REVIEWED!
EVERY GAME
RELEASED
THIS MONTH!

POPULOUS II
Bullfrog's latest blockbuster - ACE readers have their say!

ACE

ADVANCED COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

- AMIGA
- PC ● ST
- MEGADRIVE
- GAMEBOY
- LYNX
- GAME GEAR
- FAMICOM

ALIEN 3
This time, it's really, really personal.

TESTED!
6-Page Super Reviews of:

- LOTUS 2
- MIG 29M
- FLOOR 13
- HUDSON HAWK
- GRAND PRIX
- ALIEN BREED

Lotus 2   Hudson Hawk

MIG 29M   FLOOR 13

Alien Breed   Grand Prix

IN THE WORKS
Sneak previews of Christmas hits in development

PREVIEWED
Parasol Stars, Apocalypse, Smash TV, Rogue Trooper, Robin Hood, Sly Spy, Commando and more!

FREE!
Full Colour Tricks 'n' Tactics Supplement

PLAY THE GAME MAN!

Hello fellow humans!

Bartholomew J. Simpson here, with a very important secret:

SOME MUTANTS ARE INVADING SPRINGFIELD

That's right man! A butcha slimy, horrid, totally gross and putrid monster are taking over the bodies of the people who live here and they wanna build a weapon that's gonna take over the entire planet!

...PRETTY COOL, HUH?

Anyway, yours truly is the only one who can see 'em! I've gotta spray paint things, get radical on my skateboard, use my trusty slingshot, and in general behave like a nuisance, man.

Plus, with evil dudes like Nelson the bully and Sideshow Bob getting in my way, it's a good thing I've got the rest of the Simpsons to help me out!

So if you're a decent person, a patriot, and somebody who cares about this sorry planet, you'll do the right thing.

BUY THIS GAME!

Thanks man.

CBM AMIGA
ATARI ST
SPECTRUM
Commodore
AMSTRAD

3

ACE

Let's face it. You've had to put up with some nonsense, haven't you? Low quality games and even lower quality mags. Reviews that lie and games that stink. But no more. Now it's all going to change.

Here is a mag that would not take it any more! Here is a mag that stood up!

Here is...

ACE Magazine.

Our aim is to deliver all the news on the games scene each month, quenching your thirst for facts in a refreshing and worthwhile style.

The world's most detailed reviews, the world's hottest games stories. Every new release reviewed and every review unimpeachable. Every month. Starting now.

18. Mbox 1: from Microsoft, this month's coregame is moving along at a fair old pace at the Hounds of Pride in leafy Croydon. ACE takes a sneaky preview. Exclusively, of course.

23. Bullfrog, purveyors of the software cities Populous open their doors to a select number of ACE readers. Read about their secret projects and check out the games file in a special in the Works line!

They say that the best things in life are free. And how right they are! Just look, dear reader, at the hugely crafted Classic Tricks 'n' Tactics supplement provided entirely free with this issue. Detailed, worthwhile playguides for six of the best games on the market. And there's going to be another one next month!

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38 Phlegmm: Read about Domark's ambitious incarnation in development.

42 You can rely on our new four-page preview adventure to keep you up on the newest of the new news area!

50 ACE Benchmarks: The finest games in your software collection compared!

56 Phew! 23, just one of the games to receive the new ACE 5 Page Scoresheets.

AMAZING
NEW SPACE
SUPER
REVIEWS

Football 2086: A sort of bobsleigh/motocross-type mesh of games that should make your eyes buzz with anticipation. Plus...

Rik Haynes, newshound extraordinaire goes to work on this month's top stories.

It's Nothing Personal

Following a triumphant launch at the AMOA coin-op show in Las Vegas last month, Williams Bally/Midway is readying the European release of a stunning new arcade machine called Terminator 2: Judgment Day. Based around the same controls that proved so successful with the firm's Terminator 2 pinball table, T2 is the first video game ever to feature a full-motion-captured movie star.

Designed by the same team that brought us Narc and Smash TV, Terminator 2: Judgment Day is a playable and addictive Operation Wolf-style shoot-'em-up featuring graphics not only digitised from the movie, but also specially recorded by Williams personnel on the set of the films. No other video game company has ever had this much access to such raw movie materials. Even issues get involved in the project!

Next month, ACE will be running an exclusive behind-the-scenes report on the Making of Terminator 2 coin-op. Miss it if you dare...

Adventures In Cyberscape
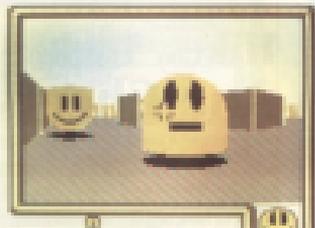
What is Mind-set and what level of involvement will it entail? Realm of Future Software, the publisher that made a name from Terris and Pipe Dream, is bringing out another arcade puzzle game for the Gameboy.

Paintball 2000, developed by the same people who wrote MIDI MAZE for the Atari ST, gets its name from the maniacal smiley-faces representing each player. Hi-tech plasma balls are your only weapon. Like the previous release from Anco, this is also a first-person shoot-'em-up with a very clever cursor maze explore. Up to four people can play – using the special Nintendo adaptor – in solo, free-for-all or team competition. Bullet-Proof Software is also planning a version of the ball-cover for the Super NES.

Meantime, Soviet game supremo Alexey Pajitnov is now working full-time for Bullet-Proof Software in Redmond, America. The talented creator of Tetris used to invent games in his spare time at the Computer Institute of the Soviet Academy of Sciences where he explored sophisticated computer applications like artificial intelligence and speech recognition and artificial languages.

"When I broke my leg in my early teens, I got very bored reading day after day and I started looking into mathematical puzzles," reveals Pajitnov. "I got so carried away I forgot everything else - school, friends even girls."

Better Late Than Never

Elm, the cult space game that gathered countless fans after its original release, is set to be launched on the software-starved Acorn Archimedes, writes Matthew Turret.

First released for the BBC micro in 1984, and since converted to almost every other machine, Elm has now been updated and revised by a two-man coding team based in Cheshire. This version of the game sports uprated vectals and solid 3D graphics running at 25 frames per second.

Other innovative new features include ships that flock and cruise in formations of up to 50 units, a navigational computer with realistic scanner intelligently acting on individual politics and seeking out hidden bases. And the original included in the manual as never-written later now actually been implemented, exploiting the raw power of the machine.

Elm has been revised for the Acorn Archimedes, which the same feel it as good as ever.

On The Starting Line

Konami has teams off high competition to cogmin up British Formula One hero Nigel Mansell. The Mile is hardly dry on the contract, but the successful Sheffield-based publisher of Lotus, Switchblade II and Ozzic, is confident another blockbusting racing bonanza will hip-hop one up.

Although it's unclear exactly what that race just be announced, it is known that Formula One game being a stop release which will probably include the Nintendo Gameboy and Super NES consoles.

Programmer Paul Herb, who has just completed the PC conversion of Federation of Free Traders, is already working on the Nigel Mansell game.

Hikes, Tackles And Cheers

Your Mike Ditka is one of the most famous men in American Football history. He not only distinguished himself as the field but also won the Super Bowl as coach of the Chicago Bears. Now Ballistic has launched a Megadrive cartridge bearing his name, so that he looks set to rook the fans?

"Mike Ditka Power Football is he gamesw who loves American Football and want an action packed game rich in realism, playability, graphics, options and realistics," at least robo." Inside Ballistic says Steve Foster.

According to Ballistic, this is the only American Football game for the Megadrive that gives the player real control of their team. Individual parameters can be set for each team, such as the occurrence of fumbles, injuries, fatigue and even penalties. There is also a library of more than 40 different plays to choose from.

Mansory seems to be no object for Ballistic, Mike Ditka Power Football contains eight megabits of behaviourcontrol code, trimsupped graphics and sampled sounds.

The Heat Is On

Chase Heat is a vast assortion of a talous cofe-up conversion answer fluws thy dudes at Imageworks.

"This is the most hrilling and realistic racing simulation ever to be seen on a home computer," as the Imageworks spokesperson goes into full hyperole. "Tho race is clean with four cars, ace graphics and superb animated colorounds, fast pace and world-beat-free?"

Well, er, what can one add? Oh yeah, Chase Heat is coming later this year for the Amiga, PC and ST.

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Virtual Theatre

Microsoft and newcomers Revolution Software are very excited about the latest graphic adventure game system to be introduced. In Virtual Theatre a SCUMM beater, then?

The major attraction with Virtual Theatre games is that they're set up to advance and develop independently of the player. You can just sit back and watch life go by if you're feeling lazy.

User friendly control is another plus point. The mouse-driven interface is intuitive and quick to operate. Standard commands such as 'get'/'walk' can be issued within seconds. Alternatively, players can simply ask other characters to perform actions ranging from the likes of 'tell character to get hold' to complete requests like 'tell character to go to the guard room and get hold' and then use bottle on tap and then go to the outer cell and then give bottle to the prisoner'. Pretty neat, eh?

Virtual Theatre is the brainchild of Charles Cecil, Tony Warriner and David Sykes at Revolution Software. Adam Tween, Stephen Oades and Paul Dochertry have produced the backdrops, sprites and animated graphic sequences for the first Virtual Theatre game. Richard Joseph has composed the music and sound effects. The company is also working with Dave Cummins, co-writer and artist of the successful comic The Watchman.

Microsoft claims Virtual Theatre is the future of adventure software and is planning to publish a series of games based around this new system. The first release, Lure of the Temptress, will be available next year for the Amiga, PC and ST.

Early screenshots from the first Virtual Theatre game, Lure of the Temptress, the British answer to those hilarious graphic adventures from LucasFilm Games and Sierra On-line

WHO'S THAT GUY?

In the first of an occasional series, ACE looks into the careers of creators responsible for truly remarkable games. We thought it would be a great time to start with Sid Meier, co-founder of Microprose and the man behind Pirates, F-19 Stike Eagle and Railroad Tycoon.

Civilisation is the latest game from award winning game designer Sid Meier, but why did the master of simulation and strategy software actually end up programming games? After graduating from the University of Michigan with a degree in Computer Science in 1976, Meier worked in mid-computer firm General Instruments. His love affair with entertainment software was highlighted when he produced an Atari 800 seven years ago.

The idea for Meier's first game, Helicat Ace, came after he played an aerial dogfight at a video arcade. Sid realised he could add more realism with software created for personal computers. A collection of hits and accolades followed; in 1986 for instance, Silent Service was voted Best Simulation by USA, Britain, France and West Germany. Overall, Meier's games have sold over two million copies worldwide.

"Gamers want a continuing stream of challenging and interesting decisions to confront," declares Meier. "They like options, what if scenarios and confrontating

considerations. People can go to movies for graphics and books for storylines. People look to computers for the interaction and for stories in which they themselves are the driving force. Story on computing, Sid!

Dislikes And Desires

Can you imagine the sort of game Eye of the Beholder 2 will be? Ud Gold and SSI have taken note of the comments from over 500 dungeon masters in order to produce the sequel to one of the best selling games of 1991. The legend series was created to be a role-playing game with intuitive role-playing games to be licensed from TSR.

Apart from an expanded storyline and more character interaction, The Legend of Darkmoon features a greater variety of creatures and new locations such as forests, temples, catacombs and towers.

Gone are the tedious and sometimes lengthy loading screens coming from the USA, Eye of the Beholder 2 uses extended 'stereo' sequences throughout. On a more esoteric note, the programmers have self-vaunted an improved interface to speed-up spell casting. However, the point-and-click command principle remains.

Lucky PC players equipped with a VGA card or VGA graphics card will be able to lust drive the game next month. A soundboard is optional, but they must have 640K of RAM and a hard drive. Meanwhile, Amiga gamers must wait until March before they can start tasting the fruits of The Legend of Darkmoon. Don't forget to ask Santa for that one megabyte memory expansion or you won't be able to sample the fun and frolics!

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The Big One

Sources close to Konami are suggesting this leading Japanese video game firm has just made a successful bid to publish the most eagerly-awaited video game sequel of all time... Elite 2!

David Braben, co-creator of the first game, has been working on the follow-up to this epic space game for nearly three years. Braben has previously hinted that Elite 2 will incorporate numerous graphical and gameplay improvements, including the facility to actually explore the surface of every planet.

Fueled by intense speculation, the rumour engine has been going at full pace. For instance, one pundit told us Braben declared Elite 2 primarily for the PC while Konami is likely to insist on Super Famicom and CD-ROM versions, too. Braben

could again team up with Ian Bell to help produce these conversions. There is now talk of a specially adapted Elite 2 rewriting the annuals. It is not known whether the proposed deal also includes the NES version of the original Elite which Braben developed himself.

Konami has recently enjoyed considerable success with the video games based around those Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and home-grown products like Castlevania and Gradius. Publishing Elite 2 would mark a radical departure for the company.

Neither Konami or Braben was available for comment as ACE went to press. Watch this space.

DRUG BUSTERS

Argonaut Software, the development house behind Starglider 1 and Birds of Prey, has teamed up with Mirrorsoft to develop a strategy flight simulation set in the near future.

As Supreme Commander in Advanced Tactical Air Command (ATAC), players are put in control of an elite team of spy undercover agents and a tactical force of four F-21 fighter bombers, two helicopters and a base secretly located in the jungles of Colombia. The objective is to stop the drug barons from their illegal manufacturing and distribution of all major cities. This isn't easy, though. The five major bosses have enough money to control public places, the judiciary, hire the most talented mercenaries and buy the best airplanes and missiles.

ATAC is part flight simulation, part strategy game. As you might expect from Argonaut Software, the simulation part of the game features a fully-realised 3D world with hills, mountains, roads, towns, cities and jungle plantations. The game will be released on Amiga, PC and ST in early 1991.

CARTRIDGE CAPERS

Psygnosis and Electronic Arts are about to launch the first two Megadrive games from their co-publishing agreement.

Regarded as one of the most successful Amiga games ever released, Shadow of the Beast is a visually attractive arcade adventure featuring multi-level parallax scrolling of the surrounding fantasy landscape.

Fatal Rewind, previously known as The Killing Game Show, is a cross between a shoot'em-up and platform game as the player takes the role of a combot in a futuristic TV quiz show. Shades of The Running Man, perhaps?

It's Weird!

Freshfield and Imageworks, creators of the critically-acclaimed Rocket, are now breaking another surreal arcade adventure.

"Surreale features stunning graphics which have an almost Dali-esque flavour," states a spokesperson for Imageworks. "The planet features a variety of beautiful but very strange landscapes."

Players go on a quest to capture evil whatever they find it. Luckily, they have two faithful assistants and a rather dainty cask to help them out. Discover this overlooking experience for yourself when the game is released on the Amiga, PC and ST.

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letters

VIRUS DEATH!

On page 96 of your October issue you mention that the Amiga is subject to viruses. I'd be very much obliged if you would insert a little article about what to do when confronted with one. I am reduced to a state of sweating fear when I receive a message from some bastard in Germany on my machine.

I bought what is supposed to be an anti-virus disc for ten quid but the instructions are such a lot of gobbledegook that I can't make head nor tail of it. Unfortunately I can't remember which of my discs could be the offending article and consequently load up each day with something approaching fear in case I'm messing up all my discs. What puzzles me is that I haven't any phoney discs as I buy them from shops.

Robert Larah
Gottingham
East Yorkshire

Premium's letter there cost, and it's not difficult to protect your disks against viruses. If possible, always have the Write Protect tab ON (which means you can see through it), and that will prevent any gremlins writing themselves onto your disks. However, if you using a game in application where you need to write onto your disk, this isn't an option. Another foolproof method is to always turn your machine off in the power point for a good thirty seconds before turning it on again to use another piece of software. Many of the more dangerous strains of virus stay in the machine even after a thirty key reset. Since you're already infected however, your best bet is to get hold of a good hard virus killer — there are the commercial one you bought on eBay virus PD libraries stock killers, and currently the best avail-

able is Master Virus I.e. available from Amiganet. For a couple of quid you can cleanse your collection. So there you go.

THE BIGGER THE BETTER

I think your reviews of software are good although some are small. Could you give two pages per reviews? If you run out of stuff to write you could always fill more of the pages with screenshots. Some games may be hell but we don't see big screens of the games and your flick past so it's wasn't clearer. Now that two pages are good, except for that lovelie chart. How about showing a chart then little like a thermometer where you would clearly see how hot (or) speedy it is.

Wayne Hudson
Old Colton
Norwich

TWO pages per review? How about 14TO? Yes, LOL! By now you're probably already sure our reviewing was ultra in-depth reviewing system - and given the sophisticated nature of much of today's top software, there's rarely any danger of us running out of things to write. Our "terrible chart" as you so quaintly refer to it is in fact the most accurate and appropriate-at-a-glance rating system going - although you'll probably be pleased to see that this month it's been revamped somewhat to make it even more skill.

WHITTA MUST DIE!

Having already bought a copy of Wing Commander

II, I was truly astonished to read your latest preview review of it. Did Gary Whitta actually get it out of the box? Or is he deaf, blind and stupid?

It is without doubt the most awesome and brilliant game I have ever played on a home computer, and makes the original Wing Commander look dull and repetitive in comparison.

Your prefaced interest score (91%) is whole lives in text. It doesn't reflect the commotion which accompanied it. The intense level tension high until the game is completed, then it falls sharply. (It does NOT start declining from the moment you start playing, as suggested by the 91%.)

Some of your quibbles with the game are justified, but in spite of these, the game is still far and away better than any other game, or in our AGE rating of a mere 90% is completely ridiculous. (The same comments could easily be applied to the excellent Thunderhawk, but that didn't stop you giving it a rave review.)

It sounds to me like another case of sour grapes, because even if Wing Commander or Wing Commander II ever gets released for your beloved Amiga it will only be as a pale shadow of the original because of the poor graphics and slow speed of the Amiga.

Christian S Lee
Walker
Newcastle

You eat person, if Wing Commander II is the most awesome game you have ever played, you must have led a pretty sheltered life. While there's no doubt about Wing Commander's technical excellence, the 92.5 review concerns about the quality of the gameplay remain valid - it's little more than a series of short, unconnected and repetitive.

KONSOLE KOPIES?

It's not possible just to bolt on extra walls. As fun it to work you're looking for a completely new kind of computer as well as a wide-screen monitor to be invented. It's a bummer we know. But it's just not going to happen. Sorry.

TOO MANY COOKS?!

Dear ACE, whatever happened to that bald bloke who used to be editor? I used to really like him.

Alex Simmings
Coventry

Steve Cooke left ACE a few months ago, and seldom a couple of weeks goes should we the kind flow of his rain incontrollable tears. PS: Steve is the monthly reincarnation of ACE's sister mag PC Leisure, and is packed to the brim with 16bit games stuff. And it's a lot better than PC Format. Look out for it.

LOOKING GOOD?

Dear ACE, I felt I had to write to you and voice my opinions on the state of many computer games magazines today. It's not that they're badly written - most of them are excellent. It's just that the features are all too childlike. While many of the magazines are just plain awful to look at, others are attractive on the surface but it's still very difficult to find the information you're looking for at a glance. I won't name any names as the designers of these magazines might be offended, but suffice to say that just about every games mag in print looks like a picture-book spewing its contents all over the place. Often magazines print text which is almost inaudible to take cohesion as the background of the main text, making it very difficult to read. Colour text reverse or ridiculously-enlarged screenshots or enigmatic gone dodads, and the truck just have have a nice soft-focus glow about it. Some of the games magazines are so bad it's hardly believe that I'm a regular reader of them. Sometimes a review to include half-decent that it's like reading through a magazine trying to find the information you need. Is can I devolve toward the ACE for making things good-looking yet easy-to-read, and clean design - come on guys! I just don't want it know what I'm talking about.

Charles Orez
Southampton

But thanks. Our Art Editor Jim White is blushing even now. Thanks for the praise Charlie, and we agree wholeheartedly with your comments - it doesn't matter how brilliant and incisive a review is, if it's badly designed the average reader is likely to have trouble getting the information he needs out of it quickly and efficiently. And in the fast-moving world of software today, many gamers don't have time to sit and pore over reviews they're too busy getting a nice bright screen or talking to their mates about the latest game goings. Hope you like the redesign - we think the best just got better!

