

**MAGAZINE  
OF THE YEAR**

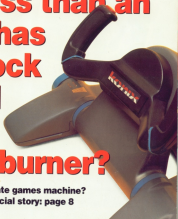
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ISSUE 10 • MARCH 1989 • £1.50

# ACE

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The official story: page 8

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**Editor**  
Graeme King

**Reviews Editor**  
Rob Wade

**Staff Writers**  
Steve James  
Andy Smith

**Production Editor**  
Duncan Noonan

**Consultant Editor**  
Brian Larkman (Graphics)

**Adventure Editor**  
Steve Cooke

**Contributors**  
Simon H Goodwin

**Art Editor**  
Travis Gilham

**Assistant Art Editor**  
Angela Neal

**Production**  
Diana Towcher  
Claire Woodland  
Yvonne Dean  
Marianne Spear  
Louise Cookham

**Advertisement Manager**  
Jonathan Beales

**Advertising Sales**  
Executive

David Lilley  
**Publisher**  
Kevin Cox

**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Academy Mail, 44 Bar 1, Portland  
Road, Bournemouth, BH2 9AD

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Is it a bike?  
Is it a plane?*

Kon

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GAMES MACHINE**



**(As created by Wyn Holloway,  
Chris Green and a team of experts.)**

**The full amazing story starts on page 8.**



LEI



## SPECIALS

### AND FROG CREATED MAN 18

A game that shows you to play God, and even do it over the phone. ACE gets down to a few fun previews.



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Steve Cooke brings his insight of us a quest to master Neomancer, Dreamland, Legend of Balthazar and Star Saga. Can he ever forget Ultima VI?

### LETTERS 96

Another batch of opinions for you to agree or disagree with. Get pen to paper, sound off and go for that soft sell price yourself.

### GRAPHICS 99

Brian Larkman thinks he's found the best graphics package yet. Electronic Arts publish it, and you will need a Mac II with all the bits to run it...

## IN THE PINK

The magazine within a magazine. In the Pinks this month you'll find everything you ever wanted to know about PCs, Hedgehog(s), arcade adventures, and strategy and simulation games. That's not all though - because this is also the part of the magazine where we take life a little less seriously - so prepare to chuckle at the antics of H-Gar, and fugal from fugal too. What you got for 'see a laugh now and again, isn't it?'

### THE BLITTER END 130

Of one thing we are certain, this is the final curtain. Double double do.





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A dream machine, unlikely to be available for years? No. The Konix Multi System will be available in the UK and Europe six months from now.

**A** few months of rumour and pages of backslash speculation in the computer press, the full story of what is set to be a world-beating British console can now be told. The Multi System, conceived at the start of 1988, is the product of co-operation between five companies - Konix, the joystick manufacturers, and Flare Technology, a trio of hardware wizards who designed their own computer as an extension of what they thought should be in an entertainment machine.

The full story behind the creation of the Flare One computer appeared in issue Eleven of ACE, about seven months ago, which was around the time Flare started talking to Konix. But the console story starts at the beginning of 1988.

Wyn Holloway, the man who designed the legendary joystick and set up Konix to manufacture it, came up with a design for the ultimate game controller. Realising that advanced flight simulators took much more than a standard joystick with up, down, left, right and fire switches to fly properly, he set about designing an articulated controller that could be connected to a PC. It wasn't long before the potential for turning the controller into a console became apparent to Konix - as one chairman's euphoric word when he saw the prototype: 'you could put any computer inside that, even the V630, and it would sell faster than hot dogs and Nintendo combined.'

While Konix is a company that everyone associates with products such as the Steering, Navigator and MegaStation, not many people realise that it has a sister company - Creative Devices Ltd. It was set up by Wyn Holloway in August 1985 to do contract development work for other high-tech companies, and to work on projects for its parent company. Subsequent contracts undertaken so far include the design of a new computer for a leading hardware manufacturer, and a project for the American toy giant Hasbro, which resulted in an interactive videogame game system. Drawing on the skills of the Creative Devices team, Konix planned to produce their own hardware which could go inside the shell of their complicated joystick - so work began on designing a game console

and the processors to go with it.

Around the time that Konix were starting the design for their own console hardware, Flare had finished their prototypes for the Flare One computer. Flare showed their machine to a number of computer manufacturers, the Mail and Amstrad. According to Flare's Martin Beaman, hardware companies expressed interest in the architecture and the Large Scale Integrated co-processors, the DSP and Filter, but nothing concrete came of these early approaches. So to show off some of the capabilities of their new computer, the Flare team spent a month or two concentrating on some demo software. When the demos were complete, they talked to ACE, and to Personal Computer World.

As a result of the publicity, Flare were approached by several companies - 'some were interested in the DSP, some in the control side while others were interested in the music side', Martin Beaman recalls. Konix were amongst the companies that got in touch.

'Konix had their console idea, an idea for a really excellent add-on, which was quite an exciting package. A marriage between our computer and their packaging seemed ideal.' In July last year, Konix and Flare joined forces and serious work began on the console project itself, codenamed 'Starbeam'.

Development work on the hardware inside the console advanced in parallel at the two companies, with ACE's main frame man Chris Green from Konix liaising between Wyn's designers and the three Flare men. It isn't the Flare One that will be providing the power behind the joystick in the final incarnation. 'As a result of being in the market', Martin Beaman explains, 'Konix put forward a number of ideas. For a start, they wanted to use a 16-bit processor, so we incorporated the 5886 processor into the design. The other major change they initiated was on account of the final price tag. We were thinking around £250 for a machine which don't offer as much as there is, in order to keep the manufacturing price down, we integrated all the custom chips inside the Flare One, into one large chip for the Multi System.'

Very Large Scale Integration isn't superseded by Ultra Large Scale Integration tech-



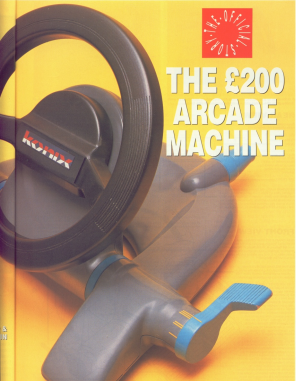
**The trio behind Flare and their prototype machine made the cover of ACE issue 11. The story continues...**



**BY GRAEME KIDD & SIMON N GOODWIN**



# THE £200 ARCADE MACHINE



5  
N



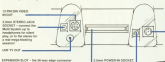
**A side view in car mode, showing the curvature of the base and steering peg, the pedal unit would be placed on the floor.**



**In airplane mode, spaces the joystick and wires on the back of the seat - the design has been refined for production.**

## REAR VIEW

Two modular controllers (left) for car present on the inside in the photograph. Both changed the design a bit!



TO THE NEW POWER SOCKET

A NEW SYSTEM-AGE SOCKET - connects the Multi System up to controllers for other play or to the wires for a new range-finding receiver

CAR TV OUT

EXTENDED SLOT - the 30-way edge connector might be used for other peripherals on some stage in the future. We could connect a controller from the back that played previous games cartridges, or the interface you wanted the special 3.5" disk drive that comes with the basic Multi System package.

1 NEW POWER-ON SOCKET

A NEW 30-PIN SOCKET, used to play all peripherals, such as the light gun, steering wheel, etc.

issues in the design of the board that is the powerhouse of the Multi System. And Kassis contacted some ideas for producing sound, which allowed the hardware to be made more cheaply and yet produce better sound, according to Kassis. They also designed a 4096 colour palette - "which, in retrospect, was a good idea" he admits. The Flare had had no screen palette as such, so in order to change one of the screen colours, you had to change all the pixels chosen in that colour.

The basic Multi System package includes a 5.5" disk drive. It might sound a strange way to do things, as compared to the PC Engine. Nintendo or Sega consoles, but the Multi System is altogether a different beast. Basically, the drive loads data into the console's memory while a game is being played. "Effective-

## FRONT VIEW

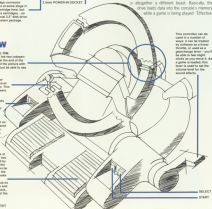
REAR CONTROL (NEEDLE WHEEL, etc) Mechanical linkage control with the two independent left buttons, A and B, located forward of the airplane joystick (could rotate, as the picture with a modification to it, and now described to be able to see the two left the buttons).

CLUTCH RELEASE KNOB - a three-position-peg clutch governs the power or locked range of the control when the mechanism is released to perform.

CONTROL PORTS 1 AND 2 Four modular control units are the base of the steering gear, which are controlled by the left and right Multi System controllers for a connected together to interconnect when - it contains several ports to the main machine (could be used to connect several controls into the game and also to separate them from the car and yellow's Multi System console, which is not necessarily used with it as a main machine, like a game, compressed package.

WHEEL HOUSING - used to fit the base of the console. Each wheel contains the necessary hardware which are controlled by pushing the top or bottom part of the wheel. Four independent control units are connected to the pedals - it had to be game designer to decide how to make use of them. In the last game, for instance, the pedals could be used to control the set pedal controlled brake and accelerator for the left sub-pedal track, with the right pedal used to control the right track.

This controller can be used in a number of ways. It can be treated by software as either joystick or wheel or a gamecube lever - you'll be able to see slight when you move it. As a game is loaded, the wheel is used to set the volume level for the sound effects.



SELECT  
START





Wheels, steering - motorcycle mode. The two handgrips have been switched round, and the console sits upright in position.



Seat in motorcycle mode. This time we've included a motorcycle in the picture to give an indication of the size of the Multi System.

ly, you're taking an 800K ROM cartridge - can you imagine the scope for pictures, sound and so on in a game?" Martin Brennan observes.

It was a deliberate commercial decision to opt for disk storage for games, rather than cartridges. Disks are indisputably cheap to produce, unlike cartridges, and they are also cheap and easy to duplicate - which is why Konix opted for disks as the storage medium. "It's the only way to give software houses a choice", Wyn says. "If you want to produce cartridges the minimum duplication order is around 10,000 units and then you may have to wait in a queue for up to nine months before the game is actually duplicated. By using disks, I may games can be economically produced and retail at £14.99".

## SIDE VIEW

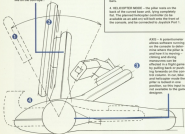
Showing the construction of the control column.

**1. JOYSTICK/PLANE MODE** - The joystick can be pulled backwards and pushed forwards between two positions.

**2. CAR MODE** - Forward in position.

**3. MOTORBIKE MODE** - The pillar is "rod bent" and locked into position to give "rod" steering over the control "bars" but no steering the handgrips.

**4. THE 800K/10K MODE** - The pillar sits on the back of the console base and, lying completely flat, the game's microcontroller enables the bar available as an add-on will lock into the base of the console, and be connected to Junction Port 1.



**AKS** - A general-purpose arcade software running on the console for demonstration when the pillar is "steering" - allowing and allowing manoeuvres can be effected via handgrips by pulling back or pushing forward on the control "bars" and the handgrips. The pillar and handgrips make the pillar's "rod" a "rod" position, as they appear to be available to the game designer.

That £14.99 price point is the upper limit which Konix have set for software - budget games may well also appear. The disk drive has been designed to avoid piracy. Only Konix will know how to duplicate disks that will run on the Multi System. That means they effectively retain control of the pace and nature of software that will be appearing on their console. While you can never beat the determined software pirate with 100% certainty, Konix are confident that their protection system will effectively lock out "crackers" and require professional involvement on the part of commercial pirates if they are to produce counterfeit or "piratical" games.

### THE DESIGN BREEZ

What does the user want? That was the basic question Wyn Holloway asked himself when he

sat down to design the ultimate joystick. "What is the user trying to get out of a machine?" is the question that accompanied the design work that took the Steamtrain from a paper's controller to a superb console. Wyn doesn't see himself as an inventor - more as an innovator who juxtaposes existing technologies in a new way, so that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. "Magazine readers have been telling me what they want," Wyn asserts, "so you had to do as well as read the letters pages and listen to your potential customers to get the specification of a product that would sell".

The basic concept was "realism". The design, if approved by the Fiat Group, will be entered onto every Multi System path. "It's a new concept," Wyn explains, "the Multi System is a fun machine - not to be even competing with Sega and Nintendo - the concept goes right through to the peripherals... the whole system is designed for fun and for realism. What we're trying to do is create a family machine that offers realistic simulations but has still got a joystick part to that you can load up standard arcade games." Wyn wants to tie themes: "You can complete joystick, but whatever you do, a joystick remains a joystick at the end of a piece of wire. From age ten on, a kid wants to sit behind the wheel of Dad's car and actually drive it - it's an urge that is in all of us. Just look at the queues that formed behind the Microcross Flight Simulator at the PC show... if computer users are prepared to queue up for hours for a four-minute go on a real flight sim, it doesn't take a genius to work out that everyone would have a go on it if they only had to wait five minutes.

"All the people we spoke to about the project, everyone who has seen the prototypes has said this is their dream - we're giving people an arcade in their home. The electronics are only a small part of the experience it's all the rest."

And what exactly is "all the rest"? Well, apart from the basic console unit which can transform itself from motorbike to racing car to simulator, a range of inexpensive peripherals is planned to add to the arcade experience. Most impressive of all is a two-seat chair which is currently being developed and prototyped - you strap the console and a TV set into the device, clamor aboard and three electric motors provide arcade-style motion synced to the game. Satisfy yourself here at Atari-





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# WOLF



TATTOO  
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# OPERATIONS

## OPERATION WOLF



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Yes, it has finally happened – someone has won the £100 software prize! Read on to find out who... And if you fancy having a crack at the big one, send a missive to: **ACE LETTERS, THE EDITOR, 4 QUEEN STREET, BATH BA1 1EJ.**

#### SOUL TRAIL

I feel compelled to put pen to paper and say "Geez are all the female computer users!" It was a 24 year old female ST Owner and fell very much in the minority when buying software from a shop. I have now learnt to what mental thinkers, because buying for position amongst quality 24 year old boys can be embarrassing to use the least. Once, I'm ashamed to say, when returning faulty software to the shop I made the excuse that I was doing it for my son (which I don't have). I don't really care any more, but it would be nice to see a few more females – even quality 24 year old ones – milling around the software shelves.

Strange though, isn't it? I wonder if anyone has got any suggestions as to why computerised seems to be ruled by males. All you female computer users out there, stand up and be counted.

**Mandy Flower  
Tisbury**

Slaps and smacks and puzzy fings' tells I expect Mandy – no wonder computers aren't too appealing a prospect to females. Could there be room for a female computer club to address the balance? Maybe out there started one? Write us, and we'll pass on letters.

OK.

#### FREECARE FOR IMPROVEMENT!

It has to be said, so here goes: FreeSpace on the Spectrum is rubbish.

Let's get things straight – I'm not knocking the Spectrum. I've had five and a half years' 'happo' fun from mine. And neither am I slamming FreeSpace – it's all for innovation, and FreeSpace is definitely innovative. However, the two aren't cut for suited.

I think the essence of FreeSpace is that it's supposed to be the best best thing to bring there, it portrays this through its graphics, and that is the problem. For a start, the graphics are so blocky, which makes most things look rather unrealistic. The graphics are very dull when it comes to colour, in particular, Total Eclipse. Then there are very slow, which ruins the excitement for a first person perspective game for me.

I realise that all this is due to FreeSpace using complex mathematics to calculate where every thing on the screen should be, but

if that are the 'side effects', is it really worth it?

The Amended version is better, but only on 1984 machines does FreeSpace show its true potential. Like I said, I'm not knocking the Spectrum – five years ago it was state of the art, and in five years the ST and Amiga will probably be in the same situation as the Spectrum now.

**Stephen Bainsby  
Stoke-on-Trent**

Anyone else like to have their say on this?

OK.

#### CONSUMER RIGHTS CLINIC

I would like to give your readers a warning about returning faulty software.

I purchased a game from a computer store which turned out to be faulty. When I returned the

game to the shop, they exchanged it after trying to make sure that it was faulty, like I think the new one, it was faulty as well, and as they had no more in stock, I assumed I would receive a full cash refund as I could buy the game elsewhere. But no, I was then informed that because of the copyright laws regarding computer software they could not give cash refunds on faulty goods – they would change the game for another of the same price, but there wasn't anything else worth buying.

**WM Gibbons  
London**

I have had trouble with several mail order computers – first about £25 when an went bankrupt, and another has sent me the wrong game face, a saga which has dragged on for three months.

I would like to know exactly how I am protected as a con-

sumer. What action I or anyone else must take to get computer stuff? How do you, the magazine, screen advertisements for software? Every month there seem to be more and more computers advertised in your pages.

**R Gibbons  
Oxfordshire**

The first person to think of, in any dispute with a retailer or mail order company, is your local Trading Standards officer. Look in the phone book or see your local council. Trading Standards officers are employed to make sure that relevant consumer laws are followed to, and in some circumstances have more power and influence than the police.

The Sale of Goods Act sets down in law that goods offered for sale must be of merchantable quality, that is, fit to serve the purpose for which they were

## POINTS OF VIEW

#### THE VIRUS DEBATE

One for and one against – You owners are too busy enjoying themselves to put pen to paper...

In response to Philip Keyes' letter telling people not to bother buying Virus, I'd like to say I'm fairly well better.

I've matched 250,000 playing Virus on the ST and hope to be purchasing Virus for my Amiga soon. I think Virus is of the highest quality and your review was dead right. I think the reason Philip was extremely disappointed was because the game requires skill and patience and, of course, time – the average Virus game for the best is an hour and a half.

**Andrew Reader  
Maidstone**

Although Virus was one of the best original pieces of software of 1988, you were wrong to give it such a high rating and such a glowing review. Its stunning graphics and sound deserve praise, but the control method takes a week to really get the hang of and I doubt if many people will be playing it more than a year. By the way, has anyone found a cheat mode for the Amiga version yet?

**David Hodges  
Morpeth**

#### RACE HATRED

Some sensible opinions came out of the weekend as a result of PC Britain's letter about showing up-racist tendencies... and one of these involves committing a crime for the national, sensible anger needs it push forward.

I don't think it's wrong to stand down the odd alien or stand down a few Germans so long as it is kept to computers. It could even be stopping people doing it for real, because they can do it on computers.

A lot of games are like the ones I (Bottrell) mentioned because they involve a lot of action and that makes it exciting for the player. If every game was about reading the newspaper or making a cup of tea, games would not sell.

**James O'Brien  
Horsburgh**

The trouble James, but you never know – even as you read this, Codemasters might be working on Ninja Gaiden Teacdy Simulator...

I am writing to support R Bottrell's letter, concerning the xenophobia apparent in such current software.

Games such as Kick Out

Blowup Red Steam Rising and so on denigrate other countries, usually the Soviet Union, as being threatening, aggressive and evil in much the same way as other games on the so-called 'fronts', glorifies and promotes for us to save the world from. If we are to truly believe in killing, bombing, blowing and destroying, then it is essential that we have an easy conscience about doing it. We can only have an easy conscience if the enemy is seen to be inhuman and totally evil. A game which depended on machine-gunning a sunny school playground, say, would not set many noses.

The real world is not all black and white, and when games are used to simulate the real world in trying to highlight the horror of the game, they reinforce prejudices that we are already prone to. In every war there has been, each side has been at pains to de-humanise the enemy, in order to persuade its ordinary, decent citizens to commit or commit acts that would normally disgust them.

Even in peacetime, we are constantly being manipulated and taught to regard other nations as a threat – there can therefore be no justification for the vast amounts of money spent on arms, it is hard enough to see beyond the doctor.

## NEXT MONTH

Issue 19 hits the streets on Thursday 2nd March – make sure you're early in the queue, because there's lots going on. Like the first government thingy that Kevin hasn't told anyone about yet.

More Mac System news – this time from the Toy Fair launch, including pictures of the demo software.

Modern games – a follow up to the features in issue Four and Issue Twelve.

Full review of Populous, in amongst a host of hot software news and reviews.

said. In the case of a computer game, this means that the disk or tape must load into an appropriately calibrated computer, and then on. If goods are not of merchantable quality, you can take a replacement from the vendor, but under law you are entitled to a full cash refund. Mention the Sale of Goods Act to most retailers, and you get the money back. If not, get in touch with your

local Trading Standards Office. With mail order companies, it's wise to bear in mind the old adage, caveat emptor – buyer beware. If a mail order company is offering wonderful deals that are very tempting, you may have to accept an element of risk in making the purchase. Getting cheap means there's less profit, and less profit means less money to spend on customer

relations and on making sure that problems with orders get sorted out quickly and efficiently. Popping down to the local shops and paying full price makes it very unlikely that you're going to be ripped off.

That said, a few precautions can minimise the risk of buying mail order. First, check that there is a full postal address on an advert – not just a PO Box number. Secondly, only buy from a company that has advertisement copy and looks as if it is around to stay. Thirdly, it's worth paying by credit card – credit card companies vet organisations before accepting them, and are obliged to step in if there's trouble between you and a retailer.

Finally, magazines who accept advertising from companies are themselves taking a risk – we can't ever be certain that we'll get paid. The make considerable effort to ensure that mail order companies are trustworthy, and refuse to carry adverts from companies of the first sign of serious trouble.

GB

film and propaganda as it is – do we really need it pouring us into our leisure spheres as well?

### Watch South Leads

Well said Keith. For such lucid arguments, you are the first person to collect the full Letters Prize. Drop me a line with a list of the games you'd like to the value of £200. Meanwhile, it's nearly time to close the Race Review edition.

PRIZE  
LETTER

I agree with P Borden, in that arcade games could do with fictional enemies instead of the usual fiend, Nemesis etc, but I totally disagree with him on the subject of simulators.

Simulators are made to be realistic. The F-16 was built to take out MiGs. The British navy is there to counter attack the Russian navy, and the Russian navy is there to counter attack the American and British navies. All these nations 'play war', that is practice fighting other nations.

If you make a simulator, you can't have an F-16 against a UFO – it wouldn't be a very realistic simulator.

**Richard Wootton**  
Roehford

...and move on to something completely different.

### FESTIVE MOANS

With regard to your Christmas issue, dear Sir, the operative word never before here so many have asked to pay no more for so little. Many of the usual articles, on computer music for example, were conspicuous by their absence, to be replaced by an increase in the number of the adverts. Even the reviews, after being paraded as the biggest screen test sector ever, failed to come up to scratch – with only two AGC Rated games, both for the 8-bit machines. You had obviously gone to very little effort to find good games to review, preferring instead to chase advertisers. Where was the review of Falcon, which some magazines reviewed at the end of November?

### The Lord Guleard University of Essex

Alas indeed. So now is our fault that computers don't produce brilliant games all the time. Hum, Oh, and you must mean ST Falcon – we reviewed Falcon barely moments after it arrived on their shores as a PC game, years ago. As for ST Falcon, it didn't seem

desirable to review an unfinished version, so we didn't. Cheers. Look out for the definitive guide to Falcon-flying as Uncle Tom Watson from Microsoft gets into the cockpit – coming next month in an ACE near you.

What's the, not enough brood?

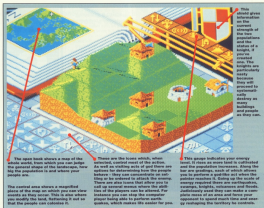
I am utterly displeased by the callous way you handled the so-called Festive edition. If you did not look at the top of the front cover you could be led to believe that it was just another edition of Britain's most popular home movie magazine. The fact that it was the most important month in the entire home computer diary was hardly brushed upon, yet above unheeded. Take for example the magnificently wonderful Playboy Modeler – holy on the front page, full paragraph of festive greetings in the editorial and may other snippets of Christmas well-wishings throughout. But you soon deem them in boring old Bums that you're too high and mighty to stick up a bit of treat.

Shame on you!  
**James Coldwell**  
Mintley

Ah yes, Playboy Modeler. That explains a lot.

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The open book shows a map of the whole world, from which you can judge the general shape of the landscape, how big the population is and where your people are.

The central area shows a magnified piece of the map on which you can view details as they occur. This is also where you modify the land, building it up so that the people can colonize it.

These are the towns which, when controlled, control most of the action. As well as visiting units of your forces are options for determining how the people behave - they can concentrate on building or be ordered to attack the enemy. There are also items that allow you to build up several towns where the abilities of the players can be altered. For instance you can stop the computer player being able to perform earth quakes, which makes life easier for you.

This group indicates your enemy level. It shows an area land is cultivated and the population increases. Above the bar are gauges, each of which shows you to perform a godlike act when the pointer reaches it. Going up the scale of enemy regulated items are earthquakes, storms, lightning, volcanoes and floods. Just-in-time units they can make a complete mass of an area and force your opponent to spend much time and energy reshaping the territory to control.

## GODS AT WAR

One of the most enjoyable aspects of the game is that not only is the computer opponent intelligent, but you can hook two machines together to interface to modern and play against another human. Much of the fine-tuning of the game has been getting the computer opponent to play well. Every time a member of the Bullfrog team found a way to beat the computer, Peter carefully reprogrammed it so as to plug the loophole.

It's not just the opponent who displays intelligence, either. The individual people also behave differently depending on the circumstances, making a total of 360 individual intelligences wandering around the map.

Another idea, not yet implemented, is to network the game so that 16 people can play at once. This would really be the ultimate in multi-player games but sadly is unlikely to surface because of the lack of people who could actually make use of it. Until we see will have to settle for two play or action for the moment.

# AND FROG

Frog walked upon the face of the world, and it was all a bit dull, so in a fit of enthusiasm he created the world in six days. He saw that it was good. On the seventh day he rested, and thought how much he'd enjoyed himself, and on the Monday morning he played with his Lego set and created Populous, so that everyone could have a go.



The Bullfrog team (l to r) Simon Cooper, graphics and programming for Populous and for Fusion; Andy Jones, custom graphics and level design; Kevin Brown, Fusion programming; David Weston, music and effects; Benji, frog; Molyneux, Populous design and programming.

Would you like to be an omnipotent being, tinkering with the lives of hundreds of people, visiting at random natural disasters upon the unbelievers and trying to stamp on other deities? Thought so - no-one can resist being all-powerful every once in a while. Peter Molyneux of Bullfrog games took his any ordinary mortal but, armed only with a Lego set, he too has created a world. In it, two real gods battle to achieve supremacy by changing the landscape to make it habitable for the people who worship them and to stimulate the technological advancement of their civilizations.

The game has undergone several name changes including our favorite, A Sea Monster Ate My Leader, but under the title Populous it's going to be one of the best games of



## TIDAL WAVE HITS LEGO WORLD

LEGO was used to design the gameworld, with the great advantage that the game was playable using the model. Although not as complex as the final computer version, the basic idea of reshaping the landscape and populating the world with your people could be fully tested in this real-world form.

As yet there aren't any plans to market *Populous* as a board game, but it would be ideally suited to the genre, so don't be surprised if you see it popping up on the shelves at some time in the future.

What you certainly wouldn't find is a board version in water. Not that Peter Molyneux didn't give

it a go. In order to test the idea of the water being displaced when blocks were added, thereby raising the water level and flooding low-lying land, he filled the LEGO model with water. Unfortunately LEGO isn't exactly watertight and the resultant flood dissuaded further experimentation.



The LEGO model game cameplete with two players (red and white blocks), houses, roads and people represented by the small yellow minifigures.



In *Populous* you can inter-act with places where the people find it tough to survive.



An unpleasant dirty has either flooded the land or whopped it out from underneath these men in the water. If some kind god doesn't intervene, they'll die.



This is the desert scenery and shows a castle, the biggest building that can be created. In the foreground are some trees, which occur randomly, in the rocks.

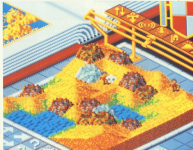
# CREATED MAN

(Right) The volcano is a rather thing to fill anyone with because it leaves these big rocks all over the place. The only way to get rid of them is to take the whole area down to sea level and build it back up again.

he sea. As a god, the player has, at his disposal many divine powers for creating, healing and ordering people around. There are hundreds of levels in which the two gods battle to annihilate each other's colony of people. The landscapes vary from barren deserts and fertile pastures to icy wastes.

Before writing *Populous* the Bullfrog team had only produced two other games - *Emightment* on the Amiga for Firebird and *Furion* for Electronic Arts, the 3D version of which is soon to be released. *Populous*, which could well establish Bullfrog as a major force among software developers, will also be available on both ST and Amiga through Electronic Arts, hopefully in March or April. A full review will appear in next month's ACE.

● See Side







**ST** - Punting action in mid-space from the alien operation Alternative.

### WRANGLER ● Alternative

Budget House Alternative are making the most of a new year by moving into the fall price, \$5.99 market. First off their new production line is a 32-level puzzle game, Wrangler, in which panels in the play area have to be repaired while dodging the foe from hostile debs.

