam. Primitive people did not need mathematics. Their calculation consisted of making marks in the dirt or using pebbles as counters. Primitive people liked to wander and their wandering led them to meet other primitive people. "Ugh, you have 10 fingers too! Who needs pebbles? I'll count using my fingers and toes if necessary."

The decimal system was a natural, but it wasn't the only option. Some four millennia ago, the Babylonians developed a system. Their "gig" was based on the number 60. The 60-second minute, the 60-minute hour, the 360-degree circle. A counting device, the abacus, was a Chinese invention and is still in wide use today.

It soon became apparent that manipulating large numbers in any system is beyond the mental capacity of most people. Society would not only have to develop a painless method of producing an accurate result of calculations, but keep traffic of the work. Results didn't mean much if a new calculation simply erased the previous one. The slide rule and the calculator still were not enough, but may be thought of as the first step along the road to the computer.

The road to the computer is considered an arduous road, so we are going on a frenzied journey through time. A journey through another dimension. A dimension not only of interactive video, laser disc technology and home satellite television, but of 3-D high definition technology. A journey into a wondrous land whose boundaries are that of the imagination. At the sign post up ahead, your next stop, 1995.

COMPUTER GENERATION

Much has been written about Generation X. Members of Generation X grew up in the '70s and '80s. Their major asset is technoliteracy. They are about as comfortable with technology today as the Silent Generation is with a coffee percolator. Since Generation X is the smallest demographic group, the Information Age is encountering many users who may not be as fearless about technology. Generation Xers are either adept computer users or at least not afraid to try.

Growing up along with Generation X is the Generation x86, the era of the microprocessor chip. Microprocessors, also called central processing units (CPUs) or chips, are frequently described as the "brains" of a computer. They provide the central control that directs the execution of programs and the processing of data in PCs and other computer devices.

A chip is a single device consisting of transistors, diodes and other components forming the essential elements of a central processor on a section of a wafer sliced from a crystal of silicon. One chip, the microprocessor, contains the entire CPU. Other chips surround the CPU. These chips take on the jobs that might bog down the CPU, such as heavy mathematical calculations. They are called coprocessors or pain relievers. They go to work when the chips are down.

MODERN COMPUTERS

Generation x86, or the Processor Generation, has its beginnings in 1978 with the introduction of the Intel 8086™, chip considered the patriarch of the Intel processor family. Although the 8086 was available, IBM chose Intel's 8088™ microprocessor chip in their first personal computer introduced in 1981. This marked the start of the mass demand for home computers.

The PC succeeded beyond all expectations and with this success came an abundance of application software designed for the Intel chip. Intel introduced the 80286™ in 1982. The introduction of a system based on the 80286 in 1984, in the IBM PC AT, further enhanced the Intel processor line. This chip was a true 16-bit microprocessor. The 80286 can operate in a "protective mode." In the protective

mode, the microprocessor becomes capable of running several applications at one time, a process more formally known as "multitasking."

In 1985, Intel introduced the 80386™. The first system based on the 32-bit microprocessor were introduced in 1986. While the 80386 retains compatibility with the earlier 8086/88 family, it represents a quantum leap forward from the earlier 80286 processor. The 80386 contains approximately 275,000 transistors and can directly access four gigabytes (bless you) of memory, which is 250 times more than the 80286 can address. Besides processing data in 32-bit increments, the 80386 operates at higher clock rates than the 80286. Software applications and programs execute three to four times faster than on a 80286-based chip. Like the 80286, 80386 can operate in protective mode.

Intel486™ was introduced in 1989. The Intel486SLC processor was Intel's first 486 processor. The i486 is Intel's most varied microprocessor offering (486SX and 486DX) and supports clock rates of up to 100MHz. The Intel486DX4™ has 1.6 million transistors running at 75 and 100 MHz. Intel sold more than 20 million 486DX and DX2 processors in 1993.

In March, 1992, Intel unveiled the successor to its 486 chip, the Pentium microprocessor. Intel broke with its naming conventions to trademark the product name, thus preventing clone makers from using it. The history of the microprocessor to date tells an interesting story. The chip market, now with more players than ever, continues to be experiencing rapid development and change. The provider of x86-based technology is no longer just the Intel Corporation. Advanced Micro Devices, Chips and Technologies, and Cyrix are all players in the microprocessor field. The number of suppliers coupled with the often misleading names (primarily due to the lack of trademarking) has created confusion among the end-users.

COMPUTERS & YOU

Do you think technology is conspiring against you? Are you still trying to find the "any" key? You are not alone. Processor performance can be fun and easy to understand. You just have to mix all the right ingredients. Parameters that govern the processing capability of the computer's microprocessor include its operating rate expressed in megahertz, its data-bus width, and its level of chip integration.

The system clock speed, crystal controlled, tells how fast the microprocessor performs operations like add, subtract, multiply and divide. The data-bus width governs the rate which data is read from or written to memory.

A PC bus is a pathway by which data travels between the microprocessor, memory and peripheral devices. Finally, the level of chip integration affects the overall performance of the microprocessor. The operating rate of a microprocessor depends on a quartz crystal included on the system board. It provides a steady beat in increments of time. The crystal's beats synchronize the flow of electronic pulses between the computer circuits and components in the system unit. The rate at which the crystal beats is known is the clock rate. The clock rate governs how fast information can flow in the computer.

Since computers comprehend information in bits, the higher numbers of bit segments, the greater amount of data is processed. Also true, the faster the clock, the quicker the data bits can be treated. Clock speed is measured in megahertz (MHz), which stands for millions of cycles per second (or a very large car rental company). For computer-bound applications like a spreadsheet's calculations and "what-ifs," the processing capability directly affects how long the "what-ifs" will take. While megahertz is one component of overall processor performance, it is not, by itself, the only measurement of processor performance. Megahertz can be compared to revolutions per minute (RPM) in a car's engine. When comparing engines, horsepower is a better indicator of performance than RPMs because a small engine might operate at higher RPMs but have much less power and performance than a bigger engine. In the same way, faster MHz does not always translate into faster microprocessors.

There is no technological market that better shows the inertia of the old with the glitter of the new than the personal computer market. Even entry level PCs today are powered by 50- or 60-MHz 486 processors, for which you can thank Microsoft Windows and the increasing demand for graphically oriented applications. You could easily look back and laugh at what once passed for powerful. But before you do, take an inventory of the PC that is setting on your desk. There's a good chance that the PC has been there for two or three years. If it has, then chances are also good that you've pushed all the buttons and you are craving for more power.

The user who buys a 486-based system today will find an abundance of new programs and applications designed to take advantage of the 32-bit processors. Pentium users, however, may be a little disappointed because of the scarcity of applications that fully use its features. The performance of the Pentium, 486/DX2 and 486/DX4 32-bit systems is startling. Screen updates are made in a flash, spelling checks in seconds, and vast improvements can be seen in spreadsheet calculations and database performance. Few studies have attempted to show just how much more productive a user is if that user is supported by nearly instantaneous response. The consensus is, however, that fast response is valuable beyond simple proportion to time savings. Inversely, a lack of "lapse of think" time will increase productivity. No matter how fast a PC operates, the human brain is still faster. Have you ever sat at your computer waiting for a response, and you start to think about all the things you have to do that evening? Can I catch the 5:50PM train? What's for dinner? Did I forget to take out the dog? Oops! My computer is back.

A new technology can affect the market only if it can enter it and eventually make up a large piece of it. In the last 50 years, computers have penetrated every imaginable facet of life. Even art and music have been changed fundamentally by digital technology. How fast can a microprocessor process information? The processing of binary information has one absolute limit: the speed of light. One's imagination can only think of the possibilities for the future. The Information Age of the Nineties may indeed be considered the the Stone Age by the turn of the century. ◆

NEW PRODUCTS

Two new games from Skee-Ball

Skee-Ball adds two exciting new titles to its family of games.

Car Toon Racin' is a one- or two-player redemption game that uses two pinball-type playfields to race a pair of "hot rods" down an illuminated roadway. By triggering a variety of stationary targets, jet bumpers and a loop ramp, players can move the cars forward at different rates of speed. Each ramp shot lights a letter in the word "Turbo" to give the player an extra boost of power.

Car Toon Racin' features colorful graphics and an exciting sound package, which includes California-style Surf Rock music, drag racing sound effects and voice prompts from the race announcer. Three-dimensional molded race cars and lighted flipper buttons have also been incorporated into the design.

Also new from Skee-Ball is *Operation Vortex*, an action-packed group race game combining a ball shooting system with an ascension race game format and a futuristic theme. Players shoot balls at a rate of four per second at a flashing light inside their "Vortex" target. Successful hits cause the player's spaceship to move closer to the Vortex. The first player to reach and disable the Vortex is the winner.



A combination of special lighting effects, futuristic sounds and colorful graphics is designed to attract attention on any game midway. The three-dimensional molded spaceships are launched from a "Mother Ship" game marquee and race against a backlit starry sky. Players are surrounded by sounds of laser battles, ships launching, explosions, warning sirens and theme music. The game even offers a "voice instruction" mode, which allows the games' instructions to be told by a computer voice.

Operation Vortex is available with four to 12 player stations, and as an optional coin operated unit with ticket dispensing capabilities.

For more information on Car Toon Racin' and Operation Vortex, contact an authorized distributor or call Skee-Ball at 215/997-8900.

POINT BLANK from Namco



Namco America draws a bead on the competition with it's new high-action, non-violent dedicated gun game, *Point Blank*.

Featuring an advanced Algorithm Sensing PCB that enhances the precision of each shot fired, *Point Blank* is said by its maker to be the most accurate shooter in the business — six times more accurate, according to Namco, than rival gun games. To further the realism, a new ".45 caliber" automatic-type gun with simulated blow-back action provides players with tactile feedback.

Targeting players of all ages, *Point Blank* captures all of the fun and excitement of realistic gun simulation, but without the graphic violence of so many of it predecessors. One or two players can choose from over 50 competitive events, keeping the action interesting and different each time.

Point Blank is available now. For more information, contact your local distributor or call your Namco America sales rep at 708/238-2248.

New payphones from G-Tel



G-Tel Enterprises new line of desk top coin telephones are designed to prevent customer and employee abuse that often results in skyrocketing telephone bills.

According to the firm, the phone allows for the owner to keep all of the pay telephone's revenue, requires no electricity and installs in a standard jack in less than one minute. Additionally, the units convert to a standard conventional phone with the turn of the owner's key, allowing free calls to be placed anywhere.

The phones are suitable for counter top or wall mounting with the optional lock-up banker.

For more information, contact G-Tel Enterprises, Inc., 17423 Shatnerwood Dr., Houston, TX 77095; 713/550-5592.

RED & TED'S ROADSHOW from Williams



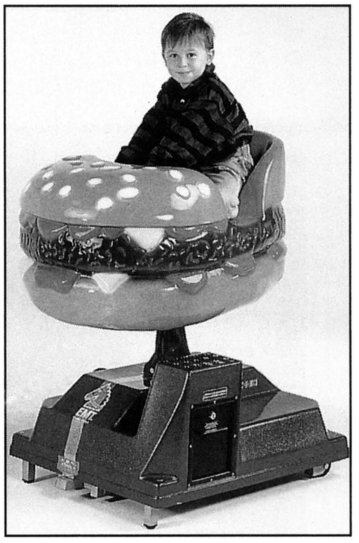
Williams Electronics is jumping on the country music bandwagon with its newest pinball game, *Red & Ted's Roadshow*, featuring the voices of CW star Carlene Carter as "Red," boss of the "Road Crew from Hell."