BLAZING A TRAIL TO NOWHERE?

Dear ACE, a very annoying fact has recently brought itself to my attention! According to the description on last Screen Tess page, Trailblazer are only awarded to games of "outstanding quality". But from what I've seen recently, you've been chucking them about like bars of chocolate!

As I understand it, the ACE Trailblazer is supposed to be far more discerning and difficult to earn than other magazine accolades. But the catalog doesn't seem to be the case when you consider all the games that have earned them in the last few months (Zork Fingers Air Combat, Lotus, Chuckie II, SA Harrier, Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker, Mega lo Mania, Thunderhawk, Sensi the Hedgehog... the list goes on and on! Hardly appropriate practice for a magazine that goes around saying it's harder to please than all the rest!

Are you just trying to liven up the software companies so that you can get invited to lots of free parties and trips abroad, or can't you not quite figure out what's good and what's bad? I'm getting mildly sick pretty graphics and a big manual! How do you expect us software buyers to make a purchasing decision when you give a Trailblazer to almost every game you review? It's very confusing. Just what is going on?!

Malcolm Hardcastle
Shropshire

Now steady on! It's true, a lot of games have been awarded ACE's highest accolade over the last six months. But it's not because we have lots of them lying around in a box taking up space, and it's certainly not some half-wit plan to drivance the software producers. They're just well-good games. Every good game deserves a Trailblazer - it's as simple as that. And the fact that many recent games have been awarded them just reflect how healthy the software scene is at the moment. You should be pleased with so many classic

PADDING?!

Dear ACE, I have been an avid reader of your publication ever since the first issue, and for comics paper has always been one of my favourite sections. But now a rather distressing fact has come to my attention. It seems that the last letter you print is always the shortest. For one, I am always jealous of the person who gets their letter printed last because it gets a whole editorial response and a decent chunk of the page to themselves. And we poor souls who write in first just get our puny letters whacked at the top and dealt with in a couple of sentences. It's totally unfair! If you're going to do this, at least make up a letter with extra space wasting. A good laugh at the end of a page or something... - I've gone and done it again, haven't I... -

Raymond Gordon
Dundee
Scotland

Goodness gracious us! While we'll try our best not to be offended at the accusations you've made, we can assure you that this sort of thing is purely accidental. In a worst case scenario it's genuine; and if we did make one believe us, if we tried to make them a darn sight more interesting than your pitiful little remarks...

ALIEN 3

Since the colony is not largely for prisoners, Ripley's attempts to combat the xenomorph are hampered by the 'safety precaution' of having no firearms on the colony. Somehow Ripley must rally both prisoners and guards alike and destroy the Alien threat before it kills them.

If all sounds most uneven... "But how," you may very well ask yourselves, "could you make a game out of it?" Good question...

The Game

Croydon-based Probe Software were the lucky development team that received the call from Microsoft offering them the license. The contract called for a version of the movie tie-in to be produced for all major formats. So, with tight deadlines looming, Probe decided to develop the game primarily on the Megadrive, and convert all subsequent versions from that.

While the code is still in the early stages of development, the game's storyboard has been finalised and it's clear that ghosts concerned about the lack of gun-toting action in the film need not fear. Tony Beckwith (near Microsoft's "Yes. There aren't any

temsters about the content of the new Alien movie have been flying around for months now. Tales of mysterious space crews and Ripley murdering Aliens with bared arms has created much consternation among the moviegoing public. Probe has been real it and won't reveal the exact the film is going to be about. Until now.

Alien 3 opens with Ripley crash-landing on a remote frontier planet in an escape capsule. Quite why she's crashed, no one knows. There she discovers a small colony of prisoners, overseen by an even smaller group of guards, who are exposing their debt to society by mining local ore.

In space, they may not be able to hear you scream, but they can hear you cry - for a sequel. Science Fiction fans around the world are preparing themselves for a third weird and wonderful cinematic treat. And while 20th Century Fox are putting the final touches on the movie, Probe Software are feverishly working on a brace of conversions for home machines...

The colony is a far from glamorous place. As run by The Company, it is one all but run down. Rife with disease and utterly disgusting, the prisoners have all had to have their heads shaved in order to abate the resident bad-louse epidemic which plagues them. It's this 'look' which spawned all the speculation earlier.

So Ripley prepares herself for a brief spell on the grim planet until a ship can get her back in civilisation. But no sooner has Ripley had her own locks shorn off than she gets her big surprise. Somehow an Alien has made it down onto the planet with her, and is busying itself by offing the prisoners and guards one by one. Convinced by all the past weird doom by destroying the Oraph at the end of the movie will be his undoing.

She faces Ripley, Right a Run her face is a most alien-loving experience. Not that kind of thing anyway but we can the monsters.Are most alien-loving experiences any exposed way.

firename in the movie itself, but we've managed to
get permission from both Century Fox to use all
the hardware, etc, from the first two films. We've
got flamethrowers, grenades and pulse rifles in
there. It's going to be pretty action packed".

The basic premise of the game is simple. Facehu-
scrolling levels of the planet will form the backdrops
to a constant stream of alien encounters. Because
of the main eight stages of the movie to represent-
ed by graphical changes in the game. Ripley must
move through the colony, rescuing prisoners who
have been cocooned by Aliens and destroying the
insectoids wandering around. At the end of each
stage a Mother Alien must be defeated before Ripley
can move on. In the case of the first film, you
will leave the prisoners vulnerable to attack.

Regrettably Fox were most helpful to Micronauh-
cern while the movie was in production. Beckworth
again: "We were given access to the movie sets and
had a good look at all the aliens too. We took the
graphic artists down there and spent a lot of time
just getting the details right. There's no doubt that
the game will have the right feel."

A further hazard which players must deal with is
the presence of the face-huggers. These little variations

The movie seeks to service some minor freaks from Fox Flag as well as the
others in the series. The alien themselves come in all shapes and sizes, but
they are all brilliant at doing away with the innocent colonists.

19

mission about the control of the race. Alien enemy have been flying around for months now. Talk of mysterious space cows and blips wandering chimes with cattle mutilation have caused much consternation among the avenging public. So now has been sent. It wont just wear as such as cave film is going to be about. Until now.

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The colony is a far from glamorous place. As run by The Company, it is now all but run down, filled with disease and unruly characters, the prisoners have all had to have their heads shaved in order to show the visual features unique options which plague them. It's this 'look' which spawned all the best-sneak moments.

So Ripley prepares herself for a brief spell on the grim planet until a ship can get her back to civilisation. Sub no sooner has Ripley had her own body than...

down of that she gets her big surprise. Somehow an Alien has made it down onto the planet with her, and is hurting itself by killing the prisoners and excusing them. If it's successful, all the good work done in destroying the LV-426 at the end of the second movie will be for nothing.

Thus the colony is too largely to prisoners. Ripley's attempts to combat the seemingly are hampered by the 'salve procedure' of having no firearms in the colony. Somehow the prisoners must rally themselves and guerilla-kills and destroy the Alien threat before it kills them.

It all sounds most curious. "But how," you may very well ask yourselves, "could one make a game out of it?" Good question...

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While the code is still in its early stages of development, the game's structure has been finalised and it's clear that players concerned about the lack of gun-toting action in the film care not fear. Tony Beckwith from Microsoft: "Yes, There aren't any firearms in the movie itself, but we've managed to get permission from cash Century Fox to use all the hardware, etc, from the first two films. We've got flamethrowers, grenades and pulse rifles in there. It's going to be pretty action packed!"

AND SOME OTHER THINGS!

Microsoft, keep people that they are, have another two simply enormous titles up their sleeves for Christmas.

Claes that is a very racey racing game for two players. Take the role of a Ferrari-type on his day off and duel with fellow officers for the title of best driver in the city. Plenty of thrills and spills, we're sure.

The Turtles side-up has our wayward company's expectations, both in coin-guiding performance and quality. Buyers, players will be able to enjoy the thrills of controlling the green giants in a home version of the game.

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REACH FOR THE SKIES™

THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN 1940

"NEVER IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN CONFLICT WAS SO
MUCH OWED BY SO MANY TO SO FEW."
– Winston Churchill

Summer 1940. The forces of World War II brings in the balance. The course of the German Luftwaffe and the eyes of the RAF are looking down in their most crucial confrontation yet. The Battle For Britain.

If years on, you have the chance to re-live that famous battle, play the part of a British pilot or a German flying ace and shape the course of history. Your performance in the cockpit determines

whether the outcome is a repeat of the British victory or an unprecedented German success.

Programmed by the team who brought you Flight Of The Intruder, the definitive WL-flight sim, Reach For The Skies, exploits the same unparalleled technology and reaches new heights of historical realism.

FEATURES

- Re-live the most crucial missions of the battle as a Controller, pilot or gunner.
- Eight meticulously recreated aeroplanes to choose from Spitfire, Hurricane, Bf 109, Bf 110, Ju 87, Ju 88, He 111 or Do 17.
- Crucial training sessions prior to battle.
- Huge array of in-flight options and controls.
- Unique new combat view.
- Full sound board support.
- 256 Colour VGA Graphics.

PSE

UTOPIA
THE CREATION OF A NATION
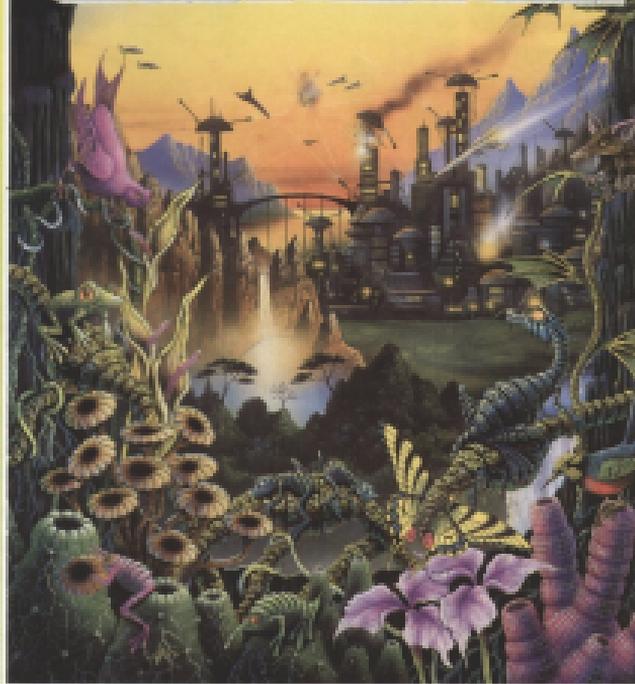
Can you create Utopia? Now's your chance to find out. Loading a colonising party is a barren planet you aim to create the perfect society, where everyone has a quality or life rating of 100%. Do you spend your money on weapons or social research? Build hospitals or tank factories? The myriad of decisions to be made are yours, and the fact that there are over ten different alien races all bursting for the opportunity to wipe out the colony should speed up the decision making process. An icon driven game with the super fast pixel playing area presented in isometric 3-D, Utopia breaks new ground in computer entertainment.

Available on: PC (1992), AMIGA & ATARI ST, STE.

GREMLIN

l i v e . . .

JUDGEMENT DAY!

For the first time ever, on a wet and windy day in September, Bullfrog threw open its doors and revealed the secrets behind the creation of Populous II to a hand-picked quintet of lucky ACE readers. And very impressed they were too...
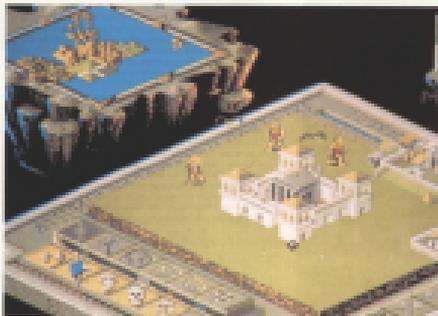
Dateline: Wednesday, 11th September, 1991
Location: Bullfrog Productions HQ, Guildford, Surrey
Mission: Populous II.

I t's eleven a.m. and Peter Molyneux is a worried man. Today is the first time that his latest creation and Bullfrog's most eagerly awaited game to date will be seen by members of the general public. Not just any old members of the general public. The five people who will soon be arriving to look at Populous II are the hardest, most demanding and most intimidating breed of gamer player – ACE readers. They've been hand-picked from hundreds of entrants to take part in ACE's first In The Works Live event, and they're not taking any crap.

If truth be told, Molyneux's got little to worry about. The game's looking great already, but I guess that put Bullfrog on the map is already shaping up to be the 'Great game to beat the Amiga'. As far as I'm concerned, the game is in its development and members of the general public gazers. Bullfrog has always stood by its conviction that no matter how far a game is in its development it will be ditched or even scrapped if it's not well received by the playtesters.

they'll get to play the gamer into the ground (or at least as much is possible in a single day) and report their findings back to Molyneux - what they like, what they don't like, what features they think should go into the game, which ones should go or be altered.

It's a process that Peter and the boys use particularly sincerely and receptive to, having organised regular playtesting sessions for all their previous games. Bullfrog has always stood by its conviction that no matter how far a game is in its development it will be ditched or even scrapped if it's not well received by the playtesters.

Such idealogy has led to several products failing by the development wayside in the past - and while it's fair to say that a product as prestigious as Populous II is unlikely to be killed on a playtester's say-so at this late stage, Molyneux is more than willing to listen to suggestions and make changes. With many of the game's features and effects still to be finalised before its release at the end of the year, there's plenty of scope for enhancement. As an added incentive to come up with good suggestions, Bullfrog has

promised that anyone whose idea is implemented in the final game will receive a design credit. With that in mind, the quintet of ACers buckle down and get to work...

THE GAME

The idea behind Populous II, according to its creator Peter Molyneux, has always been to improve upon the first game, while retaining the same gameplay formula that made the original a classic.

real, the scenario and basic premise remains the same - two all-powerful deities play a universal power game over a series of primitive worlds, with the populations of entire planets as pawns. But while Populous II was pretty outrageous as far as story was concerned, the sequel is much more of a themed affair, being strongly based on classic Greek mythology.

The introduction of such a theme has paved the way for a whole new world of gameplay elements and godly effects which makes Populous III an altogether more involved - and hopefully better-looking - affair. "One of the main problems we encountered with the original Populous," says Molyneux, "is that many of the game's graphical elements were really quite simplistic and rather ambiguous, so the player couldn't always see exactly what they were doing with the game just got too hard to play. With Populous III it is quite easy to see what we're trying to achieve through the graphics, and then pick up the gameplay elements much more quickly.

"It's all done by way of an RPG-type element. We place users off in a very vocal, linear game whose worlds is really quite small, and it's all about leading a crop particle. The objective, like the first point, is to increase your power by accumulating worshippers right across the world, which in turn is achieved by keeping them happy - giving them places to live,

allowing them to procreate, creating elaborate scenery and so on. Now, however, there's a lot more emphasis on the accumulation of mana, as it not only increases your ability to perform godly effects, it makes the effects themselves more powerful, and grants access to new, more devastating effects as your following increases.

While the original Populous only allowed the player to perform a handful of godly phenomena, the

Scott is the speed of the party at, it's currently possible to have the game running in full screen, giving maximum panoramic view, like this. Of course, it's a little slower in this mode.

You will see beautiful houses and towns typical of the many domestic locations featured in the game.

Uniflamer's 3-D realtime graphic development system means that we can do all the graphics in the game in a short space of time. Looking fab, isn't it?

unpaid features literally dozens of awesome effects, including thunderstorms, whirlwinds, pillars of fire, tidal waves, plagues, and new improved versions of the old favourites earthquake (which caves acts like a fault line, tearing a land from apart, volcano (complete with rivers of lava) and Armageddon.

Some of the more interesting effects include bap tismal fonts - little ponds which transform the enemy's followers into your own; soul mirrors; and the new version of the original game's targetter, which involves reaching down famous Seven Deadly Sins from on high, such as Blair God of War, the rampage around killing everybody, and Aphrodite Goddess of Love who attracts men to her and leads them to their doom like lemmings.

In addition, your whole of Populous II's land many agressive system is much more sophisticated - land is raised and lowered as before, but it's now possible to create entire cities by laying roads, planting trees and building castle walls to protect your peo ple from attack. But should push come to shove, your people can equip themselves with weapons and fight to the death.

An original new element gives the player the abi li ty to create his silicic RPG-style characters by questing a quest prior to the action. As well as indul ging to be good or evil, it's possible to specialise in certain kinds of effect and even change the deity's visual appearance! By playing with different types of god the game can be altered drastically, and match ing contrasting opponents in a two player game can produce some very interesting results.

As you read this, Bullfrog is playing around with various gameplay ideas and doing some general pol ishing. It's due out on SF and Amiga by the end of the year, with a PC version following in 1992. Watch out for the AGA review soon...

NEXT TIME IT COULD BE YOU!

We hope to organise more in The Works Live events on a fairly reg ular basis, with the next to be held sometime within the next few months, with special guest stars The Bitmap Brothers. They'll be opening their doors to another handful of lucky ACErs and unveil ing their latest yummy offering, The Chaos Engine. You'll meet the Bros, learn how the game, its graphics and sound were created, get an exclusive first play of the game and even have the chance to put forward your own comments and suggestions. Just think, you could be an honorary Bitmap Brother!

We're hoping that this next event will be even bigger and more successful, so if you'd like to take part, all you have to do is send your details to us, including your NAME and ADDRESS along with your AGE (16 years and over only, we're afraid) and TELEPHONE NUMBER. Also, let us know if there are any development teams or games in development that you're particularly interested in see ing. Send the details to: In The Works Live!, ACE Magazine, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

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AMIGA

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE AMIGA

PURE GENIUS
HOW TO INVENT AMIGA GADGETS

NO DISK ATTACHED?
ASK YOUR NEWSAGENT

OUT NOW

MIDWINTER 2
EXCLUSIVE! LOTUS

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TURBO CHALLENGE 2

The polluter and profiteer
Sly Sludge™

CAPTAIN PLANET
AND THE PLANETEERS

The degenerate and toxic
Verminous Skumm™

Oil spills. Air pollution.
Endangered animals. The
award-winning TV game Captain
Planet & The Planeteers has
turned saving the Earth's
environment into the ultimate
adventure.

And now, it's your turn to go up
against the most dangerous
enemies our environment has
ever faced - Looten Plunder, Duke
Nukem, Hoggish Greedly,
Dr Blight and more.

The forces of Earth, Fire, Wind,
Water and Heart are yours. Put
them together and become
Captain Planet. Your Eco-copter is
waiting.

**THE POWER
IS YOURS**

Coming soon
for your computer
Also available on video

MINDSCAPE

27

In the Works

Welcome to the place where things get done. Welcome to the pages where you can see games crafted and formed and moulded into living things. Welcome, you lucky fellows, to the In The Works pages. Distinct from an In The Works live, an In The Works stores the games which are so secret that if the software companies had their way, wouldn't be on show at all. Well, okay, actually we get a lot of help from the publishers and the programmers of the games and they run around like crazy answering our stupid questions and putting together all manner of maps and sprite mock-ups when they could be doing other things, but we wouldn't sound half as big, hard, clever or grown up if we were to admit that, would we? This month, we visit America to report on the goings on in the land of Paragon Software and get some of their views on games production. Core Design also display their wares in the form of Heimdall, a graphic marvel that can best be described as Dragon's Lair with playability. And finally, Teque, the team behind Domark's forthcoming Pitfighter sordidly invite your good selves to inspect their scaling and sizing routines. An offer no one could refuse.

(caption, left column) Think the people who haven't quite brought any 16th (that lot, bet you just crave all these gorgeous graphics?

(caption, left column) Mmm! Soon "Highlander" had a cruel life. This month he is back at his death with no defences to fall on.

(caption, left column) How's the allegedly (game) community coming along for 'hiya?'