### CAPTAIN FEZZ ● Psygnosis

Captain Fezz has got Blaster from trouble. Twentytwo levels, packed with Blaster from have to be cleared if Cap's Fezz is going to get home in time for a hot's tea, and it takes two players to attempt the challenge. Co-operation, a penchant for blasting and a strategic team all help when it comes to dealing death to Blaster-tons.

**ST** - Simultaneous two player action in the order of the day. Player One occupies the top screen, with Player Two sharing death below.



### KAYDEN GARTH ● EAS

Prisoners on a detention planet have rebelled, and in this \$4.99 romp from France it is your task to quell the uprising. Thirty dungeons packed with traps and hostile prisoners will be awaiting your arrival later this month on the S4, Amiga and ST.

**Amiga** - It's rebellion in Kayden Garth...



**ST** - Clambering up a ladder en route to the most scientist's secret hideout in Blaster's Blastertron.

### STORMTROOPER

● Creation

Mercenaries have taken over a mining complex and a mad scientist has taken control. Trouble is, the complex moves a highly dangerous mineral, capable of blowing up whole planets. The Earth government is worried, so they're sending you into this platform and ladders shoot em-up to ensure that interplanetary peace is maintained. Get the picture? The ST version should be ground and about by now, with the Amiga incarnation due March/88.

### TEEN QUEEN ● Infogrames

Oh no, not another crap poker game! Oh yes, and this time it's digitized pictures of an an-bushed Lolita that fill the (paid) poker play er's points. "It plays a really good poker game," says the Public Relations man, predictably, but how many players will appreciate that? Poker break should be able to lay their hands on their own Amiga copy very soon.

**Amiga** - Youde even juan even mall!



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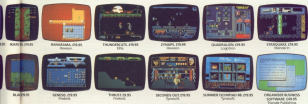
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### RAINBOW ARTS: THE STORY SO FAR...

In Germany, one group of companies dominates the entertainment software industry: Sunrise. It is the holding company which owns the Rainbow Arts, Time Warp, Roll&Bite, Golden Goblets and Rainbow Games labels. Rainbow Arts was set up by Mark Ulrich about four years ago, and is the label best-known in the UK, through its association with CD Gold.

Over the past year, Rainbow Arts have become renowned for competent programming and good games, but their reputation for producing slick software such as *Jason of Anis* (MCI Rated as Issue 154) has been accompanied, in the trade at least, with disputes about originality. Remember *Great Giana Sisters*? It received universally sound reviews, but never



© Mike Gobbins, Sun & Co. Ltd

actually made it into the shops owing to notes made by Nintendo, who felt it was too close to Super Mario Brothers. Then there was *Katoko* - a slick, high-speed shooter-up which attracted the attention of Activision, who felt it was far too close to their official license, *R-Type*. CD Gold ended up rejecting a handful of Rainbow Arts titles, apparently because of worries about copyright infringement. Whatever concerns may have been levelled at Rainbow Arts about originality, no-one can dispute that their sound, graphics and programming skills are excellent.

Quoted in the industry trade paper, *CPA*, Rainbow Arts' Managing Director Mark Ulrich admitted last year that his company were inspired by certain games, but denied that



Time Warp Roll&Bite Golden Goblets Rainbow Arts Rainbow Games

such influences showed clearly enough to constitute an offence. 'A few years ago everyone was doing this sort of thing and no-one complained then. Anyway, basically there are only five types of game so there are bound to be similarities.'

According to Teut Wiedemann, Development Director for the group of labels, German programmers have tended to clone or borrow ideas from existing games. 'Our PC, Amiga and C64 programmes are technically the cream, but they need design support - there

has been a lack of originality and creativity in game design', he admits. But the Sunrise group are taking steps to change this state of affairs, as Teut explained during our visit. A couple of games reviewers from Germany's leading entertainment software magazine have been hired to contribute to the development of game ideas. And of course the Golden Goblets label, set up after what appeared to be a major defection from retail software house Mega Bytes, is concentrating on totally original products. While the talents of Germany's 'cream' will be applied to 16-bit arcade conversions for other companies, including Activision, Demarc, and Lucasfilm, you should also expect to see some genuinely original work coming out of the Sunrise stables during 1989.

### GOLDEN GOBLINS

The eight programmers and artists now known as Golden Goblets have been working



Most of the Golden Goblets team. For a full breakdown of who's who and who is missing from this photo, turn to the Pink Pages...

together as a team for about two years, but they were signed by Rainbow Arts last summer, because Golden Goblets and started work on two games: *Grand Monster Slam* and *Cross Attractions*.

## LUCASFILM AND A CAST OF THOUSANDS...

If you were wondering whether anyone was going to get around to producing 16-bit versions of *Ballistics*, *Rescue on Anantoko* and other classic Lucasfilm games, you'll be pleased to know

that the Rainbow Arts crew are about to start work. Indeed, recall, confirming their relationship with MS Gold and the fact that Lucasfilm have signed a publishing and distribution deal with US

Gold that covers all European territories except Germany. Don't expect to see anything in the shops before Christmas at the very earliest, though.

The Rainbow Arts team are making something of a speciality of 16-bit console conversions the sport from work for Activision (look out for *Wings Sprint*). They have contracted to produce conversions of five Thomas Yglesias titles for Sunrise. First off the production line will be *Windchaser*, followed by *APB*, *Tombix*, *Sybilis* and *Descent Sprint*, but not necessarily in that order.



*Ballistics* on the Amstrad is a classic blast from the past.

# COMING SOON FROM A FEDERAL REPUBLIC NEAR YOU...

One member of the crew, Hartwig Hadergott, has been a leading figure in the German role-playing/RPG world for some time, working as an illustrator and writing modules for RPG games. I think these games should influence computer software more strongly," he says. "My great goal is to create a complete world which has a variety of computer and board games and even modules hung off it." Ted Nilsenman, Development Director for the whole group, is supportive of Hartwig's aim and understands the concept - he's an avid player of the PBM game *Warriors* himself and recently flew to New York for a week-end job to attend a film *Warriors* Convention.

The Golden Spheres team, like *Tout*, share the vision of a world, as complete in its history and geography as Tolkien's Middle Earth or *Forgotten Realms*, the D&D campaign world, a world which can be used as a setting for a collection of games that could well be played together, so that a player can enter each module and play it for his own sake, or progress through a sequence of games, building up a character in the process.

And Grand Morder (Siam) could well be the first title in just such a series of linked, modular games. Working with a friend, Hartwig created *Gold* as a large role-playing campaign scenario. The land has a detailed history, its geography is fully documented, and descriptions of the races that inhabit the land, including details of racial characteristics, have been committed to paper. Grand Morder (Siam), the game, depicts an event that takes place every



## SPHERICAL

PC gamers should make a point of looking out for this one when it reaches these shores later this spring - Rainbow Arts claim it's going to be their first full-colour CGA game, which, if it runs on all CGA machines, will be a startling breakthrough. Basic gameplay involves manoeuvring a sphere in the cell on 120 screens, killing a monster every five levels or so which yields up an access

code that allows the game to be restarted at that point. There's plenty to explore: the two player option uses a completely different set of 100 levels, and then there are bits of hidden levels full of bonus-gathering opportunities to discover.

## RELINE PORTFOLIO

The Reline team are believing early on that games that should reach

these shores during 1989. There's a *Platformer* game, *Dyer 02*, in which a hard-eyed pilot has to land troopers on a desert island and take off defective troopers while under heavy fire from the enemy; and *Windows Wizard*, in which a young wizard-be social climber enters a televised window-cleaning championship. Proving that they can tackle games from any genre, Reline are also writing an *OS System*, a strategy action game that puts the player in the behind the Chairman's desk in a game of corporate, a tennis role-playing game called *Legend of Phoenix*, and an arcade adventure, *Adventure in Arabia*.



*Angie* - *Platform* ball-control in *Dyer 02*, due later this year from Reline.

## HEAVY METAL

Two robots, *Heavy* and *Metal*, are off on a quest to collect diamonds but as might be expected, it isn't easy down in *Platformland*. Expect to come up against a host of nasties later this Spring, including snakes, scorpions, big beetles and little beetles and fairy snakes. The CGA version should feature around 30



*Heavy* - Collecting diamonds, *Heavy* and *Metal* on their quest for riches.

levels, with five of them hidden, while the ST and Amiga versions are likely to have more screens with around a third of the game locked away in the form of hidden bonus levels.



All the races competing in Grand Morder (Siam) have their own characteristics and react accordingly to the game. If a player is led by a *Wizard* character, he is automatically charmed - and some races show more easily than others.

There's an element of self-control built into the game, so as a player is wound up he'll either play freely or start controlling himself. Again, you may control, are automatically full control. Features there's one player on the bottom row, cannot turn left, use an organisational crowd that she always handling other races. As a result, they tend to get stuck a lot, so a generally led to the game to become a *Player*.

year, an event that patches representatives of the races that live in one region of *Gold* against another in a contest to establish a champion.

Taking the role of the champion of the Deacons, your aim in Grand Morder (Siam) is to emerge the victor in a knockout league of six matches. Two players face each other from opposite ends of a pitch that is about the size of a tennis court. A row of small, fiery creatures called *Deacons* are lined up in front of each contestant, and the objective is to clear your half of the pitch by kicking the Deacons at your opponent, and then make the home Run into his half of the pitch. A com-

## ANGERFREAK

Due for release by US Gold sometime during 1989, the film stuntman-producer was still at an early stage of development when we saw it - the gameplay and graphics are both undergoing refinement. Essentially, the hero is working on these films and has to complete five stunts in each. Time on the film set costs money, so there's no opportunity to hang around (well that's a pity - Ed), and while money is earned for bringing in stunts, extra cash is collected for getting things right on early takes.



*ST* - Launching himself off a ramp, the hero's stunt car ramps down a runway on his motorcycle, capturing cash by staying life and limb.



*ST* - Leaping onto the back of a speeding car presents no problem to *Angerfreak*, but to maintain the mood the hero is jump onto a rope ladder dangled from a helicopter.

heretic set of rules governs the conduct of play, including penalties, known as Fautens, for foul plays.

After winning a match, the player gets to participate in an intimate game, known colloquially as "The Revenge of the Beloms", in which extra points can be won by fouling off a group of Beloms that abound in the courtyard. These set of four matches need to be won in the first round, and then it's on to a qualification test - in which the Beloms come in for even more sick. Six guard monsters called Fautens are ranged at the opposite end of the pitch, and the player has to kick Beloms into their open mouths. Each time a Fauten swallows a Belom, it grows a little, and the Fautens need to be well fed before access to the second phase of the tournament is granted.

Phase Two of Grand Monster Slam follows the rules of the games in Phase One, but this time obstacles appear on the pitch. Ramps, pyramids and reflector walls all divert the trajectory of a flying Belom that hits them, and holes appear at random on the pitch swallowing up Beloms and removing them from play.

In Phase Three, the final set-up that



OS4 Circus Jugglissimo - Bouncing on the trail for points in the Trampoline event. On the SLS PC, Golden Gobins have been really clever: they're worked out a way to do a halfway scroll, so the whole screen scrolls down and the horizontal scrolls up.



Amiga - Beloms fly through the air during a Phase One Match in Grand Monster Slam.

The scenario behind Grand Monster Slam is wonderfully detailed, and there are lots of neat little touches in the game-play and in the animation that support the basic ground. Take Beloms, for instance. Beloms, in the other game, used to live on the tops of hills, but being round they all rolled down the slopes. Which is why they are tall, because only the tall Beloms survived collisions with trees, and evolution has played its part... They like to say that they originated by the backwards deliberately, but no-one believes them.

During play, the Beloms on the line are mindfully aware that they are about to be kicked - unfortunately they are deaf, so can't hear

their horns being kicked down the field. As a player moves to the left and right, the Beloms crowd to him to get to realize that something nasty

may soon happen to them, so they start looking worried - and as a player moves on to take a kick, the little Belom starts spluttering with fear.

Amiga - The intimate game, Revenge of the Beloms, from Grand Monster Slam.

The player is attacked from right sides by Beloms, and can spin round, breaking off the advancing creature's neck in a potted game.

Eventually, the fery cross win, but the longer you can feed them off, the wider the crowd gets and the more points you earn.



According to historical records, the game was first introduced as a means of demonstrating political power by a central delegation of the Union of Free Fighting Beloms, a splinter group of the Society for Mutual Animals.

decide the overall championship, obstacles are on the pitch but there are no rules - anything goes.

#### THE SAWDUST RING

So who feature in Golden Gobins' other game, Circus Attractions, which pits one or two players against the forces of gravity in tightrope walking, Knife Throwing, Trampoline, Juggling



PC - The juggling event in Circus Attractions is full swing.

and High Diving. Apart from perfecting solo skills in the events, the player can collect bonus points by performing tricks and stunts - or play as a team with a friend. In the fantasy or version of the Tightrope, for instance, one player stands on the shoulders of the tightrope walker. Points are only awarded to the team, and both players have to practice working together in order to get the act right.

Double scrolling effects and different perspectives are used throughout the six events to convey a sense of the dangers or problems associated with each feat, and the quality of animation is quite stunning - over 300 frames are used just for the tightrope walker.

According to US Gold, 3D-bit versions of these two Golden Gobins games should be released in the UK around April/May time, but in the meantime look for more details on the animation techniques in a forthcoming issue... ■



# BAAL



## BAAL

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# SUPERMAN!

## SUPERMAN

● Taito 30p

Clark Kent - everyday, mild-mannered journalist for the Daily Planet - hides a secret. He is an alien from the planet Krypton. Don't bother raving the Sunday Sport with this information though, because they probably know already. And, like all good aliens, he possesses super-human powers, including the power of 'see flight'. Fortunately for humankind, Superman only uses his powers for good - rescuing people, catching criminals, that kind of thing. Every small boy has, at some time, wished he was like Superman running round the garden with the dog's basket blowing behind and nice felloes give us the chance to realise the dream with their latest coin-op.

It's a one or two player beat-'em-up with the player guiding our hero through three stages per round. The first stage is always horizontally-scrolling with 'Super' punching and kicking the badies. As he progresses through the stage the badies get tougher and require more hits before they die. Reach the end of the stage and it's time to take on the end-of-stage guardian before flying up, up and away into the second stage - which is just more of the same but vertically. Again, there's an end-of-stage guardian to defeat before diving into the



## EXTENDED PLAY...

### GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS Capcom 30p

It's three years since Capcom released the hugely successful *Ghouls 'n' Goblins* arcade game (the one that Elite converted very successfully for the home computer) and now comes the sequel. Arthur Caplan ('n) is the star of this horizontally-scrolling beat-'em-up, and he's got a whole bunch of allies to defend himself against as it's fortunate he can pick up extra weapons along the way. Great fun, especially if you enjoyed the original.

### IMAGE FIGHT Irem 30p

This one's a vertically-scrolling (parallel shoot-'em-up viewed from above with the player controlling a space craft) fighting both airborne and ground-based enemies. There's the usual extra weapons and stuff to pick up and it's extremely playable and addictive. Could it turn out to be as successful as *FT Tiger*? It's certainly possible...

### WONDER BOY III - MONSTER LAIR Sega/Westone 30p

The culty cartoon character series of *Mario Bros* clones continues with this one in two-player game. The main added extra in this latest addition is the ability for the two characters to combine. Head over Heels style, to defeat the larger (or higher up) nasties. Cute fun if you like this sort of game.

### THUNDERCROSS Konami 30p

Following in the *Salamander*, *Momoko* and *Volcan Adventure* mould comes this horizontal fly-scoping shoot-'em-up for one or two players. Destroy the waves of airborne aliens - some of which move from the background to the foreground to attack - and they leave behind an extra weapons symbol. Shoot the symbol to cycle through the weapons available and pick it up when you see something you fancy. Boy! You'll need those extra weapons when you come up against the sticky end-of-level-guardians.

### CHELNOV - ATOMIC RUNNER Data East 30p

The star of this horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up is an impressive blaster-type sprite. The animation is superb as you go leaping across streams, jumping on badboys' heads and performing all sorts of acrobatics to collect the extra weapons. It's a good-looking game all right, but it's nothing really special.

shoot-'em-up third stage of the round.

Here you're using *Snay* eyes to plough through a stream of meteorite-like boulders. Survive to destroy the end-of-level guardian and it's off to another city and another challenge. The less structure of the game is such that every hit Superman takes reduces his energy bar a little - energy is replenished by consuming the water and dummies that scroll onto the screen and collecting the resulting *Mut* re-energies that appear.

As well simple panning and kicking, you've got an extra weapon in the form of a Super Laser Ball. Hold down the *jump* button and Superman's arm starts to glow. The longer you hold it, the stronger the laser ball gets - then point and release the button to take out the boulders.

Despite great graphics and tough comments, *Superman* is not that good a game to play, it's a bit too repetitive, even for a clone, to be really gripping. ■



The vertically-scrolling second stage and Super's ready for action.



Snay eyes sure come in handy for destroying end-of-level guardians.

### BIRDIE-TRY ● Data East 30p



Looked over from US East is, well, the definitive computer golf simulator. Those who have played the game have two reactions; either they loved it and thought it was the real deal (thing to bring there, or they hated it. With such a difference of opinion, Data East have made what some will see as a foolish and others will see as a brave move in producing a computer golf simulation.

Why foolish? Well, because arcade games are designed to be pretty loud, addictive in the short term and money-takers. Why brave? Because the winning coin-op formula is so well-known, almost every clone falls into one of a few narrow categories, and it's refreshing to see a company stick their corporate neck out and move away from the standard scenario towards something original.

So, what's to do in the game? For a start there are 18 holes to play. You view your golfer from above, with a close-up view of the surrounding area taking up most of the screen and an overall view of the hole on the right. Before teeing off you select a club, take account of the wind direction and decide whether you want top spin on the ball (so that it will run out or back spin to fill the bunker). Then it's a case of lining up your golfer, hitting the button to decide the strength of the shot, and sitting back to watch how well the stroke was played.

Although there is no actual hole structure in the game, if you take too long over a club the golfer produces a waddy shot himself, and the number of balls you have to complete the game with is limited. *Birdie-try* is great fun to play, so if you've been put off by the thought of golfing, well, then check it out - it's surprisingly addictive! ■

# VORSPRUNG DURCH TECHNIK?

It's not just Atari Ltd who are working on a new dedicated coin-op title: last (see News, issue 76). By now, Rainbow Games - offshoot of the giant German programming combine - should have completed three levels of Dark Chamber, the first arcade game they are writing for their new Pluto motherboard. With luck, machines should find their way into arcades before Christmas. The title of the first game may change, but not the technology.

The system offers 128 colours per scan line and per playfield, with a resolution of up to 640x480 pixels. As many as 50 million pixels can



**Dark Chamber** - that giant brown alien spaceship, far more out of the background as the hard-gyro class - it's not one of the ten new aliens encountered on each level, but part of the animated background.

be moved per second, and to help the programmer in this task, Randi wants colour and timing is offered. At this, an in-arcade activity is overseen by a 32-bit processor.

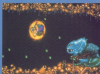
The early version of Dark Chamber seen under development in Rainbow Games' Düsseldorf HQ certainly looks promising - the graphics are being prepared by Cetal Panderomaga on a VGA PC running DPMF, and while only a small part of the gameplay was up and running on the Pluto when we visited, the overall effect of what's there is stunning.

The plot centres on a prince who embarks on a mission to save his

**Dark Chamber** - a little way into the 'Epic Level', and you meet up with Gendry. He's the brown ogre-monster who leads a lot of brown... (more text, not to be repeated, releasing a number of wiggly green snakes).



princess, a mission that involves travelling through eight levels, each containing ten new aliens. Using magic eyes in the game at his hands, the questing prince deals out single shots as play begins, but a stock of additional weapons can be collected as on the quest, including mega-powerful cyan-few lasers. Defender-style bombs, double and triple shots and booming shrunken stars. Collecting four trophies (eyes, brains) and then grabbing a star they activate a smart bomb that clears the current screen of aliens, and then there's a green dragon that chases alien



**Dark Chamber** - a meeting of an anti-forest guardian. The ogre-monster has activated his fireballs, and is spinning round, releasing loads a ball of flame.

as well as the 'alien magnet' that can be flung across the screen and used to attract the attacking creatures...

The team writing the game have created a new programming language, ADL (Action Description Language) which allows the aliens to modify their flight patterns depending on where you are in the

playfield and which extra weapons your character possesses - intelligent aliens, all told.

Felix Schröder, who designed the hardware and is writing the software in a 16-bit programmer, so Rainbow Arts shouldn't have too much difficulty producing home versions of the first arcade games they have in preparation.



**Dark Chamber** - another level, this time one with a very subtle background. The face starts death in nearly symmetrical.

Trying off at the seventh hole. Will he make it across the water to the fairway?



Almost - well, it's across the water, but the positioning's not great.



That was hard work - more top spins might have cleared the ball onto the green.

There's a lot - click this for only one over par.



# The weekly...

The trouble with trying to write an ad for New Computer Express is there are so many good reasons to buy it you don't know which to mention first.

Should it be the spectacularly low cover price of 49p? Or the fact that because it comes out every week, it's bang up-to-the-minute on news and reviews?

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"You warrant congratulations on the fine issue of New Computer Express. We have immediately cancelled our long-standing order with you. It will be interesting to note how long you can maintain your unbelievable price of 49p!"

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**MICRO PROSE**  
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Some time ago, Sensible Software wrote the *Shoot-Em-Up Construction Kit* for the DOS. It was duly released by Palace's Outlaw label, and was great (score for its facilities and ease of use). Alas, in a rough and ready fashion, things so right as to date. The 16-bit computers now have a much greater profile in this country, and it seemed only fair for Outlaw to give the 15letters a crack at this type of construction kit, so there was no other kind of arcade game maker available. But would the 16-bit version be as easy to use, and how could they harness the greater range of sounds and colour available to the Amiga user?

*Shoot-em-ups* are the world and his room's favourite computer games. Now you can create your own shoot-em-ups on the Amiga without having any truck with nasty sharp objects like machine code. Using the *Shoot-Em-Up Construction Kit*, with its easy-to-copie-with menus and on-screen buttons, you can create a bootable game, with an IFF loading screen prepared in DPaint, and your own original sound effects! The final package will be accompanied by a couple of demo games, specially created on the system by the boys at Sensible. Phil South has all the details...



# MAKING GAMES ON THE AMIGA THE SEUCK WAY

## SPRITES AND OBJECTS

### EDIT SPRITES

The basic graphics are drawn in a dithered grid in the built Sprite window. Like in normal graphics packages, you click on the colour you want these pixels to use in the drawing window. Eight colours can be used on your sprites, and they are, of course, selectable from the Amiga's 4096 palette colours. If you click a colour on one sprite, then that colour changes throughout all the sprites. So it's adjustable, nice!



You've decided on a range of eight colours, so to move with them after you've begun drawing your sprites.

### EDIT OBJECTS

Once you've designed your sprites, you can then combine them into objects. Objects are groups of sprites animated together to make groups (battleships, bullets, missiles and explosions) or other events which occur several times (missiles you'd call 'missiles' in a game. That's not yet combined form, but it's called the *MINI* terminology.) After creating the frames of animation in the built Sprite window, you combine and animate them into the built Object menu. You can create up to 64 objects in any one game, 16 of which are moving objects, eight of which are enemy bullets and eight of which are enemy explosions. The rest are players you and two, their bullets and explosions. The *OBJECT* button refers to the fact that the animation in this screen is dithered, or related to (remember, the graphics are positioned in the animation window to match the pixels once they represent, so positioning the joystick in the top left always plays the graphics on the top left of the editing screen. The two groups to call graphics, but if they're the same they'll appear to be static.



**ANIMATE YOUR OBJECT**  
Another option is to have an 16-frame (sprite) animation on each object. Just click on the *ANIMATE* button and it says *ANIMATE* instead. You may now make an animation and adjust the frame animation and speed.

What you'll normally do to create your animation is to create your animation in the built Sprite window. Having that and then using the 'next' buttons on the sprite number keypad. Then you hit each stage of the animation on this screen, and stop the *LAST FRAME* gadget so that the animation proceeds in the Sprite window above the *ANIMATE* button.

Clearly there had to be limits to the amount of data that could be manipulated, to keep the games fast, but also there had to be the flexibility to produce a credible, colourful and seriously superior game. The programmers really had their work cut out for them.

In fact the result is an elegant, quick and powerful editing system which produces smooth-sounding, colourful games. But not just stupid looking games that could be done on a Spectrum. Nope, make no mistake that these are Amiga games. The sounds are IFF samples, and if you use all the example sounds included in the package, you can sample your own and load them up as part of the game. Anyone whose graphics skills aren't up to creating graphics then scratch can alter and receive the example graphics to their taste and include them instead.

It's unlikely that games created by the

### SOUND EFFECTS

Why, so you can't do the editing of IFF samples in this same way as with Pro Sound Designer or SoundMaster, but you can play each sound back at different speeds. You can also assign the same sample to different events at different speeds at much less expense in memory than if you had a different sound for each event. Plus there's flexibility you assign a number to the sound, then remembering the number of the sound you need, you can go and call that up when assigning sounds to player or enemy attribute screens.





## PLAYER/ENEMY ATTRIBUTES

### PLAYER ATTRIBUTES

The Player can be tuned using this screen. How many hits he can take, whether his firing is directional (in direction of movement), his speed FX number for explosions and firing, time, speed and object number. You can also select whether you get another life at \$1,000, and you can change his life by making an enemy die (you 10,000 points).



### ENEMY ATTRIBUTES

Like the player attributes, you can select speed and staff, but instead, apply you can either make enemy objects moving to part of the background. You can even make them invisible, so it looks as though your ship exploded on contact with a feature on the landscape. There's also a range of top-down forms, like diamonds, left and right, just up, just down or red at all.



OS/2, Amiga or forthcoming ST version of SEED will meet the strict requirements of commercial publishers, but the system is certainly powerful enough for a really imaginative user to come up with a game that just might square into the catalogue of a budget label. In any case, one of the chief benefits of a system like this is not necessarily for the production of finished games, in the strict, but they doxy make 'demo's of a piece before recasting it properly. So why not in the games too? What's to stop you trying out some ideas on SEED before getting a more competent programmer to implement your idea in real code? You aren't limited to just vertical shoot-em-ups; if you use a bit of imagination, with most games being so alike, it's the design that really makes the difference.

Next month, we should be talking to some of the decision makers, people who visit our unsolicited submissions to budget houses, so if you are a budding games designer watch out for a few tips and tricks. ■

## BLOCKS AND MAPS



### EDIT BLOCKS

Once you have defined the objects it is possible to edit background blocks to build background maps with. The Edit Block screen let you edit the background blocks using another eight colours, different from the eight used for sprites. Like the sprites and objects, each block is assigned a number, which can be moved. Useful hint, when you come to position the block on the map.

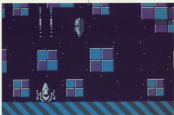
### EDIT MAP

To edit the map, select a block, either from the Edit Block screen or using the numbers on the screen. There is also a select block function which enables you to scan the available blocks and pick one just by pointing the cursor on it and clicking the button. Moving made a strip of blocks, up to 10,000 of them, you can proceed to marking the game levels from it. The bits of the map can be used repeatedly to create the appearance of a massive play area without you having to generate it all from scratch.



### EDIT LEVELS

Once you've created the map, you can then decide what you want to do with it - whether to have scrolling, static, repeatable or looping levels. Other things you can do with the map strip of blocks you've created include changing level type, direction and speed.



### THE COMPLETED GAME

And finally, when you've done all that, you get a game! You can add IFF loading screens, just to give your games that extra polish, and if you're a bit fussy with machine code, you could even have a tune at the front as well. But that's up to you. Once you've made a custom copy of the game you can give it to someone to play, and then SEED doesn't have to be installed in order to play it. With luck, we'll get a chance to chat to Benoitte before the next issue, and should be able to bring details of the game game that accompany SEED and show a few game design tips from Benoitte while we're at it.

# WIN



## ACE AND CHRYSALIS GO STIR CRAZY

A chance to sentence yourself to do time in front of the video...

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### ACE PRISON TRIVIA QUIZ

- 1) Who wrote the classic novel, *The Man In The Iron Mask*?
- 2) Who played Norman Stanley Fletcher in *Porridge*?
- 3) Where was the TV series, *The Prisoner* filmed?
- 4) What is the title of Elton's famous prison song?
- 5) What is the name of the French island penal colony that was the setting for *Popillon*?