Red and Ted are actually the most advanced versions of Williams' Pin-Mation concept. (Remember *FunHouse's* "Rudy"?) Both comment on the players pinball prowess and each other as they travel west to California in a runaway bulldozer, smashing their way through 18 different cities.

Red & Ted's Roadshow features four flippers and two plungers; you can even send a ball flying towards Ted's hard hat. There's plenty of excitement with three-ball multiballs, wild dot-matrix sequences, and rainstorms and explosions that actually shake the game. The Williams' DCS Sound System is put to good use, especially when Carlene Carter sings her hit "Every Little Thing."

For more information on Williams' latest hard-drivin' entry in the pinball field, contact an authorized distributor.

KID BURGER from EMT Kiddie Rides



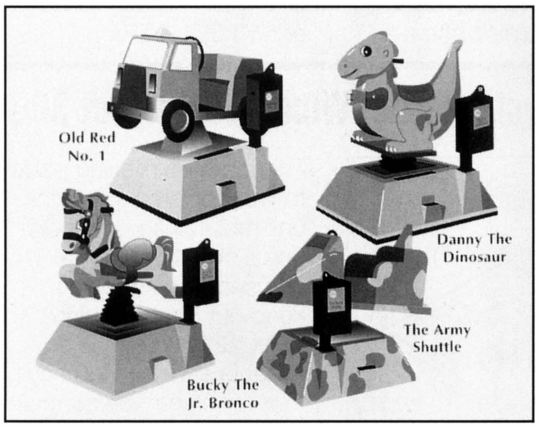
The Model 230-KB, or *Kid Burger*, is "delicious" new kiddie ride, designed to satisfy the appetites of hungry operators and young riders alike.

The *Kid Burger* features the likeness of a real hamburger, complete with ketchup, cheese and pickles, with a comfortable seat for its rider. The ride entertains kid with back-and-forth motion and cheerful music as well.

The same rugged mechanical components that go into all EMT Kiddie Rides can be found under their newest model. In addition to the sturdy frame, built-in casters and rollerjack are included to provide ease of transport.

For more information on *Kid Burger* and other EMT Kiddie Rides, contact EMT's sales manager Alicia Sadoff at 708/860-5100.

New kiddie ride line from LAI



LAI Group's new line of kiddie rides are specifically designed for smaller indoor locations.

The rides feature a sturdy all-metal fabricated frame, a top-quality belt-driven mechanism for quiet operation, an oil-lite bearing system with life lubrication, and a rugged gel-coated fiberglass body. They're available in a wide range of colors and are equipped with authentic sound units for enjoyable rides.

For video and street operators, the company is offering a special introductory price and rapid delivery. For details, contact the LAI Group, 7251 Garden Grove Blvd., Ste. M, Garden Grove, CA 92641; 800/422-2866 or 714/ 373-2993.

KOOL KANDY snack vender from LSA



LSA's stylish new *Kool Kandy* snack and drink vending machine blends easily with modern office decor, yet delivers in tough temperature conditions found in locations such as factories, plants and garages.

Kool Kandy maintains 60-70° F in the 18-selection, 213 snack upper section and 40° F in the five-selection, 175 soda/juice drink area, even in areas without air conditioning. The unit's frost-free refrigeration uses environmentally safe R134A refrigerant, and will not require future modification. The machine is of 18-gauge steel, all-welded construction, with thermally insulated Lexan windows.

With a 30"(w) x 22"(d) footprint for easy positioning, *Kool Kandy* stands 64" high. The machine uses a durable all-metal coin mechanism. Item purchasing is operator-adjustable up to $1.25 per item.

For more information, contact Ed Fredette, LSA operations manager, at 800/226-9656.

LOCKED N' LOADED from Data East

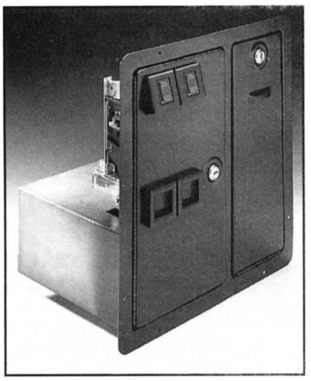
Data East's new two-player interactive gun game, *Locked N' Loaded*, is available as a dedicated upright and in two different kit formats.

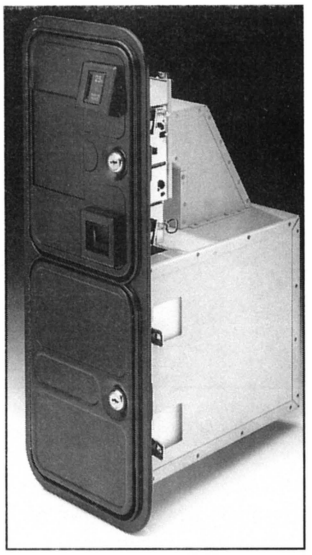
The Basic Kit, which includes the printed circuit board, conversion adapters, game graphics and manual is intended for those operators that have existing gun games in the field. In addition to what comes with the Basic Kit, the Gun Kit includes two guns, holsters and cables for the gun assembly in order to convert a generic cabinet.

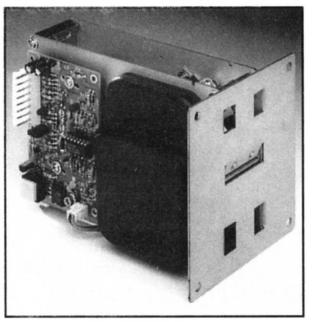
Locked N' Loaded features three intense game modes for exciting head-to-head competition, hidden icons for upgraded weaponry and an attractive graphics package. Players are further enticed by realistic scenes and challenging gameplay.

For more information, contact your local Data East distributor.

New from Coin Controls







Coin Controls Inc. has introduced three new additions to its extensive line of amusement industry products.

The All-In-One Door is designed to meet the specific needs of an expanding redemption market. This new high-security coin door features easy access to coin validation, cash box and ticket dispenser, and includes a separate lock inside the door on a high capacity cash box that is 25% larger than existing models. Constructed of strong, wear-resistant materials, the All-In-One Door is built to fit in what has evolved as the industry standard aperture.

Coin Controls has also added a dollar bill validator door to its Double Frame Mini Door product line. Offered as a complete package or as a retrofit kit, the new product is designed to fit the majority of bill acceptors on the market. Like the entire DFMD range, it features extra deep security channels on the frame and an optional steel locking bar to protect against theft and vandalism.

Finally, the company has introduced a number of feature upgrades to its CTD 10 ticket dispenser. The CTD 100 features a faster tickets-per-second dispense speed, which helps with multiple ticket dispensing. There's also a dual payout mode available giving the option of single or continuous payout. In order to accommodate host machines with smaller power supplies, the ticket dispenser now has a working current of just 500 mA.

For more information, contact Coin Controls International, 1850 Howard St., Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-2450; 708/228-1810.

Antique popcorn popper from Gold Medal

Gold Medal's newest popcorn and cart combination is the Antique Deluxe 60 Special on the 36-inch steerable cart.

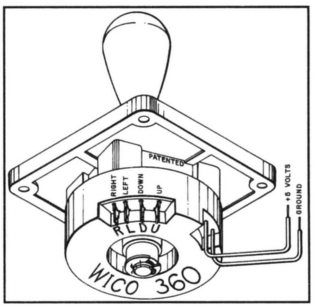
The 6 oz. Antique-style popcorn popper is equipped with a "Love My Popper" kettle, and is safe and easy to operate and clean. The kettle will pop 120 quarts of popcorn per hour, while the stainless steel finish makes clean-up a snap. With 120 volt adaptability, the unit can be taken almost anywhere.

The longer cart provides plenty of working storage and serving space, and the "Old Tyme" lettering functions as a great self-merchandiser. Gold Medal also offers a wide variety of other available color and popper combinations.



For more information on the company's line of fun food items, contact John Evans, Jr. at: Gold Medal Products Co., 2001 Dalton Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45214; 800/543-0862 or 513/381-1313.

New joystick from Wico and Perfect 360



Wico and Perfect 360 have teamed up to engineer an innovative solid-state joystick that uses infrared light to connect the player to the video game, eliminating traditional mechanical switching.

The Wico 360 is not a retrofit module, but a totally new integrated joystick. There are no moving parts to wear or break, and the unit maintains perfect diagonal switching for life. The sealed electronics keep out dust and drink spills. Shaft length is adjustable and you can have four- or eight-way control; standard colors are black, red, blue, yellow and green.

The creators are so confident in the performance and reliability of their new design that the unit comes with a full one-year guarantee (including the switching circuitry). For more information, contact Perfect 360 at 800/230-P360.

1995 catalog from Happ Controls

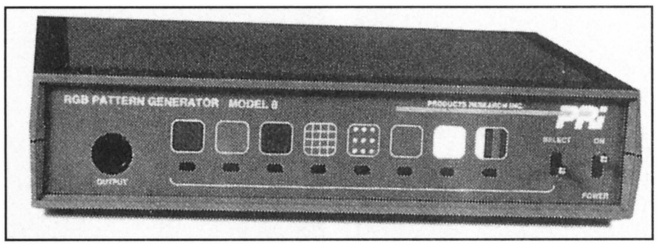


Happ Controls has just published their newest and largest catalog ever. Organized in a "user-friendly" format, the 1995 catalog consists of 56 pages of products for the amusement and gaming industry.

New and industry standard products include joysticks, push-buttons, trackballs, driving controls, meters, coin doors, bill acceptor doors, electronic coin acceptors, power supplies and pinball parts.

To receive a free copy, contact Happ Controls Inc., 106 Garlisch Dr., Elk Grove, IL 60007; 708/593-6130.

RGB pattern generator from Star*Tech Journal



The Pattgen Model 8 RGB pattern generator is a light weight and compact solution to many a service managers' video monitor problems. The units ensures good geometry adjustments, purity and convergence alignments.

Features include a new low-gray and high-white pattern for proper setting of color cut-off and gain controls; extra-long 6 ft. signal cable and 6 ft. AC cord; universal MOLEX signal connectors; negative composite standard sync; soft-touch pattern select switch; and multi-pattern generation. It also comes with a one-year full parts and labor warranty.

For price and information, call the Star*Tech Journal at 609/662-1080. In Canada, call Laniel Automatic at 514/731-8571.

New from Two-Bit Score

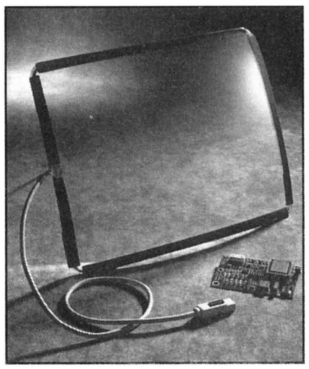
Two-Bit Score's new Yogi Board allows the operator to install a standard Deltronics ticket dispenser into any adult video game, including pokers, 8-lines and bingos.