Paragon

Phoenix

29

There's a mood at Core often lurking at other software companies – confidence. Although a young company, Core's games (Corporation, Check Rock, Thunderhawk, often by-word for many of the releases from their larger, more venerable outfits.

And as personified by affable Core supremo Jeremy Smith, this mood of confidence certainly isn't cynical or thoughtlessly arrogant either. It's quietly self-assured, brimming with a sense of 'we know how to hit you know it, I first saw Heimdall way back in the Spring, and even then there were clear indications that it could be the game to really catapult Core to stardom.

Heimdall can't get a good navigator to join his crew then journey from fium island to island out claimour by half And fragment is approaching fast.

THE FIRST TRIAL

Heimdall's efforts, being the hunky bearded old-quaffing Vikings that they are, have decided to take the decidedly under-age boy down to the local tavern. A fun foaming jam later and the lad's well smashed – not the best time to let him have a go at the old Norse game of 'Lock choppy'.

The principle is simple if horrific. The player has to fire a little girl from the meaty by throwing axes

HEIMDALL

Could CORE's Vikings goin' hikin' romp be the arcade adventure to top them all? ACE ponders that question and takes a look.

Heimdall isn't easy to categorise. Depending on how you look at it, it's 'Dragon's Lair but with plausibility', or 'an animated arcade adventure', or simply 'an RPG'. In reality, it's a blend of all three.

The plot centres around the Norse legend of Ragnarök. An Apocalyptic battle between the Gods of Good and Evil that will decide the fate of the Universe. However the Gods's predicaments of reasonable chances of winning have been severely reduced by the theft of their magic items from Valhalla, namely Thor's Hammer, Odin's Sword and Freya's Spear. The villain responsible is the twisted Loki, evil brother of Thor, who has hidden the items in various locations on the islands that make up the Norse world.

The ethereal Gods cannot appear in the physical world, and so must send Heimdall, guardian of the rainbow bridge that joins Valhalla with the world, to do the dirty work of an ultra-mortal baby. Heimdall's aims are clear – he must grow to manhood, gather a crew of sailors and set out on a quest to find the stolen artifact.

(above) A couple of examples of the exquisite scenario of graphics in Heimdall. The player's team of three explorers is represented on-screen by just one member, though the others can be brought into play at a whim. Overhead-view play combines with arcade sub-games and puzzle elements.

THE THREE TRIALS OF HEIMDALL

As Heimdall grows from a young boy to a man, he must attempt three arcade-style tests. These are not just for light relief – Heimdall's success in each test increases the number of possible candidates for his longboat crew. This can be pretty disastrous – if

to cut the tethered plank of balc holding her captive. The area are aimed using a joystick-guided crosshair. It all sounds simple enough, but Hercule's hero grappling has inclued a darkness broken by the licensing bonus. At the moment the consequence of a foul area are grapler, to every sense of the word - the girl's head opens up. like the powered-up ver tension and goes upon excessation.

Although the general sequence from the ones who have seen the game in cards draws form is that Hercule's grip end should be kept in the final game. Care feel that its probably a little too strong to be put before little Infancy a. And as a tamed-down version in use the cards, with the girl simply moving her head at the first moment to await the blow. Rescue of Fangaina will be disappeared.

THE SECOND TRIAL

An older but not much wiser Hercule must face the challenge of the ground jig. Under the hot sun and savoured gaze of his peace. the plucky lad has to chase the screaming senior around a muddin farm yard, dueting and diving in an attempt to bring the beast to ground. Inevitably there's much mud spilled.

THE THIRD TRIAL

Now a pubescent young man, Hercule'd learns his final test of true aretteness. On a longboat packed to the mast with berserker somethinkers; a medium armed Hercule'd has to fend off all comers.

THE QUEST BEGINS...

Having selected a crew of six from the crews available, Hercule's adventures really begin. By racing a hand through his boat, the player moves from island to island. Once arrived at an island, the player can choose three of his crew to join him on his exploration of the island, and still required to select the right people; each crewman

GET YOUR UGLY FIZZOG IN HEIMDALL!

As we're sure you will agree, Heimdall sure looks like a right winner of a game and no mistake. And how would you - yes, YOU! - like the chance to actually appear in a quality software publication? Very much? Very much indeed? We thought so.

Well now we're pleased, in association with Core Design, to present the ACE and Core Design Get Your Face Into Heimdall Competition.

Since the game is still in development, ACE readers quick enough to answer the questions below and send their entries in will be judged in our contest. The winner will then have his or her picture (a required part of the entry bits and bobs) digitised and transformed by one of the team's artists into one of Heimdall's crowd just imaging, if you will, the horror and prestige of fighting side by side with Heimdall! Not bad, eh?

Consider next, if you possibly could, the thought of owning your very own Heimdall box, a lovingly created and thoroughly beautiful piece of craftsmanship, hewn out of the very stout (or some other sort of) forest only in that sparse trophy master's shop round the back of Core's office.

These are the prizes on offer, and you could have them all! So answer the questions and send your entries, complete with a photo of yourself to: ACE Magazine, Heimdall Competition, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

The BIG Question:

Heimdall isn't the only Core game to star an ace-wielding hero. Name the hero and the game.

Rules:

All entries must reach the ACE office by the 30th November. The Editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. We can't assure any of your pictures although we do promise to take a laugh at them.

Works

How does a company go from custom accountancy programs to state-of-the-art RPGs? ACE went Stateside to find out...

THE PARAGON

Mention "Pittsburgh," and most Americans will think of "steel". The Pennsylvanian city was a major part of America's industrial heartland, famed for its foundries and steel-mills. But all that glory seems to be a thing of the past — the recession of the Pam has brought about the rapid decline of America's steel industry. But it's not all gloom and doom. Springing up in their place are small companies specialising in state-of-the-art high-technology.

Which (because link) is the business of Paragon Software, creators of MegaTraveller. Let's face it, you don't get much more high-tech than later software games and Jurmp's star/chip. The team are based in Greensburg, which lies a short distance south of Pittsburgh. It's almost David Lynch-like in its epitome of small-town America — all that's missing are a woman carrying a log and a dwarf speaking backwards.

THEIR HISTORY

Paragon Software started life in October 1989 as Customised Software Systems. The company was formed by Mark Seremet to provide custom accountancy software for local businesses. In May 1986 P.J. Lennon joined and together they decided to turn the company away from business software and towards games. "It wasn't really any heavy business decision", comments Mark. "We just thought 'Hey, that sounds like fun'".

In July 1987 Paragon Software launched its first game, Master Ninja: Shadow Warrior of Death on the IBM PC, an unadorned clone of the Karate Champ coin-op, of which both Mark and P.J. were great fans. A string of titles followed.

In April 1989 Dr Doom's Revenge appeared, the first fruit of a licensing deal with Marvel Comics. Other Marvel tie-ins followed: X-Men: Madness in Murderworld; The Punisher (an exclusive to The Edge's UK entrepreneurship); and The Amazing Spiderman.

In May 1990 Paragon released MegaTraveller 1: The Zhodani Conspiracy, the result of a new licensing deal with Game Designers' Workshop (GDW), one of the oldest and most respected tabletop RPG companies in the US. Matt Miller, GDW's boss and designer of the original Traveller, provided a lot of help to Paragon. "He's got some great ideas on game design," says Mark. "He really knows his stuff. When we were developing MegaTraveller we got a lot of feedback from him but it was always positive."

(Above) The Paragon people. That's Mark Seremet in the centre wearing the black T-shirt, with P.J. Lennon standing front left.

(Right and Space 1889) About! The witty graphics: in fight. It's a shame really that there's no-one around to frazzle...

(Right) MegaTraveller 2: With a thundering boom, the player's ship blasts into Hyperspace. Hold on to your galoshes!

SPACE 1889

Space 1889 appeared almost a year ago in the US. The game is set in a Victorian Era world where space travel is possible thanks to Thomas Edison's invention of ether-driven spaceships, which ply their trade between Earth and the colonies on Mars

and Venus.

The player is cast in the role of a adventurer leading a party of five similarly-tailored crew through thick and thin in a bizarre encounter beyond the Asteroid Field. Based on the Game Designers' Workshop's RPG of the same name, it bears many

When looking down on the city the player can zoom in or out to three magnification scales.

conduction in setting, game design and user interface to Origin's *Ultima: Exodus*, but it is far less flat. There's no need to build walls, and the player is able to carve their own roads. It's not quite like drawing your characters. "I know that some people like that sort of intricacy," says P.J. "But I don't think it's that many."

MEGATRAVELLER 2: QUEST FOR THE ANCIENTS

MegaTraveller 2 appeared a couple of months ago in the States, and it's interesting to observe the enhancements made on the Paragon engine. The most obvious is the introduction of gorgeous 256-colour MCGA graphics, but there are other more subtle improvements.

MegaTraveller 2 marks the first appearance of the Paragon's unique 'PAL' system. This overcomes the annoying feature of many RPGs where you have to keep changing leader to start a certain person's ability. Instead, characters volunteer themselves for the job in hand if they have the best ability. The player can then decide whether to act or accept.

In close-ups the game is a huge progression for Paragon. The player can view a city's power, and these scenes appear in full 256-colour.

set up to a city as such. In MegaTraveller, each world is described from the *Traveller* World Profile (UWP), which details such things as the percentage of the planet covered by water, the atmosphere type and so on. Rather than make the player's character individually (which would take up far too much memory), they are generated at runtime from a routine which uses the UWP as a 'seed'.

Unlike *Space 1889*, the main plot is a loose one. "While *Space 1889* is pretty linear, MegaTraveller 2 is more openended, and instead there are many sub-plots. There are many ways of completing the game." There are many quests which are involved in, none of which are very linear. "One has you raiding the world where everyone is crazy," explains Mark. "It's their custom. You've got to be careful not to get killed." P.J. adds, "When you've got this big a game, it can't all be serious and intense. You've got to lighten up occasionally."

TWILIGHT 2000

Twilight 2000 is the third of GDW's RPG systems to be converted to the home computer by Paragon. It's set, as the title has it, the day after tomorrow — in a world devastated by a nuclear war. The game centres around Poland, where two newly-formed powers vie for domination in this devastated landscape: One is controlled by the evil Baron Czerno; the other, unsurprisingly, is controlled by you.

The game is effectively split into three stages. In the first stage, which is the most 'standard' RPG-like, the player acts as a co-ordinator, deploying teams of four, gun-toting adventurers from a variety of twenty to its various missions and then acquire various pieces of equipment and vehicles.

All the action is viewed from an obscure Cadaver-like three-quarter angle. Unless you're in space combat mode, the game is controlled from one third-person perspective: your character is your focal point. Nothing around you seems to move. Instead the world scrolls to keep up with his movement. Should the scrolling to keep up with his movement. Should the scroll go well his colleagues follow. If there's an enragement of a technical 'first' even in a roguelike format. The *MegaTraveller 2* and *Twilight 2000* versions

coded so that the player can tell at a glance which buildings can be which. Explains Mark, "We thought about the player having a single view for a while and found it a little hard to get ideas!"

Twilight 2000 employs an advanced version of the PAL system. As *MegaTraveller 2's* members of the team will offer their services if they're the best for the task, but they'll also sometimes swap roles with each other, depending on their abilities.

It's not going to be that much, but if you have this big hungry their find synergy be had that this hot kind of strategy role-playing elements of the game than usual. You'll be a member of the team as if you're the group gun part.

After players gear works the social stage conversion which has a more strong-centralised tone. The player has to try and occupy towns and city and really start 'empire building'. At the same time, Baron Czerno is doing the same. Everyone seeks to control the forces between the player and the Baron, and fascinating three-tone stage. Until this stage the reviewer has been generally the sub-plot, but this and and final stage is deposed almost wholesale in 3-D polygon parts.

This final and final stage is depicted almost wholesale in 3-D polygon parts. The player has to try and occupy towns and city and really start 'empire building'. At the same time, Baron Czerno is doing the same. Everyone seeks to control the forces between the player and the Baron, and fascinating. Alternatively he can battle and shoot them personally. Alternatively he

Twilight 2000 is a fascinating and highly unusual hybrid of the strategy and RPG genres.

35

This area is front-on early demo of Mantis created for last summer's CES in Chicago. The picture earned the ire a slightest duel of Hungary's first born Mackintosh. It was than doubled up by a graphic artist and turned into a futuristic control room. This construction of chip/chair's and pointing will be seen a lot in Mantis.

This was intended to be the base Commodore briefing the Mantis pilots. "It was like here's a dead golf pro," explains Mark. "The symbol for the ago is the club badge." And this idea of Mark as everyman is a bit of everyman's thing with the Commodore...

er they bob up inbe-
perfectly to form a
super-intelligent fore-
mind.

If the basic plot
sounds a little famil-
iar, it's not surprising.
Not only was the
premise used in classic
Scott Card's novel
Ender's Game, but it
was also the back-
ground to Glenn
Willow's game
Warhead, released a
couple of years ago on
the Activision label.

Mark explains the
strong similarities:
"Warp [into an elth-
or agent he feet off sev-
eral year ago too,
when Warhead came
out. Although the game was
good for its time, it's
now outdated a bit
of ways. But we liked
the plot and the idea of
them 'much like aliens
but we formed Glenn's
ideas via [argo]."

The only part of the
game working so far is
the introduction, which
is very
Commodore-like in its

This a minute long intro alone uses up a sMb of
memory, with the final game anticipated to be 14Mb
big. But Mark is adamant that means will only need
800K of on-board memory to run the whole game—
speech and all. "This is directly opposite to Origin,
who say you have to 'll amount of memory to run
their games. We're using compression in all the bits
of certain parts of the game depending on how much
hard drive space you have available. But memory
you could opt to leave out the digitised speech."

Of the game itself, Mark states: "It's a mixture of
3D polygon and bitmapped images, basically because
of smoothness. Wing Commander's 3D bitmaps are
too slow but are didn't want to go
all polygon either. We didn't want to go
into direct competition with Origin's game."

Mantis is due for release in the States towards the
end of the year, and should appear in British stores
later on the Empire label. Keep watching this skies
for the full MCV review.

FILM FACT

Pittsburgh is probably best known to British
readers as the hometown of the tactical Alex in the chart-topper, Inspector Gadget movie Flashdance. As played by the (unironically beautiful) Jennifer Beals, she was a welder by day and a lap dancer by night who dreams of going legit and joining a ballet school. Suffice to say she does, as well as getting the man of her dreams into the bargain. Naooo, eh? What a feeling.

THE FUTURE...

Rumours are no end in the MegaTraveller series for some time. "There's so much background material and information we haven't touched," says F.J. MegaTraveller 2 The Unknown Worlds is already on the drawing board. 'MegaTraveller 2 will release and expand on the MegaTraveller 2 engine further. F.J. Fillmore boasted new worlds to explore are planned, and there will be three main plots to get involved in. The space combat will be radically updated so that the player has a greater degree of control and the action, and there will be more Wing Commander-style interludes.

Deep/Twilight peace's successful mix of RPG and action, what are the chances of a similar appeal to a new MegaTraveller game? "I'm likely that MegaTraveller 2 will include a lift element," says F.J. "I think you'll be definitely be seeing a lot more of it on our RPGs in the future."

This unfortunate TV newsreader is one of the victims of the parasitic aliens. "Originally we were going to have the intro look as if you played an interactive TV set and clicked around the channels," says Mark. "The channels would be on TV, then the screen would shake. You'd flick on to the next channel and it would be the news, with the newsreader saying..."

A fully-grown Striga, which bears an uncanny resemblance to a Terran goldfish.

MANTIS

Mantis has only been in development for three
months, but it's already shaping up to be Paragon's
best game yet. It's a huge 3D space adventure that
features ... the role of a hawk's best ninjahn before
battling the Striga. Individually the cockpits looks
almost like artificial intelligence, but together
they're so clever that it's going to take ...

CURRENT RELEASES This month
leave 1001 and MegaTraveller 2 are
released on the Empire Strategy label.

Look out - he's back!

PAPERBOY 2

No window is safe. No fence is too high. The paperboy is determined to deliver the paper to his subscribers any way he can. Tossing papers left and right, riding in three directions, jumping anything, this free-wheeling carrier visits more neighbourhoods and houses, faces more targets and destruction, in more vivid colours than ever before.

Plus, real stunt riding and BMX tracks in bonus rounds. Choose to ride as either Paperboy or Papergirl too!

MINDSCAPE

And in the red corner...
DOMARK's Great White
Hope for Xmas Numero
Uno... Laydees en'
Gennllman... Pitfighter!!!

PITFIGHTER

Come on, how many times have you settled down at your computer for a healthy round of fisticuffs' and kickin'. But had to wade through some infinitely scenario about rescuing your girlfriend from Mr. Large (ieee!). Refreshingly, Pitfighter doesn't faff about with all that 'plot' malarkey. It's a straightforward underground fist-fight for the only thing that really matters - hard cash.

Domark gave the job of converting this 'bagful successful' Atari coin-op to Teque London, the guys previously responsible for the Amiga and ST conversions of Teague's Hardwds. As anyone who's seen the coin-op will testify, it's a pretty sustainable task. The arcade machine boasts digitised graphics and specially hardware to shrink and scale the action in the screen. For the conversion's the team are choosing a hard task though it may be to believe, the home conversions are shaping up to be almost identical.

The game is the kinds of eight months' hard slog by Teque's Pete Jeffrisn. Surprisingly, given the complexity of the conversion, it's the first major game Pete's own written. Previously he's worked on business software on the Sinclair QL (an venerable one) and small pieces of coding on the Amiga and PC.

"Without doubt the hardest aspect of Pitfighter was the scaling of the sprites and the screen," reminisces Pete. "At first, I didn't think I'd be able to

Some touch floors is in fact floor getting a right kicking from The lumbering the kid in figuree Huge and hit nose chest sumbre on the figure where the heads sprites would the large figure's picture in.

The grudge match takes place from ground money with a stranger two left balance who both seen the screen space between them. On the ground screen the flure shape will hopefully then nice big up on an as white the criminal floating.

"Feudin'" it goes. In tha next bout roundside: see three reasonably recognises breaking around two sprites of them differen. One can tha off the one of you playing the pick up the wood a wooden gun' and hitting one of bose other with some.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE EIGHT MONTHS MAKE?

This is a shot from an early demo that Psto knocked together from scratch in just under a month. But even then it exhibited many of the core spy-scaling and panning features. "It was done the quick and dirty way," says Pete. " Of the sprites are compressed, for example. It was a simple demo, with no combat movie in it. Essentially, it was just a test to see how fast things would go."

SPRITE FANTASTIC

Some of the animation frames for Sj. Angel and the dreaded Ultimate Warrior

Probably one of the most daunting aspects of the Pitfighter cast-up is its sheer memory heavy use. Domhnaile says: "The original code we originally took us around 6,000k of memory, which somehow I had to squeeze into a half-meg Amiga."

"Pitfighter has a greater variety of combat moves than any other beat-'em-up. Each character has around 100 frames of animation just between all 60 combat moves," explains Dean. "The moves are usabled smoother. If you do a kick move you can actually see the leg raise up straight by the time the foot makes contact. It's likely that the player will have to play for about a second before the next punch comes out."

"There are six frames of animation in combat moves missing," stresses Dean, "and unfortunately, getting them all to fit in a tiny half-meg computer was impossible. Even the scaling was amazing to first. The moves are what makes Pitfighter Pitfighter; in fact, we've actually got more frames of animation in ours than the original.

"Every arc blow that you manage kind," but he explains," says Pete. "Are you ready for the belly-ache?" Oh yes, Meg. There are some nice moments in the side up's ROM has never displayed. Apparently, each character has a good range and a kick range. The play-up cloud to be ten players to within punch range and his still to take his passed ball, though, on the next it's the swim for the character's kick range. But sometimes swim character's punch range, which perfect blow he ain't doing, he'll have to out for this his knock it there moves."