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

AGE \_\_\_\_\_

COMPUTER OWNED \_\_\_\_\_

**A** roade adventurers can look forward to a testing challenge in *Prison*, soon to be released by Chrysalis. An undercover policeman, wrongly convicted for a crime he didn't commit, finds himself on the penal planet of Atrix. Rumour reaches his ears that the parts of a spacecraft have been scattered around the 300 locations of the penal colony – if only the marauding aliens can be avoided and clues collected, escape could be possible...

*Prison* will soon be available in the shops, but here's a chance to win a copy of this £19.95 game or a collection of videos to get you in the mood for planning an escape...

Top prize is half a dozen VHS vide with a jail theme: *Escape From New York*, *Escape From Alcatraz*, *Escape To Victory*, *Midnight Express*, *Prisoners Of The Lost Universe* and the classic, *Prisoner Of Zenda*. Plus a copy of *Prison*, the game, providing you have an ST, Amiga, PC or Archimedes.

Five runners-up can look forward to watching their own copy of *Prisoner of Zenda* before playing a complimentary copy of *Prison*, then nine more winners collect the game.

Exercise those brain cells, fill in the answers to the ACE Prison Trivia Quiz, and get your entry in to PRISON COMPETITION, ACE, 4 Queen Street, Bath BA1 1EJ before the closing date, 5th March. Usual competition rules apply.





J.R.R. Tolkien's

WAR IN

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# CRAZY CARS II

TITUS on the right road at last?

**ALTHOUGH** moved without enthusiasm by the press, Titus' first British release *Crazy Cars*, like their other automobile ventures, did reasonably well, especially in marketing parlance. Which is presumably what prompted this new, improved sequel.

Taking a similar viewpoint on the proceedings to that of its predecessor, *Crazy Cars II* now features a easy Nissan 140 as the player's vehicle, steering using mouse, joystick or keys.

However, the game takes an unusual twist in that the aim is to drive across four American states (Utah, Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico) in order to crack a stolen car racket run by corrupt policemen. All the roads portrayed are

actual freeways, and made from the States; a real working road-map is included and must be followed closely in order to reach the destination signposted for each state.

Junctions appear naturally and allow the car to be driven onto a separate slip road which then peels away from the main one. This is where CC II stands out from previous road racing games: the effect is very realistic indeed and the need to plan a route and take correct turnings provides an added dimension.

The cross-country journey is made less

## BT VERSION

The journey is more or less devoid of realistic scenery (hello *Out Run*, for instance), but the game profits from its visual deficiency by running much faster and more quickly than competitors in the genre. Mastered of road and cars is smooth and realistic, which - combined with the authentic road layouts - helps to establish a certain believable environment. The only criticisms are purely cosmetic: control and lack of any real variation in the journey, perhaps it simulates freeway driving better too well.

GRAPHICS **B** HD FACTOR **B**  
 AUDIO **B** FUN FACTOR **F**  
**ACE RATING 75%**



An authentic map of the United States can be brought up at any time to keep track of the current route and upcoming junctions.

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	£19.999	OUT NOW
AMIGA	£24.999	MARKET
SPCC 1.28	£19.999 + 128kb	End March
AMSTRAD	£22.999 + £14.999	MARKET
ORAY 128	£22.999 + £14.999	End March
IBM PC	£24.999	MARKET



# TV SPORTS

Superbowed over by CINEMAWARE

**'COACH'** think I took my tip in that last play. Don't be such a wimp - get back out there.' Such is life in American football. The gladiatorial sport of the fifties is no place for the faint-hearted, except in computer form: tucked safely behind a computer keyboard, one of those mouse-bound juggernauts can get anywhere near you.

A sports simulation is something of a new departure for Cinemaware, but it has been put together with the same sort of attention to graphics and detail as their previous games. Unlike most sports sims, this one also has a good deal of humour thrown in. Before the game, at halftime and at other random moments presentation screens pop up featuring such amusing items as a TV sports commentator, cheerleaders, locker room report and crowd scenes. These are fun to watch a couple of times, but the option to skip them is welcome thereafter.

[**Tip**] The Team Manager is where each player's attributes can be altered.

[**Warning**] Trying to kick an extra point. The defender is capable of jumping in an attempt to block the ball.

[**Warning**] The Playcalling Screen gives attributes which show how the game is progressing (at the top) and shows diagrams explaining some of the offensive plays that can be selected.

All 28 NFL teams are in the Cinemaware Football League (CAFL), with a couple of name changes, and all can be controlled by players, if 27 friends who like games just happen to be in the vicinity. Otherwise, the computer will take care of all the other teams and play their matches when the league is in operation.

Practice mode is the best place to start, because learning is the best place to start. At the various aspects of the American game you can't easily play calling, passing, running defence and blocking will all become much clearer after that plays on the practice field.

This doesn't have to be great at football to appreciate the action. The computer can be left to its own devices - which is great to watch and helps you learn. You can call plays and let the computer put them into action, or reverse it and try to play what the computer calls. If you set up the team as desired beforehand, it even plays without being watched.

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	£24.999	Autumn 88
AMIGA	£24.999	OUT NOW
IBM PC	£22.999	Autumn 88
No other versions planned		

ation by the frequent appearance of computer policemen who attempt to judge the FBI on the road. Straight highway patrolmen are also now too pleased at seeing a Ferrari scream past at 200 mph and consequently do their best to interfere with the progress of the car. Direct collisions with other vehicles, roadside lamp-posts, signs or bollards let any speed racer the Ferrari to explode in flames, and vital seconds are taken in replacing the car on the highway.

All vital information about the car's performance, elapsed time and any approaching junctions is displayed on a realistic-looking LED display at the top of the screen and a radar signal roadblocks at junctions, allowing fancy route-changes to be planned.

● Steve Jarrell



Graph of Interest vs. Age. The curve shows a steady decline in interest as age increases.

As well as the usual functions, the LED display features a combined times/line indicator alternately showing a remainder timer plus the road numbers and available turnings at the next junction, a radar detector indicating the distance to, direction of movement and location of the nearest radar source (Police cars) and a visual signal of the working condition of the radar detector beam.



The Ferrari's digital display provides a wealth of in-journey information vital to the success of the mission.

# S FOOTBALL

Each player has four attributes — speed, strength, hands and agility. Points can be allocated to each player, the majority going to the players and attributes that are considered to be most important. Not all of the team are included — just the major figures like the quarterback, wide receivers, kickers, running backs and an offensive defense personnel.

Overall, the action is about as close to the real game as could reasonably be achieved.

The hardest part of the action is, as in the real thing, completing passes. If these are played manually, the timing and placement required is great. Fortunately this skill can be acquired gradually and isn't essential to get straight on with playing the game.

Like any good all-American sport simulation, TV Sports Football is packed with statistics for the league leaders in all sorts of categories, including individual ratings and the



The main playfield during the action. The offense is always shown at the bottom of the screen.

## AMIGA VERSION

Comes with a variety of graphics and sound effects in the presentation and testing screens, but the on-field action is well represented. There's also bags of music, effects and speech to keep the user happy. Slot-swapping is kept to a minimum, the only essential change being a game being for field goals and extra points.

GRAPHICS: B IQ FACTOR: T  
 AUDIO: B FUN FACTOR: B  
 AGE RATING: BSE

stats from every match. The program also covers features such as penalties, timeouts, fumbles, interceptions, sacks, punts and field goals very thoroughly.

The action and atmosphere of American football is not easy to reproduce, but Commenz has managed it superbly. The game is easy for even novices to play, although they may not understand much at first, but can test the most skillful of players as well. Essential viewing for all gridiron followers.

● Ian White



Graph of Interest vs. Age. The curve shows a peak in interest at a certain age, followed by a decline.



# Digital Magic Software

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As a highly trained Assassin you must take your wife riding first across as a crucial mission to eliminate King MicroMogulatus, the most deadly assassin, impossible by means of equipment or abilities whose touches are fatal. To top that there's a huge monster inhabiting each area whose only purpose is to destroy all who try to pass.

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Amiga Screenshots

**DIGITAL MAGIC SOFTWARE**  
103 Mersey Road, West Bank  
Widnes Cheshire WAB 0DT  
Tel: 051-423 5943



**[Right] Amstrad** - Race-wrangling one of the computer cars needs you flitting speedily through the air. It looks good, but wastes lots of valuable time!

**OUTRUN** may well have been a tremendous success as far as sales went, but we here at ACE, and judging by the amount of mail we received, a good few of you too, were disappointed with the IBM version of this Sega classic. The car moved awfully, was slow and handled awfully. So can Ocean make a better job of converting another classic car driving game?

The action is viewed from just behind and slightly above the car, and the object of the game is to compete against a number of other cars around a circuit. There are three checkpoints on the course, so to stay in the running the player must reach each checkpoint within a time limit. Name it, and some extra time is added to help you reach the next checkpoint.

TOP SCORE 017940 TIME 71.9 LAP 176.3 SPEED 219



# WEC LE MANS

Ocean shift into top gear

Once the lap is finished you start all over again and you've completed four laps of the track.

The controls are simple enough, just accelerate, brake, left and right. What's not so simple, of course, is avoiding roadside obstacles and other racing cars. When you get to know

the course and where the straights and bends are, staying on the road becomes less of a problem - or would it if the amount of traffic didn't increase as you progressed, making it more and more common to find yourself weaving between bunches of up to four cars.

It's good to see that not all of the computer

controlled cars are expert drivers - indeed one of the major hazards (especially late in the game) is avoiding computer cars that have collided with each other and gone spinning off. Crashing into any of the cars sends you tumbling and over the wall, losing precious time while you restart and build up speed again.

What Out Run didn't have, and what really makes a convincing conversion like this playable and addictive, is realistic handling from the car and an impression of speed. Ocean have got both just right, and though there may not be much depth to the game, it remains extremely playable and you're likely to be coming back to it for months.

Andy Smith

## ARCAGE ACCURACY



An object is common as you could reasonably expect. There are a few features missing but the main objective, the gameplay, has been captured.

## COIN OF SCORE 8

## AMSTRAD VERSION

Although only few other dual colour sets are used and the sound effects are nothing much, what makes this special is the way the car moves and the smooth, fast handling. A thoroughly enjoyable racing game made even more so by the graphics.

GRAPHICS 8 IQ FACTOR 8  
AUDIO 8 FUN FACTOR 8  
ACE RATING B21

## SPECTRUM VERSION

If you're already as fast as a cheetah, all visual effects to match. The handling is faster on the Spectrum than it is on the Amstrad giving a greater impression of speed. You won't feel let by if the computer cars crashing into each other though, and when you crash the car doesn't go flying dramatically through the air. It's all and so racing and pleasing, though, and vintage racing fans will not be disappointed.

GRAPHICS 8 IQ FACTOR 8  
AUDIO 8 FUN FACTOR 8  
ACE RATING B32

TOP SCORE 017940 TIME 71.9 LAP 176.3  
SCORE 017940 TIME 71.9 LAP 176.3 SPEED 219



**[Below] Amstrad** - Computer cars often collide and go spinning off, or because of groups of steadily-bunched cars.

**[Below] Spectrum** - The time is running out and there's still no sign of the checkpoint. Take a chance and overtake that car on the outside. You'll either stay in the checkpoint, or you may just scrape by and make it in time.



## RELEASE DEX

STAR 87	Price 15A	INTEREST
BRIG	Price 15A	INTEREST
SPEC 128	£10.95 - £14.95	OUT NOW
AMSTRAD	£10.95 - £14.95	OUT NOW
CD-ROM	£10.95 - £14.95	INTEREST
IBM PC	To be decided	

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Great gameplay that's highly addictive.

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Commodore Amiga



The Knight  
one of three  
character  
classes.



Atari ST

Continue through  
single commands  
and menus.

## DISCOVER AN ARCADE ADVENTURE WITH HIDDEN DEPTHS

Discover Times Of Lore, Delight's first adventure on cassette. Acclaimed British designer Chris Roberts has taken the best of arcade and adventure — fast and furious combat, stunning graphics and animation, unrelenting danger and challenge — and introduced the depth of a classic fantasy role playing game.

Fasten your seatbelt, Times Of Lore continuously tests your combat skills while you gradually become involved in a compelling plot. With 13,000 screen locations, a powerful but simple to use menu and logic interface, scores of interactive characters and music by Martin Galway, it remains faster than other arcade adventures.

Delight have Roberts now returned in Times Of Lore. Just a time you did too? Available on C64/128 Cassette £65.95, Disk £13.95, Spectrum £18.128, Cassette £55.95, Spectrum +3 Disk £13.95, Amstrad 486/5128 Cassette £6.95, Disk £13.95, Atari ST £24.95, IBM/PC, 80 Compaq/386 £23.95, Apple II/3.95, Commodore Amiga £24.95.



C64/128



Spectrum



Amstrad

Journey through an immense  
world of cities, dungeons, and a  
stunning variety of natural  
terrain.

 **ORIGIN**

Origin, MicroProse, 2 Market Place, Tetbury Glos, GL8 8DA, Tel: 0666 54326



**Spectrum** - A much-needed energy capsule floats by, but cannot be collected.



**Atari ST** - Jumping a fence in the aerial highway (the Green Devil Box below).



**Amiga** - Sudden impact with an Easter Island head on the Rubic Dragon's saddle.

# LED STORM

CAPCOM thunder across the countryside

**ANY** mental images of huge thunder clouds using lightning bolts to smother innocents, since the LED of the title stands for Laser Enhanced Destruction, how not, since there's precious little destruction - just enhanced air resistance - we'll have to stick to the plain old truck instead.

LED Storm is the latest conversion in US Gold's Capcom range, and follows the player's fortunes at the wheel of a high-powered motor vehicle as it tears across nine regions of futuristic landscape to reach the ultimate destination of Sky City.

## RELEASE BOX

<b>Atari ST</b>	£19.99	OUT NOW
<b>Amiga</b>	£19.99	OUT NOW
<b>Amiga CD</b>	£19.99 - £19.99	OUT NOW
<b>Amstrad</b>	£19.99 - £19.99	IMMENT
<b>MSX2B</b>	£19.99 - £19.99	OUT NOW
<b>MSX PC</b>	£19.99	IMMENT

## ARCADE ACCURACY



Wonderfully accurate on the USA, comparably less so with the other versions. However, the inclusion of the game remains totally and extremely intact.

## COIN OP SCORE 5

## AMIGA VERSION

Extremely over graphics, as you might expect, and great sound, but disappointing graphics upon launch of the disc, always rendering America 3 times better from a better performance than its Atari counterpart, and then both slightly over-convincing.

<b>GRAPHICS</b>	5	<b>IQ FACTOR</b>	5
<b>SOUND</b>	5	<b>FUN FACTOR</b>	5

**ACE RATING 945**

## CGI VERSION

Another superb arcade conversion from Software Creations (authors of Super Soldier). As aspects of the original machine are faithfully reproduced - apart from the graphics, available on the machines - which makes it very difficult to not know back to the days of Spectrum, but a great game conversion. Great soundtrack, too.

<b>GRAPHICS</b>	5	<b>IQ FACTOR</b>	5
<b>SOUND</b>	5	<b>FUN FACTOR</b>	7

**ACE RATING 815**

## SPECTRUM VERSION

The monochrome Spectrum version suffers from the inability to score diagonals, although it does the storage handles. This problem is overcome by shifting the local highways in large chunks, so as to bring in the roadway to bring at the front of time - especially considering the small screen size - also it becomes, among other things, the artificially-mixed difficulty level plus other faults, such as an engine 'switched' to the turbo, makes this the only version to play like it.

<b>GRAPHICS</b>	5	<b>IQ FACTOR</b>	3
<b>SOUND</b>	3	<b>FUN FACTOR</b>	5

**ACE RATING 485**

## ST VERSION

Great graphics with fast and seemingly smooth (interpolated) scrolling. It suffers from the same static highways movement as the Spectrum, although to a lesser degree. The soundtrack fares reasonably well, with the ST's bounding working content.

<b>GRAPHICS</b>	7	<b>IQ FACTOR</b>	5
<b>SOUND</b>	7	<b>FUN FACTOR</b>	5

**ACE RATING 545**

from the Frogger episode, presumably which cause the car to spin out of control on contact. The course is also punctuated by gaps in the crumbling floors which are crossed over using ramps, plus other great features such as risks and traps which have to be avoided.

Similarly, oil-rain problems constantly level the driver: energy is the ultimate limiting factor and the replenishment of energy and fuel systems is achieved by collecting the corresponding coins on route.

Reaching the end-of-stage checkpoint before the car's energy runs out allows access to the next stage of the course, before repeats the rest of the whole course.

• **Over-Jump!**



**Amiga** - A flying saucer passes overhead, dropping bonus items. If the spinning red car can get the fuel together, the reliable coin provides a flashing green alert.

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



It takes a while to learn the course, which is a ST-offsetting will come progress to made.

# SKATEBALL

UBI SOFT play rough

**VIOLENCE** on ice is what it's all about according to Ubi Soft, and this one- or two-player game certainly provides a generous smattering of both. The scenario is simple enough, play commencing on a rectangular ice rink with a goal mouth at each end, a ball and two teams of two people. One person mucks goal while the other, the one you control, tries to kick the ball into the opponent's goal five times in all.

After the match, which has no time limit, the whole process starts again on another rink. With each successive level, there is an increas-

ing quantity of hazards such as pillars to crash into and holes in the ground that swallow up your player if he doesn't jump over them. Then there's the added danger of falling over and sliding uncontrollably into a pit or one of the huge spiked balls that are scattered randomly about the rink on the later levels. Of course you can always try to smash into the opponent and send him sliding to the same fate!

Play consists of the two players sliding around everywhere, each trying to bash into the other, knock him off balance, punch the ball (which is automatically deflected in the direction the player's facing) and then kick it into the opponent's goal. Lose a player and the next team member comes on and plays until either he gets killed, he falls off the other team, or you complete the series of matches. Lose all three players and the game is over.

Controlling the player on 'ice' is not easy anyway, but just when you think you're getting the hang of it, the game starts producing risks that can kill! This makes it a whole lot of fun, especially in two-player mode.

• Andy Smith

*Justy Jaagahl: One of your players has just slid to his death.*



## SPECTRUM VERSION

The scoring is slightly tricky, as is the situation at times. The graphics, however, is great, and you'll find it hard not to have 'just one more go'.

GRAPHICS	7	IQ FACTOR	3
SOUND	4	PER FACTOR	5
<b>ACE RATING 743</b>			

## RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	£19.95pb	March
AMIGA	£19.95pb	March
SPEC 128	£19.95p - £14.95pb	OUT NOW
AMSTRAD	£19.95p - £14.95pb	March
OSAR128	£19.95p - £14.95pb	March
IBM PC	£19.95pb	March

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The two player mode adds lasting interest.

# DYNAMIC DUO

FIREBIRD pair up

**NOT** the Caped Crusaders this time, a dwarf and a duck are the unlikely duo in question in this horizontally-scrolling one- or two-player arcade adventure.

The object of the exercise is to enter the Night House and track down ten pieces of a key that are scattered around the place, collect the whole key, find the Calculators' Room and, hopefully, escape. The bits of key are all hidden in treasure chests that only the dwarf can

Equip the team up enables you to search the house much more quickly.

open, but he's not so fast moving around as the duck, so it's a good idea to split the pair up. Place the duck (which has the key), then send the dwarf in to smash them open.

Unfortunately, to cross between floors of the house the pair must be together, so you can't rely on just using one character to solve the game. When you find a piece of the key it is automatically picked up, and as you collect the pieces 'phantom' Calculators' Rooms can start disappearing, and with all ten pieces the real Calculators' Room is revealed.

The screen is split in three. The top third is used when you're playing a character in one player mode, or when the two characters are together. The second third of the screen shows the second character when they're apart, or a small map of the house, showing objects and dangers, and so on when they're together. The

lower part of the screen shows the score and number of key pieces collected so far.

Of course, there are riches about attempting to thwart your progress, particularly the Grim Reaper who watches your progress as you move around and can appear at any time, normally killing you off if you allow him to come in contact with one of the characters.

Dynamic Duo is a fun game, and although it's not terribly easy to get the hang of straight away, played with a friend it becomes an entertaining arcade adventure.

• Andy Smith

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A simple arcade adventure, that is at its best when played with a friend.



## AMSTRAD VERSION

The Gobby characters are cute, as are the backgrounds. It's not an outstanding game in its department, but it's fun for a while, especially in two player mode.

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	4
SOUND	3	PER FACTOR	5
<b>ACE RATING 644</b>			



Level 1: When ninjas and Green Beret-style dogs provide the basic interest.



Level 2: Down in the sewers, and Bad Dudes is up to his ankles in it...



Level 3: Bad releases a Powerball, while his adversaries cover in terror.

# BAD DUDES VS DRAGONNINJA

Get a kick out of life with OCEAN

## RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	03/05c	MINI-DISK
AMIGA	04/05c	MINI-DISK
SPD 100	03/05c - 04/05c	MINI-DISK
AMSTRAD	03/05c - 04/05c	5.25" HD-DISK
DRAGON	03/05c - 04/05c	MINI-DISK
IBM PC	Price TBA - under development	

## AMSTRAD VERSION

Amstrad Dragonninja's about as good as it could be. The graphics are nicely detailed and colorful, and the usual members of the arcade has been captured, complete with parallax scrolling and a multitude of sprites. It might be expected, the wheel set up to match, but sufficient to represent the vision of the originating arcade track.

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	3	FUN FACTOR	6
AGE RATING 856			

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



There is more than enough action in this one to keep you coming back for more.

## LATEST

In a long, long line of Japanese martial arts arcade conversions is Imagine's *Bad Dudes vs Dragonninja*, from the very popular Data East coin-op.

One of the *Bad Dudes* of the title sets off in search of the fabled Dragonninja, a poor unfortunate beset with the body of a man and a dragon's head (a Soviet female helicopter, by any chance?) This evil creature is holding President Ronald hostage in his underground complex, and in a misguided fit of goodwill, the *Bad Dudes* sets off to liberate the most powerful actor in the western hemisphere.

The rescue mission takes *Bad Dudes* across eight levels of screens, boiling through a town, across the top of a moving truck, along sewers, through a forest, on top of a speeding train, into an underground cave system and finally into the two levels of Dragonninja's complex, here, the final duel takes place against the boss himself on the slabs of his helicopter.

There are four types of ring assassins who are constantly after *Bad's* blood, depleting his energy each time they land a blow. At the end of each level there lies - surprise, surprise - an end-of-level guardian, each of which has a different method of attack and must be defeated before attempting the next screen. *Bad Dudes* defends himself with punches and kicks, and also uses his own jump-kicks and a power punch to dispatch acrobatic enemies like the

As his black pygmalion enemies like the

end, they occasionally drop weapons which the *Dude* collects. In this way his bare-knuckle armory can be supplemented by a sledge and Sanchez. He also obtains extra energy and time, left by the target, to replenish waning life-force and diminishing time allowance.

*Dragonninja* is a very competent rendition of the original, and is fun to play in the same fashion as *Green Beret*, *Strigate* et al. It can be pretty tough, but the constant progress provides a strong urge to go back for more. *Dragonninja* may not be the best combat game ever to hit the streets, but it's well employed and extremely addictive.

■ Dave Lanot

(Below) *Bad Dudes* leaps to avoid the second end-of-level guardian. Note the relatively detailed *BAD* track.



## ARCADE ACCURACY



Truly taking the best player option of the original, otherwise a pretty damn close conversion.

COIN OP SCORE 7

# THE MUNSTERS

AGAIN AGAIN's monster licence

**GHOSTS** ghosts and things that go bump in the night are all commonplace in the Munster household, where the arcade adventure from new software house Again Again is set. Tearing a cat TV

## RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	119.999	OUT NOW
AMIGA	119.999	OUT NOW
SPC 128	119.999	OUT NOW
AMSTRAD	119.999	OUT NOW
EGA128	119.999	OUT NOW
MSX	119.999	OUT NOW

series into a good computer game is a tall order for such a young company - have they pulled it off?

Almost, is the answer. In the game you start off playing the part of Lily and have to rescue Marilyn (the only normal member of the family) from the clutches of Old Nick. This is only achievable by starting at the Munster house and wandering through the rooms, collecting objects and destroying monsters that guard the exits/entrances to other locations.

There's a caveat - if that's the right word - with a limitless supply of spells which are best used to destroy the hordes of ghosts that come flying from the walls. Contact with the ghosts results in some of your limited energy being sapped, but destroying them earns a

*Lily goes wandering around the garden, trying to solve the energy level is still high, but those zombies just keep climbing out of the wall. Needs a combo, and energy is rapidly drained.*



## SPECTRUM VERSION

Spells and bedspreads are fast, and the graphics is very good in places. The file save system isn't bad, there is not much in the way of spot effects. **Available - Filled - Great Adventure**

GRAPHICS	5	16 FACTOR	4
SOUND	5	16M FACTOR	7
ACE RATING 807			

## ST VERSION

The spells and bedspreads are wonderful and well animated. The file save is good too, and if you like the old game style, you'll get some enjoyment from *The Munsters*.

GRAPHICS	5	16 FACTOR	4
SOUND	7	16M FACTOR	7
ACE RATING 813			

points bonus and a little more spell power - a bottle at the top of the screen fills up as your power increases. Some of the real baddies can't be destroyed just with spells though, so you must collect the right object first.

Again Again have captured the flavour of the TV series, but the game style is old hat and you won't be hooked to your computer for long.

● Andy Smith

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



An old game style, but nicely executed.

# TRANSPUTOR

CRIL drop a brick

**NICE** idea, shame about the execution. Just when everyone thought it was safe to forget about hot and ball games, industry veterans CRIL come out with a product that is a straightforward reworking of the mediocre 8-bit entertainment, 3D Ballbreaker.

Rather than a first-person view of propped

up a 3D isometric perspective is offered. Righttime movie. Breakout. The ball moves along the right-hand side of the play area, and the ball bounces off solid blocks that explode when hit. Obviously, the wall behind the player's ball is movable. Sound effects, including digitised speech, jolly along the proceedings

and the usual crop of bonus bricks are found in the walls, which extend vertically as well as horizontally. If you get bored with trying to work through the 32 screens in sequence, it is possible to die in and start playing on a selected screen.

● GamesKit

## AMIGA VERSION

Don't be misled by the technology title. Gridly graphics and feature digitised messages including a screenshot requires after the ball moves a ball and it goes out of your control with poor controls to make an unimpressive and unexciting game. And about parity of release as a budget title, but as a future release, this effort is an insult to the genre.

GRAPHICS	5	16 FACTOR	1
SOUND	5	16M FACTOR	2
ACE RATING 303			



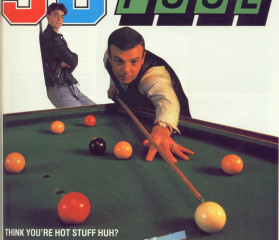
*3D isometric Breakout in Transputor. The game takes to the isometric and computerized extremes.*



Not exactly testing for - digged someone has might keep you playing for a while.



# 3D POOL



THINK YOU'RE HOT STUFF HUH?

Well here's your chance to prove it.

Empire champion "Matteo Joe" Barbara is waiting to risk "me up and blow you out."

Unlike any other pool simulation, 3-D POOL incorporates a unique "move around the table" feature — allowing shots to be played from any position, just like in a real game.

3-D POOL will take all your skill to master and if you do get that lucky break, how about entering the nationwide "Matteo Joe" high score competition with the chance to play a real forte with the champ. Full details in every box.

Get up for a shot at Big Joe.



Feature	3-D POOL vs ...
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EGA	128.00
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**firebird**



A LEGEND IN GAMES SOFTWARE



Microsoft, First Place, 64-128, New Zealand, London, WPCM, IBM.

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# LAST DUEL

CAPCOM'S final fight

**SHADES** of JED Steem in this, another one of Capcom's vertically-scrolling driving games, as a car races through futuristic scenery. However, the addition of flying craft, simultaneous two-player action and lots of shooting make it altogether a different test of the player's skills.

There are six levels to get through, each

with deadly guardians at the end of them, never mind the hordes of defenses along the way. In Levels One, Three and Five, Player One drives a car and takes out ground obstacles, while in Two, Four and Six he flies a plane - which Player Two flies on all six levels.

The defenses cover the whole gamut of alien forces, from gun emplacements to kamikaze cars, fire-breathing dragons to deathly plungers into the void. If there is no second player then the aerial defenses do not appear



**AMSTRAD** - Two players race through the first level. Player Two is the blue car with the right in front of it. Player One is the red three-wheeled car.

on Levels One, Three and Five.

Along the route you can pick up items that enhance firepower. This increases the number of bullets fired forward and also enables side-way shooting. The car can jump over obstacles and holes, but be careful of getting trapped in the library.

It's standard arcade fare, enhanced only by the two-player option. Fair enough for shoot-'em-up fans but offers nothing special.