The tiny computer hooks to the in and out meters so that when the player hits the payout button, it dispenses the correct amount of tickets. The operator can adjust the number of tickets dispensed from one credit per ticket up to 80 credits per ticket. Any unused credits are returned to the game screen.

The device disables the in meter during the payout process so that returned credits are not counted twice, and it pauses after the first returned credit to allow the screen to update so no credits are lost. The out meter counts tickets dispensed rather than credits, so bookkeeping is easy.

For more information, contact Two-Bit Score at 512/ 447-8888.

new touchscreen from MicroTouch Systems



The *ClearTek 2000* is MicroTouch Systems' newest analog capacitive touchscreen, and is based on the company's recently developed, proprietary Smart Touch Screen (STS) technology.

MicroTouch says the new unit improves touchscreen accuracy 75% over previous models, while also providing increased touch down speed of 8-15 milliseconds, and new remote diagnostic capabilities.

The *ClearTek 2000*-series controller family consists of three configuration options: the new SMT-2, a programmable CMOS surface mount serial controller; a half-slot ISA compatible PC Bus controller; and a Transistor-Transistor Logic (TTL) daughterboard controller that allows OEMs to easily integrate MicroTouch circuitry directly onto their motherboard. All the *2000*-series controllers are 100% backward compatible with previous generation products and fully compatible with all MicroTouch software drivers.

For more information, contact MicroTouch Systems, Inc., 300 Griffin Park, Methuen, MA 01844; 508/650-9000.

POWERSTICK from Exos

PowerStick, a force feedback joystick, is a device intended to enhance video gameplay by adding a sense of touch. It uses technology developed by Exos for a wide range of "touch" applications.

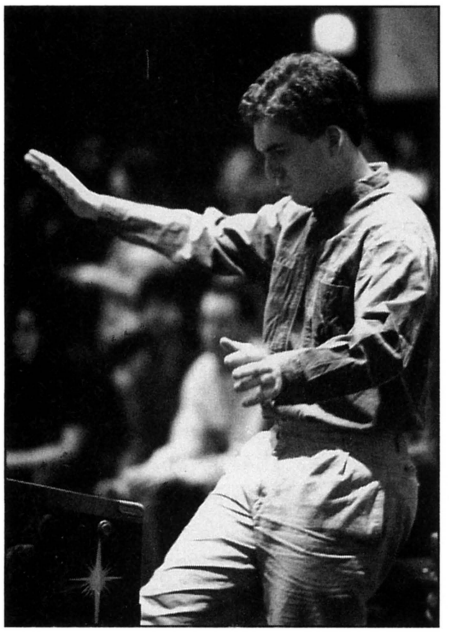
The joystick uses electric motors and a low friction, low backlash transmission coupled with integrated electronics for controlling the feedback and modeling the user's interactions with the game. It utilizes Exos' proprietary technology in information compression as well as expertise in how to render touch sensation to the human operator. The company says the device can be cost competitive with current game input devices and be just as easy to use to create games.

Potential applications include flight simulators, where the *PowerStick* can let players feel the difference between types of aircraft; in fighting/action games, the device can simulate the impact of weapons or collisions with objects or walls.

For more information, contact Exos Inc., 2A Gill St., Woburn, MA 01801; 617/933-0022.

GRAPEVINE

NORTHEAST



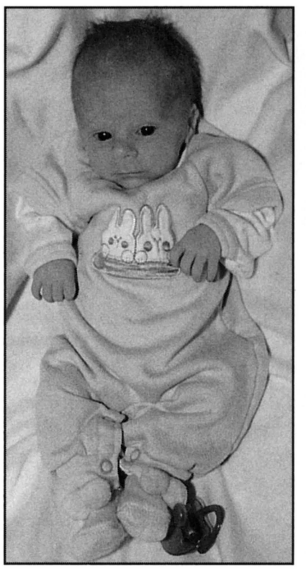
PAPA 5 — Dubbed "Judgement Day" by organizer Steve Epstein, the Professional and Amateur Pinball Association's PAPA 5 World Pinball Championships will be held Feb. 3-5 at the Park Central Hotel in New York City. The sport's top contenders from 11 European and Pacific countries will go up against top U.S. flippermasters, including reigning PAPA champ Bowen Kerins, pictured above. Over 1,000 players are expected to compete in nine divisions for a purse of over $30,000 in cash and prizes, as well as the highly sought-after title of World's Greatest Pinball Player. According to PAPA president Epstein, the goal of this year's challenge is to "break the mold and outdo what we did at PAPA 4." The '94 tournament saw over 800 competitors and gained world-wide media attention. Competitive divisions at PAPA 5 include three levels of singles (A,B & C), doubles, juniors (under 16) and the rapidly growing women's division. Although secrecy surrounds the choice of games, recent hit titles from Premier Technology, Sega Pinball and Williams Technology are likely to make an appearance. The event will also include a competitive bank of classic games from the '60s and '70s, and FlipperMania 2, the second Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDs pinball benefit party on Feb. 5. Plans are being hatched by Steve Epstein and BC/EFA director of special events John Fahey that include the usual array of PAPA celebs — which in past years included Brook Shields, Lou Reed, Penn Jillette, Elle MacPherson, and numerous pro athletes — as well as a roster of current Broadway stars. For more information, contact Kahn & Jacobs Public Relations at 212/647-1850.

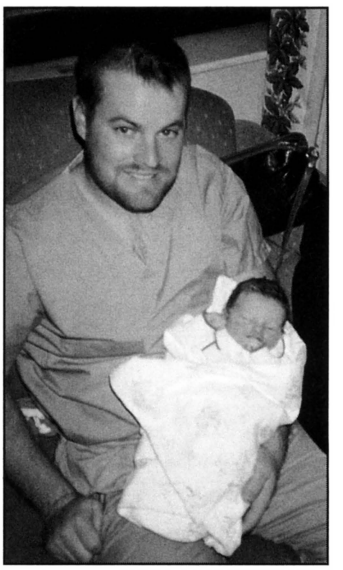
PROUD POPPA — Alex Perner, VP over at R.H. Belam (Hempstead, N.Y.) sent us a photo the newest member of his family. Andrea Heather Perner was born on Sept. 19, weighing 8 lbs. 5 oz. and measuring 20.5 in. Little Andrea is



shown here under the watchful eye of her two-year-old sister, Cecilia. Congratulations Alex and keep up the good work, Cecilia!

SOUTHEAST





DOUBLY BLESSED — On Nov. 27, Operators Distributing (Archdale, N.C.) chief Steve Henderson was gifted with a grandson by daughter Amy and her husband Brian McSweeny. Little Stephen Patrick (above, left) weighed in at 5 lbs. 3 oz. Now get this: just five days later, O.D. sales hitter Dickie McCannell was also blessed with a new grandson by son Rick and his wife Donna! That's Rick with little Tyler Heath McCannell at right. God bless all!

LEISUREXPO '95 is coming to Orlando, Florida, January 19-21, highlighting the latest in rides, games, fast food, and other items related to the FEC industry. This year's show should be bigger and better than ever, with more than 425 booths expected to fill the halls of the Orange County Convention Center. New this year is a special section on the floor showcasing the latest in themed products, souvenirs, novelties and other merchandise. There's also the annual Awards Ceremony on Friday night, and over 34 free seminars scheduled throughout the show. For more information, contact show organizers at 305/448-7976.



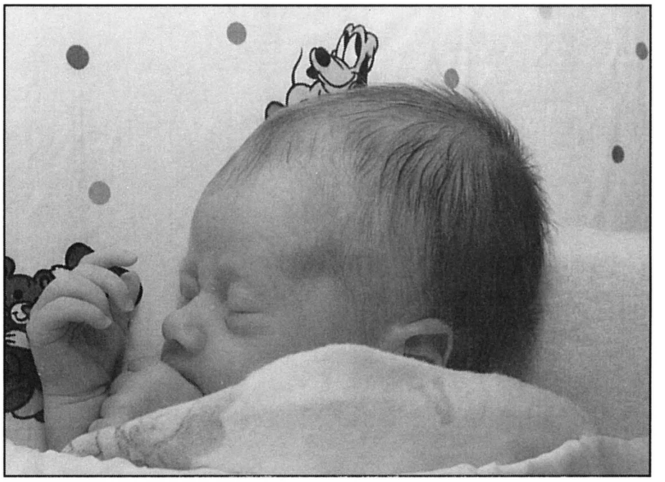
BOWLING SHOW — The Southeast Regional Convention/Trade Show hosted by the Bowling Centers Assn. of Florida (BCAF) was held Nov. 8-10 at the Belleview Mido Resort in Clearwater. And of course, Tampa-based Southeast Game Brokers had a booth, this year featuring Mr. Bentley, VP of New Accounts. Mr. Bentley, pictured above with SGB prexy Rich Holley (left) and Joe Fraumeni of Brevard Bowling Centers, is actually a remote-controlled robot who was on hand to lure customers into the SGB booth with either excessive flattery or "just for fun" insults. "This show is always a lot of fun and does produce some results," said Rich Holley, who had several coin-op games at his booth, including a crowd-pleasing 50" *Daytona USA*. Rich also hosted the annual cocktail party for the Bowling show.

MIDWEST



PINBALL EXPO — Alan Zeidman of Atlas Distributing (Chicago) sent us a few snapshots he took at the 10th Annual Pinball Expo at the Ramada Inn in Rosemont, Ill., Nov. 10-13. Shown above is the Expo tournament played on a bank of Sega Pinball's *Maverick* pingame (or are they the rare Data East versions?). There was also a game auction, an autograph session with "the greats and near-greats of the industry," a banquet, a flipper association meeting/seminar to promote pins, a factory tour, "and they reopened the Expo floor for a late-evening round of pinball," Alan reported.

IT'S A GIRL! — Sega Pinball, Inc. game designer Tim Seckel and his lovely wife Kelly are the proud parents of their first child. Madison Page Seckel was born Sept. 30, and weighed 5 lbs 11 oz. and measured 18.5 in. Mom and baby are resting comfortably at home while Dad continues to work



hard developing his next blockbuster pinball machine. Congratulations and good luck to the newly enlarged Seckel family!

INTERNATIONAL



OVERSEAS FEC — Fred Milner of Bondeal Sales International (Hong Kong) together with partners Fun Corp. of the Philippines opened their latest Time Out family fun center at Ever Gotesco Commonwealth Shopping Mall in Quezon City, a suburb of Manila. The new 850 sq. ft. fun center continues with the sports theme used in all Time Out locations throughout the Philippines. This particular Time Out has a large comic-style "sportsman" hanging from the ceiling, and a tower erected in the middle of the play area with games on the tower itself and redemption counters underneath. In addition to dedicated and upright videos, kiddie rides and redemption games, there's a centrally-located soft-play area, a first for Time Out. The mall itself is styled after a European castle and is said to be quite impressive when viewed from afar.

TECH SCHOOL — NSM's field service trainer Keith White runs about 50 tech schools a year, and he says that the school at Laniel Automatic (Montreal, Quebec) is always one of the best. The following photo of the most recent school shows just how well attended these event are. NSM's John Margold had one explanation: "In order to avoid the expense of UPS over the border, Canadian operators work very hard



to become self-sufficient. I've noticed the same thing with our Mexican customers." The result, John said, is a level of technical expertise that would be the envy of many U.S. operators.