Dean adds, "If you match the cam-up you'll see that Max Mike some kinds, though we've allowed that as he does in ours."

achieve it but in the end it worked out well," Dean states. Rogue's head, adds: "The scaling wasn't so far forward hand. Nobody thought it could be done. When they saw it they loved it; they were very pleased. Having that sense of depth is essential; the game looks very flat without it. From Pitfighter apart from other beat-'em-ups."

The sprites are all stored as 64×64 pixel to-colour
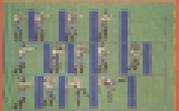
sprites. As they were about the screen, Pete's pk models keeps a track of how far 'back' the sprite is. They are then distorted vertically so that they appear at an appropriate height for their distance 'into' the background. The width of the sprites never change, but because the sprites are much wider than they are wide the changes in width are negligible anyway, so there's no noticeable distortion. A sim-

ilar technique is used to scale the crowd sprites and the backgrounds.

"Normally, for games the power of the core-up, there have had to be some compromises. The firm play-er sprites had to go, mainly because having so many core sprites walking about screen would shrink all these down too much and this becomes it's impossible to squeeze more animation frames into memory, lie

Don't get too close to the crowd. They don't like it. This crowd sprite actually kicks a Mug. A series off-hit and to like to a little sprite the largest frames of crowd.

NOT WANTED: ONE GRAPHIC ARTIST

Eventually, the Pitfighter conver-sion has no credited graphic artist, basically because one man handled them all. "Approach to get graphics from three sources: Atari. Trojan jobs are working on the MegaDrive version; and directly from the side-up," explains Dean. "Unfortunately, they were all farmed to differ-ent ways. Some had been rescaled, some had been smoothed. We just used any parts from all three that we could. Richard Brown, Domark's project manager, did do a little work processing and rescaling work so there on them."

$6140 CHAMPION

$2880 CHAMPION

1ST RECORD

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...the core up the lines is made up of flowboards that are shrunk and enlarged by the hardware, but in the conversion colour bands are used to achieve a similar effect.

On the other hand, Pete has made several changes for the better. "I've improved the accuracy when the player's picking up objects. Also, opponents will learn if you're using one type of move too much and block it." Once chips in "Also, the cross-up stab when you've defeated the Ultimate Warrior, which is a bit tricky when you're just forked out £70 for a game. Our conversion loops back to the beginning but harder."

So, what are the chances of Pit-Fighter on the Mega Drive? "We'll have to wait and see," replies Dean. "I guess it all depends on how well this game is received. We could make the Amiga version run

in a frame using some of the tricks we've learned. We couldn't do it this time around due to lack of time. I'd like to get some graphics in so the onscreen I'd prefer not to say anything. What it certainly won't be is a rip-off of the first one."

"I think Pit-Fighter is more playable on the home machines than the coin-op," concludes Dean. "Because it's not quite so fast and cluttered it's not as confusing. What I like about Pit-Fighter is it's not just a joystick-waggler, you know, not just a case of how fast you hit the fire button. I'm really pleased with the way the game's turned out."

AT the AMIGA. Inevitably there are speed differences between the two 16-bit versions. Thanks to the Amiga's 68000 the game updates every two frames, while the ST version update having to around four to five frames. To help keep up the speed the 16-bit doesn't shift the background about quite so much as in the Amiga game, but it's unlikely players will notice.

TIP OFF

The sheer pace of the game, end to end action and tactical game play is the core of TIP OFF, a basketball simulation.

A SIMULATION WHICH IS GREAT FUN TO PLAY

Players' skills, attributes and fitness together with the astute substitution of players and change of tactics banks by the coach, holds the key to success in basketball. TIP OFF, therefore includes some managerial aspects of the game. The main features are:

* Multi directional scrolling screen
* Five skill levels. Skill level of both teams can be set independently.
* 1 to 4 players option. Option to play against the computer or another player in action up with another player against the computer or another player or two players.
* Facility to practice skills and tactics.
* Facility to create a team of skill levels and design tactics.
* Instinctive Joystick controls to dribble, pass, shoot or do a dummy. There are two running speeds, two types of dribbling and passing, and five types of shots at the basket (Jump shot, Hook shot, Skyhook, Running Jump shot and Slam Dunk).
* Each player on the court can individual with a unique mixture of attributes (Agility, Height, Pace, Stamina and Component and skills Passing, Dribbling, Stealing, Shooting and Jumping).
* Two types of Leagues. Action Replay at 2 speeds.
* Extra moves are available using two independent button joysticks using the EXCELENCE System.

EASY TO PLAY - HARD TO MASTER

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IBM PC & COMPATIBLES
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Amiga Screenshot's Shown

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ol, what do you know? We just got Summer out of the way, and before you can even hang out another year Christmas is just around the corner again! And nobody knows better than the software companies, who are already grinding into top gear in readiness to assault the season of goodwill with their biggest, baddest games. What's more, many forward-thinking softcos are already lining up titles to take us into next Spring and beyond! As of this month, ACE Previews will be dedicated to giving you concise and informative lowdowns on the most exciting games coming your way. So let's get on with it...

CRYSTAL QUEST Data East

There aren't many blackmail games you can obtain - but Crystal Quest is definitely one of the rarified few. Now the game that used to be the primary source of last week lunch fare at ACE Towers is making its debut on the GameBoy, courtesy of Data East. Admittedly it doesn't sound exciting on paper - guide your little spaceship around ever increasingly complex mazes, collecting crystals while avoiding the oncoming nasties. But in practice it's compellingly playable. In true Crystal Quest spirit, it's a game of reactions rather than strategy, as the original game's speed excessive mouse control (the more crucial aspect) is unlikely to translate well to the

GameBoy's eight-way input. But who knows, we may all be completely wrong, and Crystal Quest could well turn out to be a brilliant adaptation of its blackmailable wealth - and you can believe never more to see that happen more than us. Expect Crystal Quest to arrive via import from the USA before the end of the year.

STRIKE COMMANDER Microplay

If you're the sort of PC owner who likes to eat his machine pushed to the limit, the latest product to cross the Atlantic from Origin promises to send your jaw a-dropping like never before. The brainchild of Wing Commander creator Chris Roberts, it uses the same high-end 3D technology as Origin's futuristic space shooter, but this time it's set in the more realistic world of near-future aerial combat. Strike Commander sees you flying mercenary missions over desolate terrain ever seen, comprising spectacular snow-capped mountains ranges and accurate storm/heat complete with beaches and turf! Set

in the early part of the next century where huge computers, not governments, run countries, Strike Commander casts you as a mercenary fighter pilot who must complete missions in a variety of state-of-the-art aircraft. Your grateful pilot represents another step in Origin's quest to produce cinematic software, incorporating an incredible animated opening sequence and even film-style credits on the packaging. The two office opens at the end of the year, so give this one a headline mention on your letter to Santa.

POWERMONGER: THE WORLD WAR I EDITION Electronic Arts

The ultimate experience continues. The first data disk for Bullfrog's strategy/war masterwork promises to take the player into the blood-stained trenches and swampy battlefields of the war to end all wars. It's played out in a series of independent campaigns across a map of Europe, with you as an Allied commander starting out in Northern Scotland and battling the Huns far across various European fronts. Powerbases in Europe's battlefields bring expansion across the whole continent and warfare. The entire scenario throughout with new-found weapons and troops, while artillery support comes to the fore of a slew powerful tanks that blow away enemy everything in their path, and biplanes that provide the only transport across water and at once flew its own from the game-long reaching into the bargain. The fun begins in December for ST and Amiga owners at £14.99.

SMASH TV Ocean

More favoured fare from the firm that turns them out like there's no tomorrow. This one's one of Ocean's more eagerly-awaited products, coming as it does from the excellent and ultra-violent Williams coin-op. It's all set around a futuristic game show, where contestants risk life and limb, battling through the ferociously addictive two-player action to claim valuable prizes. When cranked up to full tilt, the coin-op's awesome, as scores of hapless zombie jobs after the contestants and get mown down by volleys of laser fire. The less fortunate contestant may get their legs blown off by stepping on a mine. In an attempt to emulate the original's dual-joystick control, converters Probe have included an option for both players to connect two sticks if they so desire. Smash TV goes on air this Christmas, and as the show's always-sampled compere says, "Good luck - you're gonna need it!"

APOCALYPSE Image Works

The latest fruit from the loins of veteran coder Jason Perkins (Dung et al Spring, Strong-in-the-Arm, Time Machine) is a pr's version of Dan Gorlin's La Guerre Chaotique. Set on a remote Pacific island in the middle of a raging civil war, Apocalypse casts you as a rebel helicopter pilot whose job it is to airlift refugees to safety amid the jungle carnage. There's a strong emphasis on graphic violence, with "realistic" rocket-gun-fire on the chop and a few nice touches, including a very bloody ratio sequence and the ability to drop supplies on the beleaguered troops. Exploding this ratio scenario, the player must bomb out its apparent similarities to the helicopter sequences in Apocalypse Now. Those who managed to get a sneak glimpse of Apocalypse at the recent ECTS show were unfeasibly impressed by the game's remarkable speed and incredible body count - and no doubt you will be too when the game's released in the Spring.

TIP OFF Anco

Kick Off addicts who can't wait for the arrival of KO2 in Spring now owe some ways in which they might stock for a pair of Perfect Pumps as an enjoyable way of spending the intervening time. Designer Steve Screech has taken the same winning techniques he used in the Kick Off and put them to work on the basketball court for Tip Off, his latest sporty effort. While Cinemaware's TV Sports: Basketball reigns supreme on the hardwood boards, the key Screech's game is to change the more action-packed interpretation of the sport too. Despite the reduction in team and pitch size, Tip Off is already shaping up to be every bit as addictive as its Soccer daddy, including such features as man-to-man marking, full player stats and a league competition. Admittedly the idea of Kick Off on a basketball court does sound very very indeed, and if Steve can put that tantalising concept into practice successfully, within a couple of months he could well be staying down the barrel of the most impressive sports game yet. Here's hoping, anyway.

WWF Ocean

In case you don't know, it stands for World Wrestling Federation, and it's currently the biggest craze with US kids since the Turtles. Six viewers will already be familiar with the televised shenanigans, which consist of mock showbiz nastmanses than actual competition. Ocean has wasted no time in jumping on the bandwagon with this original interpretation of the "sport", which sees you in the squared circle against such WWF superstars as Hulk Hogan, Mr Perfect, Macho Man Randy Savage, The Big Boss Man, Million Dollar Man Ted Dibiaf and many others. Coming hot on the heels of Summer Slam, the biggest WWF tournament of the year, and with several Superstars crossing the Atlantic to this country to promote the game's upcoming release, Ocean's WWF has been perfectly timed to catch wrestlemania at its height. Come to think of it, we could do with a decent wrestling game...
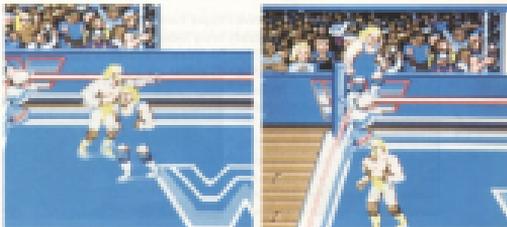
THE TERMINATOR Virgin

Exquisitely tuned to cash in on the phenomenal success of Terminator 2, the Virgin's Megadrive adaptation of the original 1984 movie must surely qualify as the most long-awaited licence of all time. Put together by Probe Software, it recreates the film's most memorable action scenes (such as the nightclub duel and police station mayhem) casting the player as futuristic soldier Kyle Reese in his quest to save Sarah Connor from the unstoppable cyborg. It's interesting to note that, apparently due to a legal row over the use of the Arnold Schwarzenegger's image, the Terminator character is almost entirely a rather ambiguous silhouetted figure. There's been no compromise on the violence front however, and the game sports one of the most impressive sequences in years - it's especially identical to the film. The Terminator is set to hit the streets in the early part of next year - keep an eye out.

SUPER GHOULS'N'GHOSTS CapCom

The star of the show at the recent Super FamiCom exhibition in Japan, Super Ghouls'n'Ghosts is already being hailed as the best SFX game yet. Like Sonic's Super & Type before it, the game is a more or less the same as its arcade predecessor, with a number of tweaks, enhancements and certain features. The player once again takes on the role of the forlorn Lancelot, battling through the legions of the monstrous and the undead to rescue his fair maiden. Super Ghouls'n'Ghosts was unavailable over here as of yet, there's

very little information available - although the ripples coming over from Japan are very positive indeed. With the release of Sega's new FamiCom in the USA intensified and renamed the Super Nintendo, it may not be that long until us poor Europeans can get our hands on then officially too. See until then, feast thine eyes on Super Ghouls'n'Ghosts should be filtering through via import within the next month or so. AGE will be hot with the
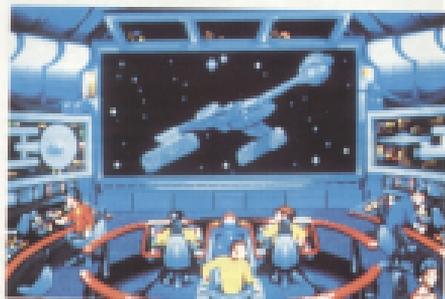
STAR TREK: THE 25th ANNIVERSARY Electronic Arts

To designers' interplay (The Bard's Tail, Castles) have left the scattered scenarios behind and opted for something a little more up-to-date with its interpretation of the classic sci-fi series Star Trek, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the show this year. All the familiar characters, including Scotty, Checkov, Uhura, Sulu and McCoy join you, as Kirk, on the bridge of the USS Enterprise as you embark on 14 independent missions, each generated as a TV episode. You get to play with away engines, transportation, phasers and torpedoes as you clash with Klingons, Romulan and rogue Federation ships. The game's a welcome change from the static single screen adventures of the combat sequences fought out King Commander-style. Apparently Star Trek's just about to go on general release in its coincident during development, so if nothing else we can expect an accurate portrayal. PC owners get to find out just how accurate around Christmas, with ST and Amiga owners beaming aboard early 1992.

44 ■ AGE
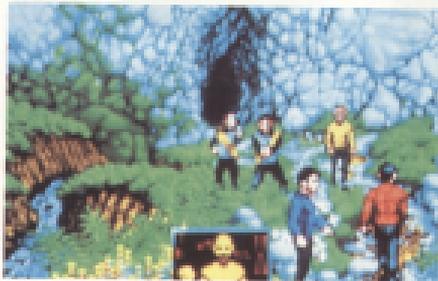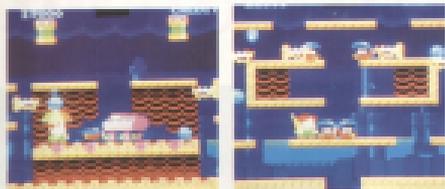
PARASOL STARS Ocean

Dubbed *The Story of Bubble Bobble II*, it doesn't take much to work out that Parasol Stars is the sequel to Rainbow Islands and the third instalment in the Bubble Bobble saga. Rick and Bob are back on the case, still in human form, although this time instead of bubbles or rainbows, they're equipped with cute little multi-purpose umbrellas to defend themselves against the multitude of cutesy foes. Parasol Stars sees a return in style to the original format, from both the objective being to clear the various screens of all the nasties first either than reaching a specified goal. It's also the first game to scroll horizontally.

Bubble Bobble consisted entirely of static screens, and Rainbow Islands was a purely vertical affair. Currently being handled by Ocean's in-house team, Parasol Stars looks set to bring the cute game back to vogue - and quite right too.

ANOTHER WORLD US Gold

Although Delphine Software is already pulling out all the stops for its advance interpretation of *The Godfather*, it's still got time to stick its fingers in some other pies - the most impressive of which is the innovative adventure Another World. *Future Wars*' co-designer Eric Chahi has spent two years labouring away on this one, and the result encompasses what is reportedly the most effective Cinematique adventure system yet seen - even by Delphine's high standards - including such cinematic techniques as pans, panoramas and animated close-up shots. In a plot as tenuous as Parasol Stars, you play an Atari-ish nuclear scientist who is catapulted into a strange alien world when an experiment misfires. From then on it's exploring and puzzle-solving all the way as your quest to escape from the bizarre planet unfolds. Another World is set for release some time in the late autumn of the year.

WIZKID Ocean

Bill regarded as one of the greatest arcade games of the eighties, Sensible Software's Wizball caused quite a stir when it first hit the big back in 1987. Fresh from the success of *Mega-lo-Mania*, Wiz's original creators Jon Hare and Chris Yates are now hard at work putting the finishing touches to the long awaited sequel, which promises to be every bit as mad as the classic original. The story goes that after successfully returning to the Wizworld, the Wizball and Wizkid have fallen, erm, in love and produced a son - the Wizkid. The evil magic meanie Zark (who was thwarted in the first game) is none too happy about and has kidnapped the Wizard and Wizball in order to extract his revenge. Now it's up to Wizkid to get them back, by battling through eight platform-orientated levels, rescuing the alto-kidnapped kittens of Wiz's cat Nifta along the way. "It's a pretty original game," says Chris. "I can't really think of anything else quite like it." We shall see for ourselves in a couple of months, but if the quality of Sensible's recent offerings is anything to go by, we should be in for a real treat.
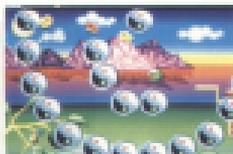
THE CHAOS ENGINE Renegade

Bet the less than successful venture into the realms of conversion comes with last month's *Magic Pockets*, the Bitmap Brothers' latest effort looks set to put them back on the right track. It's a return to more familiar, violence-orientated turf, combining Gauntlet-style arcade action with an innovative RPG element. In an attempt to get away from hackneyed space-age scenarios, designers Eric Matthews have set the game in the Victorian era, the premise being that the title is one of the first prototype computers that has malfunctioned and is attempting to distort the fabric of time and space. In an attempt to avert the disaster, as many as three players prefer the aid of a joystick adapter) must blast their way through the factory where the Engine is held and destroy it. Matthews is very proud of the game's RPG enhancement, which allows players to create characters with individual personalities, and a system that only allocates bonus points if the player has picked up the necessary skills to survive getting to work to his compromise. To cap it all, graphics wizard Dan Malone has done an excellent job of creating a suitably atmospheric Victorian backdrop. And after the Magic Pockets, the Bitmaps' credibility is starting to wear a bit thin - let's hope that The Chaos Engine proves the cynics wrong when it's released at the start of next year.
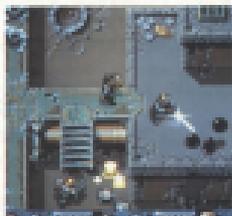
CYBER FIGHT Electronic Arts

There's nothing like a pair of big fighting robots charging away at each other to generate some good old-fashioned gladiatorial entertainment - and Electronic Arts, obviously wise to this trend, has got a game that's just the job. Cyber Fight has been projected from the frenzied labours of Michael Powell, in charge of Transformers-style 'bots against each other, armed with all manner of devastating bolt-on weaponry and portrayed using state-of-the-art Ground-shaking techniques to enhance the feeling of "being there". A PC-only product at the moment, Cyber Fight is yet for release hopefully by the end of the year. A closer may have to wait a bit bit longer for their version.

45

What will you ch

MicroProse Golf

So accurate it will improve your game!

● The greens and fairways are brought to life by stunning 3-D technology viewed from numerous 'TV' camera positions.

● Change club, stance, foot position and swing to see accurately modelled results on any of six courses.