• **Bob Ward**

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	£19.99	OUT NOW
AMIGA	£19.99	IMMINENT
SPEC 138	£9.99 - £19.99	OUT NOW
AMSTRAD	£9.99 - £14.99	OUT NOW
CD-ROM	£9.99 - £14.99	IMMINENT
IBM PC	£24.99	Under development

SPECTRUM VERSION		
The cost involved is low, which makes the version probably difficult to play.		
GRAPHICS	6	IQ FACTOR 1
AUDIO	4	FM FACTOR 6
ACE RATING 4/10		

ST VERSION		
Reasonably good graphics, but the pricing appears to mean that it's hard to see anything you need to deal with.		
GRAPHICS	6	IQ FACTOR 1
AUDIO	6	FM FACTOR 6
ACE RATING 6/10		

AMSTRAD VERSION		
Much better graphics than the Spectrum version, and much more playable too.		
GRAPHICS	7	IQ FACTOR 1
AUDIO	3	FM FACTOR 6
ACE RATING 6/10		



# DARK FUSION

Trigger fingers to the test, with GREMLIN

**PROMISING** intruder to the Corps of the Guardian Warriors must first pass a test which examines the disciplines needed as an everyday Guardian Warrior - basically lots of shooting, running around and shooting.

The test itself is broken up into three sections. The main Combat Zone involves being fitted a horizontal corridor which is entered with all manner of alien traps, robots and gun

emplacements. These fire upon and generally freeze the Corps cadet, who has only a limited energy supply and a mere three lives with which to complete the test.

Extra equipment can be collected by picking up the items released on the destruction of specific alien constructions. The cadet can thus increase his manoeuvrability and firepower along the way.

Within each section there is more 'Force Probe', giving access to further sub-sections. Two Alien Zones must be entered and the alien creatures within destroyed. Only then can the Combat Zone be completed and the Flight Zone entered for the trip through to the next level.

The difficult and lock-on gameplay tends to wear thin after only a few goes, and the potentially interesting shoot-'em-up intruder of the title. Action and even if type is relegated to the veteran's land of medicine games, both



**AMSTRAD** - Contact with a Fusion gun sends the player into the tricky Alien Zone.

is only found on all versions, but moving the vital spark to separate it from the alien plants.

• **Dave Jeml**

SPECTRUM VERSION		
Reasonably detailed and colorful, the Space Dark Fusion plays very similarly to the Amstrad. It's a fast-paced, but the 48K sound effects are pretty weak, but the title music is fantastic.		
GRAPHICS	6	IQ FACTOR 3
AUDIO	4	FM FACTOR 4
ACE RATING 5/10		

AMSTRAD VERSION		
Very smart visuals, but somewhat lacking in the sound department. Difficult to get to grips with, and the immediate lack of progress is annoying.		
GRAPHICS	7	IQ FACTOR 3
AUDIO	3	FM FACTOR 4
ACE RATING 5/10		

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	£19.99	IMMINENT
AMIGA	£19.99	IMMINENT
SPEC 138	£7.99 - £19.99	OUT NOW
AMSTRAD	£9.99 - £14.99	OUT NOW
CD-ROM	£9.99 - £14.99	IMMINENT



(Right) Down in the east, what looks like the enemy has to fight off an attack (red). Units move and the enemy loses a battle until you're on top of it.

(Street) Unit symbols can be changed to icons at the press of a button.

**THIS** one- or two-player tactical wargame covers what many experts consider to be the single most masterminded confrontation of the American Civil War — the Battle of Chickamauga Creek, on the 19th and 20th September, 1863. Though the Confederates won what is now regarded as a tactical victory, it didn't really do much to improve their chances of winning the war. SSI now gives you the chance to change the course of history by using a decisive victory for the Confederates, or attempting to hammer them if you should choose to play the Union army.

The game is composed of eighteen turns, each turn representing two hours on the battlefield. The players decide which armies they'll



# REBEL CHARGE AT CHICKAMAUGA

## SSI Fix bayonets

command and the game starts with the first commander issuing orders to his troops. Taking a top-down view of the battle, each commander is aiming to score as many victory points as possible by capturing strategic positions on the large game map.

Each turn is made up of several phases, with movement coming first. The distance a unit is allowed to move during any two-hour period depends on the amount of movement points the unit has, which in turn depends on what type of unit it is (infantry, cavalry or artillery) and whether it is ordered to move at double-speed time. After moving, the unit can target an enemy unit to attack during the combat phase, if the enemy is in line of sight and, of course, within range.



The smaller-scale strategic map gives a better overall view of the situation.



Here, too, is the unit's

line of sight. This unit can fire on any enemy unit that falls within the screen area.

Units are moved by placing the on-screen cursor over them and then using the numeric keypad to move in one of eight directions (use **Tab** to be taken when moving units close to each other as you can only stack a certain number in any one square, and detours are often expensive in movement points). After all the units of a side have moved, the other player gets to take any opportunistic shots at the moving units. Then the combat phase is entered with attacking and defending units firing alternately. Finally the other side moves and the process repeats to complete the turn.

*Rebel Charge at Chickamauga* is very tactical, so will certainly test powers of strategic and tactical planning. Don't be put off if you've never played a wargame, because there are three levels of play and options offer hidden or open movement, as well as many other user-definable options which can swing things in your favour. The game is well put together, with almost everything taken into account (barracks,

terrain, whether the unit is charging, is retreating or even which direction it's facing). The multi-level of options and play levels means you can make things as simple or as complicated as you wish. If you're an experienced wargamer, too it's well worth taking a long, hard look at.

● *Andy Cook*

RELEASE BOX		
AMIGA	12/1986	OUT NOW
OS/2	12/1986	IMMEDIATE
IBM PC	12/1986	IMMEDIATE

AMIGA VERSION			
The graphics could have been better, but they're adequate. <i>Rebel Charge</i> is easy enough for novices to play and challenging enough on the advanced scenario to keep veterans happy.			
GRAPHICS	B	HD FACTOR	7
MOVIE	N/A	PER FACTOR	6
AGE RATING			
E-4			



# WANTED

## Bounty hunting with INFOGRAMES

### AMIGA VERSION

Decade defused effects add some extreme atmosphere. The scenery and characters are plain textured blocks, and certainly not state-of-the-art in the shoot-'em-up field.

GRAPHICS: 8 IQ FACTOR: 1  
 AUDIO: 7 FUN FACTOR: 7  
**ACE RATING 896**

### ST VERSION

Its defused sound effects, but the graphics are really in good as on the Amiga, and gameplay is more or less identical.

GRAPHICS: 8 IQ FACTOR: 1  
 AUDIO: 6 FUN FACTOR: 7  
**ACE RATING 844**

### RELEASE BOX

AMIGA ST £19.95b OUT NOW  
 AMIGA £19.95b OUT NOW  
 No other versions planned

**GUNFIGHT** games have been around since the earliest computer and console. They made a comeback last year with *Gunsmoke*, a vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up, and now here's another one.

Four bunnies, in other words four excellent gunners, have to be found and killed. On the route to them are more attempts than get worked in a Sam Peckinpah movie. There are also bunnies like rocks and barrels that tumble down the screen to crush bounty hunters into the Atlantic del.

Fortunately the animation is distinctly



Amiga - Shoot the bunnies to reveal treasure. The table in the bottom left of the screen shows which objects are currently in use.

superior to anything the real West had, firing in three directions at once. firepower, speed and range are all improved by collecting objects from blasted barrels. Be cautious, mind, because deadly shells also fall in some barrels. Particularly helpful are the sticks of dynamite that act as smart bombs.

There are also clouds to stop bullets and hearts to give extra lives. If you are killed, the weapon's level is reduced, making it harder to deal with all the incoming bunnies who appear from all sides of the screen except the bottom, looking off the occasional bullet in your direction. Occasionally, ropes pop up in buildings and jump bullets across the screen. The only way to take them out, again, is if you can kill them diagonally.

Not a very original concept, but it's better put together than *Gunsmoke* and has enough levels to keep the gunfighter addicted.

by Mike

### PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Not bad at first, but the action is repetitive.

# MANHATTAN DEALERS

## Fight crime the SILMARILS way

**DRUG** pushers are invariably portrayed as characters who would benefit from some rehabilitation, and the same is true



Henry picks up his dollars and prepares to take out a substantial amount.

backstage are no exception. To play the part of Inspector Henry, an already good dude and tough cookie just to break up the drugs rings and restore harmony to the neighbourhood.

The action is all viewed side-on in pseudo 3D, with the player controlling Henry to for wander around wacky areas of Manhattan smearing innocent punks and chain-smoking mooks are into unconsciousness. Most of the baddies that Henry comes across will be the police; therefore, so once they're knocked out it's relatively easy to rob them of their drugs. His aim is to collect a specified amount of illegal substances, run to the far right of the game area and burn the drugs in a large burner that's conveniently blazing away.

Do all that and you can start smoking up the real drugs ring (the coffee ring is the first to break, followed by the cocaine ring, the

drugs involved getting progressively harder). The game area remains the same for each ring, but the number and ferocity of the gang level are increased. Let Henry take too many hits and his health status bar (below the main play area) starts to take a dive. If it reaches the bottom, Henry's game and you'll have to start.

The game concept is not new and there are some classic gameplay points. For example, it's an effort to get Henry facing the way he's moving, so much of the time it's easier to have him wandering around backwards! Once you've seen all the features and discovered how to break the baddies, manual garbage managers to kill your enthusiasm before long.

Andy Child

### RELEASE BOX

AMIGA ST £19.95b OUT NOW  
 AMIGA £24.95b IMMANT  
 SPEC 128 Price and release date TBA  
 AMSTRAD Price and release date TBA  
 DOS128 Price and release date TBA  
 IBM PC £24.95b IMMANT

### ST VERSION

The backgrounds are colourful and detailed and animation of the sprites is good too. Unfortunately, Henry's just not enough here to keep you playing for long, and the cumbersome control does nothing to help.

GRAPHICS: 8 IQ FACTOR: 8  
 AUDIO: 6 FUN FACTOR: 6  
**ACE RATING 848**

### PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Lacks lasting interest.

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## SCREEN TEST

(Right) That big guy keeps pumping out burning missiles, but you've managed to pick up some extra weapons so he shouldn't be too much trouble.

**HORIZONTALLY** scrolling shoot-'em-ups are fun a plenty, but *Denaris* is one of an elite few that, in virtue of their graphics and gameplay, really stand out from the crowd.

The player flies a space craft through stages after stages of alien tunnels. In each of the tunnels they change for each level, there are no route choices; you simply keep flying from left to right, destroying waves of flying aliens that come from all directions. There are also aliens that walk slowly along the bottom firing and, as if that weren't enough to contend with, there are installations which fire too. These can't be destroyed, so they just have to be avoided.

At various stages of the game, symbols come scrolling across the screen that grant your ship with extra weapons if they are picked up. Extra weapons include a pistol which will attack to the front of your ship and act as a shield, three-way laser shots and bombs.

All these are needed to get past the tougher opponents, such as Transformer-like robots that pump out homing missiles and the end-of-level guardians. The end-of-level challenge varies; for example, there's a large monster to destroy at the end of the first level, but at the end of Stage Two there's just a load of grunting aliens that look like mines and take several shots to destroy. At the end of Level Three there's a snake-like guardian that moves around the screen pumping out shots - beginning to get the picture?

All extra weapons stay with the ship until you lose a life, but fortunately it doesn't take long to build weaponry back up to a decent strength after you start again from the last restart point, which is never too far away!

*Denaris* is a terrific shoot-'em-up. Don't expect it to tax your brain in any way, shape or form, but your joystick and joystick-arm will get a serious workout. As far as shoot-'em-ups go, it's one of the best.

● Andy Smith



# DENARIS

High-speed blasting with RAINBOW ARTS



(Above) **004** - the end-of-level guardian on Level Six. Even with all these extra weapons, you'll find him tough to beat!

(Below) He's against the best end of level guardian - keep on blasting!

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**CG128** Price TBA **AMNNT**

No other versions planned

### AMIGA VERSION

Swift graphics, great sound and great gameplay combine to make this one of the most compulsive shoot-'em-ups to have appeared for a long time. However, you feel like some doddering fooling, this is the one to beat us.

**GRAPHICS** 9 **IG FACTOR** 9

**AUDIO** 7 **FUN FACTOR** 9

**ACE RATING 887**

### CG128 VERSION

Completely different to the Amiga version, it's a horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up game, though, but the plots and their attack patterns are completely different. Still a great game though.

**GRAPHICS** 9 **IG FACTOR** 1

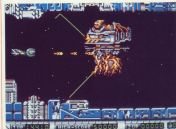
**AUDIO** 9 **FUN FACTOR** 9

**ACE RATING 894**

### PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Intensely addictive and challenging enough to keep you playing for a long time.



# CUSTODIAN

HEWSON on their guard

**WAY** back in the olden days when programmers were still trying to deal with vertigo cliff or the Spectrum, Chris Hensley wrote *Pyanusama* and changed arcade adventures forever. Now he's been let loose on *1000* machines and, at tandem with Nigel Stronape, has produced Hewson's latest handiwork.

Item borders are evidently colourful places, because that's where the action takes place. The tombs have been invaded by parasites that

are draining energy. Your task is to collect and destroy pods in the three levels of the tombs, while fending off numerous alien attackers.

Each tomb level is a large, two-dimensional, multi-directional scrolling area - much of it peppered with obstacles. Flying around is sim-



ulation - You're the red flying whatchamacallit. To the right is a pod, emitting red blue rockets-spheres that drain energy.

## RELEASE BOX

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AMIGA £19.999 NOW

1-bit versions under development

ple enough but there's a constant stream of aliens for company. Aliens have different behavior patterns, so there are few types of weapon for dealing with them. These weapons come in various strengths, shoot in different directions and even include smart bombs, homing missiles and excitable laser torpedoes.

The weapons systems have to be paid for with pods, or also dotted around the tombs. Pods also have to be exchanged to give tele-port slots, but at least the slots give you energy in return. When a pod is collected it has to be taken to a special chamber where it has to be shot, miss it, and it will have to be collected again. While all this is going on the tomb's energy level is being sapped, so it's important to complete the job as swiftly as possible.

It's frantic stuff, beautifully depicted. What keeps it fresh are the variety of weapons and aliens encountered. Hardly a classic, but it has many great moments to savor.

■ *Bob White*

## AMIGA VERSION

Smooth scrolling, lovely backdrops, neat alien and rapidly sound effects. It can sometimes be a little tough to see what's happening, but that is usually a gameplay feature.

GRAPHICS 8 IQ FACTOR 2

GAME 7 FUN FACTOR 8

AGE RATING T8+

## ST VERSION

Graphics and sound have undergone the pain of the Amiga, accidental graphics.

GRAPHICS 8 IQ FACTOR 2

GAME 7 FUN FACTOR 8

AGE RATING T8+

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



There is variety in the blasting, but it won't sustain the interest for too long.

# GI HERO

FIREBIRD send you on a recovery mission

**SPIES** are early games of war at the best of times, but when they start handing over stolen peace documents to the enemy they can be a real pain in the neck. What's needed in this situation is a hero, someone who is not scared to charge into heavily-defended enemy territory and bring those documents back. That someone, my friend, is you.

Just to complicate matters, the equipment you were supplied with has suffered slight damage after an inopportune parachute drop. There are, thankfully, found and already wooden-dog killer for, see all because he was scared.

The real action takes place in the bottom half of the screen and is viewed sidon. To complete the game you'll have to accomplish certain tasks in order, details of which are relayed in code via a satellite linkup. To decode the messages you must switch on the cipher machine, and follow the clues. There is a drawback though: the cipher machine (and

any other equipment) costs energy to use, and energy is slowly limited.

Being shot at by the enemy also uses energy, and shooting back at them uses ammunition, although that's not so much of a worry because you can discard used magazines and collect full ones that are lying around on the floor. Once Killer is found (follow the beacon signals) he'll meet any enemy guards who happen to wander onto the same screen as you.

*GI Hero* is definitely one for mapping fans. It's varied enough to keep you playing, but takes a while and a lot of thinking to get into.

■ *Andy Girth*



Spectrum - You've found your faithful friend Killer, so go solve the next puzzle.

## SPECTRUM VERSION

To avoid attribute clash, the border system used in *Dark Empire* is employed again. Sound effects are good - get 3000 especially - as is the music. The game isn't handling with color, but it is fun to play and contains a whole lot of concepts.

GRAPHICS 8 IQ FACTOR 4

GAME 7 FUN FACTOR 7

AGE RATING T8+

## AMSTRAD VERSION

Almost exactly the same as the Spectrum version, which is a shame because more options could have been used. Still, it's just as playable.

GRAPHICS 7 IQ FACTOR 4

GAME 6 FUN FACTOR 7

AGE RATING T8+

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A tough but enjoyable game, likely to be of particular interest for mapping fans.

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**BLOOD** is a strange thing: people only start worrying about it when there's a very good chance of losing it. This explains why bloodsucking vampires aren't exactly the most popular sorts to have as neighbors. In their efforts to quell the vampires' evil reign, the humans have acquired a holy medallion which sustains the precarious balance between good and evil...

In *Night Hunter*, the player is given the chance to indulge in a little windowing for a change, by taking control of the ancient Count Dracula in his final attempt at world domination. Starting from his ancient resting place in the Transylvanian castle, the Count intends to track down and steal all the medallions, bring the world to chaos, to can then continue terrorizing the population in style.

The Count's efforts are portrayed over 30 full-screen levels, totaling 600 locations (some 200 different screens). Dracula negotiates castles, villages, graveyards and rural landscapes and must gather eight objects — three parchments and five keys — in order to progress. Keys allow entry to locked rooms on the same level, while the parchments unlock the final door — a laser and red portal that goes across to the next level.

Dracula is constantly beset by vampire hunters recruited by equally ancient Professor Van Helsing, who himself appears at the end of each level. All manner of obstacles appear, including holy water, silver balls, arrows and the now-popular wooden stake in their efforts to rid the vampire of his energy, and thus his life.

A flick of the joystick turns the Prince of Darkness into a windowed off, unresponsive, a lot. The joystickless possesses the ability to hit its enemies, while the ball examination allows Dracula to avoid obstacles of otherwise fatal water. Both physical forms are a useless drain on his energy supply, however, and can only be used for short periods at a time, as denoted by a decreasing bar.

The Count's dwindling energy supply can be managed by sucking the blood of the

Transylvanian sucking blood from a victim.



The Prince of Darkness, Dracula himself, caught in the act of shape-changing...



...into a bat, so that he can fly across water that would otherwise kill him.

# NIGHT HUNTER

UBI SOFT sink their teeth in...

human vampire hunters, accompanied by a suitable sampled gurgling noise. The poor unfortunate recipient of the creature's advances finally drops to the floor in a lifeless heap of bones.

Dracula's minuscule limbs toward the lively side right from the outset, and it's amazing that death sends him back to the very start of each level. Patience and persistence soon pay off, but the age is complete at 30 levels could wear off after a while.

— Dave Jent

Hang the Count in sawdust incarceration.



## ST VERSION

The ST is evenly split at *Night Hunter* (some adventures, and *Night Hunter* is up among the best of the genre). The results are extremely attractive, with a variety of colorful, detailed backgrounds and nicely animated characters. Sound is evenly mixed, but used to atmospheric, effect-raising, graphics-uppers that rest of thing.

GRAPHICS: 8 3D FACTOR: 4  
 AUDIO: 8 FLOW FACTOR: 7  
 AGE RATING: 8/10

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## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Looks good and plays just as well — since the other leading trouble and down time.

# BASEBALL

Are NINTENDO in the right ballpark?

**ALL** the features of the popular American game are faithfully represented in Nintendo's latest sports simulation, from the pitcher's mound in the center of the diamond to the strange visual signals of the release.

One or two players can participate, and both teams play through nine innings; one match with control divided between batting and pitching. The batter can be moved around the batting area to line up for a hit, and is made to swing his bat with a jab of the fire button; the pitcher has a choice of four throws (fast, slow, curve and control), and is made to release the ball by pressing fire.

Contact between bat and ball is simply a matter of timing — although getting a good hit isn't as dependent on split-second reactions as it is in other games of this sort. Once the ball is in the air, the batter automatically cuts off around the diamond while the fielding team attempts to catch or collect the ball; the fielding player may then select which base to throw the ball to. All other aspects of gameplay, such as catching, tagging and making runs are carried out by the computer.

Baseball's graphics are adequate for the game style, with small but clear sprites. Gameplay is smooth enough but there are annoying delays when playing against the computer, and the game as a whole may prove to be a bit on the slow side for those that like to get on with the action.

Competing solo proves to be the worst option because of the random factors intro-

duced — the computer varies between totally useless and amazingly brilliant, and always puts it out of the bag in the last few innings. Two-player mode is Baseball's real strength, but the limited amount of game strategy still only provides short-term interest.

• Steve Jarrid

## RELEASE BOX

NINTENDO 074-0501 OUT NOW

GRAPHICS 6 IQ FACTOR 7

AUDIO 4 FUN FACTOR 7

AGE RATING 8-24

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A reasonable prediction of the sport, but limited in variety and strategic options.



## KONAMI'S

Top Gun is the home version of a machine that is already unknown in this country. Clambering into the cockpit of a US Navy F-14, the player is charged with repelling an aerial assault by Russian forces over a series of four combat scenarios.

After an air-air combat practice in the first stage, the F-14s plane is thrown into a low-altitude air-to-air attack against the enemy base in which the carrier Mirak must be destroyed. Combat continues over Russian territory, with



Heading for the US aircraft carrier Enterprise after a successful mission.

(Main pic) After a 100 mph delivery, the white player cuts off around the diamond. (Inset) An overhead view of the pitch as the bases empty after the ball.



# TOP GUN

Tom Cruise simulator from KONAMI

the plane, raising the gauntlet of tanks and gunship helicopters. Only the enemy's huge fortress headquarters gets in the way before the final confrontation in space against a threatening Russian satellite base. (Was a jet-powered F-14 team in a valour in anyone but the Sunday Sport's gears...)

Between stages the F-14 is refuelled to the US carrier Enterprise where it must be safely plotted down onto the deck - a failed landing ends one of the player's three planes.

Droperry includes a machine gun with oriented ammo, plus a selection of three types of missile chosen at the start of each mission. The more powerful the missile, the fewer there are available, so the decision must be made to weigh quantity versus effectiveness against larger targets.

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GRAPHICS  10 FACTOR

VIDEO  FUN FACTOR

ACE RATING BOX

As fuel is naturally used up during the mission, the plane may be refuelled by calling a tanker plane once during each sortie. Carefully guiding the fuel line into place using the radar screen sees the tanks refilled, an unsuccessful effort leaves the plane running on empty - with inevitable consequences.

Top Gun is visually sparse, but the enemy sorties are extremely effective - especially in the air-to-air combat. Combined with decent sound effects and the varied and entertaining action, the latest Konami release is bound to appeal to all die-hard jet addicts.

• Dave Lamb

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Brightforward shoot-em-up that looks good, plays well and has plenty of action.



(Above) In flight above the ocean, the Russian fleet appears over the horizon.



(Middle) A sub surface of a U.S. attack, or it's time to launch a missile and (Below) blow it out of the water.



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# SHORT AND SWEET

## TURBO TRAX

Microdeal, Amiga version reviewed, \$4.95/dk.

Lectra Games were responsible for the official Scalix's computer game, but Microdeal have produced a version from above that brings game with more than a passing resemblance to the toy.

The program comes complete with five pre-designed courses and a design program that allows you to create your own circuits, in much the same fashion as sticking together those bits of track.

In turbo racing (played either the joystick or in a hand) you have to keep your car in the centre of the power supply that runs along the

track (you'll incur a time delay if you don't) and this is where the problems start. You have to raise the joystick around in the direction of the circuit, which gets to be annoying.

Data apart from the control problem, the graphics are nothing special, particularly because the sprites are too small, and the sound effects are somewhat limited too. Turbo Trax is a nice, if unoriginal, idea but the gameplay lets it down. Still, the design option should keep fans of the toy going for a while.

Andy Smith



Amiga - Turbo Trax

GRAPHICS 5 10 FACTOR 4  
 AUDIO 5 FUN FACTOR 7  
 ACE RATING 360

## FAST BREAK

Accolade, DOS version reviewed, £9.95/£4.95/dk.

The Slamers and the Jamers are in this one or two player basketball sim that keeps the pace hot and the action exciting. Pick your team members (the various players available all have peculiar characteristics), decide the plays and go for those baskets!

The standard 'player' leaves the ball in the one you control (minus it's adopted and your current player) is highlighted (you can switch between players at a flick of the fire buttons). As you move around the court the player dribbles the ball automatically. Then it's a case of avoiding the opposing team members and shooting

at goal. As a fast-moving sports sim it's a lot of fun.

It's slightly annoying that the court is split in two and the screen flips every time you cross the centre line, but the graphics and animation are fine otherwise. It's a well put-together basketball sim that you'll find entertaining for some time even if you're not a great fan of the sport. Of course, it's even more fun when you play against a friend.

Andy Smith



DOS - Fast Break

GRAPHICS 7 10 FACTOR 4  
 AUDIO 5 FUN FACTOR 8  
 ACE RATING 730

## A QUESTION OF SPORT

Elite, Atari ST version reviewed, £19.95/dk.

ERR, Coleman, quite, well, remarkable, Ah, good or Steve Coleman, don't ya just love him? Well, love him or hate him, he's one of the Beeb's most popular commentators and host of the wonderful sporting quiz programme, A Question of Sport. Now, following a board version, Elite give us the chance to play the game at any hour of the day.

There are no bounds to the game including all the favourites like 'What happened next?' and 'Home or away'. Choose your team members, decide whether you'd like to play against the computer or a friend, pick your specialist

subjects and you're off. A speech bubble appears above David's head, which all the questions scroll through - all about sport, of course, no general knowledge - and all you have to do is answer them correctly.

If you love this kind of quiz game, especially the sporting ones, you'll find A Question of Sport highly entertaining. All the favourites of the TV programme are faithfully reproduced, down to the Coleman-winning commentary and the digitised mug shots of the various celebs are fun too.

Andy Smith



Atari ST - A Question of Sport

GRAPHICS 8 10 FACTOR 7  
 AUDIO 5 FUN FACTOR 7  
 ACE RATING 670

## MOTOR MASSACRE

■ **Gremlin, Spectrum version reviewed, £7.99vs £14.99pb.**

The world of the future is short of food, so the evil Dr & Reed has started pumping out a synthetic foodstuff that turns out to be addictive. It's down to you to control the Doc and tell her where to go off.

Feeding her involves driving around several cities in your 4Wt Armoured Tactical Vehicle collecting food and fuel with which to canvas, and hopefully tracking down a special pass in each city. The pass will take you into the arena to enter a martial demolition derby where you must van enemy cars to destroy them, and so gradually progress to the real city.

Collecting objects involves driving the 4Wt into a building and then leaving the vehicle so that you can wander around corridors, avoiding monsters and collecting bits and pieces that you should hopefully be able to trade in for car repairs and the like.

This is a nice idea with plenty in favour of it, but unfortunately the whole thing is poorly executed. The gameplay is something of a dis-appointment and you will have to be very determined to get anywhere near completing the game.

● **Bob Fildes**



Spectrum - Motor Massacre.

GRAPHICS	3	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	3	FUN FACTOR	3
ACE RATING 412			

## K DALGLISH SOCCER MANAGER

■ **Cognita, Atari ST version reviewed, £19.95pb.**

Liverpool have just lost their name to a game produced by Grand Slam, but the manager has ordered this one all by himself. It follows in the fine tradition of soccer strategy games like Football Manager and Football Director.

The management of the team involves dealing with both the financial side and the playing side. There are six people you can go and see - Chairman, bank manager, scout, physio, accountant and coach. The one that needs to be visited most often is the scout because this is where players can be found to improve the team.

The team takes part in the League and both Cup competitions - starting, as ever, in the Fourth Division. You can alter the formation the team plays in to suit the players in the squad. The highlight sequences are slow and easy, but can be left out. The strategy element is strong but, if anything, it's too easy to win.

It doesn't add anything to the genre of management games, but it's competent, and will suffice for anyone who hasn't got one already. Then again it might be worth waiting for the Liverpool game.

● **Bob Fildes**



Atari ST - K DalGLISH Soccer Manager.

GRAPHICS	3	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	3	FUN FACTOR	3
ACE RATING 522			

## TITAN

■ **Titas, Amstrad version reviewed, £9.99vs £14.99pb.**

It might seem as though all the possible variations on the Breakout theme had already been explored, but these cunning French have come up with another one. Instead of shooting single spheres, one at a time, they've set the ball free in large scrolling areas.