ISLAND HOP — Rowe's exec VP Joel Friedman and tech rep Phil Cole recently hit the beaches of sunny Puerto Rico. Well, we really don't know if they had time to take in the sun and sand, but they did spend several days visiting Rowe's Puerto Rican distributors and operators. Distributor open houses were held at Funny & Fun, James Industries and Mondial International, with ops from all corners of the island attending. Joel is pictured above, along with Aldo Andreu of James Industries, discussing the merits of Rowe's LaserStar Diamante with Puerto Rican operators.

IN THE NEWS — Canadian newspapers ran a couple of industry-related items over the last few months. In September, the Montreal *Gazette* ran an excellent profile of Gaetan Laniel and his family-run business, Laniel Canada, Inc. of St. Laurent. The company has undergone many changes and now in the hands of the third generation of Laniels, and has shifted emphasis from selling coin-op machines to developing state-of-the-art bill changers....In October, coin-op made the pages of two Toronto dailies, the *Star* and the *Sun*, with coverage of the 16th Annual CN Tower Stair Climb, a United Way fund-raising event that has over 1,000 people climbing the steps of the world's tallest building. In the past, stair-climbing enthusiasts have lugged various heavy objects with them, including a refrigerator, a motorscooter and a giant pumpkin. But this year two volunteers took a 128-lb. NSM jukebox up the stairwell with them. Gilchrist Vending supplied the juke, which made the party at the top a roaring success.

LATINO Jukebox Top 30
FOR MONTH ENDING NOVEMBER 1994

COMPILED FOR COMPACT DISC JUKEBOX OPERATORS

	THIS CHART	LAST CHART	TITLE	ARTIST
REGIONAL MEXICAN	1	1	**GRACIAS MUJER** (No. 1)	BANDA MACHOS
	2	3	**EN CONCIERTO**	LOS TEMERARIOS
	3	2	**JACARANDOSA**	BANDA ZETA
	4	1	**GRANDES EXITOS A LA MANERA**	ALEJANDROFERNANDEZ
	5	6	**AYER Y HOY**	ANA GABRIEL
	6	3	**EL PRINCIPE**	RAMON AYALA JR.
	7	5	**DIME CUANDO VOLVERAS**	RAMON AYALA
	8	--	**INALCANZABLE**	LOS BUKIS
	9	4	**LOS DOS PLEBES**	LOS TIGRES DEL NORTE
	10	5	UNA EXPLOSION MUSICAL	LOS HURRACANES DEL NORTE
TROPICAL / SALSA	1	--	**LO NUEVO & LO MEJOR** (No. 1)	JERRY RIVERA
	2	2	**EXITOS DE LA DINAMITA CON MARGARITA**	SONORA DINAMITA
	3	--	**IMPARABLE**	SONORA DINAMITA
	4	--	**SIENTE EL AMOR**	OLGA TANON
	5	--	**SALSA P.R. vs SALSA N.Y.**	VARIOUS ARTISTS
	6	--	**RETONANDO**	JOHNNY VENTURA
	7	--	**EL MERENGUE SE BAILA PEGAO**	SERGIO VARGAS
	8	--	**CLASICOS DE LA PROVINCIA**	CARLOS VIVES
	9	--	**Y SIGUE LA FIESTA**	SONORA DINAMITA
	10	--	**SWING LATINO**	BANDA BLANCA
POP	1	2	**AMOR PROHIBIDO** (No. 1)	SELENA
	2	1	**SEGUNDO ROMANCE**	LUIS MIGUEL
	3	3	**TE CONQUISTARE**	LOS FUGITIVOS
	4	4	**VANIDOSA**	LOS FUGITIVOS
	5	10	**VIDA**	LA MAFIA
	6	8	**SUPER EXITOS**	LIBERACION
	7	--	**ENAMORATE**	FAMA
	8	5	**17 SUPER EXITOS**	LA MAFIA
	9	6	**THE BEST**	ANA GABRIEL
	10	--	**GRACIAS POR ESPERAR**	JUAN GABRIEL

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VITAL TITLES



TOP-SELLING 45S & CDS AT KEY ONE-STOPS AS OF DECEMBER 20, 1994

POP

1. ***ALL I WANNA DO,*** *Sheryl Crow, A&M 0702*
2. ***GET OVER IT,*** *Eagles, Geffen 19376*
3. ***BLIND MAN,*** *Aerosmith, Geffen 19377*
4. ***DANCE NAKED,*** *John Mellencamp, Mercury 856346*
5. ***OUT OF TEARS,*** *Rolling Stones, Virgin 38459*
6. ***TREMOR CHRIST/SPIN THE BLACK CIRCLE,*** *Pearl Jam, Epic 77771*
7. ***ALWAYS,*** *Bon Jovi, Mercury 856227*
8. ***WHEN WE DANCE,*** *Sting, A&M 0846*
9. ***HOUSE OF LOVE,*** *Amy Grant w/ Vince Gill, A&M 0802*
- ★ 10. ***ALWAYS & FOREVER,*** *Luther Vandross, Epic 77735*

POP PICK HITS

YOU DON'T KNOW HOW IT FEELS
Tom Petty - Warner Bros. 18030

TAKE A BOW
Madonna - Warner Bros. 18000

SPACE
Prince - Warner Bros. 18012

C/W

1. ***PICKUP MAN,*** *Joe Diffe, Epic 77715*
2. ***GOIN' THROUGH THE BIG D,*** *Mark Chesnutt, Decca 54941*
3. ***UNTANGLIN' MY MIND,*** *Clint Black, RCA 62933*
4. ***THE BIG ONE,*** *George Strait, MCA 54938*
5. ***THERE GOES MY HEART,*** *The Mavericks, MCA 54909*
6. ***MI VIDA LOCA,*** *Pam Tillis, Arista 12759*
7. ***BABY LIKES TO ROCK IT,*** *The Tractors, Arista 12717*
8. ***THE FIRST STEP,*** *Tracy Byrd, MCA 54945*
9. ***THIRD RATE ROMANCE,*** *Sammy Kershaw, Mercury 858922*
10. ***I GOT IT HONEST,*** *Aaron Tippin, RCA 62947*

COUNTRY PICK HITS

UPSTAIRS DOWNTOWN
Toby Keith - Polydor 851136

R&B

- ★ 1. ***DON'T SAY GOODBYE GIRL,*** *Tevin Campbell, Warner Bros. 18254*
- ★ 2. ***THE SWEETEST DAYS,*** *Vanessa Williams, Mercury 851110*
- ★ 3. ***ALWAYS & FOREVER,*** *Luther Vandross, Epic 77735*
- ★ 4. ***SPACE,*** *Prince, Warner Bros. 18012*
5. ***CAN I STAY WITH YOU,*** *Karyn White, Warner Bros. 18007*
6. ***U WILL KNOW,*** *B.M.U., Mercury 856200*
7. ***I'LL MAKE LOVE TO YOU,*** *Boyz II Men, Motown 2257*
- ★ 8. ***ENDLESS LOVE,*** *Luther Vandross & Mariah Carey, Columbia 77629*
9. ***WHERE IS MY LOVE?,*** *El Debarge & Babyface, Reprise 18140*
10. ***HUNGAH,*** *Karyn White, Warner Bros. 18121*

CDs

1. ***TUESDAY NIGHT MUSIC CLUB,*** *Sheryl Crow, A&M 0126*
2. ***HELL FREEZES OVER,*** *Eagles, Geffen 24725*
3. ***THE TRACTORS,*** *The Tractors, Arista 18728*
4. ***FROM THE CRADLE,*** *Eric Clapton, Reprise 45735*
5. ***GREATEST HITS,*** *Bob Seger & The Silver Bullet Band, Capitol 30334*
6. ***THE ICON IS LOVE,*** *Barry White, A&M 540115*
7. ***VITALOGY,*** *Pearl Jam, Epic 66900*
8. ***BIG ONES,*** *Aerosmith, Geffen 24716*
9. ***MONSTER,*** *R.E.M., Warner Bros. 45740*
10. ***VOODOO LOUNGE,*** *Rolling Stones, Virgin 39782*

★ = *significant crossover activity*

DATEBOOK

— 1994 —

JANUARY 1995						
SU	M	T	W	TH	F	SA
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

JANUARY 1995

19-21: Leisurexpo '95, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. For more information, contact Al Barry at 305/448-7976.

25-27: ATEI show, Earls Court 1, London, UK. For information, contact Peter Rusbridge at 44-71-713-0302.

25-28: IMA '95 (Germany) show, Frankfurt Trade Fair Centre, Frankfurt. For details, contact Blenheim Heckmann GmbH at 49-211-901-9134.

FEBRUARY

8-12: Taiwan Amusement Exhibition (TAE '95), CETRA Exhibition Hall, Taipei, Taiwan. For more information, contact Creative Int'l PR Consulting at 886-2-746-6860.

22-23: AOU Show, Makuhari Messe, Chiba, Tokyo, Japan. For information, contact Mr. K. Kirtani at 81-3-3253-5671.

MARCH

7-8: AmEx '95 (Ireland) trade show, Green Isle Hotel, Dublin. For details, contact Susan Feery, MD Associates, at 353-45-21190.

16-19: ENADA Primavera, Rimini Trade Fair Centre, Italy. For information, contact KMS at 44-323-44-2747.

23-25: ACME '95, Reno Convention Center, Reno, Nev. For more information, contact William T. Glasgow, Inc. at 708/333-9292.

APRIL

20-22: NAMA Western Convention and Trade Show, Reno/Sparks Convention Center, Reno, Nev. For more information, contact the NAMA at 312/346-0370.

MAY

20-23: AMOA/AAMA Government Affairs Conference, Washington D.C. For information, contact the AMOA at 800/937-2662.

JUNE

7-8: Asian Amusement Expo, Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre, Wanchai, Hong Kong. For more information, contact William T, Glasgow, Inc. at 708/333-9292.

JULY

19-20: EXIME, Exhibimex, Mexico City, Mexico. For more information, contact William T. Glasgow, Inc. at 708/333-9292.

27-29: Billiard Congress of America Int'l Trade Expo, The Sands Expo & Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. For more information, contact Frank Zdy at 619/278-3877.

SEPTEMBER

21-23: AMOA Expo '95, New Orleans Convention Center, New Orleans, La. For information contact the AMOA at 800/937-2662.

OCTOBER

7-10: Int'l Family Fun Center & Miniature Golf Show (Fun Expo '95), Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. For more information, call the Fun Expo at 914/993-9200.

NOVEMBER

15-18: International Assn. of Amusement Parks and Attractions 77th Annual Convention & Trade Show, New Orleans Convention Center, New Orleans, La. For information, contact the IAAPA at 703/836-4800.