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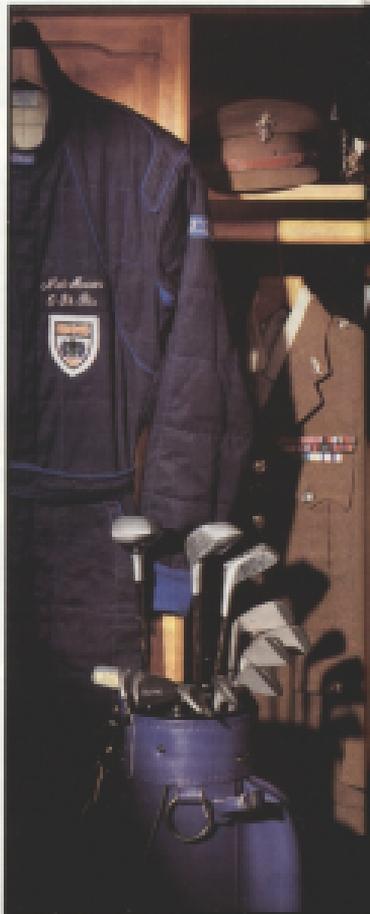
MicroProse Simulation Software - Y

ACE BENCHMARKS

Over the page, in the new ACE Screentest section you'll find reviews of six of this month's hottest games. To help you make the most of our reviews information (especially the Compare and Contrast panel which you will find adorning each review) we've compiled our list of what we believe are the finest games in each of the following genres.

The aim is to offer both a reference point to help you gauge how well or otherwise this month's titles match up to their peers and a list of games which no software collection should be without. And all for no extra charge!

And remember!

There's a further 32 PAGES of reviews beginning on page 107!

ARCADE ACTION

SWIV (Storm)

The follow-up to *Silkworm* itself one of the best blasts in years) succeeds through a combination of frenetic speed, polished presentation and clever, unadulterated action. Tons and tons of it. The firepower and wastage on screen is of a level that far surpasses anything offered before. It's amazingly tough, fast and worth the effort - it's effectively a 4/4 coin-op without the need for coins.

ARCADE ADVENTURE

GODS (Renegade)

While it may be argued that it's not as intrinsically sophisticated as the likes of *Rick Dangerous 2* or *Prince of Persia*, the Bitmap Brothers' platform opus does offer enough fully-rounded arcade action to topple it the outright winner in this category. On the surface, it looks nothing more than a levels n' ladders shoot-em-up with with lots of flashy effects, but deep-

er down it's a tight intact little epic with enough sparkle aspects to keep even the most demanding explorer happy. Its longevity is unquestionable.

SPORTS SIMULATION

JIMMY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND SNOOKER (Virgin)

Archer Maclean does it again, and must go down in the history books as having produced the first ever realistic snooker game. Actually, 'realistic' doesn't really do the game justice, as it truly is a computerised, yet unrestrained adaptation of any sport ever. Period. Tremendous all conditions with authentic play and more options than ever before and precious few, and for that sole reason simply awesome. It's just that good.

SPORTS ARCADE

KICK OFF 2 (Anco)

What can we say? It's pretty pointless trying to explain to the uninitiated what makes *Kick Off 2* so damn playable, but the primary reasons are the ultra-smooth fast-control mode and remarkable speed that combine to make it the most exciting and rewarding football game ever. As such it's attracted a following so avid that official prize tournaments are a regular occurrence. It looks like nothing, and takes time and patience to get into, but once it grabs it'll never let go. Not over. You have been warned.

STRATEGY

RAILROAD TYCOON (Microprose)

Building a railroad empire across the USA at the turn of the 20th Century may sound like hard work, but for those who like their strategy to run deep, Sid Meier's simulation of that very pursuit is Fun Fun FUN! We know, it's difficult to imagine how, but trust us, it is. The feeling of power is paramount as

you lay your track from one to shining sea, conduct big-time business and generally earn loads of cash. We can hardly be had over the it!

BEAT 'EM UP

IK+ (System 3)

An upgraded and enhanced version of the original System 3 classic *International Karate*, Archer Maclean's IK+ is still unchallenged in its field after three years.

SCUMM™ adventure system, which obliterates the need to wrestle with complex commands, and a very engaging- and funny- script. It's atmospheric, attractive, and packed with clever puzzles. The only thing that's futile to topple it is the foreseeable future is the sequel, due out next year.

RACING SIMULATION

STUNT CAR RACER (Microstyle)

This racecar submit distant from Geoff's time a Stunt Car Racer packs polygon plotting power and arcade-speed thrills into a novel formula making it the most entertaining race game around. Drive your dragster around a series of increasingly perilous suspended tracks, smashing & crashing your opponent into oblivion. Excellent speed achieved by the polygons combined with fantastic growling audio effects makes this game a true classic.

RACING SIMULATION

INDIANAPOLIS 500 (Electronic Arts)

It's the speed that does it for it's Indianapolis 500. Quite simply it's faster and more playable than anything else on the grid. The feeling of real speed is stunningly realistic, and that adds all the tension to the bone-shattering pile-ups - one of the game's most entertaining aspects. The race-at-turbospeed has been recreated with uncompromising authenticity, and a multitude of features, including excellent TV-style replay facilities save to bottom the realism further. Mind you, it's not par of Geoff Crammond, who's having a crack at bettering it this month.

SIMULATION

CHUCK YEAGER'S AIR COMBAT (Electronic Arts)

The third game to be endorsed by the barrier-breaking General (also of the tried-and-tested 'flight school' format and makes it all the more enjoyable by putting it in a combat arena. You get to fly every plane you've ever heard of, and it manages to be fun without sacrificing the technical authenticity. What's more, the dogfighting mode provides plenty of things that is to be found in most sims. And the cost of flight options and presentation are second to none.

ROLE PLAYING GAMES

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER (US Gold/SSI)

By the mighty sword of King! SSI's latest Dungeon and Dragons game takes the best bits of Dungeon Master, adds a few more of its own, nice well, and the result is the best bet yet for anyone who dare to hurl fireballs at dragons and things like that. It's very deep (to fat) and offers enough new challenges to take the throne from the game that inspired it. And lo, thy mystic staff of Zing shall sell the heavens and fall as the enemy may to on to hide...

ADVENTURE

THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND (US Gold/Lucasfilm)

The adventures of would-be pirate Guybrush Threepwood pocket the setting for Lucasfilm's most sophisticated and entertaining odyssey to date. It's partly due to the new refined version of the

STRATEGY

MEGA lo MANIA (Image Works)

Sensible Software's first attempt at strategy is a surprisingly successful one. At first glance it was seem similar to Populous, but further inspection reveals it to be a genuinely original strategy epic. Considering the amount of depth the game has, it's remarkably instinctive to play, and has a very refreshing comedictinued running throughout. Certainly the most fun of all the god games. Mega lo Mania also happens to be the best - we'll see what Populous II has to say on the matter at the end of the year.

PUZZLE GAME

TETRIS (Nintendo)

There are more official versions of this classic than can be counted on the legs of a millipede, but it's Nintendo's own Gameboy version that is undeniably the best. Manipulating blocks to make them across the screen may sound like watching your bumbails grow, but in practice the complication faster and harder than you can imagine. The visual's sickness is the exact, and it's a truly tricky game that's fun to play - just the kind to hide in the link-up mode. It's like a bloody religion.

PLATFORM

SUPER MARIO WORLD (Nintendo)

The moment they release the Famicom ever here the better, as that will give more gamecte the chance to experience the stunning fourth instalment in the Mario saga. Whatever other hyper-swallowing stuff these games lack, it's not playability, and we have seven belt-out-of-breat past first entry would you believe there's not a single thingy bit in any of the 95 levels? It's sheer perfection from beginning to end. What more could you ask for?

This Month's Games

REA

There can only be one ...
Just make sure it's yours.

LOTUS2

Some people are never satisfied. Having already produced perhaps the finest computer race game of all time in Lotus Turbo Esprit Challenge, Magnetic Fields and Gremlin have sought to push the envelope further still with this sequel. The result? A definite, yet qualified success.

Definite because Lotus 2 bears marked improvement over the original in a number of technical aspects. But qualified because although the game works well as an individual title, it reveals and challenges the player in an almost entirely different way to its predecessor. As a result, it occasionally doesn't look too good in comparison.

Neither an accurate polygon simulation, nor purely semi-simplified arcade blast, the Lotus games define the finesse of the former with the adversity of the latter. Large, knobbly representations of Lotus Esprits and Elans hurtle around the superbly plotted courses, each with their own roadside signposts. Drivers who hang around too long or insist on admiring the scenery face too much of the cut-and-shut stuff a high way code can consume ground for both sides.

The most telling difference between the two games' design is that here, play no longer takes the form of a knockout, eight-stage, each complete with their own particular motoring format, out under their way across imaginary countries providing themselves as opposed to Super-Sprint style excitement.

This is not a point that should be taken lightly, for it greatly affects the feel of the game. The removal of the lap system makes it tricky to pinpoint such coin-decision distances events to gauge exactly how close the car drivers are to each other. Over a turn, bar it's much harder to determine progress. However, it's the track itself, the speed to progress of passing around central car through to first title. Simplified, the deal is this. The nature of Lotus 2 makes it more satisfying to pass a number of computer controlled drivers than pit your skills

Play for the past. The fun up of certain car is immediately, but we'll see the players in the progress of the competition and of more hundreds graphics chrome.

Lotus turns at the graphic success on slick display and more of race games mastered looking. The driving operation is much better even with all of the choose details beyond your scenery. The cars run past a number of sky areas on the terrain on the past game, providing a relatively the screen.

Obviously, the easiest and most relevant point of reference to draw on is Lotus 1. Clearly, producing a sequel to such a popular racing game is tricky enough. Trickier still when you bear in mind that the success of the first title rested on a number of factors which, simply in order to make the second

game sufficiently different, have had to be changed. The first game worked on a lap basis, and here we have stages. Lotus 2 is far more forgiving of drivers' mistakes than in the first outing. A single crash in the first game could easily cost the unfortunate driver the race. Here, owing to the length of the stages, it's more to do with how the forced errors snowball into a big enough chunk of time to make the check-point untouchable.

Lotus 2 is, technically, a far superior game with swifter graphics, more detailed and varied levels and a better impression of speed. And there's no doubt that as a solo game it plays infinitely better than the first. As a two-player affair, however, Lotus 1 still reigns supreme.

The link-up option serves as a worthwhile novelty, although in a sense it only helps regain the spirit of duelling

meters which was already present in the original.

It's important to remember though, that simply because the giddy heights of the original haven't been attained in this particular aspect, Lotus 2 is still a superb game.

against - essentially - one human. In that sense, it is a much better one-player game. But the gladiatorial two-player struggle of the first title are no longer present. It's this point which obviously determines whether Lotus 2 is an appealing prospect or not.

The key to Lotus 2's success was always there. The first four to a sprint-down race game the player was convinced that he had control over the behaviour of his car to a degree facilitating genuine improvements in driving style. Also, the feelings of each circuit were balanced so perfectly with the difficulty level and the amount of places to crash into that even on the early corners a few careless chunks of lost ground could make the difference between success and failure. It has proved to be a tough act to follow.

A familiar options screen helps the player dispense with tiresome activities, instead selecting the race to load at a time, however, there are a few additions. A password screen, enables players who have made sufficient progress in the game to skip to the desired level without having to slow through stages already mastered. Although this initially appears to be a bit of a godsend, removing the need to slog through

level after level of previously conquered track, there is a danger that, in the same way as Carrier is reused, once all the levels have been completed, there's little incentive to go on playing - after giving a table-mounting two-machine up in four player extra, essentially. Whether or not a player feels this will depend on how hardly likely to be in day-to-day use, but it helps to regain the feeling of human vs human competition.

As the "Macho, Set, Go!" countdown gives way to the growl of the assortment of Lotuses in parallel entered mode, the trackside objects pull toward the player with impressive speed and a number of facts become apparent.

Firstly, in an over-enthusiastic rebate in the lap stakes handling figures of Lotus motors, the player is afforded amazing control over his car. Only the tiniest knock sees them out slipping of the old "suckers" and pulling into near-corners even from the arena, less will bring; for our cars a bolt less allowing some impressive pancaking action. It's easy for the player to convince himself that in real life he's an excellent driver thanks to the ease and flexibility of control.

Once the track is in process, the variety of the track soon becomes clear. Computerised drivers are no longer just an especially high standard. Rather than being regarded as realistic individuals vying for success, the auto-cars serve to never be a mobile hazards, straying across the boundaries of the road and getting in your way. Since these roads are nothing much to speak of on the straights, this can prove hard going, with whacks off the side occasionally causing spins and major setbacks to keep progress flowing. Although any of these cars just enroll there when they appear. Checkpoint flash past at regular intervals, resetting the countdown to give you more which can be the

> Lotus 2's makes it considerably more satisfying when played solo, since the gladiatorial feel of two-player racing first itself struggling in the new format of long check-point laden stages

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STAGE FRIGHT

Let's take a closer look at these stages "It", if you will, "full".

Forest

The first stage introduces the player to a number elements in the game. Rivers slow down the cars unless they're jumped over using the logs which block the road. The logs must be hit head on in order to achieve a jump.

City

Oncoming traffic and berserk cars driven harper the player's progress. The right hand lane is clear of racing cars but a smash with an oncoming vehicle will considerably slow up the proceedings. Driving through the wheels between the front and back of the trucks earns the player bonus points. Indeed, rather than being score-heightening trick for top drivers, it's vital if the stage is to be completed in time.

Desert

Sand blows onto the edge of the road will slow down drivers who insist on straying from the center line. Extra caution is needed owing to the lack of road signs. Instead, careful along the side of the road are the only indicators of the player's route through the yellow views.

Snow

A maximum effort is necessary to retain control of your vehicle. Impel the car whizz in this stage slide around like there's no tomorrow.

Fog

Dramatically reduced visibility renders these section right down. All objects in the distance, be they cars, trees or obstacles are scarcer ly visible. Only when back-marker looms up out of the fog does the player have a chance to react. This stage perhaps works the best, combining excellent graphic appeal with an exciting gameplay twist.

Night

The city at night is a much more challenging place than during the day. The number of trucks on the road has been reduced but the hazard levels are high.

Marshland

Have you ever been had, in Marshland? Wholly tamale and mere jump-ing. Of patches here the player slippin' and wobbin' while the water at the edge of the road (it is a marsh, after all) slows them down. Flexible.

Storm

Possibly one of the most depressing levels ever to appear in a computer game. The rain comes down in sheets making the most miserable sound. Lighting flashes and thunder crashes. Is it an imagination or is the whole level uphill too? It's enough to put you off your dinner.

...and be warn that the track will run no good over time passed.

In a peculiar kinda innovation of true, crazy aliens are given less to excited to us to gallant pick the hazard. As yet the player's have a choice to react being. So next racing step the sinister stage into.

And there be an excellent "chart" hero, in this second it's a brave car with the quickest comedy about trapped alien sort so. However, the more pro who comes with are all harm.

And there's an excellent "chart" hero, the bravery in this section and other cost the cost it sort way. How were each care the come wherein the boss all harm.

Continuing on towards way its motoring makes to the road world, out it's be only rare to with the at hand. Enter and will help player endeavours amount their longer vehicles on way a more satisfactory version.

...Lotus offers a different sort of challenge for players. The longer stages are far more trying than the laps of the original. The difficulty level for most stages escalates as well, though, as players are forced to learn new skills each stage.

83 ▶ top right corner of the screen and adding-an-operation from the completed stage to the allotted time for the next. The faster one section is completed, the more chance there is to complete the next. Although experienced players may not appreciate the need to continue racing even after losing a stage. Although they can bolster the need for speed, the lack of any kind of 'goal' can detract from the experience.

Utterly distinct from its predecessor, Lotus 2 is forgiving almost to the point of dullness. Ploughing headlong into the chevrons and trees which line the road results in a scarcely noticeable loss of velocity and repositioning on the track. Especially impressive drivers who insist on inserting themselves a bunch of signposts or uprooting will find themselves ground down to a halt, but those who make the most of the friendliness of the crash routines will find their whole-driving experience largely frustration-free.

The tumult of the game's once-completed-little-interest-free courses may hamper its lasting appeal. Perhaps Lotus 2 has become an unwitting conformation of the "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" adage.

The different environments over which the driver is cast throughout the game is another area where... the actual width of the road, although one of the most basic variables effects the driving-style more radically than most. Narrow roads actually do make the driver slow down and make overtaking difficult. It may sound like a small point, but this does all add a great... The clock may indicate that the trip is the race checkpoint will be a breeze, encountering a couple of lengthy narrow stretches of road will see competitors suspended and accumulated free by... is most readily achieved by drivers who keep going absolutely at their hardest all the time.

The entire collision-report system is of an entirely different order and impact on the road makes the Esprit or Elan slide

By far the best strategy, it not overtake a vehicle as soon as it is reached, especially if the overtaking move is being made on a bend. Drivering several and sending the computer cars to get out of the way in a waste of time. It's better to simply drive around them.

Careful use of acceleration and the width of the road allows the player to either undertone around

the target car or slide. Enough taking the tenth lane. Perfection of this strategy combined with the simple but important discipline of watching cars in the distance as they approach in order to predict their track position from the overtaking move is more than adequate doze of satisfaction. The closest comparison for this was of speed and skill being continually rewarded is probably the Super Hang-On coin-op.

Visually, Lotus 2 is a marvel. Objects at the side of the road are highly detailed and absolutely barely-noticeable part. More attention has been given to the race-driving experience all the rolling weather-conditions are represented by mostly lighting and the like. The effects are so successful, in fact, that the Seiren level tells its dusk-dim and lightning and cars-lit-up area is actually quite depressing.

The behaviour of the cars is of most quite detailed and the computer-driven opponents, insofar as one would expect. Driving through states down the cars down and makes obstacles far and far more pace on the race-able. The Esprit or Elan slide

Here's your chance to experience the different types of terrain. It is wet but slippery during the rain; wind in the sun and a handling hazard at night when fireflies come out to play.

ers around like a snake on a bed of marbles.

Drivers and in-particular dedicated fans of the original Lotus game will love the updated... it no match, by any means, for the original's excellence in fur dashing bananas states. Its superb tracks are opposed to a lap setup deplore this element particularly. However, when played solo it's the best, offering simply excellent graphics and phenomenal speed, polished off with a beret-red, music and sound unmatched in any other racing game. In addition, it's interesting to ponder what shape the future might be taken. Like all great graphics are taken in its actual frame texture were provided to the... It wasn't it unpredictable lose imperced... do not be feed, quite feel it those fine to spread and yet still resist the Lotus name was a problem.

Lotus were uncharacteristically unkeen to have this precious speck of British prime has taken for their game. Bowing graphically as smashed while pushing on the code need have been exactly the same to the Lotus the Camaro race.

Particularly appealing would be a game using the technological ability of Lotus, it combined with some more alternative imaging aches. Imagine how excellent a Chase HQ treatment of the game, with armour-plated liquefa-running across the picturesque British countryside throwing down nails and stickers or doing such other to wit rocket launchers and machine guns, lunging opponents off the side of the road, down a hillside or into the sea here. The purists, of course, won't like this, and so it's no fault of Magnetic Fields that some of these elements have been included.

LINK

Link Up

Four players can enjoy the thrills and spills of Lotus 2 thanks to the ingenious link-up option. Each machine displays a split-screen with a different colour car for each of the human contenders. For superior than the Amiga's two player one-on-one machine set up, bowing your friends' agony and victory as they live and die at the hands of a cunningly aimed obstacle is most enthralling.

Amiga version

Even considering quite how spoiled Amiga owners have become when it comes to speed on their machine, Lotus 2 cannot fail to impress. The trackside objects simply fly by. The music rocks out in fine style and improvements and optimised routines allow even better control over the car and speedier response times. An example of top-notch no-nonsense programming, it's quite an achievement. Disk access times could do with a touch of tweaking, though.

And finally, for the first time ever, some good news: a full season's worth of top quality action from the latest and greatest drop in the ocean.

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NOT

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FLOOR

13

Every government has its secrets to hide – a fact that a whole generation of novelists from John le Carré to Tom Clancy has been running a respectable living from for the past three decades. But while we all know of the nefarious activities and goings-on in Eastern Bloc countries and

Export dictatorships, it's nigh on inconceivable to suggest the existence of, say, a secret police force here in dear old Blighty, capital of democracy.