The idea is still to destroy blocks but the tactics required are different. Instead of a ball you control a cursor which can move anywhere on the play area. The screen scrolls with the cursor, leaving the ball to do its own thing wherever it is. The scrolling is very fast and frantic seeing might just turn a few stones.

The cursor deflects the ball, sure enough, but it is not at all easy to persuade the ball to go where you want it.

As well as one-hit blocks there are blocks that require multiple hits. In the levels progress there are other features introduced - stars that kill the ball or cursor, oneway passages for the cursor and blocks that become impassable after going through them a few times. The puzzle element makes the game interesting but only for the first time you play each new level.

● **Bob Fildes**



Amstrad - Titan.

GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	4
AUDIO	3	FUN FACTOR	3
ACE RATING 977			

## RAMBO III

■ **Cosmi, Atari ST version reviewed, £19.95pb.**

He's on the loose again - this time driving fast, and dead, into the hearts of the Soviets in Afghanistan. The world's highest-paid video probe is trying to rescue his perennial gun Colonel Trautman from the remaining hands of those naughty reds. It takes the form of a three part arcade adventure and shoot 'em up.

In the first part, the Colonel has to be released from a large fort, in Part Two he has to escape and then get across the border in Part Three. The first two sections involve searching for objects and exploring the fort. There are some little puzzles to solve and end

less numbers of guards to be destroyed or using a tank, armor or machine gun.

Reminiscent of Into the Eagle's Nest, it is not as nice graphically but has more in the way of searching and puzzling to do. One odd switch is that the third stage is played using the mouse, which controls a cursor for shooting enemy forces as they charge towards you. However, the blasting action can only be reached by going through the first two stages.

Not a spectacular game, but there is certainly more to it than the first Rambo game.

● **Bob Fildes**



Atari ST - Rambo III.

GRAPHICS	3	IQ FACTOR	4
AUDIO	3	FUN FACTOR	3
ACE RATING 649			

## RACK 'EM

■ Accolade, IBM PC version reviewed, £24.95dk.

Continuing the long line of green table games, Accolade's Rack 'Em includes both snooker and pool, with options for playing both shots, seeing the last shot played in slow, and our favourite games to have rules.

A normal overhead view of the table appears with which to set up each shot, the being advanced along cannons in the now-standard fashion. The view then switches to a low angle, and an animated player appears to initiate the shot. Some skill is required in the timing, whereby passing the cue at the moment that the cue tip hits the white ball results in a more

straightforward shot. Each shot is accompanied by text, so that CGE users can tell the coloured balls apart. Obviously, CGE users reap the benefits of the added colours.

Movement of the balls is pretty realistic although the accompanying sound effects are not. Effecting shots is smooth and uncomplicated, and so the sole disappointing aspect of Rack 'Em is the omission of a computer opponent. Players are thus forced to play solo or find an enthusiastic human opponent.

● Dave Janet



IBM PC - Rack 'Em.

GRAPHICS	7	IQ FACTOR	8
SOUND	5	FUN FACTOR	6
AGE RATING T10			

## TIGER ROAD

■ Capcom, Amstrad version reviewed, £9.99cc £14.99dk.

Continuing the increasing flow of Capcom conversions comes Tiger Road, in which our wretched good guy Lee Wang sets out to rescue a group of village children taken prisoner by the evil Wu Kai Shih. Before Mr Wang, we mean, Mr Shih is going to breach them all into becoming soldiers in his army—the best!

Lee Wang is loaded with looking for his way past Mr Shih's entourage, including. Sansa warriors, guards, traps and flying dragons. As Lee enters Mr Shih's domain he also has to negotiate a variety of physical hazards, smashing or leaping over approaching boulders.

● Dave Janet



Amstrad - Tiger Road.

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	8
ASOUND	5	FUN FACTOR	6
AGE RATING 5-15			

## SPITTING IMAGE

■ Demark, Atari ST version reviewed, £19.95dk.

The infamous satirical Central TV show based on the puppets of Flux and Law has finally given rise to a computer game featuring the six most popular characters (plus the Queen as referee). Taking control of one of the world leaders, the aim is simply to destroy the credibility of the other five by beating them up.

Each leader comes out punching and kicking, and has his own range of individual movements, such as the Pope releasing a boxing run from under his vestments, or Ronald Reagan spraying his opponents with the contents of a tomato ketchup bottle. Each

combatant also has a sidekick who he can call upon during the bout. From then on a small character frequently appears, and attacks the opposition.

The graphics on the ST are quite wonderful, from the detailed backdrops to the carefully-animated caricatures and the fully-animated sprites. Everything is dead smooth and humorously implemented. Unfortunately, the gameplay is more in the boring demo manner as a straightforward combat game it fails miserably, and any novelty value soon wears right off.

● Dave Janet



Atari ST - Spitting Image.

GRAPHICS	9	IQ FACTOR	8
ASOUND	5	FUN FACTOR	4
AGE RATING 3-75			

## VICTORY ROAD

■ Imagine, Amstrad version reviewed, £9.99cc £14.95dk.

In a similar mould to Imagine's previous 32K conversion, Guerrilla War, Victory Road sets a solo player off on a vertically-scrolling journey through a strange and hazardous landscape on a more-tightly-defined mission. Starting off on the 'stairway to heaven', the player must repel attacks from a range of weird creatures, including vampires and two-headed demons.

The player's armoury includes a single-shot Gatling and grenades, although extra weapons are obtained by picking up icons lying around the floor, or hidden under destructible blocks. The Gatling can thus be exchanged for a powerful

flame thrower, and temporary shields may be installed. At intervals throughout the landscape, trapdoors and elevators draw the player into underground sections where large slow-moving creatures must be defeated to continue.

Thankfully, comparisons to Guerrilla War only go as far as the game style; the graphics are far more detailed and more colourful, the scrolling is smoother, and the gameplay is far more entertaining. Victory Road isn't a great game, but fans of the arcade game won't be too disappointed.

● Dave Janet



Amstrad - Victory Road.

GRAPHICS	6	IQ FACTOR	8
ASOUND	5	FUN FACTOR	7
AGE RATING 8-13			

## NO EXCUSES

■ *Arcana*, Amiga version reviewed, £19.95/£6.

Survival in the land of No Excuses is not easy — it is based on a grid suspended in the middle of space, and strange green alien creatures lurk/roam down from above.

The players control the airspaces above the grid, following flight paths that take them along the columns or down the rows, moving closer to the floor after making each pass along or across the grid. As they move, they send shield rays and a fan degree of spatial awareness is needed to work out where exactly the pestering monsters are, while coping with the other hazards — colliding with a low-flying monster costs

a life unless the one-per-level protective shield is activated. The player controls a spider-like creature that flies forwards and up at the same time, can turn on its axis and walk forwards.

The grid is made of blocks with a variety of properties, modified by the bombs dropped from the skies. Jelly blocks, for instance, disappear after they're stood on, ice blocks create a one-way slide. A combination list allows you to design custom levels.

Once the controls are mastered, play is marvellous over the fifty levels. A fun game.

■ **Chris Kidd**



Amiga — No Excuses.

GRAPHICS	7	IQ FACTOR	8
AUDIO	5	FUN FACTOR	7
AGE RATING TBB			

## DEF CON 5

■ *Coast*, Amiga version reviewed, £24.95/£6.

One of the less impressive offerings in the current Coast range is *Def Con 5*, a Strategic Defense Initiative simulation which puts the player at the controls of a complex computer nation, monitoring the surveillance and weapons systems of the heart of America's defence strategy.

Although purporting to be an 'extremely authentic simulation', in use the game is cluttered and unwieldy (I used the Yanks if they have to go through this rigmarole every time a flock of birds appears in the radar screen). Once moving missiles have been detected,

an effort is entered and deployed the enemy warheads is initiated. Numerous superfluous menu screens then have to be endured before real time arcade sequences begin representing the weapons in action — some of which are particularly entertaining or exciting.

The lack of playability is a huge disappointment, when considering the smart digitised graphics and the potential of the subject matter. A polished and attractive game, but one which falls short in the playability stakes.

■ **Steve Jarrat**



Amiga — Def Con 5.

GRAPHICS	7	IQ FACTOR	8
AUDIO	3	FUN FACTOR	3
AGE RATING 3-4D			

## GALACTIC CONQUEROR

■ *Titus*, Atari ST version reviewed, £19.95/£6.

You're the only person that can save the universe from the alien invaders — as if thousands hadn't done the same against thousands of previous threats. Never mind, there's always some dumb alien force eager to get massacred in its million.

The strategy part of the game is deciding what planets to defend against the alien hordes. This is done on a map of the galaxy showing six planets in blue and the enemy in red. If you attack a red planet in a group (unusually it will have a knock-on effect on the rest of the planets nearby).

Each attack is in three stages, although they differ only slightly. These stages are just like *Asteroids* to play. There are plenty of things to blast away at — meteors, probes, fighters, mines and stars amongst them. Colours damage the shields but most of the time you will have the upper hand.

Spending graphics add a bit to the present lation — excellent into screens, smart sprites and spilling explosions. Despite the claimed strategy element, the gameplay is repetitive and limited, so it will not grip you for long.

■ **Col Nield**



ST — Galactic Conqueror.

GRAPHICS	6	IQ FACTOR	8
AUDIO	5	FUN FACTOR	6
AGE RATING TBB			

## HELL BENT

■ *Navigator*, Atari ST version reviewed, £19.95/£6.

One of the big early games on the ST was *Got Thru'er*, which heralded for its superior scrolling but not too adventurous in gameplay. Surprisingly this one from Navigator is very similar in many aspects.

Firstly there's the rapid vertical scrolling through obstacles that do various front end damage if hit. Next there's the tank, which is to shoot enough ground obstacles to allow you to pass over the next level.

While flying about, the ship uses fuel and loses shield energy from collisions with aliens. Both can be replaced by flying over the rebi-

vent cones. The fuel runs out fast, and it doesn't help that the scans can be destroyed by a careless shot.

On later levels the range of obstacles gets more complicated but it's so difficult and unresponsive that you may not make it that far. The only successful way to play it seemed to be to go over-slowly very slowly because at high speed scroll there's no time to react to anything. Not an impressive reason for Navigator — *Zaxxon*s should be infinitely better.

■ **Col Nield**



ST — Hell Bent.

GRAPHICS	5	IQ FACTOR	5
AUDIO	4	FUN FACTOR	4
AGE RATING 5T3			

# OPERATION HORMUZ

Oh No! Not AGAIN AGAIN!



Flying over the sea, headed towards the first enemy base.

**THINGS** have been quiet in the Persian Gulf of late, but it's still a volatile place — which is presumably why new software houses Again Again chose to set one of their first games there.

As a US pilot flying a McDonnell Douglas F-15, ground attack jet, launched from a carrier anchored in the Straits of Hormuz, your mission is to destroy enemy missile launchers located inside bases. Fortunately, the Big Mac is



Missile launch taking about most of an enemy plane as you approach the base.

armed to the teeth with air-to-air and air-to-ground missiles plus a forward-firing cannon and a whole mess of bombs. The bombs are the most important weapons, used to destroy a number of sites at each missile base in order to render the base harmless.

Not to say that the other weapons are useless: so far, they're extremely handy for taking out the MIG fighters that protect the bases, and for interrupting the launches that are occasionally by first toward your carrier.

Protecting the carrier is a major priority.

## SPECTRUM VERSION

The graphics are poor and, despite attempts to make the game as colorful as possible, it's all too empty — rather like the sound effects.

GRAPHICS	0	IQ FACTOR	0
SOUND	1	FUN FACTOR	0
<b>ACE RATING 3/5</b>			

## AMSTRAD VERSION

Much more colorful than the Spectrum version and the sound effects are a vast improvement. The flow of the battle the closer you get to the ship.

GRAPHICS	0	IQ FACTOR	0
SOUND	7	FUN FACTOR	0
<b>ACE RATING 3/5</b>			

Because with every hit the ship takes one of your three planes is destroyed. When you're in flight and the onboard planes are lost, either get shot down or allow the carrier to get hit again and it's game over time.

Operation Hormuz is not an impressive start for Again Again. The control is fair and the game idea weak so lasting interest will be low. Let's hope their next releases are better.

• Andy Bell

RELEASE BOX			
AGARI BT	£7.99	OUT NOW	
AMIGA	£7.99	To Follow	
SPEC 128	£9.95	OUT NOW	
AMSTRAD	£9.95	OUT NOW	
ORIG 128	£9.95	OUT NOW	
IBM PC	£9.95	OUT NOW	



# HYPERDOME

EXOCET offering a token game

**FIVE** years of Federation space pilot training school may seem like apprenticeship enough to you and me, but the Federation bosses are a tough bunch. They insist that only the best will graduate, so they always make recruits undergo one final test — the

Hyperdome — which they must survive to become a fully-fledged Federation fighter pilot, or die in the attempt.

Thus the scene is set for Exocet's third release, a side-viewed horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up that puts you at the controls of the space fighter. As might be expected, the Hyperdome is full to the brim of enemies, both airborne and ground-based, that need to be wiped

out, although flying skills become just as important as shooting on the later levels, where there are moving pits to avoid.

The destruction of a ground target leaves a token which you can collect to trade in for an extra weapon, the more tokens, the better the weapons. As you collect tokens, the weapon available is highlighted in a display on the right of the screen. Missiles, homing missiles, drones and shields are just a few of the good ones on offer. Lose one of your own lives and you lose the weapon, though, so beware.

Exocet won't win any awards for originality with Hyperdome, but it's good-looking and playable stuff — in the short term.

• Andy Bell

RELEASE BOX			
AGARI BT	£7.99	OUT NOW	
AMIGA	£7.99	IMMINT	

## BT VERSION

The graphics are good, especially the backgrounds, but the sound effects are nothing special. It is a market already crowded with shoot-'em-ups; it doesn't stand out from the crowd.

GRAPHICS	0	IQ FACTOR	1
SOUND	7	FUN FACTOR	7
<b>ACE RATING 5/7</b>			



Meeting your way through Stage Two. Now you've got moving enemies to dodge as well.





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# S C R E E N T E S T SUPPLEMENT

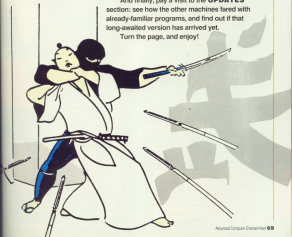
That's the Screen Testing out of the way – now on with the Supplement, the perfect complement to the perfect reviews section.

First off comes **TRICKS 'N' TACTICS** – the software equivalent of an A to Z of shortcuts. This month, *Last Ninja 2* gets the full treatment, with a complete map plus hints and tips. There's also some help with last month's free cassette, *Aliens*, listings for *R-Type* and *Batman*, and more cheat modes for all the biggest games of the last couple of months. Something for everyone there.

Next, if funds are a little low this month, the slightly expanded **BUDGETS** section should provide some enlightenment on what to buy, avoid, or look out for – especially for the more discerning shoestring games player.

And finally, pay a visit to the **UPDATES** section: see how the other machines fared with already-familiar programs, and find out if that long-awaited version has arrived yet.

Turn the page, and enjoy!



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Screen shot from *Wolf 3D*

**HE'S THE ...**

**HUMAN**

**HKM**

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of the right-hand man of the Nazis and the unrelenting fighting and tactics  
of the unrelenting then Nazi and his fearless companion against a German  
army. Finally witness the merciless brutality of the Maniacs and  
reap the battle for the sake of Berlin.

**Tough and mean ... you're the Human Killing Machine!**





## ELIMINATOR

John Philip's brilliant 3D racing game can shock-up for the ST has the rather useful option of level-only passwords. Couldn't be simpler really, could it?

LEVEL	PASSWORD
02	AMECSBA
03	BLOODP
04	CHEROKI
05	DOINCK
06	ENIGMA
07	FLIPME
08	GEEGEE
09	HANDEL
10	ICICLE
11	JAMMIN
12	KICKING
13	LAPDOG
14	MKADO

Press **HELP** on the title screen and type in the required code to start the new level. Please be noted that the Eliminator only starts with a press single-shot button, finishing the level may not be as easy as it is getting into it...

■ Steven Hodder, Kildare-on-Sea

# TRICKS 'N' TACTICS

It has always been the evil plans of the Penguin and Joker. Batman never gets defied up a road. To provide almost everything but this issue's other issues it's less painful, the following is intended to speed in, several hours ago, and 100% Enter mission 2 or 3 at the present, and make sure the correct mission is loaded. Remember that a 500 utility bit.

10 PRINT CHR\$(147)  
20 FOR A=164 TO 400: READ C=C-Y:POKE C,C:PRINT  
30 IF C=-4096 THEN PRINT "ERROR IN DATA" :END  
40 NEXT A:DO YOU REQUIRE THE DATA ENTRY CODE FOR LEVEL 2 OR 3?  
50 IF 1 THEN PRINT "YES" :GOTO 100 :POKE 195,100  
60 GOTO 100  
70 DATA 100, 120, 140, 157, 32, 98, 245, 169, 32, 141, 81, 3, 169  
80 DATA 124, 141, 85, 3, 169, 1, 141, 86, 3, 96, 72, 77, 80  
90 DATA 72, 169, 185, 281, 259, 125, 104, 173, 32, 208, 96

■ The Master Hacker

## AFTERBURNER

Anyone who can't be bothered landing their way through all the levels of Afterburner on the ST should game the game, type in **ADBE** (which is legal for hardware) and press the 'r' key to advance to the next stage. Since the keyboard can also change the Afterburner, this cheat might also work on the Commodore version - when it finally appears...

■ Aynon Army, Glasgow

## R-TYPE

Atkinson's been psychobilled can be made a bit easier on the ST by using the following thing. Enter the program on ST basic and use it for future use. Place R-Type disk A in the drive and RUN the program, the game should load in the normal way, but with a few small changes...

```
10 REM-R-TYPE CHEAT, ST VERSION
20 ADDR=847F000
30 DEF DEG=0
40 FOR F=0 TO 37 STEP 1
50 READ W0:POKE ADDR+F,
WAL*(F&F-1)
60 NEXT F
70 BLOAD "RTYPE.DAT", 8480000
80 POKE 8480004, 847F00
90 POKE 8480016, 848000
100 POKE 8480024, 848000:POKE
848002C, 8480
110 CALL ADDR
120 DATA 4247, 0F9C, 8008, 4E44, 46FC,
5700
130 DATA 4478, 648E, 437A, 0005, 3800,
5500
140 DATA 0000, 5574, 3008, 1408, 777E,
4E7E, 9400
```

Lines 80 to 100 are optional: 80 gives infinite credit, 90 installs infinite lives, and 100 returns collected weapons after death. Any or all of these lines may be entered in order to vary the difficulty level faced.

Note that line 30 is needed for 1985 versions of ST basic only; when using a newer version simply leave it out.

■ Mark Richardson, Preston

## CARRIER COMMAND

Realtime's 15-bit versions of the ACE-rated strategy shoot-em-up have an interesting cheat mode, initiated by pressing the game from the main view screen and typing: **THE BEST IS YET TO BE**, complete with spaces. The game restarts automatically, and displays 'Cheat Mode Activated' in the message panel.

When played, pressing + and - on the numeric keypad toggles Blanka invisibility; the flying craft are no longer vulnerable to aerial attack, although collisions with large objects is still fatal.

Once a course has been programmed for the carrier, Mantas or War-wars, engage autopilot and click on pause. To avoid lagging around in real time, you will find that pressing 3 on the keypad and engaging again takes the corresponding craft directly to its destination.

Likewise, pressing and pressing 2 replaces lost shooting, while tapping 1 returns the craft in question. 8 shows the current difficulty level, and 0 brings up the programme's test panel.

■ Dr. Paul Harris, Southend (with some extra help from Realtime)

## SHORTS

### ■ VETERAN

The ST (by itself) looks like to make substantially more use of a well-placed **HELP** key, allowing the mission to end stage.

■ G. Gower, Birmingham

### ■ STAR RAY

All those poor ST owners getting confused with Logotron's Defender show me this cheat: Set ray play from **04**, and then press space to bring up the options screen. Type **10000000**, press fire to resume play and then press fire for extra credits. More fun/credits can be obtained without fear of personal injury.

■ Jonathan Talley, Nottingham

### ■ REX



Spectrum owners looking for an easy way to the second level of Rex can now rally forth with ease. By entering the ridiculous large-size code: **#F920447#04795008**

■ Ian McLeod, Edinburgh

### ■ GAME OVER II

The second level of the Spectrum sequel can be accessed by entering **03420** on the Amiga, ST, or by typing **03087** on the Amstrad CPC.

■ J. Haskew, Ireland & S. Loomer, Essex

### ■ SORCERY+

Following on from last month's tips, ST owners are now treated to the cheat mode, simply type in **000 0000 0000000 00000** (**0000** including the spaces) to be invincible, to see all items, to stop the timer and to be able to enter the '+' part of the game.

■ J. Leonard, County Antrim

### ■ DEFENDER OF THE CROWN

A standard little cheat for owners of the Amiga version (only) shows the **04** key as the main game level. The cheat might not have 100% time and 100% health, if this depends on well as improved noncombatants.

■ R. Brady, North Devon

### ■ RETURN TO GENESIS

The Amiga and ST versions of Return to Genesis are a lot fun. To bring **RAMB** back on the title screen and then pressing **03** for more help, try these:



## BETTER DEAD THAN ALIEN

Electric's Space Invaders-style shoot-'em-up on the ST and Amiga has an incredibly useful cheat mode, accessed by typing in **00F** or **00AMP** on the ST or Amiga title screens, respectively. Pressing the following function keys provides all manner of amazing weapons and bottom goodies with which to do over huge amounts of alien crates...

- F1 ...SCATTERVOLTS
- F2 ...MULTIPLE FIRE
- F3 ...AUTO-REPAIR
- F4 ...AFROUNT MISSILE
- F5 ...STUN
- F6 ...NEUTRON BOMB
- F7 ...CLONE SHIP
- F8 ...SHIELD
- F9 ...SKIP LEVEL
- F10 ...EXTRA POWER BARS

If the passwords are extended into the names of the programmes, **00VE** and **00AMP**, the program usually starts. But the 'Supershot' has been entered. If anyone finds out just exactly what this does, drop us a line, eh?

■ Anonymous, Sydney, N. Australia



## THUNDERBLADE

To skip levels of the Mega chopper conversion for the ST and Amiga, type in **CRASH** when the game has completely finished loading, and the picture from the film 'Blue Thunder' appears. On pressing the **R** key, the screen should flash to signify that the cheat is active. To access the next level, press **0000** on the ST, and **HELP** on the Amiga.

Spectrum owners have to do a bit more work, press **0** for the joystick and keyboard option, then press **0** and **0** together. The screen flashes to signify cheat mode active, pressing **ENTER** then progresses play to the next stage.

Ball news for C&A owners. Though Chris Ball is dead I put a cheat mode in.

■ Thanks to Canada of US Gold

## WIN £150 WORTH OF SOFTWARE!

Every month in **TNT** we are handing out a real order voucher to the value of £150 – yes, £150 – to the reader of the Top Tip. This can be redeemed through our mail order section for games, joysticks, cheat covers – whatever you need.

If you want to get a piece of the action,

send in your tips, **PCK**ies, maps or detailed playing guides, and do it now! We're not interested in second-hand tips from other magazines, or detailed guides on how to play games for the TMS94. It's brand-new tips for the games in the last couple of issues that we're looking for. And

remember, you may not win the top prize, but we're also giving away five £20 vouchers to readers of the next best entries. Send your contributions to the usual address:

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'State of the Mind'



TODAY'S LEISURE SOFTWARE



## BOMBUZAL

The Amiga version of the Imageworks puzzle game must be quite possum, judging by the amount of codes we've been sent. So, here, courtesy of several Amiga owners, is the complete list of pass codes:

LEVEL	CODE	LEVEL	CODE
8	ROBBS	136	BIKKE
16	BATT	144	SHRP
24	LESA	152	TAPE
32	SAVE	160	BASE
40	BIQH	168	PILL
48	LEAD	176	SPOT
56	WESD	184	PAUM
64	PHQD	192	LODR
72	QREL	200	SAFE
80	GOLD	208	WOPPM
88	OPAL	216	NOBIB
96	SOHNG	224	EYES
104	PINE	232	HAIR
112	LAMP	240	SGAR
120	TRIS	248	MYTH
128	SINK		

Although this list applies to the Amiga 500-based, the same codes are used for other versions of the game. They can be entered, but it's just not fun to do so to which level will appear?



The lucky C64 and Spectrum owners who received the complete Amiga game box with last month's ACE might be having a little difficulty getting to the later stages of the mission. So here, first with the month's ACE, are some useful pass codes:

APC RESCUE	272FH
OPPROB DEFENCE	1508D 1508E
ANDUCT MAZE	238LF 2761H
NEWT RESCUE	7142E 0643C
QUEEN BATTLE	7143H 0643F

Simply type one of these in when prompted to access the final levels of the game.

## F/A 18 INTERCEPTOR

Amiga owners proud in the knowledge that they are the only ones who can play this superb flight simulation, might not give so freely when their fail to qualify for the later missions. To avoid this sorry situation, save the following talking tables, and when prompted for the log disk, insert the POKB disk instead.

```

50 PRINT TAB(20) "Interceptor POKB by Richard Bedding"
70 PRINT "Enter 'insert the Interceptor log disk in drive B'"
90 PRINT "Press any key"
99 GOTO 85
95 GOTO 85
96 GOTO 85
97 GOTO 85
98 GOTO 85
99 GOTO 85
100 PRINT "Please wait"
110 GOTO 85
120 GOTO 85
130 GOTO 85
140 GOTO 85
150 PRINT "Finished"
  
```

Richard Bedding, Peterborough

## WHOOPI!

The Spectrum file being printed last month was presented as a word POKB, when it should have been a word listing. The instructions SHOULD have read: type in the listing, RUN B, and then follow the on screen prompt to load Sp: that will update everything.

Now, one or two people have been having problems with last month's Spectrum Football Manager listing. If you try loading it in Basic first, and then following the instructions you should have more luck. OK?

Finally, Rocky Strong was credited for the Last Days 2 map and tips which, because of space restrictions, couldn't this month instead. Sorry. The offending staff writer has been taken out and shot.

## PANDORA

Firebird's colourful arcade adventure on the C64, Amiga and Atari ST is just about out its playing date, so here's the complete solution - in case anyone was wondering...

- 1 Wait a few moments for Amy to appear.
- 2 Take 10 Amy and find the Second Officer. Pick up the Laser Rifle from the table next to him.
- 3 Put Laser Rifle into backpack - don't use it yet.
- 4 Find the Engineer, take his ID and the Same Driver.
- 5 Find the Lt Commander, take his ID and carry it.
- 6 Find the Commander, take his ID and carry it. Also take the Code Blue and Code Scarlet.
- 7 Feed the Captain, take his SDI disk and leave the ID Lt. Commander.
- 8 Shoot the Ice Lord with the Laser Rifle.
- 9 Carry the ID Engineer to go through the force field.
- 10 Find the WFOI, officer and take his ID.
- 11 Carry the Sonic Driver and head for the HelioMechanic.
- 12 Swap the Sonic Driver for the Code Blue.
- 13 Carry the SDI Disk and go to the SDI computer.
- 14 Give the SDI computer these items in the following order: SDI Disk, Code Scarlet, Code Orange and Code Blue.
- 15 Carry the Engineer's ID and exit the Engineering Section. Then switch to 6:00.
- 16 Go to the transporter and enter along the arrow.
- 17 That's all folks.

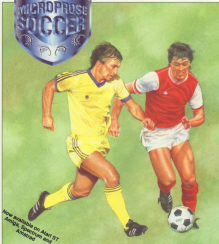
Many characters carry different items. It only the ones mentioned above are used to complete the game.

Viscount Levenston, Basingstoke

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# LAST NINJA

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龍國四湖  
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龍國四湖  
龍國四湖





<b>LEVEL 1</b>		K Key
S Start	C Cricchette	X Exit
TD Trapdoor		
K Key	<b>LEVEL 4</b>	
H Hamburger	S Start	
SW Sword	D Drugs	
M Marshmallows	CA Cashier	
ST Start	CC Credit card	
SS Stylish star	L Ladder	
J Juggler	H Hamburger	
B Boat	X Exit	
BE Beers		
G Gate	<b>LEVEL 5</b>	
R Climbing frame (with this is a hash mark)	SD Secret door	
M Map	FA Fan	
X Exit	S Start	
	L Ladder	
<b>LEVEL 2</b>		CT Computer terminal
S Start	G Gate	
K Keyboard key	R Exit	
H Hamburger		
SD Sword	<b>LEVEL 6</b>	
BT Bottle	S Start	
T Traffic lights	W Window	
X Exit	O Worked exit	
	H Hope (bell pull)	
<b>LEVEL 3</b>		SW Switch
S Start	X Exit	
OL Orbits		
T Teacup	<b>LEVEL 7</b>	
SP Spider	K Kusitaki	
RA Rats	OB Orb	
Q Forbidden doorway		

LAST  
WINNER  
2

...Continued

■ Following on from Issue 16's solution to the first level of *Last Ninja 2*, C64 and Spectrum owners of System 3's latest should more than welcome the map on the previous pages, and the tips for the rest of the game, printed here:

**LEVEL 2:  
THE STREET**

The bottle is found on the frame by the burger bar, and the key to open the manhole cover is found in the red and white striped workmen's hat.