THE BLUE PAGES

BUYERS' BULLETIN

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

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

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Conventional Power Supplies (used in pinballs and monitors) — $ 49.95
Videogame Monitor Repair Made Simple 3 Tapes — $109.95
Switching Regulator Power Supplies — $ 49.95
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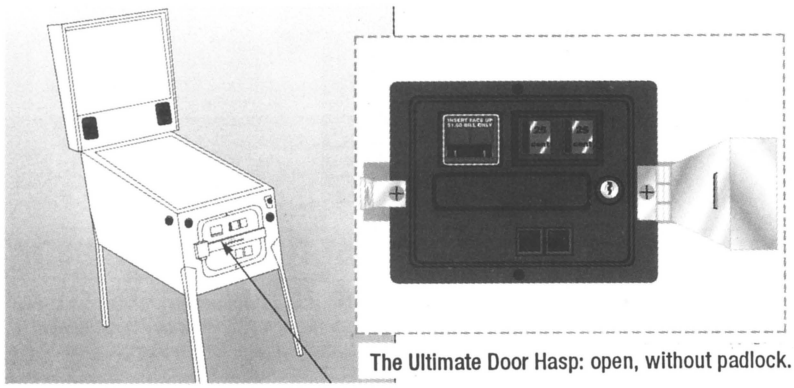

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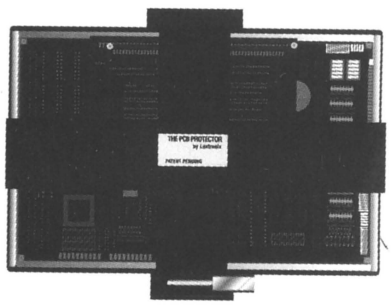

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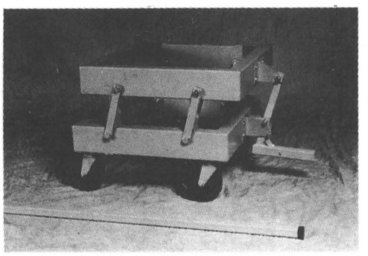

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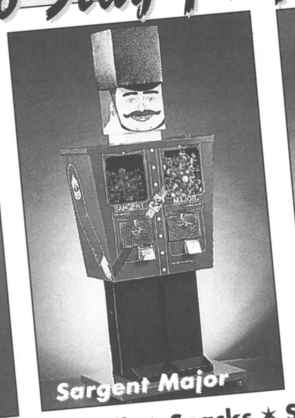



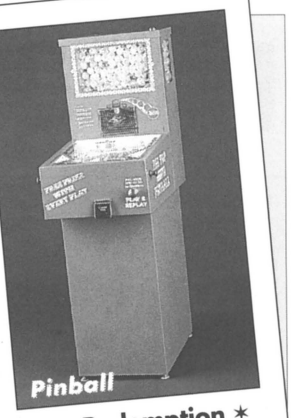



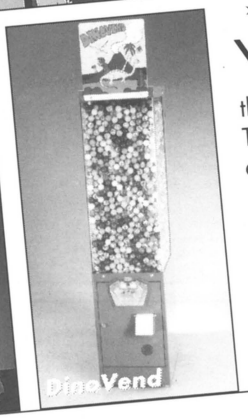

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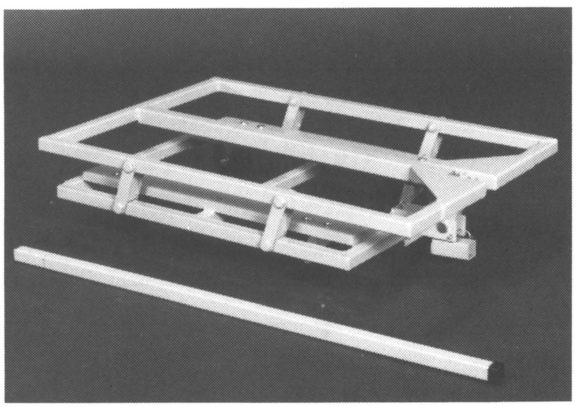

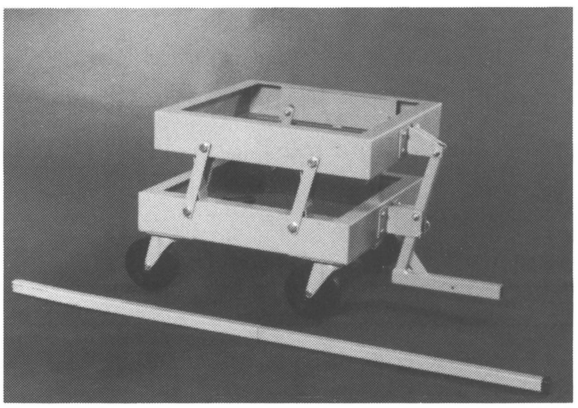

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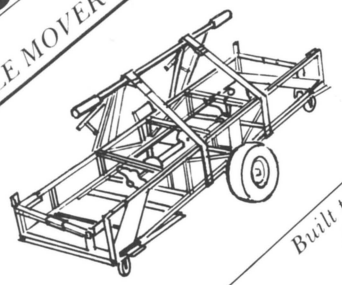

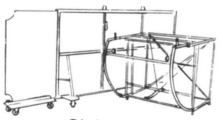

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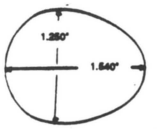

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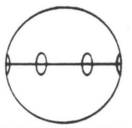

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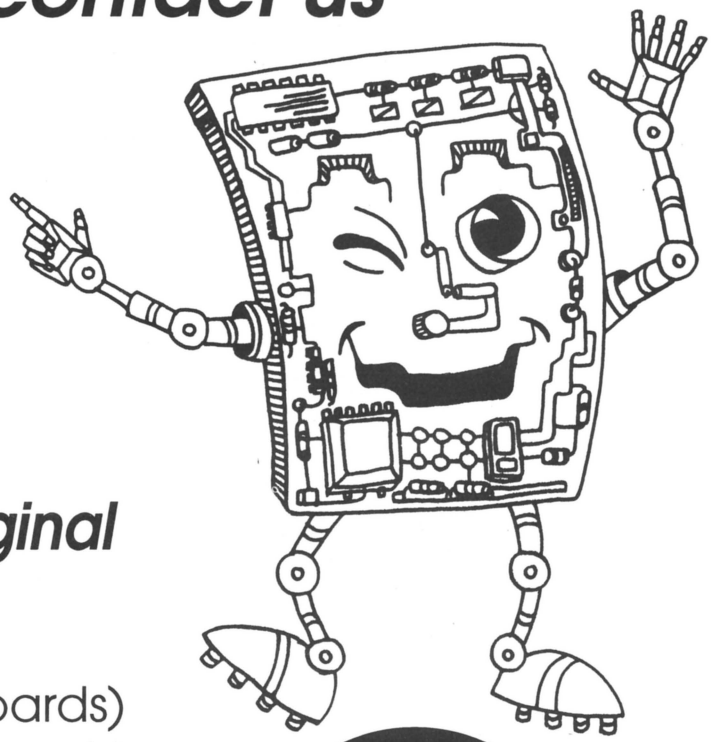

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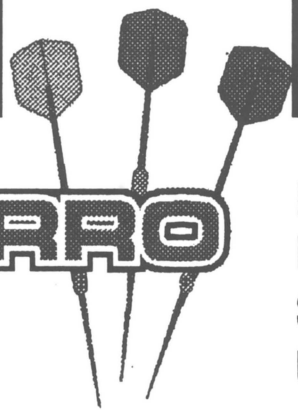

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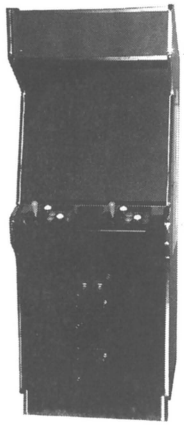

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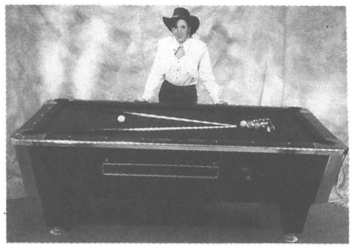

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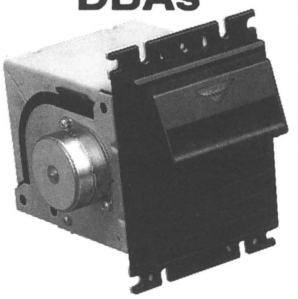

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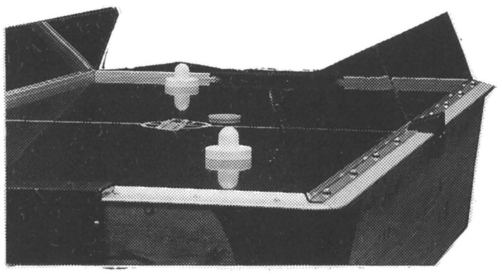

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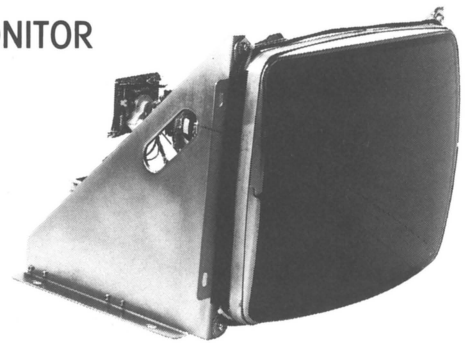

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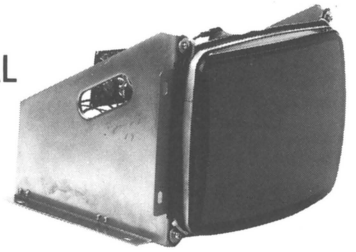

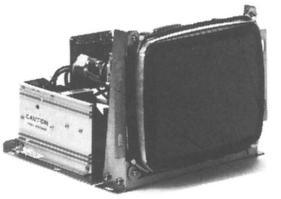

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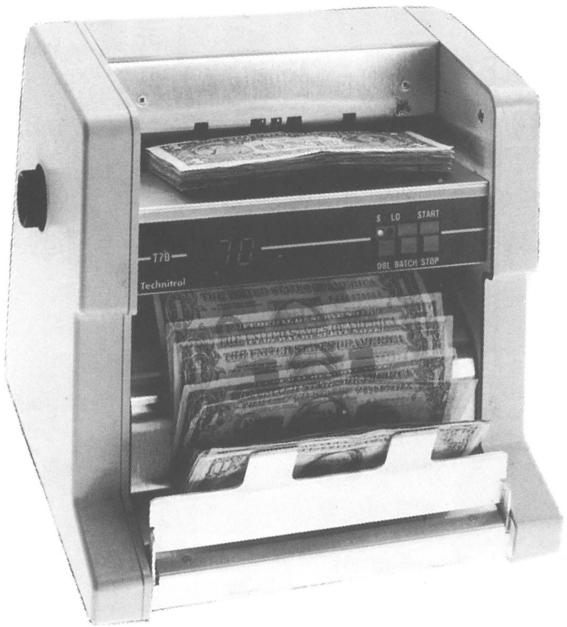