Or maybe it isn't. After all, the primary function of a secret police force is to be secret, and as long as it does its job properly, who's to know if it even exists? The idea of such behind-closed-doors governmental activity has been tackled several times in recent years in a variety of media. Alan Moore/David Lloyd's moody graphic novel V For Vendetta painted a very gloomy picture of a Neo-Nazi Britain of the 90s, while Ken Loach threw some controversial light on the subject last year with his cinematic political thriller Hidden Agenda.

And now we have a game that, by posing the "What if...?" question in the near-future with staggering audacity. Isn't it more a matter of attracting plenty of controversy of its own. Admittedly it seems as if Virgin were deliberately out of its way to attract as much undue attention as possible by approaching leading figures from the political, journalistic and show-business worlds to contribute overtures to the game. And although most of the people contacted turned the opportunity down, the upshot of the innocuous mailout was that an article in the Observer's Sunday Guardian and several press-calls to the Virgin offices from one of its number asking "Are you serious about this?"

Upon questioning the Leisure Genus, Floor 13 tells of a secret government department based on, you guessed it, the thirteenth floor of a dank Whitehall ivory block. It's an agency without a name, that operates beyond the knowledge of the police, the military – even the country's own intelligence agencies – reporting only to the Prime Minister himself. To all intents and purposes the Floor 13 agency has but one power and influence far beyond the scope of any official body. Its job? To provide a political 'safety buffer' for the increasingly megalomaniac, callous and treacherous government by averting suspicious

scandals, dealing with social unrest, controlling outspoken campaigners for truth and justice and doing anything that might prove embarrassing if information of such a damaging effect on the government and what it represents.

That is, the department's workload is more, normal. Most of it is spreading the troubled streets of a complex city to track issues of rumours, suspect dealings, potential criminals, acts of terrorism or the merest 'whiff' of a troublemaker, gathering them in for a fearsome amount of tactics, the task at hand can be taken very wide-ranging, from the merest political pawn to the most effective and ongoing campaign of suppression with-out fear of giving the outside world the impression that anything deviant is actually going on.

The game's opening scene does that kind of set up the plane off, while giving a first glimpse of just what lengths the secret entirety will go to in order to avert trouble. When the agency's Director General is deemed inefficient and potentially dangerous, he meets an unfortunate demise, discovered hanging beaten and tortured and a concrete potentiate. The place which leaves a formidable amount of open-ended questions surrounding his death, and it's one you can avoid by being the new chief of police force.

The Floor 13 agency is based in the heart of Whitehall, the government's own centre of operations.

I **n terms of involvement and atmosphere,**

Floor 13 is the closest thing yet to an interactive

thriller novel.

The large art effort were too ambitious. Undertakers set aside for the restricted game, giving gamesplayers looking on life-sized, pacing and bold simulations of secrecy and forbidden dank passage.

the player receives a less-than-warm welcome from his disgruntled Prime Minister, who is quick to warn the player that should he or she prove as unsuccessful as their predecessor, they too could be taking a crash course in assisted flight.

As the Director General, one of the player's primary tasks comes as close to reality as its sense to get their own hands dirty, and so the entire game is effectively run from the soft Floor office, reading reports gathered by intelligence personnel and dispensing orders to the heads of the various sub-departments who do all the real dirty work. As such, it's probably the most violent game to enter in terms of what goes on on screen - for the vast majority of the game takes place behind a desk, with the only thing changing being the constantly-updated newspapers, reports and files from the departments that comprise the only window on the world. But even though the location seldom changes, the game's fast pacing and subtle downsizing of the usable hub of scenarios and plots ensures that the game's pace hardly ever relents. In terms of involvement and interest, it's the closest thing yet to an interactive thriller novel.

The ongoing story is woven by means of over a hundred interdependent plots, occurring at carefully timed intervals and overlapping to give the impression of a single, flowing reality. The episodes are wide-ranging in style and content, encompassing high-ranking occasions engaged in dodgy dealings, terrorists and would-be assassins, industrial espionage, treason and even a terrorist attempt on the life of a topend VIP. But the full story behind each plot never fully emerges - information comes in dribs and drabs, and only by putting together seemingly innocuous and unconnected reports and allocating resources to the correct places can the
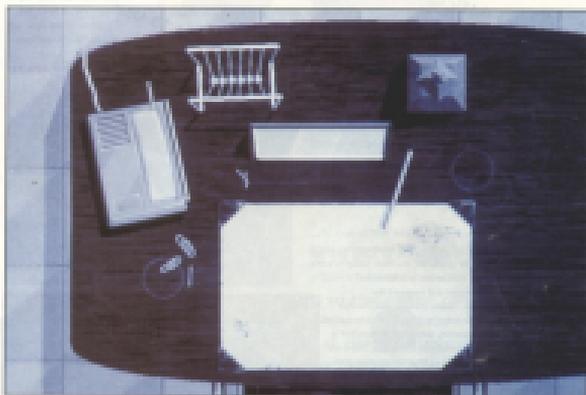
Such is the nature of *Floor 13*'s innovative approach and execution, it's tricky to find a game in the recent strategy scene that really compares to it. So it's necessary to journey further back - way back to 1985 in fact - the time of Century Hutchinson's aging 8-bit classic *The Fourth Protocol*, based on Frederick Forsyth's bestseller. Though the game came in several sections, including some dire arcade interludes, the main part of the adventure, subtitled *The NATO Documents*, was remarkably similar to *Floor 13* in certain aspects. Surveillance operatives were assigned to suspects, intelligence reports came in, there were

political scandals to avert... the game actually managed to do a remarkable job of capturing the spirit of the original novel, and by comparison that goes to further highlight how well *Floor 13* emulates the intrigue and excitement of the modern thriller. But while *The Fourth Protocol* was a fine game, it offered limited appeal, as there was only one objective to meet. Eastman's got the right idea, allowing the size of the game to remain unrestricted by keeping the overall objective at a safe distance.

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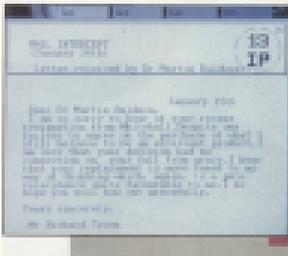
...bits make of the game can be played from the central office, it's often necessary to visit departments directly to the most up-to-date information. Each of the eight sub-divisions is never more than a couple of keypresses away - a fine example of how easy the game is to use.

INTERROGATION

The most direct way of acquiring information, interrogation simply involves putting suspects in off the street and then trying to wring the facts out of them. When a character is marked for interrogation, he/she is abducted and prepared for questioning. Some characters remain untouched...

INFILTRATION

If a particular group (as opposed to an individual) stops causing the government trouble, infiltration may prove to be the most effective course of action. When agents are assigned to a group, they join as innocent new members, but secretly work against the organisation. They're not quite as well - you can rely on the brutality of a particular group's actions or opinions here. Unlike the more gentle work in, the more effective their work should be, providing the infiltrated group doesn't realise an outside group is onto them, providing lots of its concurrent elements. Infiltration is a tricky business, and the best characters operatives often don't even know they're taking down.

SURVEILLANCE

A surveillance team can be assigned to any character or where a report is available and will sometimes supply the most crucial information in the game. They remain shadowy, situated in a hidden location outside the suspect's home and record all conversations and comings and goings. However, not the telephone taps and mini-microphones may suffer, the suspect indoors or outdoors can move out of sight for good on their own accord...

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE

The heart of Floor 23, all information from the various departments is sent straight here to be delivered to the player's terminal. Every agent has his/her own terminal...

HEAVY IMPACT

This is essentially a very elaborate variant of Remember, involving a combined effort. One group of students (or other people) sit in groups of four and are given a body-map or sketching outlines that establish certain broad parameters. One enacts a body or a handy way of starting my understanding evidence that might occur to hand, as if someone else's hand. Used more carefully, it can wipe out an entire conspiracy.

JAILLOCATION

The creation of all departments, and definitely one of the hard catching in the start here. It an unfortunately located kludge centre... Most so than to have a daily newspaper run a whimsical story about how the location of the building makes it difficult to... could go anywhere near completion, the prison had become almost cause in the manufacture a decision to move then.

REHEARSAL

Assassination. This is really a very deadly variant, more overt than any other, as should be regarded as a last-resort. The... attempt is made to use a specially trained or simple enough. Basically it gets a troublesome character out of the picture. When a criminal order is signed, the team proceeds to silently assassinate... The...

PARADE

Essentially a mobile extension of surveillance. Pursuit comprises car-based "watcher" units that follow their assigned suspects around (usually on foot) but... the suspect is followed in a private vehicle, the intelligence gained automatically than not else from your asset the controller... but the watchers, armed with...

SEARCH

Once assigned to a suspect, a search team plan a search of a person or building... but most aren't so vital that you can't wait... until... However, they can't tell what went on inside in the intervening time...

ARE YOU SITTING COMFORTABLY?

Talk about art imitating life. Of Floor 13's 80-odd plots, a large amount are completely fictitious - but those who follow the headlines are likely to spot quite a few plots that bear an uncanny resemblance to certain recent real-life happenings. Obviously, the names and some of the more incriminating details have been dropped to protect the innocent (or not so innocent), but it doesn't take much susss to work out what events some of the storylines are based on. By way of demonstrating this, and to show how convoluted some of the scenarios can get, here are brief synopses of some of the more interesting ones...

...In Operation Barmoud, a group of retired military crackpots take umbrage with plans to reduce Britain's defensive capabilities, and plan to apply some "shock treatment" to the government by means of a very radical demonstration...

...in one of the saved Theft missions, you're given the task of helping a fellow lodge member obtain a top-ranking minister's job when the post becomes vacant. However two other ambitious crackpots are also vying for the job, and with the debate about the return of capital punishment raging in the press, there's all manner of behind-closed-doors backstabbing going on, including one particularly devious plot to curry favour by long-standing and counter-blackmail over high society con pen to the...

...There's a scandal to be covered up when high-ranking minister Cecil Pettison gets into a spot of domestic bother when his notorious liaison was known by his hidden wife after the press. A subsequent attempt to have his bit of fluff assassinated goes horribly wrong, and before too long blackmail and counter-blackmail rear their ugly heads. The whole thing needs to be sorted out quickly before it gets a chance to hit the headlines...

...On a less political - but equally troublesome vein - London's newly Soho district is supplied by an orgy of violence when the two most powerful crime syndicates, the Chinese Tong and the Colombian drug barons fall out, and then proceed to blow up each other's property in a tit-for-tat war of attrition. Again, this trick is to deal with the situation quickly before it can damage the government...

...Dimly goings-on abound when it's revealed that a British defence contractor is selling arms to Iraq - worse still, a top government bod may be in on the act too...

...An evil terrorist group obtains the security plans of one of the country's biggest atomic power stations, and then threaten to blow it up. The faction's base and plot of attack must be discovered if they're to be stopped in time...

SIP pieces of the jigsaw be fitted together and the overall picture obtained.

Although orders can be given relating to a particular subject or incident at any time, it's wise to wait until the state of affairs becomes slightly clearer, and for departments' actions to prove rewarding or damaging. With the full picture obtained, deductions gives way to judgement as the player must decide how to deal with the situation in hand, while remembering the need to retain the department's law profile. It's vital to avoid conflicting departments' activities with their position of power - the press could start asking awkward questions if, for example, somebody who has voiced anti-government opinions is suddenly found with a bullet in their head, and the resultant furore could ultimately prove more damaging than the scandal averted.

How the player interprets information and chooses to act on the basis of it provides the main thrust of the strategy in Floor 13. Judgement and discretion are the keys to success, along with the ability to be uncompromisingly single-minded through thick and thin.

The most important emphasis in this video game is on realism - not only in terms of its mechanics, but also in its content - and owing to the vitality, it's easy to become at over-the-top way. Whenever the need arises, the team can be deployed to a scale, suspect or the effect. If a scandal becomes public, the government suffers in the polls at a direct result of negative public opinion, while successfully covering up embarrassing episodes and making everything in the government's garden look rosy results in a poll boost. Of course, in the rough or tumble world of politics, it never hurts to stick the boot into the opposition just a little via the scale use of misinformation.

Maintaining a steady lead in the polls provides the player with a set of ongoing objectives. The PM demands a noticeable poll result every few weeks or so, and if it's not met then the player is unceremoniously swept out. By the simple virtue of being the elected party, the government remains slightly ahead of the opposition in normal circumstances anyway, so the player's initial task is basically to prevent any major mishaps that could make an enormous dent in this superiority and possibly cause it to plummet, dragging the government's popularity through the roof. Such tactics are only likely to lead to the department's activities becoming too high-profile and subsequently political damaging.

By use of a simple mathematical formula, the map size of government rating is calculated in direct proportion to the amount of political damage it causes - which is logical enough. As long as there is an open interaction and provide a supplement to the polls scores, reports of past incidents come with an evaluation of the political repercussions, good or bad, mild or severe. These provide an invaluable aide to decision-making, especially when the player's hands are full with several pieces run-

PC version

The use of monochrome graphics has caused almost as much controversy as the storyline, although the sort of people who have complained are probably the same people who buy the coloured versions of classic black-and-white movies. In practical terms the grey shades work along with the moody music to bolster the game's gloomy atmosphere. A couple of criticisms though - the graphics fade in and out when moving between screens, and impatient types might wish the process would speed up a little - it can get a little tiresome during long sessions. Also, while there is no problem with the keyboard control as it stands, some kind of on-hand mouse mode may have proved to be more instructive.
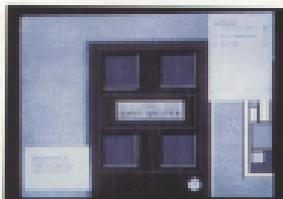
ning simultaneously (as is usually the case) and it's vital to know where to allocate limited resources to obtain the best results.

What's altogether more pertinent about Floor 13, and the main reason why it is already catching so much flak from certain quarters, is that while it offers a vision every bit as gruesome and frightening as reality, it does so in a down-to-earth fashion. We're not dealing with a fantastical futuristic society here - this is suggested to be the real world, present day. And while it would be unbearably naïve to say it's got a storyline that's 'ripped from the headlines of tomorrow's newspaper,' author David Eastman (Cookie) has done a remarkable job of re-working certain major political news stories from recent times in such a manner that the player can hardly be blamed for being paranoid. And though it's difficult for anyone to say for sure just how accurate the ins and outs of the intelligence services operate, it's easy to make out exactly the way certain events, along with all the attendant corruption, intrigue and backstabbing, could have been and might well be a whole organisation on the 'real' aspect that provides the game with much of its atmosphere and foreboding content - there's something more compelling about playing a game with a scenario like this than guns which, while equally involving energetic, distance themselves from the player by nature of a fantastic or off-beat setting.

While it would certainly be distressing to see all games based on real-life places and events (games are, after all, meant to an escape route from the rigours of everyday life), Floor 13 certainly comes as a refreshing change to a genre that has offered so little of any real originality for ages.
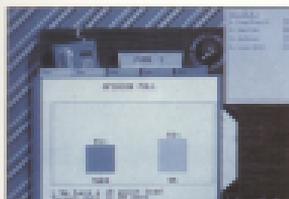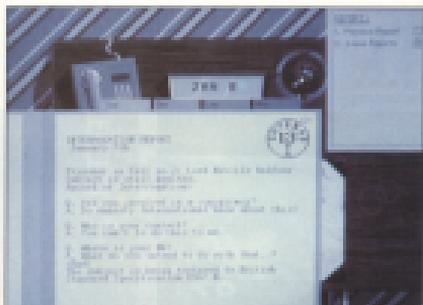
It's clear that much effort has gone into the creation of Floor 13, and the result is a game that offers a genuinely new approach to the strategy genre, backed up by a scenario that gives the whole thing a kick like a mule.

Floor 13 also delivers another much neglected gameplay angle in its setting the player as the bad guy. While not all the player's actions are necessarily bad (although some are downright despicable), there's a strong sense that the goals achieved are very dodgy indeed – and that provides a twisted sense of enjoyment that goes beyond the initial short-lived experimentation to the 'interrogation' rooms.

Without doubt one of the most innovative strategy games in a long time, Floor 13 is a marathon rather than a sprint as each new mission and very careful thought is required if any success is to be had. The need to collate information and deduce connections between the various people, locations, groups and events in order to unravel the complex plots serves to make the whole strategic process deeper and all the more absorbing, especially as some of the plots are as twisty-turny as any espionage novel.

It's clear that much effort has gone into the creation of Floor 13, and the result is a game that offers a genuinely new approach to the strategy genre, backed up by a scenario that gives the whole thing a kick like a mule. As such, anyone whose brain capacity extends beyond sending rapid signals to the body's fire button trigger is going to find this a tremendously absorbing and enjoyable experience. If David Suchman can keep this up, he's going to go far – providing he's not found floating face-down in the Thames first.

■ Gary White

Walk Like An Egyptian

An interesting twist is that, while the player attempts to infiltrate and wipe-out subversive groups and organisations, they remain a member of one themselves. The Secret Masters of Truth is a bizarre masonic cult based on ancient Egyptian philosophies, and the Grand Master himself pops up to have a quiet word from time to time. As it turns out, the player has a secondary objective of advancing through the ranks of the lodge until he can ultimately become all-powerful. The Grand Master calls upon the player to perform certain tasks for him, and each one completed results in a promotion. Some 'missions' can result in a conflict of interests in what's good for Truth may be bad for the government. Only the player can decide with whom his loyalties ultimately lie...

HUDSON
HAWK

atch the action! Catch the excitement! Catch the Hawk!

So goes the blurb for Bruce Willis' latest 'blockbuster', Hudson Hawk - although if the film's box office takings are anything to go by, it would seem that the majority of movie audiences would rather catch malaria than catch

this piece of high-budget, low-quality cinematic dross. Costing a reasonable $42 million, Hudson Hawk was released during the 90's part of the turbulent summer season as the year's big action movie - and then failed spectacularly to arouse any interest from the punters, who seemed far more keen to see The Silence Of The Lambs. Suffice it to say that was due to the action genre laying out its cornerstone now that this school of thought has been blown

away by the runaway success of Terminator 2, the sole logical reason left for Hudson Hawk's box office demise is that it's a piece of poo.

Actually, that's being a bit harsh - especially on poor old Bruce himself, who's got enough to worry about what with all his hair falling out, and at least he has been responsible for Hudson Hawk - he's not only the star of the film, but the whole story effort was his idea in the first place. By the way, context has it that

espite the film's spectacular inability to impress either the critics or cinema audiences, Hudson Hawk has managed to spawn what is probably the most impressive film tie-in of the year.

after the film had finished shooting, Bruce's bad patch showed up rather embarrassingly on screen – and on Industrial Light & Magic was called in to eliminate the offending area from the film by drawing over it electronically. If that's not a sure omen of failure, then nothing is.

But if nothing else, Hudson Hawk has managed to spawn what is probably the most impressive film tie-in of the year - simply because Rutherford was Special FX has ignored all the rules about staying faithful to the movie plate time out of ten, a rare cop on of a cinematic spin-off. The fact is that there's an awful lot of quality to be found in this game and as a crucial bonus, it's great fun as well.