Whenever crossing the road, always wait for the pedestrian lights to turn green.

The final level is reached through the manhole cover in the pavement. Open 4 using the key, and drop down to exit the level.

**LEVEL 3:  
THE SEWERS**

Collect the grille key, open the grille and climb down.

Some doorways are dead ends. On the first three, take the middle one. On the second three, take the last door. Ignore the red line, and take the first door of the final three.

Light the bottle from Level 2 at the flaming torch to make a molotov cocktail, and throw it at the invisible's head.

Enter the doorway to reach Level 4.

**LEVEL 4:  
THE BASEMENT**

Climb up into the catwalk and collect the credit card. Enter the room at the far end of the walkway and take the meat from the dog bowl.

Reverse of electric power cables and battery packs that lie on the floor.

Progress through the basement to the section where the drugs are handled. By the meat in the white substance in the box next to the wall, and return around the corner to face the sanitizer. Use the meat to knock him out, and then enter the elevator by inserting the credit card in the slot.

**LEVEL 5:  
THE OFFICE BLOCK**

Enter the first room to collect the four-digit code from the computer terminal. Remember to write it down; it is to be used later.

Activate the secret doorway in the parallel room by poking up the lamp on the table.

Approach the large fan light against the wall. This should allow enough room to pass without being blown off the ledge.

Ignore the doorway, and go through the grating to reach the roof. Then break a hole in the helicopter ladder to the next section.

**LEVEL 6:  
THE GAMBION**

Drop from the helicopter into the very first tunnel. Move onto the right hand tunnel and then onto the block on the roof itself. From here, cross over to the slight dip and drop down.

Get the ballast from the second bedroom, which acts as a rope. Move into the first room and enter the panel holding the rope. It climbs downstairs into the kitchen. Slung down the stairway activates the alarm and alerts the guards.

Move into the hallway and go through the first doorway which is hidden behind the large potted plant.

Turn on the light switch at the end to the bunker room, illuminating the maze next door. Move through the maze into the boiler room and turn the second switch on the boiler to redirect the jet of steam. Exit to the final level through the doorway.

**LEVEL 7:  
THE FINAL BATTLE**

Open the safe using the four-digit code, and take out the key to reveal Kunitaki. To defeat him, the Ninja must light the candles on the pentangle before Kunitaki awakes. To complete the game, simply replace the orb in the safe.

SEGA  
TIPS

## ZILLION

Whenever a dead end appears, such as the end of a corridor or the wall next to a lift shaft, give it a good looking (around 15 shots): if it isn't really a dead end, the wall can be destroyed to show the adjacent corridor or room.

## SPACE HARRIER

Select the sound test before the game starts (it explains how in the manual) and select different sound effects in the following order: 7, 4, 5, 1, 4, 8, 1 (the effect doesn't need to finish before selecting the next). On entering the final 'I' instead of exiting back to the game, another menu appears enabling the difficulty level, controls and main options to be changed.

If time runs out enough to complete the mission, when the 'Game Over' sign appears press the control up, up, down, down, left, right, left, right, down, up, down and up (six) times, but do it anyway. The game restarts with another three Space Harriers. This can be done at least six times during one game - quite helpful really.

## GHOST HOUSE

When arrows appear, jump over them (this takes a bit of practice; jump up just before the arrow hits in order to clear it completely). After doing this for a while (a random number of arrows need to be cleared), Mickey becomes enclosed in a bright glowing shield, which acts as temporary protection against even Dual Impact.

■ Craig Brown, *Waltham*

## WINNERS

The lucky recipient of this month's £100 mail order voucher is Rocky Wong of County Down, for the impressive *Last Ninja 2* map, hints and tips.

Four C20 vouchers should soon be winging their way to: Richard Bedding, Peterborough; Vincent Lawrence, Hants; Craig Brown, Waltham; and Mark Richardson, Preston.

Your name could be here next month - and remember, the Tip Top can be for any machine, so get your thinking caps on!

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# BUDGET BONANZA

## JOCKY WILSON'S DARTS CHALLENGE

Zeppelin Games

■ C64, Spectrum 42/99



◀ C64 - Jocky Wilson's Darts Challenge.

Dart games have appeared regularly over the last couple of years, and seemed to have hit the heights with Mastertronic's 180. However, indicated by numerous predecessors, Zeppelin continue the genre and have released their product with the obvious blessing of sporting megastar Jocky Wilson.

So how does this latest video simulator stack up? Throwing darts is achieved in a similar way to previous offerings, whereby a rotating dart hovers in front of the board and is released by pressing the fire button. Although this proves quite tricky at first, it does introduce the correct amount of randomness into darts: the darts can be grouped neatly, but a 180 is still difficult to achieve.

Normal 100 down rules apply and the program supports a two player head-to-head, a solo player competition against computer opponents and also 'round the clock' darts, competing against a timer.

Certainly a very capable rendition of the game, JWC's only drawback is that it's all been seen before. Great if there isn't one in the collection, but otherwise it hits the wire.

■ ACE RATING: 731



## ZAMZARA

Rack-It

■ C64 42/99



Fans of Meteworld should be pleased to see that AAAA Japanese has shown its magic once more in a C64 game that puts the 3000ers in theme. Scoring some absolutely gorgeous backgrounds and sprites, Zamzara puts the player in control of a 190 Open-style creature as he battles through an equally bizarre alien-infested landscape.

The extraordinary two-tiered horizontal-scrolling levels connected by walls or entrances at the end of each. The route is punctuated by large alien creatures and swarms of smaller beings who are all intent on blowing the hero into much smaller pieces.

However, the alien has an impressive armoury at his disposal, consisting of a blaster, three missiles and four types of ammunition to supplement the normal bullets. Three varieties of reflective rays can be selected, together with rapid-fire bullets.

Zamzara is a real treat visually; silky-smooth scrolling complemented by amazing graphics and, thankfully, backed up by decent tactical blasting action and addictive gameplay. One for the C64 owner's 'must buy' list.

■ ACE RATING: 817

◀ (Below) C64 - Zamzara.



## BLACKBEARD

Kibox

■ Spectrum, Amstrad 42/99

This is Kibox's first original product, and has been programmed by Spanish software house Topsoft's authors of the US Gold Pirate Challenge game, Mad Mike.

As suggested by the title, the game follows the efforts of one Blackbeard the Pirate to hunt down his buried treasure map which has been stolen by his arch enemy, Redbeard. The map is scattered inside a chest somewhere on board Redbeard's ship, HMS Victory, and it is Blackbeard's mission in life to get it back.

Steered from above, the pirate is guided around the deck, tables and less storage by



◀ (Above) Spectrum - Blackbeard.

els of Peabody's vessel land, incidentally, the decalage is an authentic representation of the original Victory Nelson's flagshot, with the separate levels being connected by stairways.

Peabody's crew are all large, and Blackbeard defends himself by collecting knives and guns with which to fight back against his attackers. Blackbeard is motivated by picking up bottles of rum from around the ship, but overwhelming odds in a cluttered and difficult to control pirate swagging about the deck.

Entertaining - if a little slow - this capsule 'n' shoot-em-up offers nothing new, but is nicely uncomplicated and has enough appeal to warrant further examination. Also of interest to mappers with a nautical bent. **B+** for us.

#### ■ AGE RATING: EPG



OS/4 - Camelot Warriors.

## CAMELOT WARRIORS

Mastertronic

■ OS/4, Amstrad, Spectrum: £1.99

Requiem in a suit of shining armour, a solitary knight heads off in search of the fabled castle Camelot. His route across medieval England takes him through woods, across a lake, through caverns and finally on to the tower of Arthur Penelagor.

In each segment of land, the knight has to avoid the touch of various creatures indigenous to the region; contact with any proves fatal, and the knight is only blessed with four incarnations. Later scenes are entered by reaching the end of the previous one.

Once the castle is safely gained, four elements from the regions are to be found and presented to the corresponding guardians so they can be destroyed. The final challenge is an enigmatic quest 'to find the key that will unlock the secret magic mystery' Heaven.

This difficult mousing and tick-screen arcade adventure goes a bit limp after a while. Although transcribing a large sword, the knight has precious little chance to use it and must instead rely on his abilities to leap large chasms in a single bound. Annoyingly tricky controls and lack of immediate action compare towards its premature and unfortunate downfall.

#### ■ AGE RATING: EPG

## WATCH OUT FOR...

### MASTERTRONIC

Fresh products from the Mastertronic studios over the next month or so include a couple of 8-bit games, such as *El-Cid*, *Shinai*, *Spectromancer* and *ConQuest* (all formats). Meanwhile, their 16-bit catalogue goes from strength to strength with *Warrior Knight* (Amstrad) the old Jon Williams eight-bit game and *Spectromancer* for the PC as OS/4, plus *ConQuest* (Amiga, ST) and *The Last Crusader* (ST) - most names as and when they appear.

On the re-release front, the Plebeian label continues its assault on the Activision back catalogue, with *Hooker* (OS/4, Spec, Amn, ST, Amiga, IBM PC), *The Sorcerer* (OS/4, Amn, Spec), *Peacemaker* (OS/4) and also *Hooker II* and *Aladdin* waiting in the wings.

### SILVERBIRD

Telestream's budget house has been fairly quiet of late, but the steady trickle of releases continues over the next couple of weeks. *Archer* (as in *The Sacred Armour of...*) reappears across all formats, while *Steep Winter* (OS/4) and *Night Gunner* (Spec, Amn) are probably in the shops now.

Later February sees the arrival of *Atlantis II* for the Spectrum (vague sheering in the background from fans of the original), and possibly the start of a new range of 'Crasy' games led in the 'Kick' range) with *Combin-Crasy*



IBM PC - Knight Games.

(OS/4) and *Nice Ramp Crazy* (OS/4, Spec, Amn).

All the above games are at the normal £1.99 price, but Silverbird have also decided to start a new range of £2.99 packages, starting with the '100 Pack' which contains three games on one cassette; *King Master*, *Rock 'n' Minnie* and *Ball Kick* (all the billing).

Similarly, a £2.99 'Double Trouble' pack features a range of sequels on one cassette, *Starline I* and *Starline II* and *Starline III* and it also includes, closely followed by *EyeBall I* and *EyeBall II*.

Lastly, the more major full-price releases - such as *Bubble Bobble* - are to be re-released with a £2.99 price tag, since they offer better value for money.

### PACK-IT

Reappearing on Howson's Pack-It label are Grubby's *Special Day* (OS/4). Technician (re-developed for the Spectrum and Amn), *Heavy Metal* (Amstrad)

(OS/4), plus re-designed versions of *Pyramaze*, *Gunrunner* and *Quasstar* for the Spectrum.

New products include *ConQuest* - a goring game for the OS/4 - and *Starline* for the OS/4, from the programmers of *Blazer*. *Crash*, again for the OS/4, comes with a good post-game, programmed by Gary Foreman (Manarad), graphics by John Cummings (Synapse, Proton) and with sound-effects by Steve Turner; this could be one to look out for.

Finally, Spectrum owners get back in with *Info Africa*, a 10,000-screen menu-driven encyclopaedia. Cool!

### KICK

Anyone in search of some decent re-releases could do worse than take a look at Kick's current line-up. *Men Crasy*'s inhibitor should be in the shops by now, along with the passable *Ripper* and *Boyz*: *World Gemant* (superb) on the OS/4 - not to be on the OS/4.

Among any day now should be *Temple Run* (and the excellent *Super-cyber* from Eggs). The beginning of March sees the arrival of *Planet Planet*, which is pretty decent on all versions; *Harbald*, one of the best Baseball sims around; and *Spy Hunter* (what, ya like ancient Spy Hunter?)

All the above will be available on the OS/4, Spectrum and Amstrad with a retail price of £2.99.



IBM PC - Voodoo.



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# UPDATES: AN ATARI

## AMIGA IMPOSSIBLE MISSION II

EPYX (13-0066)  
C64 version reviewed issue 9 -  
ACE rating 700

The follow-up to the resented Impossible Mission was a slight disappointment when it first appeared on the C64, and the Amiga version is even more so. It's a fun arcade adventure, but the graphics and sound effects are poor. A lot more thought and it could have been so much better.

■ ACE RATING 670

## LOMBARD RAC RALLY

MANDARIN (13-0066)  
Atari ST version reviewed issue 10 - ACE rating 674

The sound effects have been improved, so that it sounds more like a car than a cat. The game play remains the same - which is a shame because the driving sequences need improving in terms of the impression of speed and collision detection.

■ ACE RATING 674

## PURPLE SATURN DAY

EXOROS (13-0066)  
Atari ST version reviewed issue 17 - ACE rating 612

Hard to tell the versions apart, which is a pity because how good the ST one was. The pictures are magnificent and the gameplay varied and exciting.

■ ACE RATING 612

## SUPER HANG-ON

ELECTRIC DREAMS (13-0066)  
Atari ST version reviewed issue 13 - ACE rating 662

The sound effects stand out in special, as do the superb graphics. Action is as impressive as the ST and the graphics have been improved a good deal. High-class racing.

■ ACE RATING 610

(Main Pictures, Right)  
Amiga - Super Hang-On.

## WARLOCK'S QUEST

EPYX (13-0066)  
ST version reviewed issue 9 -  
ACE rating 630

A role-playing Castrolike game for the larger machines. Good graphics and great sound effects but little in the way of addictive gameplay. Collect objects, shoot badies, loose the evil of them!

■ ACE RATING 630

## AMSTRAD NETHERWORLD

HEYMON (13-0066, 13-0066)  
C64 version reviewed issue 10 -  
ACE rating 620

Plays very closely to previous versions but isn't as impressive graphically. This should not seem what is otherwise an exactly original game.

■ ACE RATING 760

## THE TRAIN

ELECTRONIC ARTS (13-0066, 13-0066)  
C64 version reviewed issue 8 -  
ACE rating 641

Take command of a train that belted Common lines during last during WW2 and drive it to freedom. Simple strategy interweaved with the occasional arcade sequence. Too easy to complete to keep you busy for long.

■ ACE RATING 641



## TRIVIAL PURSUIT: A NEW BEGINNING

DOMARK (13-0066, 13-0066)  
Amiga version reviewed issue 10 - ACE rating 614

The graphics are not too hot on the C64 but they always were unimportant to a trivia game. Same questions and gameplay as other versions.

■ ACE RATING 607



ST - President is Missing.

## ATARI ST

### THE PRESIDENT IS MISSING

COSSM (13-0066)  
PC version reviewed issue 11 -  
ACE rating 761

Everything fits on one disk, so there's none of that swapping to do. The menu system is also much improved by the use of the mouse. These improvements speed things up considerably when investigating. The look remains the same, so this is a great use for those requiring some mental exercise.

■ ACE RATING 618



ST - R-Type.

### R-TYPE

ELECTRIC DREAMS (13-0066)  
Spectrum version reviewed issue 10 - ACE rating 671

The superb from classic makes it onto the ST at last, but a little disappointingly. The graphics are colourful and the gameplay's good but it's just not as memorable as you'd expect after seeing the excellent Spectrum version. Still a great shooter though.

■ ACE RATING 640

## C64

### HELLFIRE ATTACK

SMARTCH (13-0066, 13-0066)  
Atari ST version reviewed issue 10 - ACE rating 654

An improvement on the 1040 version but not drastically so. It's still repetitive blasting but it's more fun because culturally savvy to make the flying aliening graphics and sound as respectable too.

■ ACE RATING 607

### MENACE

PSYCHOCAN (13-0066, 13-0066)  
Amiga version reviewed issue 15 - ACE rating 676

The fast and furious arcade style shoot-em-up has been well converted to the C64, with all the features present. It's a good blast, but don't expect to be playing it in several month's time.

■ ACE RATING 676

### RETURN OF THE JEDI

DOMARK (13-0066, 13-0066)  
Atari ST version reviewed issue 10 - ACE rating 654

A terrific cloning conversion with plenty of frantic flying and blasting. Good sound and good graph-

# AT-A-GLANCE GUIDE

to complement the equally good gameplay, making this the most enjoyable of the Star Wars trilogy of games.

■ **ACE RATING 804**

## TRIVIAL PURSUIT: A NEW BEGINNING

COMARX C14.9504, C18.9504  
Amiga version reviewed issue 18 - ACE rating 814

The graphic presentation is good but once again it's just a frequency which makes little difference to the game. Some questions, some gimmicks.

■ **ACE RATING 814**

## SERVE & VOLLEY

ACCOLADE C8.9504, C14.9504  
PC version reviewed issue 17 - ACE rating 751



664 - Serve and Volley.

Very close to the PC version, with all the same elements included. The graphics are reasonable - you can see the ball's position clearly. Same gameplay for the timing and control of shots.

■ **ACE RATING 701**

## PC

### PHANTOM FIGHTER

BARTSCH C8.9504  
Amiga version reviewed issue 17 - ACE rating 739

Unlike the Amiga version it only has vertically-scrolling levels. The graphics are good, even in CGA. For platform it, it's very difficult.

■ **ACE RATING 808**

## HEROES OF THE LANCE

559 C24.9504  
Amiga ST version reviewed issue 14 - ACE rating 844

The initial setup procedure is ridiculous, but you only have to do it once. The graphics and animation are attractive, again even in CGA.

■ **ACE RATING 844**

## SPEEDBALL

BRADSPROCK C28.9504  
Amiga ST version reviewed issue 14 - ACE rating 834

Should prove an addition to PC owners because everything has converted beautifully. It looks good in all graphic modes and plays fast.

■ **ACE RATING 840**

## ROCKET RANGER

COMMANARE C28.9504  
Amiga version reviewed issue 15 - ACE rating 814

Another excellent job of conversion makes this very attractive on the PC. The graphics have come over well, although some sequences have been changed. Luckily, there's no conversation on the Zepheris.

■ **ACE RATING 814**

## BATTLE CHESS

INTERPLAY C28.9504

The standard of chess played is similar and the animation has come across in good shape. There are even the digital sound effects to help things along. The society will start off but it's one that you will come back to often.

■ **ACE RATING 732**

## SKATE OR DIE

ELCOTRONIC ARTS C14.9504  
CGA version reviewed issue 4 - ACE rating 878

It's been a long time coming onto the PC and unless you're a younger PC owner or are really into the skateboarding scene, you'll find it lacks variety and depth. The ability to play with up to seven friends bumps up its rating a little.

■ **ACE RATING 655**



CG4 - Monaco

## AIRBORNE RANGER

MICROPHONE C24.95  
CG4 version reviewed issue 4 - ACE rating 881

Graphics are merely average in CGA and work downwards through the standards. However, sound has been used reasonably well. The original CG4 game remains vital - although a touch slow - but scoring is joddy and the gameplay is starting to show its age a little.

■ **ACE RATING 748**

## SPECTRUM

### FIRE AND FORGET

TITUS C1804  
Amiga and ST version reviewed issue 12 - ACE rating 818

Once through enemy territories bleeding all and sundry. The graphics are good and it's a fast and furious blast, but there's just not enough in it to keep you playing to day.

■ **ACE RATING 618**

## MINI PUTT

ACCOLADE C8.9504, C14.9504  
CG4 version reviewed issue 1 - ACE rating 689

The graphics did not stretch the 64, so they have translated fairly well. The somewhat silly gameplay has also translated well. The ball does stop a bit suddenly, but otherwise the game behaves fine.

■ **ACE RATING 623**

## TRIVIAL PURSUIT: A NEW BEGINNING

COMARX C14.9504, C18.9504  
Amiga version reviewed issue 18 - ACE rating 814

Same old game and the graphics are OK too. Surprisingly it's got quite nice sound effects as well.

■ **ACE RATING 814**

## AIRBORNE RANGER

MICROPHONE C8.9504, C14.9504  
CG4 version reviewed issue 1 - ACE rating 681

The usual micro-machine display leaves a lot to be desired, and the unintelligent game structure and loading system mean that each mission has to be reloaded - even when waiting to lobby the same one. Inexpensive cassette owners should really slow down.

■ **ACE RATING 628**

Spectrum - Airborne Ranger





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# STUDY IN 256 SHADES OF BLUE

The hardware to run it might set you back thousands of pounds, but Electronic Arts could well have produced the ultimate computer art package. Brian Larkman explores *Studio 8*.



## MIXING THE PALETTE

At first sight, this account might seem to describe a program that is nothing out of the ordinary. What makes Studio II unique is the range of options for every function — the complete control that it offers. Almost everything can be customised to the user's preferences and saved for later re-use. The range of options is far too broad to describe fully here so let's instead look in detail at just one area, the colour palette.

Studio II can use a palette of 256 colours, accessed by moving the pointer over the colour indicator and holding down the Mac II's single mouse button. The palette pops up and by clicking the pointer sideways onto it any colour can be selected (no pop-ups). Similarly, background and frame colour can be changed whenever required. Moving all the palette with the pointer will hold "open": it will be opened wherever on screen. Below the colour indicator is a box displaying the 15 most recently used colours. Any of these can be selected at any time.

Amongst the Tool icons is a "Colour Pickup" tool, which allows any colour on the screen to be selected. If



the Command or Option keys are held, the background or frame colours can be chosen. Double-clicking on any colour in the palette wills the Colour Pickup Tool is selected brings up the Colour Ball window. This shows the relative red, green and blue values to be added using RGB and HSV (Red-Green-Blue and Hue-Saturation-Brightness) values.

A complete menu of feature items is given over to colour. Several of these are duplicates of tool selections but most are unique and all bring up a

simple dialog window. The heart of the system is the "Colour Mixer" dialog, the work area of which consists of 32 rows of 16 cells, 1924 in all. This allows plenty of room for mixing and storing colours. Both have features that allow a variety of methods of mixing colours including "Colour Square" and "Colour Mixer".

Colour Square (or from picture) provides gradient tools. When you position the primary colours you intend to use at each corner, each intervening cell, horizontally, vertically and diagonally becomes part of a range of tints between them. Anyone who watched the "Painting With Light" series on television will have seen Quaker's version of Colour Mixer.

A range of primary colours and a mixing area are provided. The artist picks up a colour and lays it down at random in the mixing area. Picking up another hue, this can now be mixed with the first to produce a range of intermediate shades. Any of these that seem suitable can be added to the main palette. This system is so familiar to artists and designers that it alone makes Studio II an ideal professional tool.

## MAKING THE GRADE

Perhaps the most exciting and versatile function of Studio II's gradients is the ability to create a transition from one colour to another or from light to dark across a surface, a range of gradients must be available. Most multi-colour painting systems provide this facility, but Studio II's method is perhaps the most simple and effective.

The ranges of colours and shades are produced for the palette using the "Define Gradient" dialog, up to eight sets of three two-colour gradients can be designed by placing the extremes of either end of a

set of cells. The best intermediate are chosen from the available colours in the colour palette or from the total 16 remain available colours.

The chosen gradients are then available via the Gradient Selector window



on the Tools window of the drawing screen. Once a gradient is selected it becomes the fill for all tools that are filled, including circles, polygons and free-hand shapes. Drawing any shape will only produce an outline, but also a ribbon-fanned line coloured from end to end with the gradient, one end of which is constrained at the centre of the shape. Clicking the other end, outside the outline, produces an oval, parallel "lightning" and the gradient fills the shape from that point as a series of concentric rings (powerful, but very simple).

Unless you live at California, using the Mac II's native language seems a little odd but like the original Mac, before it, the Mac II shows the way that home computing is likely to go over the next few years. Having a Motorola 68000 or 68010 processor gives it fast and powerful graphics capability — 794 colours (drawn from a palette of 25 million using 1600 video card, or all 25 million with a 24-bit card. There is a price to pay, though: to produce a full screen image in 250 colours, Studio II requires a minimum 2 meg of RAM, or 4MB video display card and a hard disk.

Even though the hardware required is very expensive, so soon to you, see a laptop image in screen at high resolution the viewing of words like "cheap" and expensive should mean. And the tools with which you create more beautiful parts around and so comprehensive, all powerful and above all, so easy to use that the temptation to sell your car to "save" becomes overwhelming... get this before the Exchange and Most!

### APPLE SOON

On the right, it can be a surprise to see the user interface of Studio II looking almost the same as those used by MacPaint, MacDraw II, MacDraw and several other Macintosh paint systems. Apple's closed system architecture imposed a system of windows, gadgets and dialogues on software developers to give of Mac programs a similar look and feel. The users only need to learn the interface once, with the first, custom package they use. From that on, the mode of operation is always familiar. Commodore have tried less successfully to impose similar consistency with the Amiga and its intuitive interface.

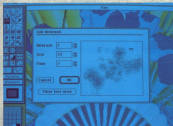
Indeed Studio II seems to provide all the expected drawing and painting tools without offering anything spectacular. Most of the tools, while are familiar and almost anyone could produce a reasonable image intuitively, rely on using the excellent mouse (space bar is optional) for most functions. Some things, when the facilities are already used they real power becomes evident: fill starters, and the high resolution and range of colour, even the most suitable Warshawski tool produce a fine image. This might be expected from a superior machine such as the Mac II, but all the same it is a joy to experience. Even the drawing of a simple line or box is almost all instantaneous in a single touch screen.

Behind the familiar facade, Studio II hides a wide range of new and powerful tools. Almost

### Working with a gradient using the ribbon-fanned systems of pull-down menus.







(Above) Defining the first attribute.  
(Below) The completed picture.



story facility imaginable has been included, the viewer can see the surface of the system and the more complex ones of slightly diverse looks. There is only room here to describe a few of these, but they'll serve to illustrate the hierarchical nature of the program. It is the beautiful and simple way that this hierarchy has been arranged that makes Studio II so impressive.

#### MOUSEBARS

Although the user interface is efficient, Amiga 3Paint users would have to difficulty getting to grips with the use of Mousebars to control the action of the common tools. Nine Mousebars (six separate Macintosh-style) view displays with various actions are pulled up or a color bar (which is whether lines and colors fill all into center to edge or corner. To create, delete every function can be affected by hold or more of these, but only modifications that are likely to find things toggling are instead of the Mac. One, for example, further they are highly complex at the system, and quite in contrast to the keyboard, dedicated to 3D.

#### MOUSE

The main system of the Macintosh has been copied or at least imitated by most computer systems (except IBM compatibles). Where the Mac screen is it easy to use. Using a light res-

olution means that these lines can be smaller, so they can be more widely spaced, allowing easy pointer selection.

Nevertheless, mouse operation is slightly more cumbersome than you'd expect and so is used for specific tasks such as pan or selection modification, as well as to duplicate a number of the functions observable by other means. Take the 'Toolbox' as an example. Double-clicking on most icons brings up one of a series of dialog boxes which are also available on menus. The specific operations of almost every tool here can be set using these. Right-clicked operations can be selected much as Mac OS does and forward independently on to any open tool's window.

#### KEYBOARD EQUIVALENTS

Once the required range of functions has been set in the mouse display, each of the eight defined functions can be called up using the up and down arrows, and the number of the one currently selected is displayed on the status bar. Almost every function available using the mouse with icons, menus and dialog boxes is also available from the keyboard: the nine modifier toggles, for example, are set by 1 to 9 on the keypad. Experienced users will find this invaluable for speeding up drawing applications. It's always easy to find a list.

#### PROFESSIONAL SYSTEM AND PRICE

It is a remarkable thing to have to write but at the moment Studio II seems to be the perfect painting system - 3D really as everyone could be found of any kind. At the start of writing this review, the Mac II system (and to be fair Studio II) provided by COMPTON, took had already been very reactively handed back. Now, thanks to PLENIX COMPUTING, Halifax, another system is available. Over the next few months, the program will be tested vigorously and hopefully the design that result will appear in ACE along with any criticisms. Now it's only the screen that is 256 shades of Mac, not the processor!



Anyone who is already familiar with Mac software will recognize the system of menus and tools displayed on the screen.



From the Selection menu the Define Pen-operative facility can be used to rotate the grid on which the image lies.



The product is completely different view.



Other facilities offered on the Selection menu allow the user to play about with the image in a number of ways, including bending it to produce the effect below.