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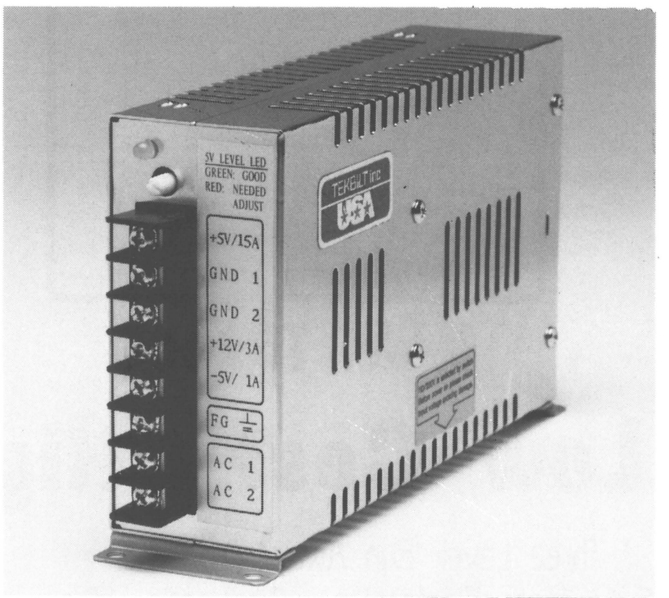

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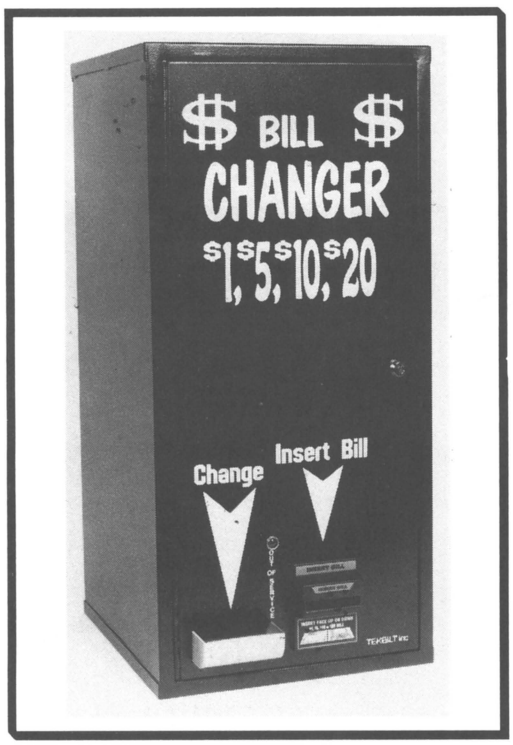

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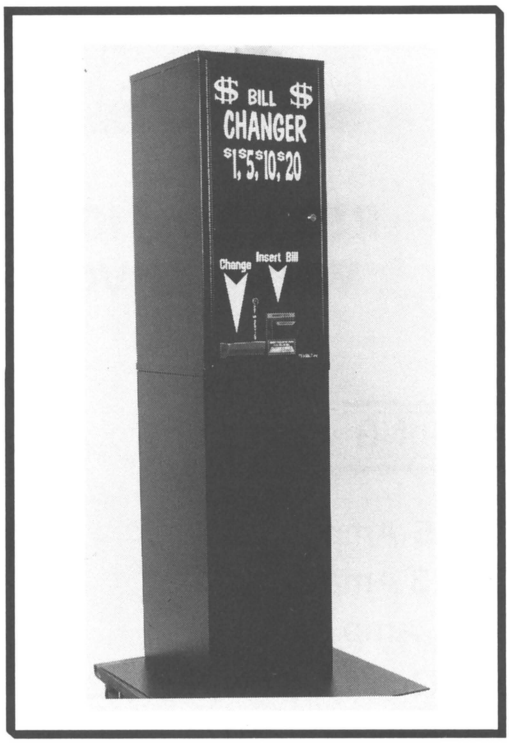

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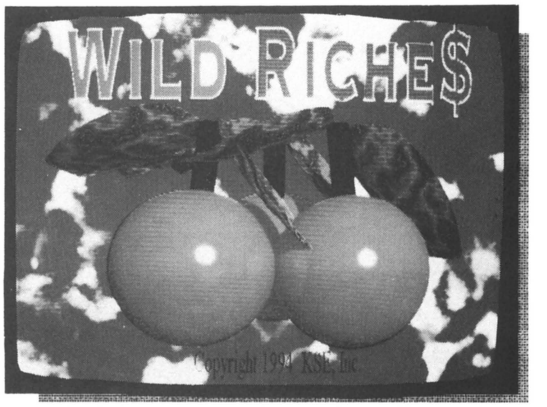

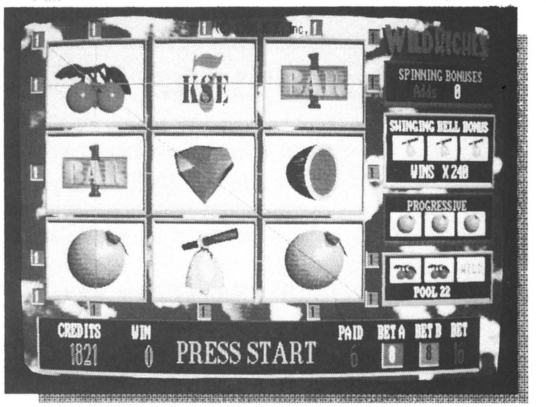

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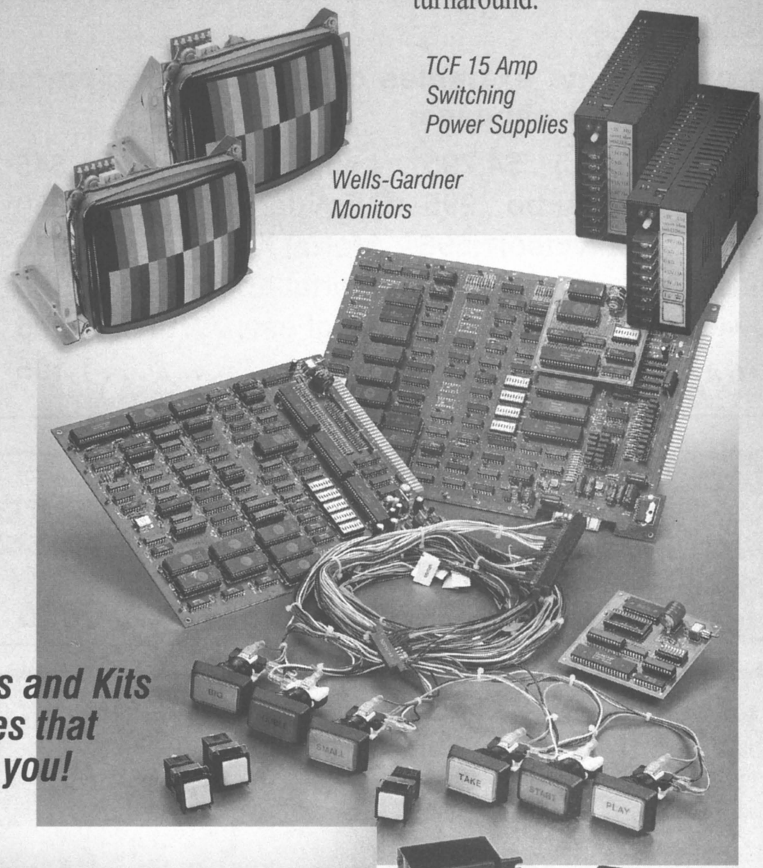

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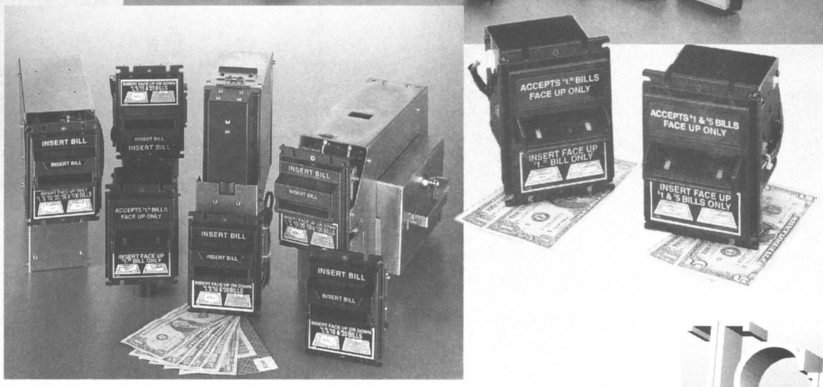

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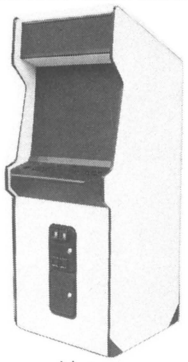





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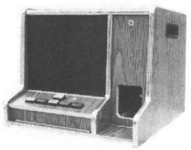

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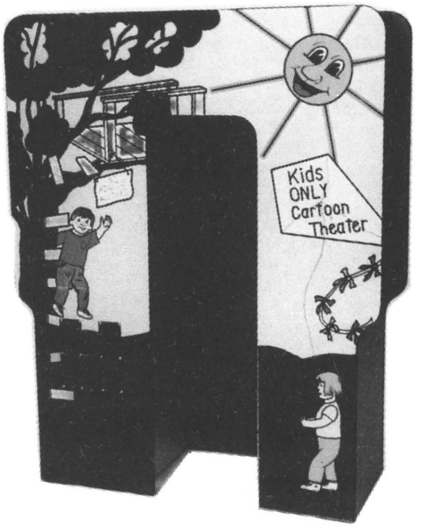

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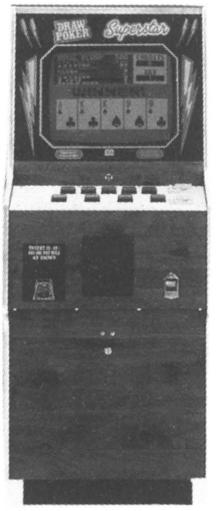

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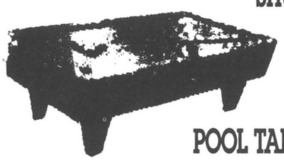

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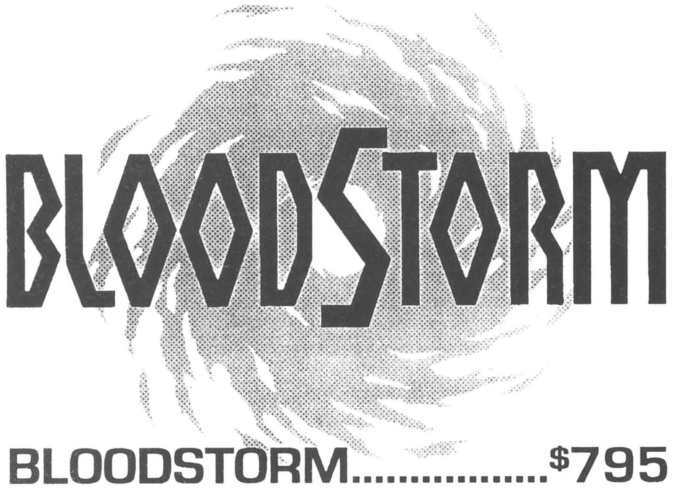

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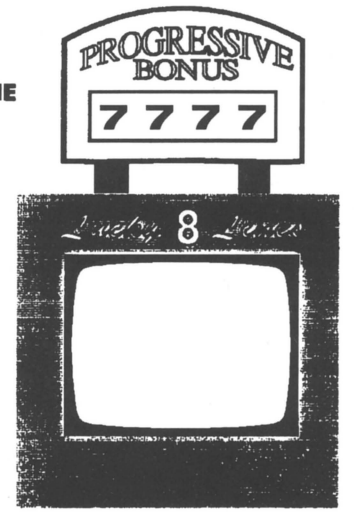