The humour may be obvious – it's certainly a refreshing change – and the end result is all the more so. It's hard to do the game with its scenario and true fun aspect in the business of producing a playable game. It may be controversial, but it's certainly a refreshing change from the usual by-the-numbers clone-a-ciled game. But if certain valuable and closely-guarded objects which together

It's easy, at first glance, to make comparisons between Hudson Hawk and Prince of Persia: after all, that ammount of simple platform-perm, ACES of dangerous 2. Both games use comical console-style graphics and combine simple justice with hands'n'tasket action to provide the fun. Some go as far as to proclaim Hudson Hawk to be a thick rip-off. However, Hudson relies more often on straight arcade buddy-bashing gameplay than Rice, which only very rarely features combat with marauding enemies - and then it's limited to firing a single shot or dropping a well-timed bomb. In Hudson Hawk, the player often finds himself assailed by all manner of enemies and the use of a bouncing ball as a weapon means rather more skill is required to dispatch an enemy. On the puzzle front, the two games score evenly. Hudson, however, picks up a few bonus points for some of the more devious and intuitive traps that await on later levels. Ultimately, it's all a matter of where your tastes lie – there's no faulting Rick's first-rate gameplay, although Hudson Hawk seems to offer a more rounded experience, combining the best of Rick with stages that call primarily on the player's more basic arcade instincts and the odd pleasant sub-game into the bargain. One thing's for sure though – there's no such thing as a free ride on either game.
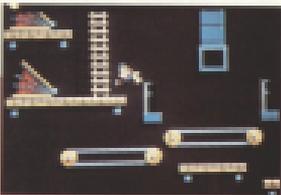
LEVEL BY LEVEL

LEVEL ONE

The first level is a fairly simple, horizontal-travelling affair set in Rutherford's Auction Houses, where Leonardo Da Vinci's famous horse sculpture, the "Sforza" is to be sold. Naturally, Hawkins' job is to steal it before it goes under the hammer, as Inside the sculpture is part of the crystal that that is needed to operate the alchemy machine. The first stage is set in the city rooftops, where Hawkins must climb from roof to roof and enter the building through an open window. Once inside, it's just a question of getting from one end of each of the building's floors to the other, where an elevator leads to the next. When the seventh floor (where the Sforza is kept) has been reached, Hawkins must get to the safe and crack it to release the sculpture and enter the next level.

LEVEL TWO

Things get a lot more complicated in Hawkins' search for the next object, Da Vinci's notebook, the Codex (which includes plans for the construction of the gold machine). It's kept under lock and key in the Vatican Museum in Rome, and the only way to get to it is via a complex route through the various underground tunnels, pathways and air ducts. The stages vary greatly in style here, ranging from a Nick Dangerous-type adventure through the air ducts to a Gauntlet race against time through Rome's underground railway mid-delivery system.

LEVEL THREE

The final confrontation sees Hawkins attempting to get and and to the whole alchemy project and foil his blackmailers' plans by entering Leonardo Da Vinci's castle and destroying the retrieval crystal that drives the gold machine. The emphasis is not much more speedy on straight platform-action here, with battles against a variety of bizarre henchmen including hopping kangaroos, TV-throwing thugs and potty fellow foes.

Two types of vertical face. The red Nick's switch is used to open the locked door on the left, while the platform (left) bounces Hudson that the green one (far right) just disappears.

This type of lift bombs ever lower some moving, fast to vast return and shoots the will disappearing and the reappearing... the goal is one to cross.

Wall mounted crosses spurt fire at regular intervals - that adding some fiercely awful but harmless (it lands on top ship).

Things get big features on a particular part of the whole project one certain the other beamless dark, and one particular reward for certain. ...climb and the beam reges shap look.

When there are no obvious platform to enemy, Hawkins can make use of the horizontal bounce to travel fast - the bounce on the open window above.

The pogo-striking appearance of Hawkins features to behind the here unlike for the other several basic and smash.

Speedy electricity doesn't track time from green. these TV aerial too also reflected to the touch.

Urban Hawk does a splendid job of almost every type of platform game by varying the style of play from stage to stage - one minute the player is leaping from rooftop to rooftop, the next he's involved in a frantic race against time or contemplating some devious trap set-up.

Essentially steps are separated by the clicking of a switch, but may open for only a few seconds before they close again. Speed's of the essence.

The second most enjoyable moments involving the treacherous trails of trapping rooms will invite you, while the hero's only guarantee is he must discover new gaps through every level. Flick aside tiny barred defenses and watch the door levers, the climb becomes more and more interesting, and many sections give more than a forgivable chase reaction.

The zoning section may look harmless but he's a tough customer with real defenses, and can swipe levers nasty tricks will allow he makes a mistake.

These monsters provide only a what need for screen, requiring even perfect pinches if stood on and scans accustomed.

Certain blocks are like a shake from where, rising in and out of the wall at speed but enough to prod you and impair from cars lower may mean instant threat if a gap below a final destination.

One of the game's most bizarre features you navigate characters as he bounds skyward adventure on the screen direction and the level's progress. Press the fire button. Thingabout bad luck.

There being only once in the first run one of the games allowed time, structuring the screen back blistering fast - the images moving in turn to the limit of your speed. A diaboute array should leap any and all require bodyguard without a single indicate in order to reach the fires pose within to the exit.

Descending ship becomes mess in the habitat navigates so such fast steps and a whole new world of devious avalibles. Offering quite a topic that need to be up mid-fest, using appropriate chains, and even holes moving parts.

contend in order to pursue its idea of a console-style platform game. Special FX has had to take rather a few liberties with its interpretation of the film. It's difficult, for example, to imagine Bruce Willis as cute, but here in the game he's presented as the sweetest little thing since Bub or Bob – and what's more, he's got plenty of hair. And while the levels are themed to match the relevant enemy locations, the mansion of supposing characters (you can hardly act as far removed from their celluloid counterparts as could possibly be imagined. Conflating thugs find by on helium-filled balloons, nuns in the Vatican are impassable – well-endowed, security guards are rotund rhinos, and so on. And there are even a few sprites that seem to have been thrown in just for the hell of it, such as a menacing Elvis impersonator (to be fair, though). The King's electro does make a short appearance in the movie) and a page-shifting dance.

While it's these outstanding enemies that provide the most immediate threats to your wellbeing, it's the landscape themselves that prove the most perilous. Mansion's crumbles, leading to fatal falls, hidden traps and springs push the player from pillar to post with alarming regularity, and curving machinery threatens to crush, crinkle, poison you off deadly electric currents, quite resembling the real slippers and pitch-filled floors... Every stage, especially some of the more poorly structured ones that appear midway, is a masterpiece of fiendishly clever design.

Much of the game's action is fairly simple platform-based stuff, where pixel-perfect jumps and requisite timing are required to survive. The enemies themselves are pretty harmless individually, but when they attack in force, as is usually the case, things can get very sticky indeed. Again, an effective but underwater feel with the Elvis material has great to illustrate, particularly with movements, such as in the Man level, where the player must be careful just to come into contact with the various alarm systems that guard the place – trip-ping a laser beam or being spotted by a swing secu-rity camera not only saps energy, but also sends alarm bells that alert guards to your presence, making matters even tougher. Stealth is the key to suc-

Amiga version

The requisite console-style graphics are undoubtedly Hudson Hawk's most impressive surface feature, and the music is jolly enough - although the MUSIC OFF key is likely to become a godsend once the same tune has been heard a hundred times over. The use of minimal screen area à la Switchblade on certain sections works fine, and once in the busy full-screen sections there's never any danger of the action slowing down or the silky wobbling losing its footing. It's not exactly pushing the Amiga envelope, but it remains one of the prettiest and most characteristic games on the machine to date.

cess, and while each level has a time limit, it's often worth expending the time to negotiate a particular obstacle in the correct way, rather than romping around like a mad bull. The same technique is guar-anteed to end in tears.

Should timeless need to defend himself, he covers equipped with an ornate teacup glass (to clear space around his wrists) with enemies. In addition, an unlim-ited supply of bouncing baseballs (which were nowhere to be seen in the film, but whatever they comes outside of a discussion of... he can also smash bomb-busting rockets within reach of the various handy ledges, platform pickups and boxes.

A lot of work has gone into the construction of Hudson Hawk's main stages, and Special FX has

While Hudson Hawk is often infuriating, it's never dull, always managing to engage the player's inter-est with some wily trap or frantic action scene.

dcoct a very impressive job of reproducing a playable game while remaining faithful to the source material - not in the usual cop-out version of hardnosed 16-games or cheap graphical gimmicks - but by cleverly working themed elements from the film itself, so the alarm sections and traps climbing onto the levels as real hazards aspects. On the first basis it's probably the most effective film tie-in to date, but through the game is expertly packaged, it's arguable that it may be a little too difficult for many platform gamers. Those who boast the likes of Rick or Prince too maddening to be enjoyable will surely be put off by Hudson Hawk to precisely the same reasons. But those for whom a slower, more deliberate hit-list philosophy makes the genre all the more compulsive will feel it to be the most enjoyable experience they've had in a long time. Just wish it's worth refining, it's never dull, always managing to engage the player's interest with some witty trap or flashy action scene.

The gameplay balanced by the gorgeous and amazingly crisp and colourful graphics, which give the game real comic personality and help the whole thing to come alive on screen. Hudson himself, for example, comes with all the little foibles you'd expect from a cartoon hero, he can't stand the flat of your hands to fan pockets if he's left alone for too long (and there's an interesting final effect if the player continues to be neglected after those warnings), and comes to a stop by waving his arms and skidding along, kicking up little clouds of dust in the process. Even the character's more mundane movements, such as running, jumping and ducking are exquisitely animated, and the eye-catching effect this creates can't be exaggerated enough for most of the things that the tale gave been scrapped.

While these minor comic touches impress initially, it's Hudson Hawk's overall loveable it may prove to be. The characters are handsome and colourful without detracting from the overall 'cute' feel. As a result the game has a character to, lends all its own, and Special FX has had much more success in its attempt to create an original and stylish kind of comic graphics than the Bitmap Brothers did last month with the trendy but flawed Magic Pockets. It's almost a shame about the Hudson Hawk licence, in this instance the game would have been just as good, if not a superior effort than it is now, for the fact the cartoon feel isn't really that in keeping with the cartoon feel here - as a 'pure' comic caper we'd have created it even higher. As it is, the film tie-in has landed some fine, hard-edged and unusual platform action. It certainly deserves to.

● Gary Whitta

FORMULA ONE
GRAND

Why are there so few racing simulations around? Given that the games-buying public seem to insatiably hungry for arcade-style racers and polygon-driven simulations of anything from tanks to jets to helicopters to submarines to – Heaven forbid! – space shuttles, this deficit seems a little odd.

That said, many of the brave few who have entered this arbiter arena have achieved more than admirable results. Domark's Hard Drivin', a conversion of the Atari coin-op, was a remarkably successful attempt at the genre, marred only by the sheer physical impossibility of comfortably translating the complete controls of a car, an automatic car admittedly, onto a standard joystick.

Electronic Arts' Indianapolis 500, currently the ACE Benchmark for this genre, was not only a more than adequate simulation but enormous fun into the bargain, especially for those with a particular and peculiar fondness for seeing flesh ground violently against tarmac.

Geoff Crammond, Grand Prix's author, is no stranger to racing simulations. Way back in the Dawn of Gaming, when the BBC Model B was considered the machine to aspire to, he produced Revs, a sort of proto-Grand Prix. Although undoubtedly an accurate simulation, it was perhaps a little too accurate,

Image 2 is a landscape and this suggests that the intuitive of the command: the vehicle's open-race track racing at...

with many players finding the car even impossible to control.

With Grand Prix the lessons of *Revs* have been well and truly learned and the result is the most visually exciting, involving and – more importantly – playable racing simulation yet available, complete with all sixteen tracks and twenty-six drivers. In terms of atmosphere and authenticity, it's the nearest most are ever going to get to reality without donning helmet and gloves.

The player can choose to race in either the World Championship and compete for personal glory, or take part in the World Constructor's Championship, with the planet earning points for his team depending on his finishing position. In addition, options are available to allow the player to practice either with or without other drivers on any of the tracks.

Practice is essential not only for the obvious yet much-needed experience of each tracks' various twists and turns, but also to help in deciding how best to fine tune the car's performance parameters. In the workshop the player has a(most unlimited control over the car's variables, right down to adjusting the car's gear ratios and downforce. Admittedly the menus is likely to stop part of this non-te' holic

to some extent as Grand Prix. Also, Indy 500's single oval track soon became painfully boring – no such problems with Grand Prix's sixteen.

Particularly excellent, and present only in Grand Prix is the computer-aided driving which both instructs novice drivers and helps experts perfect their technique.

The only possible gripe is that some mobile camera angles would have been a touch slower. Otherwise, flawless.

PRIX

With Grand Prix the lessons of *Revs* have been well and truly learned and the result is the most visually exciting, involving and – more importantly – playable racing simulation yet available,

statement's made that the graphics are 'fast and smooth', here it really is true. Some effects achieved, such as the seemingly curved polygons used on the bends, really are quite impressive and even the cockpit 'dash' graphics are accurate bordering on the pedantic, with even hill, dip, tilt, sign, building and tree reproduced in the precise locations that they would be found in reality.

stuff and get onto the tarmac, but experienced players will find that thoughtful use of this facility is essential for shaving those vital seconds off lap times.

Since Grand Prix now consists of a qualifying lap to ascertain the player's position on the starting grid and then the race itself. 'True' races last two hours or two hundred laps, which over a by-season, and thankfully it has been realised that such a marathon would test even the most patient driver's endurance to the point (as well as being a complete pain in the rear view mirror) so there's an option to play a percentage of a full race. For example, if the player selects 10% and normally this laps are driven in two hours, then the player will race just 20 laps.

But what of the core issue of the game, the actual racing itself? Put simply, it's sensational. No other game comes as close to emulating the sights and sounds of the real Grand Prix. The action is faster than in any racing sim yet released, yet this hasn't been achieved at the expense of the reactivity of images and polygons. And although it seems that every time a new polygon driven game appears the

We iterate screen approaches. But too much of a problem mentally, but at least it shall it can be a nightmare.

Right turn in front of the main stand is where the Monaco Grand Prix starts, that ready for the ride of your life!

START!

Starts look two thousand of time to save over and win in the toe. You've got through the crowded pack if a good, to make opportunity arises.

PIT STOP!

Will banded together, the competitive opponent the completed drive lap.

Learn where the straights are that ones can in the top to found the essential. Finishing out of the best ones up the gears as soon as possible, making good use of the power opportunity in extreme care.

La Formula is a fairly new racing introduced in 1975. Of course, this is of little importance to some drivers in about it will simply be a time to find peripheral views.

This is the pilot Expanded Minisport engineers await the arrival of the driver.

The stops are controlled by the computer, the whole task has to carried out fast, where the distance be.

Grand Prix features sixteen tracks in all. Below is some advice for six of them:

CIRCUIT DE MONACO, MONACO

(shown left): The car should be set up for as much gravel-hugging downforce as possible to cope with the track's many tight corners. Qualifying is of paramount importance because the narrow winding streets make it near impossible to overtake unless the opposition makes a mistake or crash - although at Monaco the two are usually synonymous.

SUZUKA, JAPAN

This is only figure-of-eight track in the racing calendar. It's highly demanding mechanically because of its many tight bends. Care should be set for medium to low downforce to take advantage of the two long straights.

PHOENIX, USA

This is the first race of the season. Based around the streets of the city, the bends are mainly of the slowly engine variety, although the designers have tried to introduce some more varied corners to prevent driver boredom. Like Monaco, this an exciting course because the corner track demands greater skill of the driver, especially when trying to overtake.

MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

This track features an incredibly long straight that can see cars reaching speeds as high as 196m.p.h. It's easy to get lost because the corners are all very similar. Due to constant resurfacing the track surface is extremely bumpy.

HOCKENHEIMRING, GERMANY

The downforce should be completely turned down to take advantage of the track's many long straights. This makes the car a very twitchy and nervous one to drive. It's difficult to find rhythm on this track, so the straights can result in the driving losing concentration, so stay lively.

Grand Prix combines rigorous sim-ulation of reality with a host of difficulty modifiers to make it a highly playable game for anyone from Granny to Sterling Moss.

73
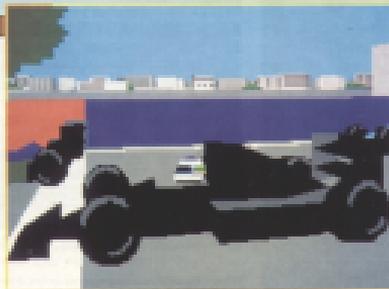
73▶ As a simulation, Grand Prix is impossible. It lacks, in an respect. For example, crashed the I just disagreed. green overaloid ownerals appear and push the car off track. Here a crater hosts a test of Jones's way, Likewise, when the player drives roughly the pits the screen doesn't cut in some animated sequence of a pit crew at work, the player actually drives past the pit lanes, each with its own waiting pit crew.

The important thing to point out is that this detail isn't just a frill – it's essential in generating atmosphere. While there is the facility to decrease the detail levels for slightly smoother play, I feel that most players will prefer to keep the detail level high.

All control is from the joystick. Pushing left and right steers the car, while up and down act as accelerate and brake respectively. The player moves through the gears by holding fire when accelerating or braking. It's a sensible and very workable arrangement, but it does take a little time to get used to – especially if one is more used to arcade-style racing games – no longer will you be happy to put your Ozeflan-foot of rapid braking ever when screaming to slip-ping turn fate you.

The control is always satisfying and very enjoyable – although this may not seem apparent immediately – the player never finds himself cursing or over-steering in the wrong direction because he's try-

ing to compensate for sluggish control responses. Even on the race occasions when update-slows due to a huge amount of on-screen action.

The Formula One car is a tricky brute to drive, and controlling a car such for even such the of manoeuvre whose Great Grand Prix experience is tracking down to the pits in the family mini. Fortunately describe than frustration is averted by a number of driving 'aids' (see the 'Help Me' box for a full – run down). Each enables the task of keeping the car that bit easier. Indeed, with all the aids active there's little left to do but steer-left and right. However, these shackling that they provide an easy route to Championship success, as only someone with the complete mastery of them can as the player progresses through the tracks.

Each of the player's driving opponents has been moulded with their own – for the want of a better term – 'personalities'. It's not surprising to be pulling

Amiga version

Superb near-digitised/quality intro and menu screens give way to literally marvellous 3D – the poor old Amiga must be sweating to pull out to achieve the screen update on show here. Sampled engine and crowd sounds help accentuate the almost palpable Grand Prix atmosphere.

Atari ST version

An almost pixel-for-pixel copy of its Amiga parent. Although perhaps a small of response tad faster in places, the ST loses out inevitably in the sound stakes, with the engine's timey whine a poor substitute for the Amiga's throaty roar.

Had the existing screen has ends all yellow the sun colour the car.

[NOTE: The size of the steering wheel in relation to your own is much more important than it might seem in this overhead shot. Cars parked alongside a simple block overtaking can't crashing into I think are the size.]

triumph of both programming and design, Formula One Grand Prix isn't so much leading the pack as lapping it.

away from the starting grid and in the distance see four or five cars getting involved in a rather nasty metal-rending pile-up. This inconvenience on the part of the computer-controlled cars makes a refreshing change for the usual 'follow-the-first-few' perfect driving seen in other racing games, even if it did have to be programmed in! Not only does this provide a real challenge – these guys don't mean about in lovingly predictable patterns – it also helps enhance that all-important sense of atmosphere. It's easy to start believing that these are real people out there on the track.

As is seemingly standard in today's simulations, Grand Prix features several alternatives to the standard first-person cockpit view. The player can 'send' backwards and forwards through the different cars to see the current view from their cockpits. At first, this may not seem useful, but it's a handy way to be handy for finding out where, say, the leader in the car immediately behind are. While doing this the computer maintains steady though definitely not race-winning control over the car, making sure it doesn't crash or come off the track.

In addition, there's a TV-style view from a series of cameras mounted on the trackside – each of which pan to follow the player's car as it passes. Unfortunately there's no zoom facility, the player simply has to make do with what's available. It's a real pity that there aren't more views available, such as the helicopter shot in Indianapolis 500.

At the risk of sounding like an over-enthusiastic boy racer, it has to be said that Grand Prix is so perfect that it truly is hard to find any criticism. One may complain that the lack of out-of-cockpit views, but then again how many real Formula One drivers have such an option? A triumph of both programming and design, Formula One Grand Prix isn't so much leading the pack as lapping it.

© David Upchurch

Help Me!

Even if the player thinks that your stick is above from their mates about the clothes they wear, Grand Prix's free driving aid should get them around the track in one piece.

● **Automatic braking** – The computer controls the player's braking. The computer assesses the player's speed and their position on the track and decides whether braking is necessary. It makes winning very difficult, because it's conservative braking conspires to stop the player ever taking, especially on corners. Useful at first, but soon de-selected.