**DESK TOP COMICS**

Comic strips, from Flash Gordon to the Three Stooges, must be the most enduring popular art form of the century. Seeing an Desk Top Publishing comic seems to be the serious business art form of the moment? It may only a matter of time before someone brought out a comic version. Typically, Comic Setter was designed for the Amiga by Gold Disk, publishers of arguably the most serious DTP system for the Amiga, Professional Page.

If a Communication package of this nature is any good it should be capable of advertising itself, so the strip on this page is a straight-outprint on a Xerox 4820 of one page of a Comic Setter document. It was produced in a few hours from scratch using almost exclusively the clip-art provided (slightly modified using Leslee Faint II). Apart from a couple of mistakes and a few spurious lines and colours the system worked perfectly, was lots of fun and is highly recommended.

Comic Setter Gold (Disk/II B Marketing, 0985 444433) £89.95.

# GRAPHIC ACCOUNTS



**MICRO DESIGN**

Considering how much hype is being given to Desk Top Publishing these days, with systems boasting each other's finer attributes to offer more and more professional facilities, it is nice to find a page design program that is deliberately simple and straightforward in the way it operates. Because the dot-matrix output from most (mis)named screen-oriented systems is so awful, DTP applications have almost exclusively committed themselves to laser printers and therefore to sincerely object page manipulation systems.

Micro Design starts by testing at the end product: providing a screen dump of absolutely exceptional quality even from a 19pin dot matrix printer. This means that a screenpage design system can be used that is beautifully simple though quite powerful, even though such simple features as kerning and leading are not supported. The new PC version is far removed from the Amstrad CPC program reviewed in ADL [1] though the on-line interface is similar. A full review follows but in the meantime hassle your dealer to see it in action. This is DTP for ordinary people.

Micro Design Creative Technology (0894 567180). Price to be announced.



# 空手

**'THE ULTIMATE MARTIAL ARTS SIMULATION'**

IK-1 is now available in 3D-bit format as a follow up to its No. 1 chart position on the Commodore 64.

Archer MacLean, the creator of the original IK, has completely rewritten and vastly improved the game to make IK-1 the ultimate martial arts simulation.

It features super smooth animation, instant response and extremely addictive all round playability. And what's more every head-butt, knee-slap and gut-punch is accompanied by like-like digital sound effects.

IK-1 contains superb graphics and a great deal of attention has been put into the fully animated sunset - right down to the leaves falling from the trees and piling up on the ground. The fighters' shadows are seen slanting away from the sun. In addition there are dozens of features, adjustable by keyboard, such as the game speed, the music volume and various secret codes.

So, if you are ready for the ultimate in Martial Arts, IK-1 is for you!

Now available for the Amiga at £24.95, also available on C4d cassette and disk, Spectrum, Amstrad cassette and disk, and Atari ST.

**COMPUTER GAME  
ARCHER MCLEAN**

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Amiga version, white screen





Is *Neuromancer* the ultimate hack? Can *Deathlord* out-ultima *Ultima V*? Is *Mars Saga* out of this world? For the low-down on the latest in fantasy and adventure gameplay, read on...



**EVERY** now and then along comes a game (or a novel — Dickwork Dringo, for example) that attempts to create its own culture through the use of crazy language, outrageous ideas, and barely-controlled narrative. *Neuromancer* is such a game, along with *7400 Times in Tomstown* and to a lesser extent *The Storm* (inspiration: Forget balls and missiles, this is cyberpunk country and if you can't take it, cyberspace, you're a scenery salesman — in *Neuromancer* is that effect).

The core of this new game from Interplay, responsible for the *Bards Tale* series and *Wizardland*, is an endless quest for clues through the interrogation of on-line databases and game characters. As a cyberspace cop, you roam freely and slowly across a head-on display of the surroundings, your actions dictated by a limited icon which is set at the bottom of the screen.

Your prime interest in life is hacking, but you're not taking conventional byte familiarity

## NEUROMANCER

ELECTRONIC ARTS get into cyberpunk...

altogether. Instead of simply using text on-screen, cyberspace represents the global communications/database network of the future as a world in itself, through which you move as a disoriented entity searching for the secret behind the disappearance of your fellow street cleaners. For this quest, you need more expensive equipment and more intricate software.

The search for funds and knowledge takes you through a number of scenarios in a world where people sell their organs for cash, lawsuits arrest you at every opportunity, the World Chess Federation gets hoodlanked by rogue software (you, of course), and Hitachi Biotech carry out painful experiments on your long, neural feedback, legal proceedings, and a host of other challenges conspires to reduce your contribution to zero, whenupon the Body Bank can be employed to resurrect your dead brain... for a price, of course.

During the game you can communicate with other characters in a limited way by choosing from a small number of suggested phrases. In response, they will offer services, information, or downright hostility. There are very few objects, as such, to be found — not will you have to spend much time mapping in the early stages. You will, however, have to persevere in your attempts to crack the secrets behind the various databases and ensure your own personal safety.

For example, one of your first objectives is to pay your hotel bill. You only discover this by talking to a bartender and realizing that you do not have enough cash. When you first log into a database, you have the opportunity to run money by offering your services to a Mapp Annelage. You can now pay your hotel bill. However, persistence will enable you to hack into the hotel's billing system and simply erase your debt — a much better solution all round.

What *Neuromancer* really has going for it is

originality. The game design, drawn from the original cyberpunk bible of the same name written by William Gibson, is excellent and always compelling. The puzzles are quite different in structure from any you will have encountered before and will require you to master skills by locating tall chips, taking copious notes of account codes and database details, and following up many dead alleys. The only drawbacks are slow gameplay at the beginning — you will have to play for several hours before the game really begins to take off — and the actual process of moving about it, as the Commodore version, rather slow.



You're in the Cheap Motel. On the wall behind you is a Pictorial Message Board, and in the coffee machine in front of you is a cyberspace panel. Prepare to hack it...

### THE ACE VERDICT

A very challenging game with considerable long-term interest. However, you'll have to persevere in the early stages and follow a number of blind alleys before you can really get into cyberspace and start the big balls rolling.

LANGUAGE	0/1	SYSTEM	0/1
CHALLENGE	0/1	EXPERIENCE	0/1

### RELEASE BOX

IBM/SA	024 9548	024850/01
024/128	116 9548	024 9508
IBM PC	020 9548	024850/01

No other versions planned

item. This is hacking in the far future, when you face a little rocket behind your ear for plugging in old ROMs, and interconnecting databases means literally plugging yourself into the network to do battle with the deadly Invention Countermeasures Electronics. Man, this one's up, steam, and you don't get big off — you get neural neural overload and fry.

*Neuromancer* begins as a quest for information with the interrogation of a few characters and visits to a couple of nearby locations. Before long a cyberspace 'deck' is found, enabling you to log into on-line databases. There are plenty more but offer further opportunities for interaction with various characters in cyberspace land.

Going into cyberspace is another matter

# LEGEND OF BLACKSILVER

EPYX/US GOLD summon the Bowel Roots...

**EPYX** are better known for their arcade software, so we were intrigued by the appearance of Legend of BlackSilver. It just goes to show how important fantasy/adventure software is becoming in the States. Can Epyx pull off a fantasy hit to rival the success of a masterpiece like Impossible Mission?

BlackSilver is a hybrid fantasy game with a screen presentation very similar to the Ultima series (but without the option of forming a party). As a young sett, you answer the summons of Princess Aylea to rescue the kingdom of Bawissa from the evil Baron Teragus. The King has been kidnapped, the noble wizard Genent is arrested, and it's up to you to master magic and weaponry in your fight against the angry.

During the game, you measure your progress around a trade map very similar to the earlier Ultima games in concept. Every now and again nasty creatures pop up and challenge you, whenever you can fight in free. When you enter towns, the display changes and shows you the layout of the area and the interior of the buildings when you enter them.

BlackSilver has a large number of gameplay options so you endeavour to maintain your character's attributes of Strength, Endurance, Dexterity, Intelligence, and Charisma. While fighting you can approach land hope for a friendly reception, stalk, wait, or flee the foe. You can use your weapon cautiously or rashly in combat; you can feed food by killing and stealing wild creatures, and you can learn lessons from other characters by doing favours for them. You can threaten characters, barter with them, or surrender, and you can even die the choice in some of the shops to earn money.



BlackSilver - The map isn't that attractive, and the towns aren't much better.

#### RELEASE BOX

044128 (14.95) OUT NOW  
044129 (14.95) BANNED

No other versions planned

A good compromise has been made with the map: supplied with the game - it's blank, but you're given a number of stickers to show the names of the locations that you can put in to mark the appropriate positions when you've discovered them.

Unfortunately these gimmicks feature, while excellent in themselves, do not totally disguise the game's weaknesses. The lack of a party detracts considerably from the interest of the gameplay, particularly during combat. It may be amusing to be confronted by Frost Wolves, Blood Roots, and Squeaking Nags to start with, but the excitement soon palls. Furthermore, your lack of control over the creation of your character makes it harder to identify with him.

Secondly, the map is smaller than those offered by other contemporary games of this type - Ultima IV and Bard's Tale II, for example - and the various locations are not terribly interesting. The Ultima games used to have the same problem and have solved it by making the characters you meet more significant, but this doesn't happen to anything like the same extent in BlackSilver.

What you're left with is a competent adventure with no remarkable surprises. In view of the competition currently available, this isn't enough to make it an essential purchase.

#### THE ACE VERDICT

A game that will occupy most players for long enough to get their money's worth, but is unlikely to have them on the edge of their seat while they do it. More skills, a party option, and a better map would have worked wonders.

LEADERSHIP 50 SYSTEM 70  
CHALLENGE 80 ENCOUNTERS 70

**COR** strike me dead with an arc laser - it's ANOTHER role-playing game. Having taken a bit at Ultima with Deathlord, EA have at the same time floundered off to Mars in an effort to prove that they can produce a really hot RPG that isn't called Bard's Tale and isn't by Interplay.

And, surprise surprise, they've succeeded wonderfully. Mars Saga is a gem of a game - easy to play, quick to get into, and with a fair dollop of long term interest. It also has some very original features that really pump up the ratings. Here goes...

Mars Saga is a polished RPG, which means that success comes from building a party of adventurers who each major in a set of useful talents. There are 23 skills to choose from, ranging from Administration through Blade-handling to Mining. These combine with a character's five attributes to give each party member unique abilities and characteristics.

Your objective in the game is to discover why Mars has lost contact with one of its colonies. You start in Phoenix, the largest city and will visit both Progress and Paradise in your travels. Progress is due to be the largest city when completed, but it seems that the construction has not gone well...

Everything in Mars Saga is on a smaller

#### RELEASE BOX

044128 (14.95) OUT NOW  
No other versions planned

**NOT** content with their own fat wallets, Keris, Tate, Electronic Arts have now produced a game that looks and feels very like the Ultima series, EAT's main competition.

Deathlord challenges you and the other party members to rally forth and wade on and onward. The competitive element of this scenario is somewhat compensated for by a good deal of wit and invention in the details of the scenario. Your ultimate objective is to collect seven seeds of power and six artifacts which, together with a good deal of combat prowess, will enable you to emerge victorious.

Unlike the Ultima series, the character definition phase of Deathlord is extremely complex. There are eight races, ranging from human, through various hybrid forms of intelligent, semi-intelligent races, to the strong but stupid troll. There are also seven mental/physical attributes, including six



Deathlord - A very competent Ultima look-alike, and let's not forget it.



# MARS SAGA

ELECTRONIC ARTS and the beauty of simplicity



On the move in *Ultima*, *Mars Saga's* on-screen map on the right can be toggled to take up the whole screen if required.



Combat in *Mars Saga* is complex and laboriously satisfying. You can issue orders to each member and then watch them being executed (pend the game).

scale than the larger RPGs, and this is what gives the game its charm. On-screen graphics show the status of your most vital attributes, and there is an attractive graphics window showing your current location. The views are each essentially giant sublevel maps, but in addition there are exterior locations that you can only enter with a scroll. 'Variants', of course, cost money, so the first thing you do is set out to find scrolls and cash.

You can't exactly define characters in *Mars Saga*. What you do is go looking for them, bring recruits in bars, barracks, and so

forth and then choose from amongst those who present themselves. If this sounds easy, it isn't - people don't put themselves forward until you've earned a reputation for yourself and so you face the early stages of the game in the company of only one or two companions.

The game is full of nice touches. Recruits tell you their life histories; there's an excellent on-screen mapping facility that includes layered references to all significant locations you've visited. SAVES are instant and numbered and do not require an extra disk. Finally, there's one of the best combat systems around.

Combat gives you an exploded top-down view as in *Ultima*, but with better graphics and more fight options - including the ability to invoke computer control for one or more characters if you're feeling lazy. In fact, to begin with it's nice to get the computer to fight all your battles for you so you can study tactics. After half-a-dozen fights or so, however, you begin to see that it's a costly tactical and time-consuming exercise.

During your wanderings you can log on to computer terminals to see if there's anything of personal interest. You can also exit to the surface, where you face less human opposition than *Steel Dawn*, *Crusader*, *Dark Reign* and the like. Combat throughout is quick and smooth and, unlike its more complex brethren, does not require endless reference to combat tables and spell charts.

*Mars Saga* just goes to show that you don't have to be big to be beautiful. There are a number of RPGs around that fancy deep programming and unrealistic displays or, simply because the programmers have spent all their time dreaming up another dungeon level. Give me a game like this any day...

## THE ACE VERDICT

Not in the same class as *Ultima IV* or the *Bards Tale II*, but its simple, direct gameplay makes it a refreshing change.

LANDSCAPE	90	SYSTEM	90
CHALLENGE	80	ENCOUNTERS	70

# DEATHLORD

ELECTRONIC ARTS jump on the bandwagon.

and charisma. Finally, there are sixteen character classes, giving you general skill-trends ranging from *Wizard* through to *Warrior* and *Hand-to-hand* combat.

Combine all these with sex, alignment (good, neutral, or evil) and numerous rules governing the behaviour and required conditions for each class and you get a very complex character system indeed. Even with the excellent character generation module (which tells you which classes each character can join) you can retire or goading at least an hour simply building a party.

This may seem like a waste of time, but in practice it has the effect of building a very strong link between the player and his party. After all, if you've spent ages pondering whether to make *Thumper* an intelligent, charismatic, blood-thirsty bear or an honourable Samurai, then his role in the game is going to be of strong personal interest.

The only complication of this stage is the authors' interaction with old things Japanese, or you not only have to wade through all the tables, but also remember the difference between a *Samurai*, a *Silmar*, and *Shiran*. One mistake, and you could pay in blood.

*Deathlord* has a large map with rather

more features than your average *Ultima* game. It also has a better system for viewing character statistics and a faster graphics interface. Most of the *Ultima* features - oceans, ships, dungeons, castles and so on - are included, and the quality of the graphics is certainly on a par with *Ultima IV*.

However, there are two drawbacks. First, the game is 50% similar in concept to the *Ultima* series that it naturally provides a direct comparison - and with *Ultima IV* due to be released on the Commodore soon (and already out on the PC) it is difficult to recommend *Deathlord* on any point other than price.

The second drawback is the clutter, however, and that's the combat routines. For a game that manages to present an excellent user interface in so many areas, the combat routines are incomprehensibly bad. You can't see your characters in their individual combat positions and the reports on the action are repetitive and uninteresting. Apart from selecting your battle order and ensuring a good mix of talent in your party, there is very little scope for tactics in combat.

The moral of this tale must be that if a program imitates another so closely, then it must at least result in a better product.

## RELEASE BOX

CD-ROM 7.14mb 0.7 mb

No other version planned

## THE ACE VERDICT

Clut, overly complex, and repetitive - except for the combat routines. If you're a great fan of the *Ultima* franchise, then you may enjoy looking for its own take on the *Ultima IV* games. (Should, however, be prepared to make allowances.)

LANDSCAPE	80	SYSTEM	80
CHALLENGE	50	ENCOUNTERS	60

*Otherwise* it bears the consequences of a very disadvantageous comparison. If you can forget about *Ultima IV*, *Deathlord* becomes a very attractive purchase - but CAN you forget about it? It seems quite obvious that our reviewer can't - Ed



## THE PLAYER'S GUIDE TO LORDS OF TIME (PART 2) BY THE PALADIN

Heave ho, me hearties! The Norsemen are about in this period...

On the beach, the wandering guardian's got thin blood, so be generous to him. Don't wonder about too much until...well, you know what all treasure hunts start with? See what you can dig up. If you can't find anything, remember "Despond of your pen!"

If you were kind to the Norseman, he and his friends will be kind to you. Especially if you have trouble with a nautical term (BLOND LIGHT) Have a look in his chest before you go anywhere.

Along! the Middle Ages. You've reached a REAL milestone at the beginning of this section,

make sure you pick it up. If you've got anything worth bartering, treat yourself to a stack of something else, but don't be selfish. The shiny messenger will give you some food in return for some... Take it and feed the worms in the woods and set him free for a note. At your destination remember what frogs turn into!

With the aid of the Prince, you should have no nightmares, but wear some personal protection as well. Along the way pick up the guards. To return to the dock, find somewhere soft to dig.

Along! Toler times, mistakes. Along for some

entertainment, but it's he who needs to joke more than you. Take the musical sounding vessel for later, and pick up the search means to keep some games quiet. As with all old mansions there are secret doors - the false, played in the right place, will locate one. A wanderer could a hedge made for trees, but this you'll have to navigate for yourself. It's not that difficult, and you don't have to find your way out again. Once at the centre of the maze search your trunk, and continue on to the dock.

There's as far as we go until next time.

## GREAT ADVENTURE SOFTWARE PRIZES TO BE WON!

Next month we start the first of our ACE Adventure Fantasy confessions. If you've got something to say on the future of our adventures then you could win a prize by sending us a

letter stating your point of view. We'll be awarding some excellent adventure software to those who send in the best letters...and of course they'll be printed in the magazine, along with

opinions from the people in the industry who actually write the games. Write NOW to: ACE Adventure Software, 4 Queen Street, BATH BA1 1JL

## NEXT MONTH

Who, what, or which is Zak McKracken?  
...Ja Kings Quest IV the greatest animated adventure ever?  
...Will Leisure Suit Larry get his rocks off?  
...and will YOU win a prize in the first ACE Adventure Confession?  
The ACE Adventure section...gets off in your lamps and an edge on your swords.  
Don't miss it!

## NO PROBLEM!

This month we just have to print those definitive Dante's Tale Pages from Jeremy French. If you can't succeed after reading these, you might as well give up!

### GENERAL TIPS:

When starting out, create a party of random, then pool all the gold on one person. Next, remove the other members from the party and erase them from your character disk. Create a new party and add in your "pooled character". Feed the gold again and again erase the other characters. Keep doing this until the pooled character is rich enough to buy whatever you need.

Elves make good mages, dwarves make good fighters. Make sure your fighters have strength at at least 17 and high dexterity.

Run from magic users in the early stages - they can do a lot of damage.

Whenever you think you have enough experience points to go up a level, always try to get a few more before going to the Review Board. You'll find that if you have a lot more than is needed then you will get advancement in important areas, such as strength and dexterity, rather than less important ones.

### FERREAR'S CASTLE

Once in the maze go into the North door.

### DARGONE'S TOWER

Make sure all your party have 7 levels or less.

Type in HAWCK.

Go to the bottom left corner of the room to the left of the room with mages in, go through the magic door and get segment.

### MADE OF BREAD

Get rid from Master and give it to the magic mouth.

Enter INDELPABLE.

Follow the door, to get segment and then hit the master and pupil.

### SCOGG'S FORTRESS

Get rid from the main room, turn right, walk 2, turn left, walk 2, turn to see scogson's time SCOGGORG.

Go to the other two statues and enter PAPER and ROCK and join them to your group.

Put Rock at the top, then paper, then scogson, then go to the magic mouth. Follow the door to get seg 5.









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# GREAT GAMES GREAT



## BATMAN

**Review:** The magnificent return by Special Effects with 3D graphics graphics in a fun cartoon style that scores 90% in ACE's report 90.

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Spectrum 486	19.95	9.95	AC1000C
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ISA disk	14.95	9.95	AC1000F
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Amiga 500 disk	19.95	10.95	AC1000H
Amiga 500 disk	19.95	10.95	AC1000I
Amiga 500 disk	19.95	10.95	AC1000J

## PURPLE SATURN DAY

**Review:** A 100% ACE rated space action tournament game which runs nicely (and the operation).

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Amiga 500	19.95	19.95	AC1001F
Amiga 500	19.95	19.95	AC1001G

## TOTAL ECLIPSE

**Review:** The first (and only) experience game into the Nintendo 32-bit era, it's a new dimension in computer gaming.

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Spectrum 486 disk	19.95	11.95	AC1001D
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ISA disk	19.95	9.95	AC1001F
Amiga 500 disk	19.95	11.95	AC1001G
Amiga 500 disk	19.95	11.95	AC1001H
Amiga 500 disk	19.95	11.95	AC1001I

## POWERDROME

**Review:** ACE  
The futuristic racing simulator which runs a 100% ACE rating and a fun experience game.

System MSRP ACE Price Order Code  
Amiga 500 19.95 10.95 AC1002A

## IN-GROWD

**Review:** ACE  
The new computer racing game. Powerdrome, Project X, Formula 1, Super Mario Kart, and more. It's all here in the box.

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Spectrum disk 19.95 10.95 AC1002C  
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ISA disk 19.95 10.95 AC1002E  
Amiga 500 19.95 10.95 AC1002F  
Amiga 500 19.95 10.95 AC1002G



## SPITTING IMAGE

**Review:** ACE  
The new Spitting Image game. It's a fun and addictive game for the evening hours of the computer for the TV screen.

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Spectrum 486 19.95 10.95 AC1002I  
ISA card 19.95 9.95 AC1002J  
ISA disk 19.95 10.95 AC1002K  
Amiga 500 19.95 10.95 AC1002L  
Amiga 500 19.95 10.95 AC1002M  
Amiga 500 19.95 10.95 AC1002N

## F16 FALCON

**Review:** ACE  
The advanced flight simulator currently leading the field with superior design and extraordinary attention to detail.

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Amiga 500 19.95 10.95 AC1002P  
PC (ISA version) 19.95 10.95 AC1002Q  
PC (ISA version) 19.95 10.95 AC1002R



## SPEEDBALL

**Review:** ACE  
The new Speedball game. It's a fun and addictive game for the evening hours of the computer for the TV screen.

## CARRIER COMMAND

**Review:** ACE  
The new Carrier Command game. It's a fun and addictive game for the evening hours of the computer for the TV screen.

## SDI

**Review:** ACE  
The new SDI game. It's a fun and addictive game for the evening hours of the computer for the TV screen.

## STOS

**Review:** ACE  
The new STOS game. It's a fun and addictive game for the evening hours of the computer for the TV screen.

## CRAZY CARS II

**Review:** ACE  
The new Crazy Cars II game. It's a fun and addictive game for the evening hours of the computer for the TV screen.

# BARGAINS!

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# THE ACE PINKPAGES

Upgrading to a new computer? Perhaps it's a PC you need. Buying a new game? Check the ratings. Bored with life? Check the puzzles. Got something to say? Anything at all? Get writing to The Pink Pages Ed., at ACE's Bath address. We don't care what you've got to say — as long as it's funny. You never know, you might even get a spot prize for your efforts. If you want to be read — get in the Pink!

**THE STORY SO FAR...** Gar Thrombido is an ordinary spirit, but he's still being a Computer Godfather to one of his finest (Godfather's) games. He's not about taking his earnings. He plans to spend some time at Cambridge Computer Historical Sewage Fluctuating Plant. For all it's worth, he's got some money, but doesn't get out and the world by writing a story which he names MESSAGE Machine-Accommodated Today Available and Horribly Like Mountain Intelligence. Meanwhile, it's the time of MESSAGE's existence and gets about as big as it can get, just a name. Unfortunately, the last thing he wants himself to continue something like that. He's about to be a hero, though. It's the same, but becomes MESSAGE, but he's not happy. **NOV. READ-ON.**

**H**ere you are little Cyril, I've got a present for you to be sure to be sure. Mr. Ford had not long returned from the closing up operation at Cambridge Computer Historical Sewage Fluctuating Plant, and although Cyril Neakley's parents didn't intend to let the kid buy a granddaddy's latest new presents, the old father will hand at least some amount of his earnings before clearing across their 415 per cent and interest.

"Oh, granddaddy, health paper, how kind you are!" cried little Cyril gleefully. "What do it?"

"It's a floppy disk for your computer. I found it after we were cleaning up today, and thought you might like it." Mr. Ford gave his grandson the disk.

"Oh, granddaddy, health too, the paper," said little Cyril, jumping up from the table with glee and taking it from his hand. "I'll be able to download my computer programming after I've finished my homework."

Cyril's mother pulled her son's golden locks. "It's staying to be a daddy this week," she said. "Well," said Cyril. "I'm going to study medicine at university and cure all the diseases in the world."

"Oh, to see that's a marvelous thing to be doing, to be sure to be sure," said Mr. Ford, thinking how it would have been if they'd been able to cure diseases when he was a lad.

"Now do make sure your scarf is done up properly. Cyril, as don't want you catching cold we do we!" said Cyril's mother.

"No mommy, it's over so kind of you and daddy to let me go to the hospital."

Cyril's mother blew her nose, and then wiped her eyes. "Oh, you're such a sweet little boy," she said, hugging him.

"Don't worry Granddaddy, I'll take care of him," said Cyril's father. "Come along now Cyril, help Daddy start the car."

## THE ACE SERIAL

### The Git In The Machine: Part 6

"Oh Daddy, really, really..."  
Later, in the kitchen...

"Oh you have to do is let the Kodenmate. Daddy what to do via a visual program mounted on disk into the slot in the backplate, and it will carry out your instructions in the letter" learned the sales lady.

"Really?" said Cyril's father, lifting his glasses to peer at the beautiful high mental and plastic robot. "And it's a genuine aid to learning?"

"Oh most certainly," said the sales lady. "It teaches the youngster all about computer programming in a genuine ongoing play-type situation environment."

"Oh Daddy, it's wonderful!" said Cyril Neakley, tightly clutching his father's hand. "And are you sure it isn't too sophisticated?" His little face paled as it flew.

"Nothing's too good for our little Cyril," said his father, ruffling his golden locks. "Could we have a demonstration?" he said to the sales lady.

"Certainly sir," she said. "Now if I can just feed a disk..." she turned to rearrange about on the shelves behind her counter.

"I have one here in my tin," called Cyril, taking out the disk Mr. Ford had given him.

"Ah, thank you," said the sales lady. "Now you just insert the disk like so, and programs in a short series of instructions. Let's make the Kodenmate sing a little song and walk up and down the counter, shall we?" The sales lady tapped a series of keys on the back of the KODC, then closed back to watch. After a moment, a tiny little voice started singing "See-see-chock-chock."

"Oh Daddy, that's just beautiful," called Cyril. "Can I have a go?" he asked the sales lady.

"Of course!" she said.  
Cyril inserted his father's...

"Cyril reached out his hand. When his fingertips got to within three inches of the cabinet, an electrical discharge of at least thirty thousand volts shot up his arm, made him jump three feet in the air and threw his golden curls to a chair.

"Amusing little thing, isn't it?" said the sales lady, not quite sure it was meant to do that.

The Kodenmate's rocodile arm shot out and held...

and its mechanical fingers closed around Cyril Neakley's neck in a vice-like grip and began to shake him vigorously.

"Genuinely educational," said the sales lady, not smiling quite so broadly now.

The Kodenmate began flexing shaking Cyril Neakley, and three feet over its shoulder clear into the Fire Department. Then it turned round and grabbed the sales lady by her neck chain, and a whining shriek now appeared from its back.

"I think we've seen enough," said the sales lady as she ran for the door. "The writhing with the writhing arm holding the car for me as it advanced towards my partner."

"Now, perhaps I can do something..." said Cyril Neakley's father, peering at a couple of switches on the robot's back. A pair of compasses was attached to the hand, and a narrow sharp projector whizzed back to him. At the same moment the circular saw got caught up in the sales lady's blouse.

Cyril's father grabbed at the robot's legs and pulled it off the counter. It crashed to the floor on its back. Desperately, Mr. Gar Thrombido tried to right the Kodenmate, but the foot was too big heavy for its limbs to get a purchase. What's more, he couldn't see properly because of the fall, of blood splashing round on the law back. Then he saw a brown leg. He grabbed at the material and pulled himself up just as Cyril's father's trousers came down.