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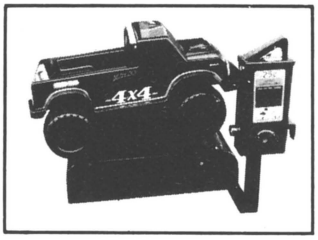

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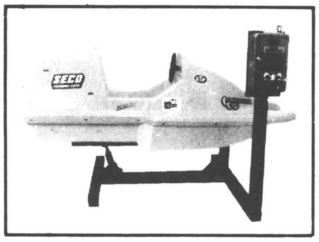

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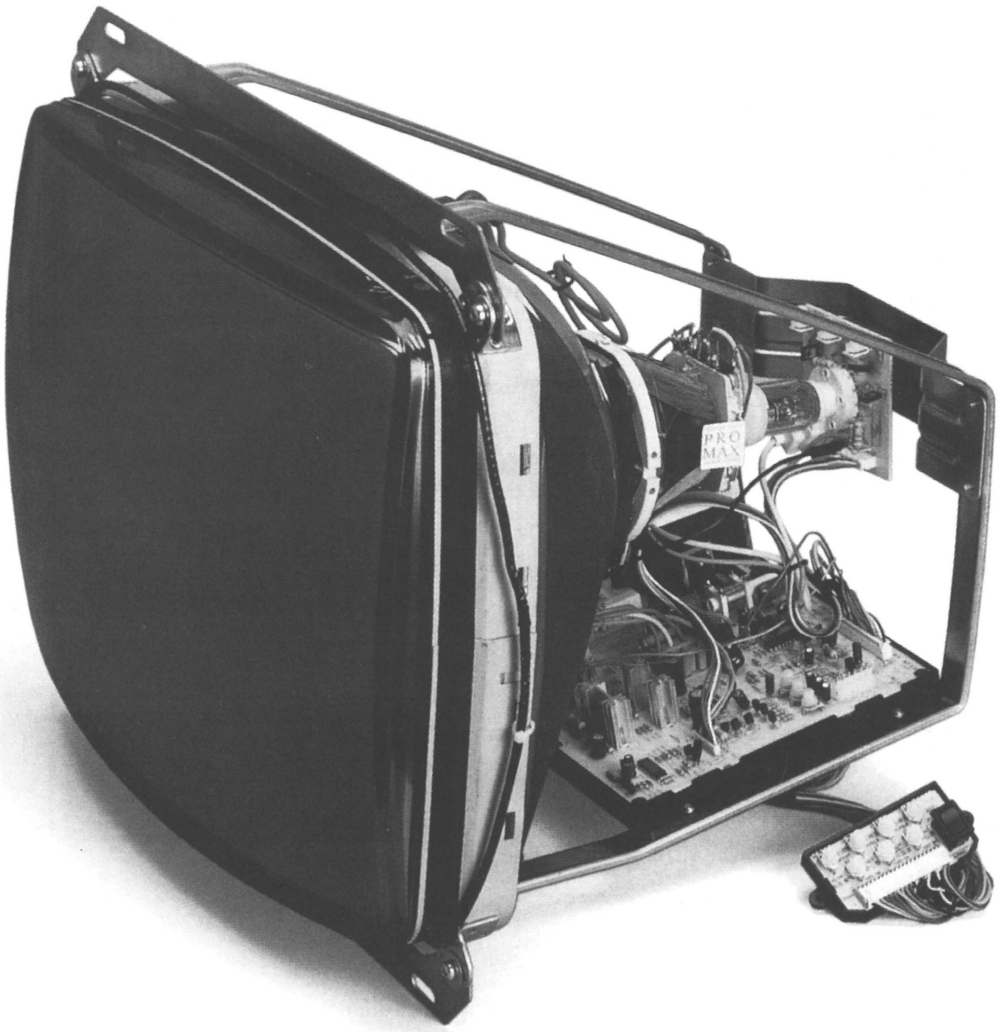

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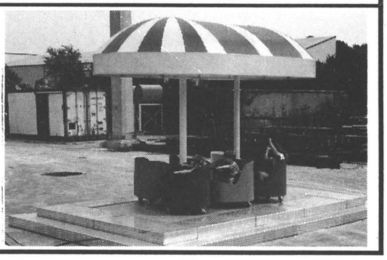

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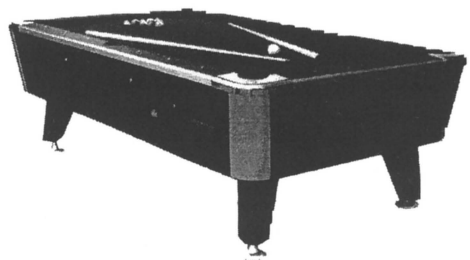

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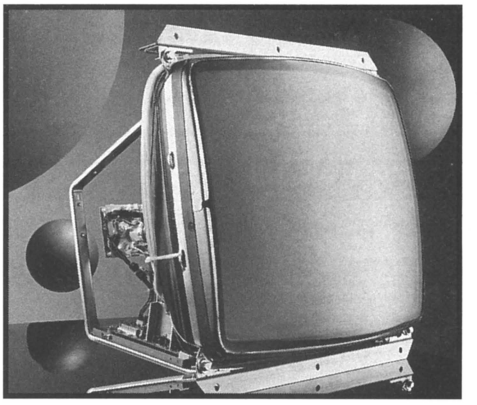

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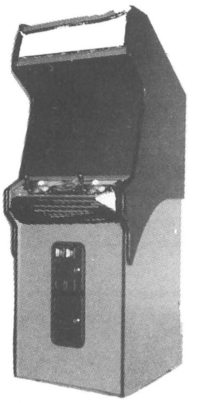

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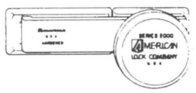

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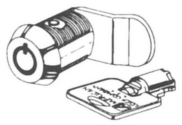

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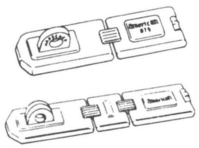

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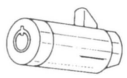

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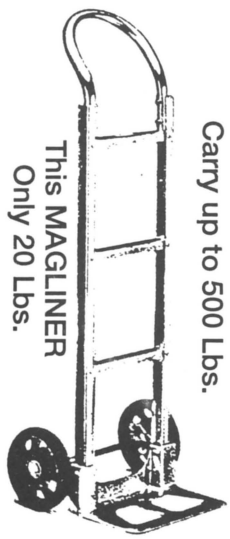

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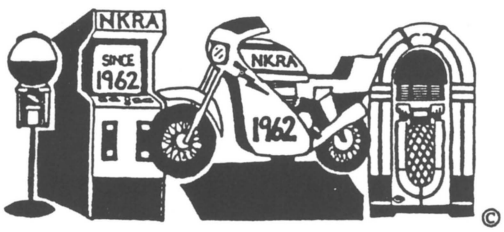

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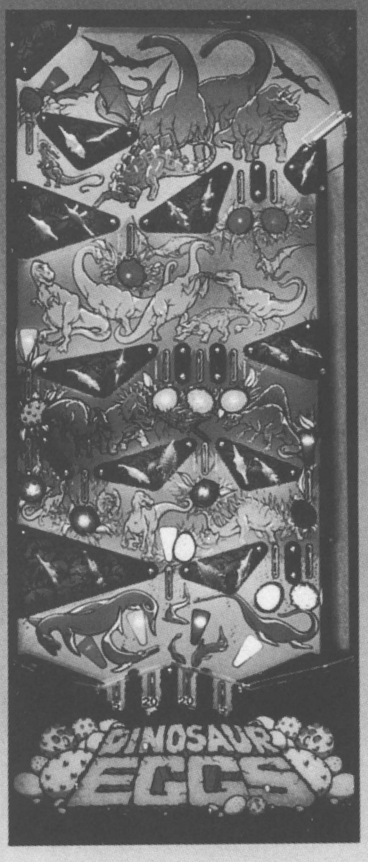

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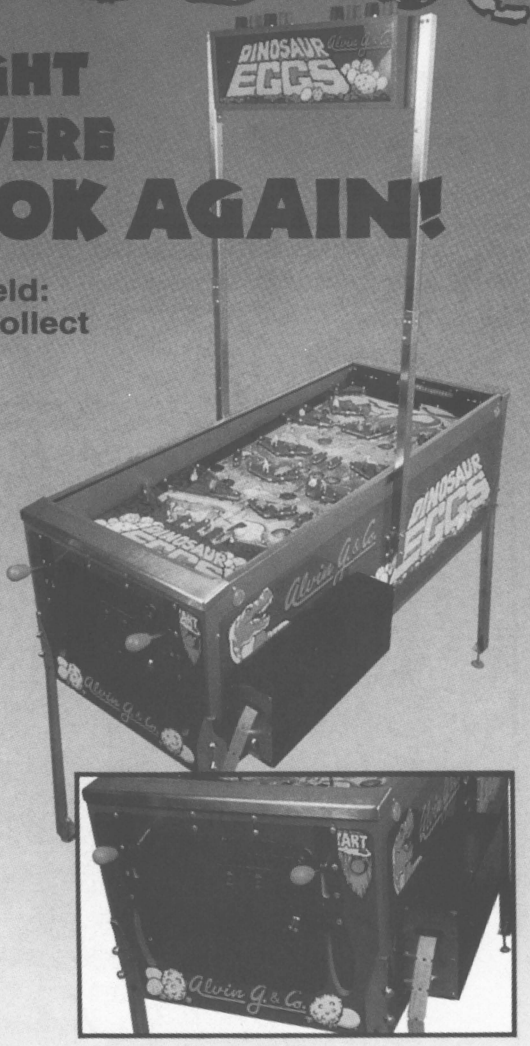

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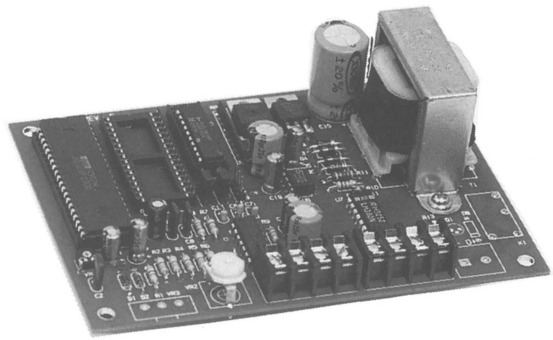

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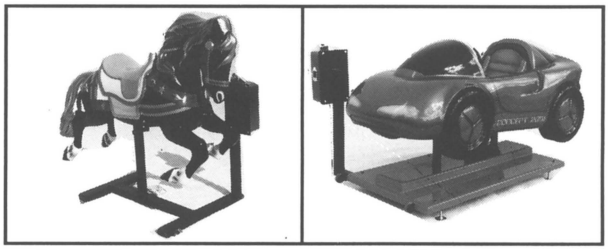

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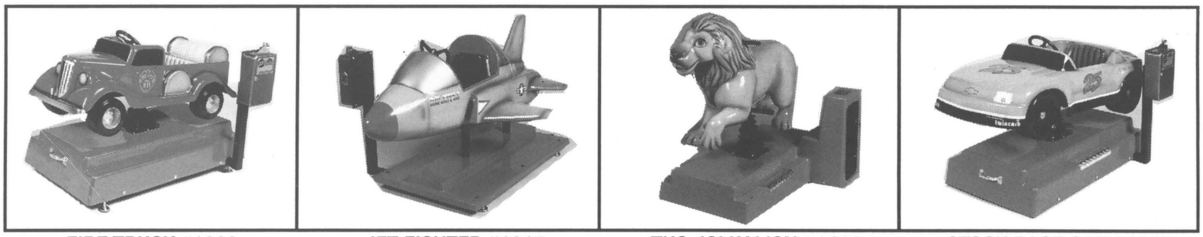

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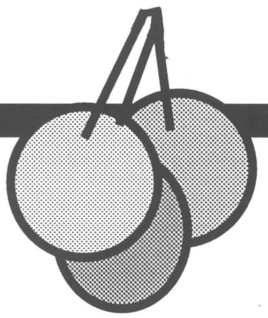

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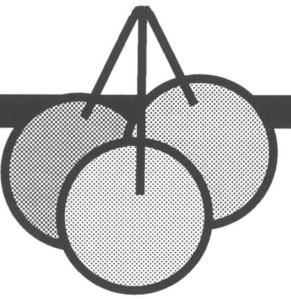

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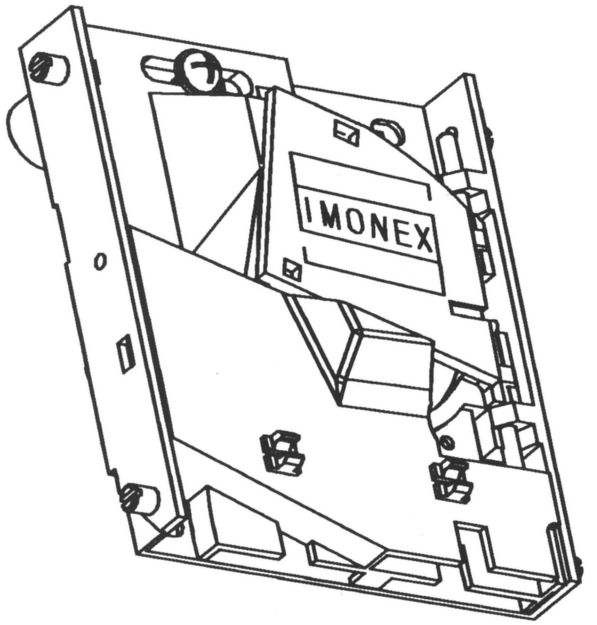

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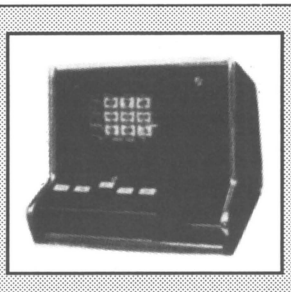

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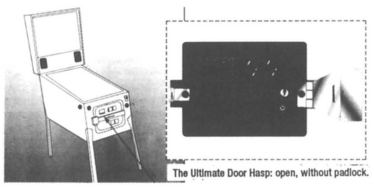

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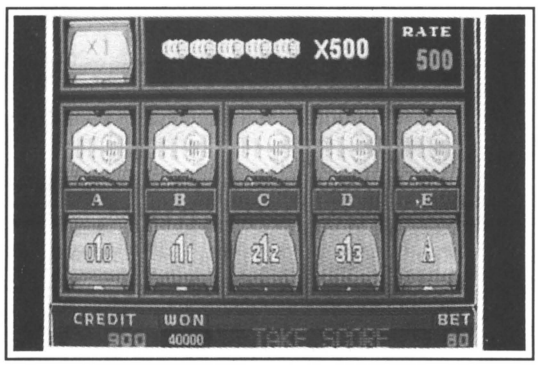

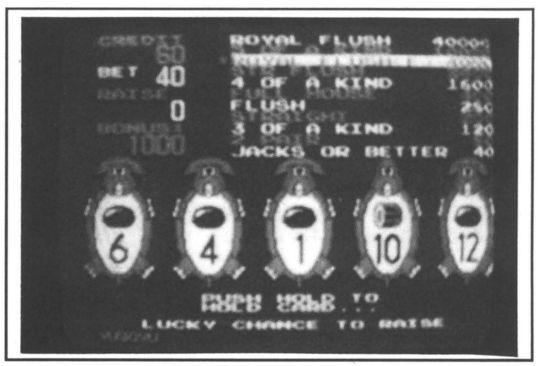

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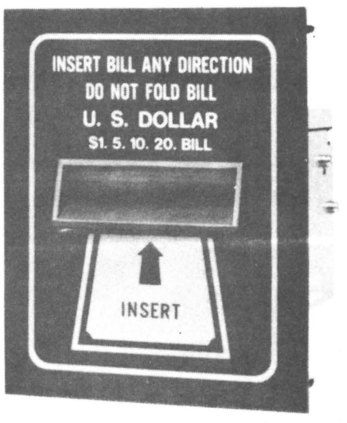

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INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

ACME Convention '95 ..... Pg. 97
AMOA 125
Acces Entertainment 77
Allstar Music/Silent Partner 83
American Laser Games 51
Amusements Plus ..... Toss-in-flyer
Arachnid 61
Arjay Export 107
Atari ..... cover #4, 19, 93
Atlus Software 29
Baton Lock & Hardware 114
R.H. Belam Co 36, 59, 78, 84, 142
Benchmark Entertainment 57
Bob's Space Racers 62
Capcom U.S.A. 21, 81
Cherry Electrical Products 113
Chugai Bayeki/Kaneko 35
Coastal Amusements 25, 105
Coin ConneXion 55
Data East, Inc. 49
Deltronic Labs 54
Dynamo Corporation 37
Fabtek ..... Pg. 29
Fillmore 102
Fun Center Software 48
Fuuki Co., Ltd. 112
Gametime 42
Grayhound Electronics 89
Great American Billiards 140
Hamilton Manufacturing 135
Hoffman & Hoffman 34
HumanCorporation 44
I.C.E. 23
Imagination Leisure 11
Impressment Plus 46
Jaleco 17
LazerTron 99, 101
Henry W.T. Mali 140
Mazzco ..... Toss-in-Flyer
Merit Industries 45
Micro Manufacturing 127
Mission Crane Service 65
NSM-America 27, 85
Namco 4-5
National Ticket Co. ..... Pg. 91
Planet Earth Entertainment 41, 109, 131
Play-by-Play 95
Playfair Shuffleboard Co. 56
Plush-4-Play 64
Premier Technology ..... cover #2
Rock-Ola/Antique Apparatus 73
Rowe International 32, 63
SNK 12, 15
Sega 7, 9
Skee Ball, Inc. 47
Smart Industries 67-70
Star Track, Inc. 118
Success Plush 28
Taito 43
Valley Recreation Products 53
Van Brook of Lexington 62, 111
Roger Williams Mint 52
Wico ..... Toss-in-flyer
Williams Electronics ..... cover #3
Ya Chou 122

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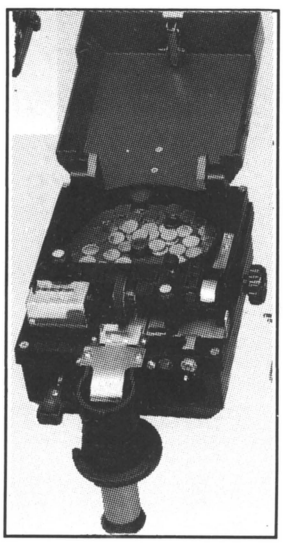

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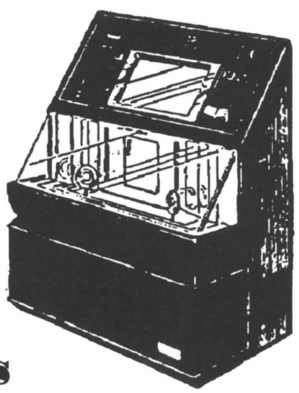

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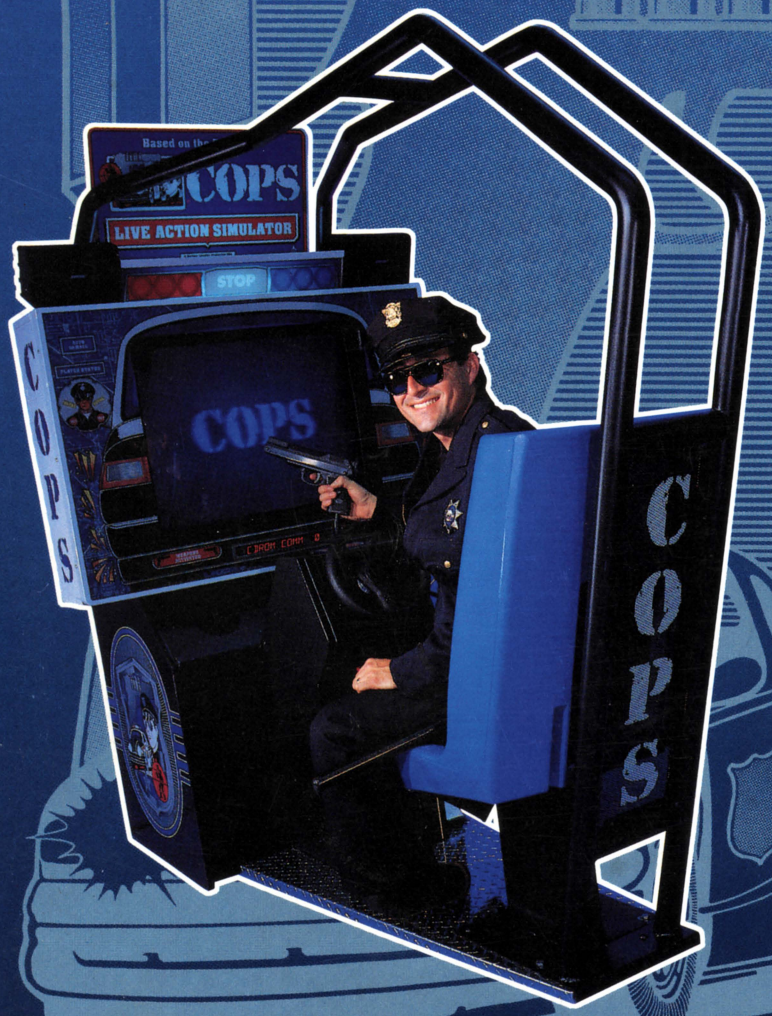

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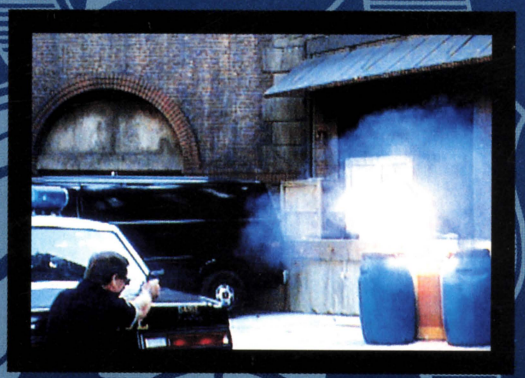





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