"Could somebody please explain what's happened here?" roared the Assistant Manager, who had to see a rather frightened and angry Cyril Neakley. "I'll tell the sales lady with the rather difficult task of explaining to the Assistant Manager why Cyril's father had no trousers on, and Cyril's father with the rather more difficult task of explaining to Cyril what he had done to the sales lady's blouse."


Meanwhile, the rumpaging Kodenmate Detective had vanished...

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## RECOMMENDED GAMES

# ACE!

GAMES YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE

All of the following games are **ACE RATED**, that means they're all red hot masterpieces of computer entertainment. Some of the games were available long before the first issue of ACE came of the press; however, so we never had the chance to review them in the magazine. These games are marked with the **ACE CLASSIC** flash, and rest assured, they're all superb pieces of software and are well deserving of the title.

## ARCADE ADVENTURES

These games usually give the player a joystick controlled character with which to explore the huge game area.

### AIRBALL

Microdot ■ Atari ST £24.95cd

Multi-coloured three dimensional arcade adventure that owes something to the Ultimate style but is years ahead in terms of graphics detail and presentation. You, as the airball in question, must negotiate corridors and rooms full of various obstacles - all spelling instant death. An astounding rendition of a popular game.

■ ACE CLASSIC

### BATMAN

Comarc ■ C64 £19.95cd ■ £19.95cd Spectrum £3.95cd £14.95cd

Two games in one here as you play the part of Batman in two adventures against your arch enemies The Joker and The Penguin. Terrific graphics capture the flavour of the comic book originals superbly. All we need to do now is wait for Batman: The Movie to be released.

■ ACE RATED 903 - SPECTRUM

### DUNGEON MASTER

Microdot ■ Atari ST £24.95cd

A fascinating arcade adventure turn role-playing game that gives you four characters to guide through a series of dungeons on a quest to find the Wizard. Superb graphics help to create an enthralling game that will keep you playing for a long time to come.

■ ACE RATED 945 - ATARI ST

### EAGLE'S NEST

Phoenix ■ Amiga £19.95cd ■ Atari ST £19.95cd

This is one of the better Gauntlet clones, especially on the 16-bit machines. The military flavour of the arcade adventure adds atmosphere and if you like this particular style of game, you won't be disappointed with Eagle's Nest.

■ ACE RATED 944 - ATARI ST



## RECOMMENDED GAMES

### HEAD OVER HEELS

Ocean ■ Spectrum 07 960s ■ C64 08 960s 013 960s ■ Amstrad 02 960s 014 960s ■ MSX 03 960s ■ IBM PC 010 960s

3D exploration-reaches its peak with this huge intricate masterpiece. You play two characters—Heed and Heels—as you search for the crystals that will free the galaxy. The puzzles can get very difficult indeed, and you'll often have to split Heed and Heels up to use their different capabilities. The game's 300 locations are wily drawn, and the animation is excellent throughout. **A real classic.**

■ **AGE CLASSIC**

### MAGIC KNIGHT TRILOGY

Masthead ■ Knight Time ■ Spectrum 02 960s ■ Amstrad 02 960s ■ C64 02 960s ■ Spellbound ■ Spectrum 02 960s ■ Amstrad 02 960s ■ C64 02 960s ■ Demolisher ■ Spectrum 02 960s ■ Amstrad 02 960s

The trilogy is a series of maze-like arcade adventures which, as well as all the expected running and jumping, have a complex system of interaction between characters. In Spellbound you must rescue the Wizard from the bewitched Castle of Magic. In Knight Time you have to find a way back in time after being catapulted into the 20th century, while in Demolisher, the final part, we find that the magic knight has been split in two, one part good, the other evil. You can't kill yourself, so the only solution is to merge the two halves. But how? Lots of action, plenty of thought and good graphics make all three winners.

■ **AGE CLASSIC**

### POOL OF RADIANCE

US Gold 021 ■ C64 014 960s

USG have done a superb job in trying to capture the **AGE** system on a computer. The result is a game that will not only appeal to **AGE** fans, but anyone looking for a role-playing game that will keep them entertained and entertained for months to come.

■ **AGE RATED 021 - C64**

## STRATEGY GAMES

The games for megastomaniacs. The games listed in this section will really test your mettle on the battlefield.

### BALANCE OF POWER

Mindscape/Microsoft ■ Amiga 026 960s ■ Atari ST 026 960s ■ IBM PC 026 960s ■ Mac 026 960s

Definitive strategy game for 16-bit PCs. The player takes the role of one of the superpowers, while either the computer or a friend takes the other. Then it's a case of trying to win friends and influence people on a global scale. This can be achieved in a number of ways, including supplying arms or financial aid to radical factions in the hope of toppling a government which is not receptive to the great American or Russian dream (depending on which side you're playing). It's complex, involving and it's difficult to play in an minute sessions. **Mastering** staff that gives an insight into the device world of geopolitics.

■ **AGE RATED 960 - AMIGA**

### CARRIER COMMAND

Parade ■ Atari ST 024 960s ■ Amiga 024 960s ■ Amstrad 014 960s 019 960s ■ Spectrum 014 960s 015 960s

A magnificent strategy game **epitomized** with some great arcade action—as commander of the aircraft carrier **Spiton**, it's your job to stop the invasion of an island archipelago by the rogue aircraft carrier **Omega**. State of the art graphics use **intentionally** with great gameplay to make an enthralling and entertaining game.

■ **AGE RATED 927 - ST**

### DIPLOMACY

Leisure Genius ■ C64 012 960s 014 960s ■ PC 024 960s

The grand old man of **heavy** negotiation boardgames makes it onto

home computers and how! The game can handle up to **sixteen** players and it's an engaging and **really** addictive game that's a must for **heavy** negotiators.

■ **AGE RATED 949 - IBM PC**

### FIRE BRIGADE

Further Games ■ IBM PC ■ STS Australia ■ Mac 070 Australian

A magnificent **war** game for one or two players. Based on the battle for New in 1845, there are a number of scenarios and the variable difficulty levels allow you to play an complicated a game as you wish. It's well presented and a fair old challenge too.

■ **AGE RATED 910 - IBM PC**

### JOAN OF ARC

Parade Arts ■ Atari ST ■ 019 960s ■ IBM PC 024 960s

Superbly it's like Defender of the Crown, but that's as much more so. In fact, just when you thought you'd reached the ultimate you'll realize it's only just the beginning.

■ **AGE RATED 912 - ATARI ST**

### REACH FOR THE STARS

Electronic Arts ■ PC 024 960s

This terrific game of space exploration and conquest may not be the best looking PC game around, but it's certainly one of the most fun. You start the game with a planet around a star and have to fend off (and eventually conquer) attacks from the other three players. It's not easy to get into, but once you do you'll be well and truly hooked.

■ **AGE RATED 940 - IBM PC**

### UMS

Parade ■ Atari ST 024 960s ■ IBM PC 024 960s ■ Macintosh 024 960s ■ Amiga 024 960s

Parade's Universal Military Simulator is designed to simulate a conflict between two forces on a user-definable terrain that can be viewed in three dimensions from any one of eight directions. The program handles a war area in 16-bit computer languages. The ST version is available now with the other versions following shortly.

■ **AGE CLASSIC**

### VULCAN

CGS ■ Spectrum 03 960s ■ Amstrad 03 960s

An elegant, simple and ingenious war game. Vulcan covers the Turkish campaign of 1942-43. A huge playing area and an attack phase make the game an improvement over the same author's earlier work **Armistice** and **Desert Rats**. **Vulcan** is fast, efficient and simple to play, and the self-explaining vignettes should be without it.

■ **AGE RATED 961 - AMSTRAD**

## SIMULATIONS

Games that put you at the controls. Whether you're flying helicopters, or aeroplanes, or steering battleships, simulation games can become very involving.

### BATTLEHAWKS

US Gold/Lucasfilm ■ IBM PC 019 960s

Play either an American or Japanese fighter or bomber pilot in this **combat** game based on the major battles of the Pacific Ocean in 1942. It's real **knock-out** stuff that gives you a great sense of being there. Thrilling and surprisingly addictive.

■ **AGE RATED 926 - IBM PC**

### BOBSLEIGH

Digital Integration ■ Spectrum 03 960s ■ Amstrad 03 960s 014 960s

Bobsleigh is a thrilling game with enough strategy involved to ent

another dimension to a highly complex and addictive simulation. Have you got the stamina to roll your way into one of the top three positions by the end of the season? Remember, sponsors don't back losers. Unfortunately, though (Strategy is available for the C64, it's a poor game compared to the Amstrad and Spectrum versions and is therefore not recommended).

■ **AGE RATED 90+ - SPECTRUM**

## CHUCK YEAGER'S ADVANCED FLIGHT TRAINER

Electronic Arts ■ C64 £3.95cc £14.95cc ■ PC £24.95cc

Chuck Yeager's flight trainer takes the flight simulator genre a step further by including a training option. Chuck will guide the novice through such difficult moves as steep loops and rolls. With 24 levels in one package it will take many hours of instructive fun to master all the available options.

■ **AGE RATED 912 - C64**

## FALCON

Movestek ■ Apple Mac £24.95cc ■ IBM PC £24.95cc

A magnificent flight title that gives you a dozen missions at any of five levels, so there's an awful lot to get through. The game's very combat-oriented making it definitely one for fighters rather than jet fans. After a short while of playing it's easy to see why Falcon was assigned a whole bunch of awards in America recently.

■ **AGE CLASSIC**

## FLIGHT SIMULATOR 2

Softlogic ■ Amstrad ST £49.95cc ■ Amiga £49.95cc ■ IBM PC £39.95cc

The versatile patchwork of flight simulations, Flight Sim 2 is the standard by which all others are judged. Although it spent a 280cc weeks on top of the US charts, it's difficult to get hold of in the UK. If you have the technology, this is an essential purchase.

■ **AGE CLASSIC**

## GUNSHIP

Microprose ■ PC £24.95cc

Excellent graphics, involving simulation and a variety of missions make this one of the better PC games. Ploving your 'booster ground' in order to stop various 'picks' may not be totally useful - but if you can stand the politics you should have a lot of fun.

■ **AGE RATED 902 - AMIGA**

## INTERCEPTOR

Electronic Arts ■ Amiga £24.95cc

F-16 simulation combining stunning 3-D graphics with atmospheric sound and an interesting variety of missions.

■ **AGE RATED 934 - AMIGA**

## LEADERBOARD

Access/US Gold ■ Spectrum £9.95 ■ C64 £9.95cc £14.95cc ■ Amstrad £9.95cc £14.95cc ■ Amstrad ST £19.95cc

If you only buy one game you can't buy Leaderboard. It's head and shoulders above everything else in popularity and realism, easy to get into, with delightful graphics and clever controls. Once you've mastered the original, try Tournament Leaderboard from World Class Leaderboards (based on real scores, including St Andrews, plus the 'Tourament Country Club' - devised to be an effort as possible).

■ **AGE CLASSIC**

## TOMAHAWK

Digital Integration ■ Spectrum £9.95cc ■ Amstrad £9.95cc £14.95cc ■ Amstrad ST £24.95cc

One of the all-time great flight sims, Tomahawk also has a strong combat edge. Flying a US Army Apache helicopter is complex, and the realistic controls make no concessions for learners. Choose one of three combat missions and you can fly out to attack ground targets, while keeping a watchful eye open for enemy aircraft. Landscapes, buildings, and vehicles are all drawn in crisp vector graphics.

■ **AGE CLASSIC**

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# PCS - WHAT HAVE THE

Erstwhile PC PLUS editor, Matt Nicholson, gives us the low-down on PCs and how they measure up against today's 16-bit machines. If you're thinking of upgrading your system, is a PC a viable option?

**S**hould you buy a PC? The specifications of the IBM PC is difficult to write home about, particularly after compared to modern 16-bit machines. Nevertheless, the PC and its competitors have outlived the Amiga, STs and Mastertrons put together - by at least a factor of two. The reason is simple: there's three out of two.

IBM is by far the biggest computer manufacturer in the world, and has been since the mid-1970s. To put one on the list of just how big, consider this: between 1980 and 1992 the sale of the industry made a combined total of over \$1,000 billion. IBM made a profit of over \$100,000 million. The second largest computer company in Japan is IBM's Japanese branch. This is largely irrelevant to the home user, as by far the greatest part of IBM's business is in mainframe and mini-computers. However, back in the early 1980s IBM branched its PC, the Personal Computer, and it was an immediate success. Big business had been looking for a desktop computer, but felt uneasy buying large quantities from young upstart companies like Apple and Commodore. IBM was a name they knew and could trust.

Nobody gets tired of buying IBM, as the old adage goes.

Other companies, anxious to tap into the burgeoning market, started copying the IBM design and producing boxes that could run IBM software. The PC became a standard and now probably over 80 percent of the micro sold in the world today are compatibles.

## WORKERS PLAYING

The original PC was designed very much with the home environment in

mind - it had a cassette port, could be plugged into a TV, and booted up to a version of the BASIC programming language just like any other home computer. In the States the IBM PC was seen as a home machine from the start, but in the UK it took Alan Sugar to launch the PC1512 at £299 plus VAT, and a host of 16-bit feature PC-compatibles were available in high-street stores from a nameless company known as The PC Group (because visible as a home computer in the UK).

There are however a large number of PC designs around, ranging from those a couple of hundred to over £10,000. Looking to buy an IBM-compatible is the only port.

## SOFTWARE

The fact that the PC had been converted into a home computer in the States for the last eight years means that there was a considerable base of games software ready for the limited PC1512. Although some of the 85 titles are a bit dated, at least they are still game computers of Spectrum or C64 games. Indeed many are not available on any machine except the PC, as an early user being converted. Microsoft's Flight Simulator, for example, and many titles from Microline and Electronic Arts are PC-only.

Meanwhile 80 computers have started producing PC versions, independently with Amiga and ST releases. Many games houses now regard the PC as important as much as the Amiga, although sales tend to be considerably lower than for the ST. Game prices tend to be comparable, too.

But without doubt the PC's strength lies in business software. For many word processors or spreadsheet

on the Amiga or ST there are few or none. For the PC, many cheaper and more powerful. If you are looking for a games machine the PC is not the best choice, but if you want to run business with pleasure the PC is a safer bet.

## LOWER SPEEDS

The basic PC used an 8088 processor running at 4.77MHz, and was almost too slow to meet the latest 16-bit Macintosh. Most clones that day ran the faster 8088 processor running at 10MHz which, though not quite as rapid as an Amiga or ST, is considerably faster than most 8-bit machines with the notable exception of the BBC Master II.

Most clones came with at least 128K of RAM, and 640K is now the norm. It is not worth paying more than 640K of RAM into a basic PC as the MS-DOS operating system - under which most software runs - won't recognise the extra. There are work-around kits out, but these involve extra hardware and an increasing size of the installed software. PC clones with just a single 1.25-inch 360K floppy disk drive can be had for around £450 (plus disk).

The 80486 introduced the faster 80386, a true 32-bit processor running at 16MHz. Most clones currently run at least at 20MHz, and now 25MHz is becoming common, installing a machine that can run as fast as an ST or Amiga. Prices are rather higher, but have inexpensive machines coming in at around £1,200. A hard disk made with decent colour graphics, such as the new Hitachi PC2020, could cost nearer £1,800.

The latest IBM compatibles use the 32-bit 80386 processor running at anywhere from 16 to 25MHz, and are fully capable of matching the competition when it comes to speed. However there are few in the UK. The cheap and widely available over 1,500 for a lower machine with a 10Mhz of memory and 65 Kbytes hard disk drive.

Although several budget-priced PC compatibles have recently been launched, such as the Sinclair PC88, Schneider's EuroPC or the Sharp PC1, it is the faster and more expensive machines that are better when it comes to games. Many flight simulators are only really playable on a 286 with decent graphic display.

## GRAPHICS & MONITORS

For a supposedly standard design, the IBM PC is extremely confusing when it comes to the display. This is largely due to the modular nature of the PC, as the electronics that drive the screen

are usually mounted on an expansion card, called a 'graphics adapter' (American spelling, which means that they can be changed at will).

The original PC came after with an extremely fast but only 40-pin Adaptec Model Monochrome Display Adapter (MDA) or with a rather less clear Color Graphics Adapter (CGA) that was capable of displaying a number of graphics modes. The latter model displays four colours at a resolution of 320 by 200 pixels, and it was this MDA that was mostly most games authors' preference. The CGA adapter is also capable of displaying monochrome graphics at 640x480 text at a resolution of 640 by 200, the best being the most common mode for business software.

A further limitation of the colour display is that only three combinations of four colours can be used - the most common being a rather lazure mix of purple, light blue, black and white. Some games, like for example, think life up green, red, yellow and black.

To make up for the low text quality of CGA, Hercules introduced the Hercules Graphics Card (HGC) which could display high quality monochrome graphics and high quality text. It became very popular and it was the standard for monochrome displays, providing a resolution of 720 by 144 pixels. However, although it is compatible with CGA when displaying text, it is totally incompatible when it comes to graphics. Games software written for CGA graphics will not run on a Hercules machine.

IBM eventually produced a direct display with the Enhanced Graphics Adapter (EGA). This offers a resolution of 16 colours from a palette of 64 at a resolution of up to 640 by 350 pixels. It is fully compatible with MDA and CGA, but requires a six channel display graphics adapter for a 16-colour display. It is now the standard for colour graphics on IBM hardware. IBM, and most games now support both CGA and EGA - some, such as adventures from Magica Sorcery, only display pictures on the CGA version. The standard PC2020 offers CGA graphics at 640x480 colour and monochrome modes, reserving colours to shades of grey for the monochrome display. It also offers a Monitor mode that boasts a 640x480 resolution to EGA, but is really incompatible. Little software has been written for this mode, although it is supported by the freely-IBM-written mouse interface packaged with the machine.

The standard PC2020 offers either straight CGA or VGA or its





# THEY GOT TO OFFER?

colour models — or monitors on the monochrome version. The generated considerable confusion when it was launched as many assumed that it had lost the example of the mouse [5.2] and were disappointed to find it would not be most games.

In 1987 IBM introduced the VGA display. This can display 64k modes, also several others including 16-colours at a resolution of 640 by 480, and 256 colours at a resolution of 320 by 200. The choice for the best mode can be selected from an amazing 260,144, making it capable of displaying that from a dollars book in clear as a photograph, and are common to the rest of the things or 15". The mode store, however, relies on an analogue monitor to display which leads to cost around £250 more than the usual 775 monitor. Other modes can be displayed selectively on an ordinary display.

Most IBM and IBM compatibles offer VGA display. VGA is not yet vital for the purchaser wanting to use this piece with business, but is above the floor bar.

## SOUND

The IBM's sound capabilities are subtle by their absence. There is a synthesizer, but that's about it — the only sound the machine itself supports is a beep.

Programmers have used all sorts of clever techniques for generating more interesting noises, and indeed most games manage the job very well. Grisoft's Commander Keen, for example, actually includes a short burst of

completeness, but no one ever bought a PC for its music purposes.

But for those with the money, the PC is worth considering. There are a number of intelligent MIDI interface expansion cards available for around £150 that, with the right software and MIDI instrument, turn the PC into a full MIDI controller — often more powerful than the best in fact, as the IT's built in MIDI port is only passive.

## DRIVES

The standard PC uses 5.25-inch floppy disks each storing 360K of data, and most software is issued in that format. The AT' design also uses 5.25-inch disks, but uses a 1.2 Mbyte unit instead. All competitors can read 360K disks, but some of the copy protection systems used by games publishers's cause problems.

IBM chose to join the rest of the world with its PC-D range, and fitted 3.5-inch disk drives. These store either 720K or 1.44 Mbyte on a disk, and do seem to be catching on with software publishers. Most software these days is either issued in both 5.25 and 3.5 inch format, or you can exchange the 5.25 format disk with the publisher for a 3.5-inch version.

You can also add hard disk drives to any IBM compatible, which can store anything from 20 Mbyte upwards and are considerably faster. A 20 Mbyte drive for the PC can be better around £200.

## BIOS & OPERATIONS

Many software packages will take input from a mouse or a joystick. The



Microsoft mouse has become a bit of a standard fare, although this is quite expensive. The standard PC-D and 1.44k both come with a mouse, but unfortunately it is not fully compatible with the Microsoft model — it usually works fine, but seems to have problems when running with Microsoft software.

The original IBM design also catered for a joystick in that it provided an expansion card that could be plugged into the PC, and which provided sockets for one or two analogue joysticks. The rather nice price compatible joystick I built cost around £25, while the joystick cost around £20. Fortunately the few who are fond of joystick — those, for example, do it for £20.

The standard PC-D and 1.44k also come with a parallel outlet, but this is for a switched turn-on unit and is completely incompatible with the IBM interface. Most US software supports the IBM interface, while most UK soft-



ware provides an Amstrad option as well. The good news is that the Amstrad option is effectively part of the keyboard, so if the software allows you to configure the keys it is for Amstrad-people to substitute control movements instead. It has been dropped on the PC-D/DX range.

## ACE MACHINES

No one in their right mind would buy an IBM clone just to play games — you would need to spend thousands to get a machine anywhere near the size of an Amiga or AT.

Nevertheless, as a machine for doing serious work, the PC is second to none, and not too bad as a games machine either. If you work from home, or if you frequently bring work home, the PC is an ideal partner. Buy a PC and you will never end up in a computer backwater, either.

## MAIN MACHINES

Make & model	Price (ex VAT)	RAM	Processor/Drive	Display Adapter	Software	Comments
Sealed PC200	£514	512K	8086/720K	EGA colour	GM and Basic Four games	Comes with joystick
Schneider Euro-PC	£521	512K	8086/10MB	EGA colour	Microsoft Works	Limited expansion
Olivetti PC1	£536	512K	640/884/720K	EGA colour	First Choice package	One expansion slot
Amstrad PC1640	£604	640K	8086/884/360K	EGA colour	GM and Basic	Three expansion slots
Amstrad PC2086	£667	640K	8086/884/720K	VGA colour	Windows and Basic	Price for single floppy drive
IBM Model 30	£1495	640K	8086/884/720K	None mono	-	Price for twin floppy drive
Amstrad PC2286	£1322	1MB	80286/1.2MB	VGA colour	Windows and Basic	Price for twin floppy drive
Amstrad PC2386	£3219	4MB	80386/30MB	VGA colour	Windows and Basic	Price for 60MB hard disk drive
IBM Model 30	£2467	2MB	80386/25MB	VGA colour	-	Price with 120MB hard disk drive











## SOLUTION TO THE ACE PUZZLE No10

The first correct entry out of the post bag was from Richard Elton of Wake-on-Frost who wins £25 worth of software for his computer.

The program took in terms of the number of pages if numbers would be one with 1270 pages. To read it according to the set of rules that were discovered I would have to read 263 pages on the first day and I would arrive at the last page on the 12th day.

From a page starting number the number of pages read on the first day 2630 maximum page number can be found by multiplying the digits of the preceding page number and adding on the total. This procedure is then repeated until one of two possible conditions occurs. Either the number of the current product will exceed 300, or a total can be given a zero is produced, this preventing any further increase in the total.

As the sequence of numbers starting at a given value is predetermined the program relates to finding the highest total that can be reached from each starting value in the range of 1 to 300. This cannot exceed 300 as this is the maximum number of pages which can be read in any one day including the first. A variable, @MAXVAL, is used to

store each maximum total, the value being updated each time a higher scoring maximum is found. The initial starting value 30 is also stored in variable FIRST to indicate the number of pages read on the first day. After all starting values have been evaluated the contents of these two variables are printed out to determine the answer.

```

10000
10 MAXVAL=0
20 FOR I=1 TO 300 IN 5
30 N=I-@MAXVAL
40 PRINT@MAXVAL,"I="I;" N="N;"
50 @MAXVAL=I
60 IF I=300 THEN GOTO 100
70 IF I=0 THEN GOTO 30
80 N=N+I*2
90 IF N>300 THEN GOTO 30
100 @MAXVAL=@MAXVAL+I
110 PRINT I;" "MAXVAL
120 GOTO 20
130 END

```

NOTE: This listing should run on any machine capable of using Microsoft BASIC.

## THE ACE PUZZLE No12

Set by Archie Meades

One year ago Arnold was a proponent of whisky as first prize in the village café, and for twelve months this bottle has occupied a prominent position on Arnold's sideboard - still to the amazement of his many visitors. The keeping it for a special occasion? In the answer he gives to my hopeful enquiries:

However, all is not as it seems, and I can tell you why. I received every Saturday night for the last 152 weeks, though not precisely counted because a nip of whisky from the bottle, but to give the impression of witnessing a full bottle, each time he has mixed in an equal measure of water, thus reducing the bottle to its full volume. In this way Arnold can enjoy his price without

being obliged to share it around.

Now, much has that Arnold taken in, by sheer coincidence, EXACTLY one hundredth part of the volume of the entire bottle.

Can you say PROBABLY how many nips of whisky have actually been consumed - that is, down to the almost negligible part of a nip?

A clue - your answer should run to exactly 1000 decimal places, so you will have to write it down on a separate piece of paper when you send the answer.

Instead of trying to wash the set with pencil and paper, why not devise a simple listing that will allow your means to solve it for you?

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# EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT HEDGEHOGS BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK...

Hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*) are wonderful creatures that everyone's familiar with, but did you know...

1. There are approximately 5,7000 species on an average adult hedgehog.
2. Feeding a hedgehog an bread and milk alone is not a good idea, in fact it can prove to be costly harmful. A healthy hedgehog normally eats mainly beetles, caterpillars and earth-worms.
3. Removing all the heat from a hedgehog can cause it to suffer withdrawal symptoms.
4. Shakespeare mentions hedgehogs in "The Tempest" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream".
5. The forerunner for hedgehog is Piggies.
6. Hedge R.I.C. are nicknamed The Hedge-fogs.
7. The British Hedgehog Preservation Society is a registered charity dedicated to encourage and give advice to the public concerning the care of hedgehogs particularly when injured, sick, treated cruelly, orphaned or in any other danger.
8. There are approximately 5 dozen species of hedgehog. Two can be found in S.E. Asia, three in Africa and a couple in China. There are no indigenous species in the Americas or Australia.
9. Pigs first suggest that hedgehog-like creatures have existed for some 15,000,000 years.
10. Hedgehog-flavoured crisps do exist but certain absolutely no hedgehog in fact they taste like chicken flavoured crisps.
11. In ancient times, hedgehogs were a valuable food source. They were first cooked in clay and then baked. When the clay was removed, the spines would come off with it.
12. Monty Python's Donatello Peasie was originally harassed by an imaginary govt hedgehog called Spiny Norman.

13. The programmer of Microsoft's 35000 versions of Fernando Must Do calls himself Spiny Norman.
  14. Fredrik once produced a budget game with a hedgehog called Spiny Harold as the main character.
  15. How do hedgehogs mate? Very carefully! It's true indeed.
- For more information contact:  
The British Hedgehog Preservation Society,  
Kingsbury House, Kingsbury,  
Ludlow, Shropshire,  
SY8 3JQ

## GAMES DESIGNED TO MAKE MAGAZINES LIVE

Just when the Art Dept and almost every other department within Future Publishing thought it was safe to turn out a Mail without being warty tempted to foot up *Diablo* (see pink pages) issues 12 and 13 comes yet another mindless, simple but extremely addictive game. Crystal Quest has been responsible for more lost production over the last couple of months than the hangovers incurred after one of Bob Wade's pizza evenings (that's Bob, no you can't come! Write us his affectionately known name). So, if you ever give us a ring and it takes ages for the responsibility to answer, it could just be because you caught her in the middle of a Crystal-Quest high score attempt.

## COMPETITIONS

We at ACE work hard and play hard and there's nothing we enjoy more than a couple of hours of an evening in the pub next door, The Nuclear Arms. Now the landlord, Larry, is very fond of animals - especially sheep - and he keeps running out with five bottles with a costly theme, such as An Olfact and A Gentle Lamb, Goodenights and Who Framed Larry the Lamb. If you, groans all round, but there you go, if you wish you can think of a punner you send it in. The funniest one we receive by March 31st will win a glorious chocolate as the ACE cover (Christmas special issue) as awarded by every member of the ACE team. Send your puns to PRR, SNEZ, ACE at the Bath address.

\*\*\*

Thanks to Danielle of US Gold we've got two fantastic Organigama books to give away - the collector's edition of Organigama Chromates and Organigama Legende! Wow! So, how do you win 'em? Simple, just guess the combined weight of the two books (answers must be in Grammes please!). To give you a hand, you'll want to know these two facts:

Chromates is 228mm x 210mm x 44mm and has 1800 pages.  
Legende is 228mm x 210mm x 40mm and has 180 pages.

Send your answers on a postcard or stuck down envelope to ACE BOOKS, at the Bath address to arrive no later than 31st March 1989.





















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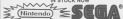
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