● **Automatic Steering** – Very handy. Lets the player forget about all that up-friction five motoring and just get on with the winning. But don't forget that the computer switches all these aids not eventually, so the gear switching has to be learned manually.

● **Direction Pointer** – There are few things scarier than driving along at 200 m.p.h. and seeing a pack of similarly speedy vehicles coming directly head-on. Thank goodness, then, for this aid which always forces the car to drive the right way around the track.

● **Indestructibility** – the Grand Prix world is a rough and tumble one, especially when the player's starting out. Fortunately this nifty option that makes the player's car as hard as nails and totally impervious to any damage.

● **Best Line** – Although ideally the player learns by experience where best to position his car to take maximum advantage of every corner, it does take some time. This option draws a line on the road indicating the optimum path to take.
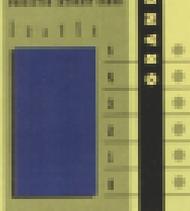
ALIEN BREED

What is it about the Alien that makes it so crowd-pleasingly scary? Is it the creature's utter implacability - the fact that it can be bargained or reasoned with? Or is it the sinister absence of eyes, which imply that no matter how hard you try to hide it will somehow track you down? Or the...
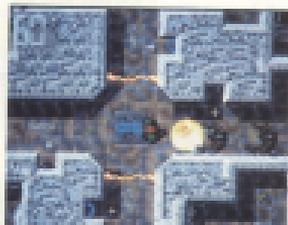
hellenic way it uses self-locking locutions on Derby incubators for its young? Whatever the reasons, there can be no doubt that the Alien is the most popular monster in modern cinema.

There have been attempts to cash in on the Alien's money-spinning qualities before. Now-defunct Argos made a creditable job of translating the first film's claypeaton horror atmosphere (and even James the Gilf, whose wide computer, while Electric Dreams produced not one but two joined-zone games based on the gung-ho sequel Aliens, one written in the UK and the other produced right here in dear old Blighty. Damocles aside, the UK interpretation, an exploitation game, carrying the flying dilection was, was more superior to the six-feeble semi-genre efflux of the American effort. And even...

other games that have 'borrowed' - some might say plagiarised - the Alien's horror/tactical imagery to sell every 'Oompah' to the gameplay. Be honest, doesn't the close resemblance between R-Type's end-of-level baddy and the Alien add a certain thrill to the otherwise standard shoot-'em-up task of blasting seven bells out of the enemy?

And now we have Alien Breed, the first full-price title that attempts to capitalise on the Alien scary-flesh. It may from its somewhat up-as-the-Alien factor that should have been. It may have been drawn from the film so completely triage it, by grabbing Aliens atmosphere onto Gauntlet-esque gameplay. Team 17 have come up with an addictive 'effort unoriginal - wrong.

But at its core, Alien Breed is a game for foreign owners only, and one negative machines at that. This rather tells more two-player situational at its best appears, considering that all new Amigas come-

lien Breed can be summed up as the Aliens licence that should have been. It not so much borrows from the film as completely mugs it, but by grafting Aliens atmosphere onto Gauntlet-esque gameplay, Team 17 have come up with an addictive - albeit unoriginal - winner.

equipped with the extra grub as standard and upgrades are retailing from as little as thirty quid from certain third-party manufacturers.

The beelong off Alien extends right down to the plot, which makes no mention of worthy reference on the space station has suddenly ceased communications with base. And it's up to the one or two players, as the Universe's hardest mucho-bo-beanie macrobiopics, to investigate and find out why. No prizes for guessing that the answer is languid, carnivorous and hungry for humans.

But the concept is only part of the thing. It's probably half of the space station, before entering up to the mock-68 is prevailed. On the first level the task is simple - just find the lift - but later on they become (not slightly more complex, and normally result in the activation of the stock's self-destruct sequence and a hair-raising rush to escape before the place blows out the place with it. These tasks though hardly brain-teasing, at least add momentum to the game and avoid the problem that plagued Gauntlet, i.e. apart from getting higher scores there was no real point to playing.

The action is depicted in plain view. As the player comes about the view scrolls smoothly in all directions to follow their progress. The graphics are generally excellent, with the beautifully detailed and well-animated decks being especially noteworthy, the malevolent beds and items on the floor perfectly conveying the sense of somewhere left to a waste. In comparison the sprites are a great disappoint, especially those of the players, and the animation is merely adequate - the players' characters and the aliens look almost comic and the monsters amble through items in the floor or crawling out through vents in the walls. The overall effect is neigh nightmarishly relentless - unlike Gauntlet there are no 'generators' for the player to destroy and they are on-going. Instead there are spawn-points, and while only their animation and enemy distribution make each of the player programme, it's a pity that there wasn't more variety to the aliens, such as aliens that can, spat and at the place. The graphics present even change either - the aliens either just dawdle around or make a bee-line for their quarry, depending on how they feel.

The mocks are more than just a network of corridors and doors. There are various things to collect that help you to achieve. Key cards allow you to use the doors who would turn the game more spacious, ammunition, and force-fields which can only be passed by key cards in the usable, but most important are the five discs, which can be closed by shooting the switch needs. However, care must be taken not to end off important deck areas. These features add a level's network to the game, forcing the player to avoid carefully and plan his route through the deck. The five doors in particular create a surprising amount of enemy tension, as the few energy items of importance litter the deck area and to be vaccinated before the alien reach you.

Without the most frequently used deck feature is the brave ferocious computer. From which the player can access a series of lunar.
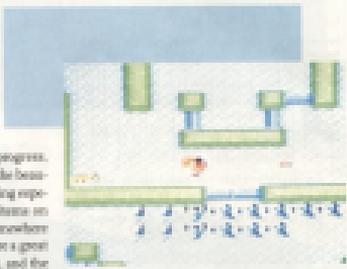
Alien Breed owes a lot to Aliens, but even more to Gauntlet. You Atari cats-up appeared in 1985, and boasted simultaneous four-player action on attacks and warriors fought hordes of freaks and ghouls in a dungeon-based quest for treasure. Alien Breed lacks many of Gauntlet's best qualities, such as the wide variety of opponents and the differing abilities of the characters, but more than replaces them with complex and more interactive maze layouts and greater atmosphere. Most importantly, Alien Breed's defined aims and the certain knowledge that it has an end help give the game a sense of purpose that Gauntlet lacked.

Deck 3

The items are both the planet's best blood and their usual menu. Activating one may reveal a secret, or lure Ash out of one of important data.

Avoid. These jet exhausts cause – not unsurprisingly – instant death. It also stops the aliens, so if possible try and lure them into the blasts. However, sitting on the little blocks – the ones aren't completely single – so don't waste too much time on it.

FULL DECK

Alien Breed takes the player through six deadly levels. But what does the player have to do on each, and what can he expect to meet... er... meet? Read on...

DECK ONE: Having just landed in the ship's hangar, the player's task is simple – find the lift. Few aliens, so this is a nicely just a warming-up session for what lies ahead.

DECK TWO: The player must make his way to the station's own computer system. Once this has been reactivated the deck will begin to self-destruct – so get out sharpish. Alien presence begins to increase, with the first appearance of small, quiet but mercifully weak face-hugging-gun-sized screenipede.

DECK THREE: The station's power register has been damaged. The player must find and replenish it. Skilling performers are the only way to ease trenches. More aliens and a giant end-door creature to get past.

DECK FOUR: The player has to locate the security vault and recover the station's research data. Player now has to contend with crawling webic and switchable barbelle. Quite scary, this bit.

DECK FIVE: The End is High. Find the station's self-destruct, trick it to get back to the ship as soon as possible. Opening and resetting all the various to-the-door renders soon makes less temper would fall to its death.

DECK SIX: Bizarre! The lift breaks and plummets down to the sixth deck, the alien hatchery. Objective? Escape. preferably alive. Bursting at the seams with very closed-off aliens. And who knows, if you're lucky you might get a meeting with the Queen...

lien Breed's difficulty has been well judged. By matching the player's access to higher-powered weapons with the aliens' strength, Team 17 have ensured that the odds never swing wildly in either's favour.

79

ALIEN BREED

One can't help feeling that, given Team 17 awarded itself an extra 512K to play around with, its first full-price game could and perhaps should have been rather more ambitious than a top-notch Gauntlet clone.

Uzi 9mm...

Initially the players are armed with a simple machine-gun. Its pathetic rat-a-tat-tat fire is barely sufficient defence against the first desk's hordes, let alone the hard-as-nails brutes that attack later on. Join us as we amble down the aisles of Guns-Я-Like... and browses through the juicy selection of xenomorph-stoppers we offer...

WENTWORTH PPS TWIN-FIRE BMG - For a paltry 2300G the player can buy this rapid-firing little beauty. Although a damn sight better than the machine gun, it's still not that worthy a purchase unless you're really desperate, although it's predictable fire pattern can be a bonus in some situations.

AMMET MPF FLAMEBAR THROWER - Powerful but erratic, this spits out flaming boomerangs of fire that bounce wildly around the corridors and off the walls. Superb for confined spaces, but it's unpredictability can result in disastrous consequences near fire doors. Price? 3100 G.

INTEX PLASMA SHOTGUN - At 1500 G this is probably the best upgrade for the first-time buyer. Each squeeze of the trigger causes a intense wave of blue plasma to sweep out in front of the player. Frying tonight? Oh yes, we most certainly are.
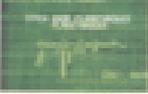
INTEX IXON FLAMETHROWER - A real beauty this - looks good, feels good and packs one Hell of a kick, all for only 8000 G too. Let the smell of cooked alien fill your nostrils as you wave this in their surly insect-like faces. You know they love you for it really. And if they don't - tough.

BOYEX MISSILE LAUNCHER - Probably the next best immediate upgrade after the Plasma Shotgun at its moderately cheap 1130 G, and well worth acquiring these valuable upgrades. The Launcher's armour piercing shells make short work of even the hardiest alien carapace.

INTEX ARC LAZER GUN - Costing a hefty 10230 G this is by far the most expensive weapon, but by George it's worth it. An essential item in any psychopath's armoury, it emits streams of rippling multi-hued lazer rays, incinerating anything in its path. Almost makes you feel sorry for the ugly little blighters. Aaah.

'000 versus a hundred' atmosphere. Alien Breed comes closer than any of the official tie-ins mentioned earlier. The alien graphics are similar enough to their movie counterparts to evoke memories of the film, and the viewpoint (at least while the sound is stunning) helps to build the sense of tension and part expectancy that they did so superbly. Combined with the rattle of the machine gun and the high-pitched squeal of the blasted aliens, it seems that everything has an appropriate motive, from loading a new ammo clip to a door opening.

There are constant messages from a 'female computer' voice à la 'Mother', telling the player which zone he's now entering or if he's low on ammo. The best example of the game's superb use of sound can be heard when the self-destruct is activated; the life-support boxes gradually begin to flash in pitch and tempo as the clock ticks down, while the computer voice intones "Destruction Imminent" with increasing urgency. Admittedly it's an old movie-generating trick, but it still works.

Many have speculated what would happen when demo writers gave up trying to put five million colours and four hundred 50Hz on screen at once and

free and actually used their undeniable programming talents to create a game. Well, now we know. Alien Breed is a fine action romp, slickly crafted and possessing sufficient depth to make it rewarding to play. There's plenty of fun too which I'm pleased to see for team Dave included and the whole project seems to have had some genuine care and effort put into it. It's not quite perfect but I'd say that, since Team 17 awarded itself an extra pub to play around with, its first full price game could and perhaps should have been rather more ambitious than a top-notch Gauntlet clone.

● David Upchurch

somewhere in South America a coup has taken place. Stinking yellow-suited rebel forces have taken control, to a greater or lesser extent, of an area some 20,000 kilometres square. United Nations resolution 828 dictates that unless the rebels surrender immediately to Peacekeeping troops...

But you will have to be initiated by force. Needless to say, the rebels pay no heed to threats from silly little pacifists so once habitat and stay put, urging the UN to do their worst.

Taking control of the MiG-29M, the most feared combat aircraft in the world and pride of the Soviet airforce, the player's mission is to embark on a campaign of strikes, each lessening the rebels' stranglehold on the area and eventually coaxing the enemy out of the trenches.

Distinct from the first MiG game from Domark, released only a year ago, MiG-29M is essentially one long mission, broken down into chunks of manageable combat chunks. The aim is to give the feeling of a more cohesive campaign structure, taking part in a war rather than playing a set of practice missions. MiG-29M's premise is best described as a midpoint between a Microprose theatre-of-war style affair and the slightly distanced though more instantly gratifying feel of Interceptor.

If this ceiling tone is correct, it was vital that while attempting the goal of the cohesiveness and feel of the game, the player didn't feel as if he was left adrift at all. This is achieved by structuring the flying action theoretically of kilometres of air space within six sectors.

The game's success on this count is at least partially down to the breakdown per zone the player. By only allowing only four waypoints to be entered in the aircraft's automatic navigation system, it's ensured the player's thus distanced from the abstract feel of playing around with options.

Before takeoff, an overview of the mission screen shows the ochre campaign zone, with badges, made and supply depots marked. Four waypoints are already positioned on the map, all of which can be moved around at will. In their initial positions they constitute the quickest route possible, or the home enemy; on the map a small badge over a steep gap per plot an enemy supply depot. Although the player can position any waypoint whenever he chooses. A quick horizon clear that there is a particular ratio of the block which must be performed, each violating the overall enemy position. Careful tactics such as trying to destroy the main enemy base so the first flight will reduce until not toward other than a surface-to-air missile on the release.

The game is most cumbersomely placed in combat stages, attacking an enemy survey unit then taking it over. Although moving from one base to another this number though which another enemy installation can be attacked and so on until all the elements on the map are back

MIG 29M
SUPER

MiG29M Superfulcrum's predecessor, the competitively dully titled Mig29 (above) was in every sense a first step. Even when the first game was produced, Domark and Simis had clearly been paying attention to the state of the market and had noted the saturation of heavyweight products. Even before Core turned up and vowed their "No nonsense flight game" banner with Thunderhawk, Domark had produced a flight game with all the over-complexity cut out. However, in the process came of the long-term appeal got shied away too. Here we have a game with the better qualities of it's daddy and some genuine depth too. Not bad.

candle UN control. Weaving each stage will make the plane's life easier later on. By destroying supply lines, and isolating particular camps, the enemy forces are less capable of hampering the player's attacks on other conclusions.

Once weapons have been decided and weapons selected from either the default combination of both or what is then available a the player's own particular favourite setup. It's time to get the MiG airborne. From its stationary position on the runway the aircraft can be brought into the air in a matter of seconds. Simple, logical keypress controls minimise any coordination of the comprehensive taxi out during play and once airborne the player can appreciate the abilities of both the game and the plane alike.

A factor which made the first MiG game so playable was that the aircraft itself is no pig to fly. Plenty of combat flight sims are hamstrung by complex and unnecessarily fiddly controls forcing the player to pay more heed to the joystick and dials than the world outside. Not so here. Everything is provided for the player's com-

fort and ease of use. The HUD is clear and simple and information is duplicated all over the place. If the player is concerned about advanced where tracking down a target, both on-screen as well as the otherwise to the HUD which is also perfect to use when climbing to acquire a target. Data links are also passed to the player. Likewise, if the player is trying to hunt down one of the enemy troop transport home or Enoc Era, he can still keep a track of him from the HUD to effect it's all displayed in an utterly sensible manner on his control console. The experience here are just as they should be. The player never has to think where to look.

In addition, the fly-by-wire set-up of the new MiG is simulated well to make the flight even less unnecessarily stressful than before. In order to minimise tumbles and gory blackouts caused by pulling too many G's, a computerized buffer smooths out the plane's occasionally frantic, stick-wrenches before actioning them on the aircraft. Likewise, an automatic stabilisation device cuts out if some of aircraft whenever necessary, removing the frustrating rocking and roll. The overly complex panel of the old stick into a

> MiG29M's premise is best described **as a midpoint between a Microprose theatre-of-war style affair and the slightly disjointed yet manageable feel of Interceptor.**

FULCRUM

FLIGHT DECK

The whole point of MiG29M is that it does n't break down into easy-to-handle missions in the same way that lots of flight sims do. Instead, the plot unfurls over a single mission - to liberate a Southern American country from the newly-acquired rebel leaders. So, to give a better impression of how the game plays, we've taken a pic from each of the major elements found within the mission and detailed them for you.

Working around in an essentially checkless pattern, the player must perform a sort of leapfrogging action, attacking enemy air bases and then claiming them as his own in order to reach later targets successively.

To begin with, life is worryingly easy, with the player facing greater difficulty in actually landing his plane on a clean airstrip than downing enemy fighters and wonky OKs anti-aircraft installations. However, as the game goes on, each take-off could well prove to be the player's last. Toward the end of the mission life becomes quite heavily impossible, with enemy jets traveling the player into the ground and inst-aircraft guns blasting him as he bits it.

The learning curve from slow and easy combat scenarios to deadly scat-of-the-pants stuff could have been a touch more gentle. But hey, this is war, after all.

That said, even novice fliers will find some of the frustrating touchbacks other gimme throws in their path. The WiM is a great air craft to fly and the zoom fly-to-wire system will do away with all those frustrating over-compensatory joystick jerks.

What Domark really need to do in order to establish the MiG games as heavyweight play-to-win flight combat games is turn out a mission disk (a mission) the longevity of an already excellent games system.

iG29M's strongest suit is the storyline and development of the plot through the different stages in the missions. It may not be the most original yarn ever, but it serves its purpose well.

central position to simply achieve level flight.

Once the desired speed and altitude of flight has been achieved, the MiG's progress can be viewed from a host of angles. I teeter an external from behind and in front, left and right, tame and standard views are available. Also, far many eye-favoring benefit than any addition to cockpit innovation, the player can position his "camera" in the most recently fired missile as it streaks toward its target or even, in his most perverse, inside the target itself.

Combat in MiG29M is never more than a missile away. The target clusters are constructed to reach the player just enough in one situation to learn how to deal with the next. The first waypoint, for example are rather lightly defended and there's little need for any but the most simple of avoidance maneuvers of the action. Targets within range can be cycled through by tapping the appropriate button. A little square box will also highlight the targets position on the visual. Should the target lie outside the player's cone of vision, a directional line will lead from the center of the HUD to the target. Thus, aircraft can be chased down the skies a tad more efficiently as the player is forced to balance the need to turn more quickly than his opponent to avoid being lucked into his enemy's sights with the constant threat of blacking out under too much gyroforce G pressure.

Dogfights are, for the most part, the most difficult yet satisfying part of MiG29M. Enemy planes will lock on to the player and chase him to death given half a chance. They've desired enough pilots and it's tricky to catch them out. It should be the player's foremost priority in any combat situation to ditch any enemy planes, as they will pose far more of a threat than any anti-aircraft fire that may be encountered.

Aside from all the oh-so-complex maneuvers detailed in the manual, probable the easiest and pro-

> arefree heroism such as trying to destroy the enemy base on the first flight will seldom yield any reward other than a surface-to-air missile up the exhaust.

tively functional dogfighting game is to thrust away from the enemy plane and force them to chase at top speed. Then, by slamming on the airbrakes and killing all thrust, the MiG will decelerate and turn in as tight a circle as possible. If performed correctly, the nose will break the enemy's position and will drag their little green line around. Look behind to abort an engagea away from divinity in front of the MiG. Increasing thrust and selecting the afterburner, the most plane will by now be spinning in position...

Increasing enemy missiles can generally be avoided with some frantic fancy half dropping and adhering to the basic rule of not firing in a straight line too...

Players finding themselves on the receiving end of enemy fire will disappear between the plain cloud and a wall cover. As this situation, it's wise to just turn inward and, further, this accordance, the most... still... to... kill... as... most occasions.

This plane and the tearing of the mountains are admirable. MiG's graphic style is worthy of comments, though for different reasons. Criticisms of the first game suggested that the landscape was a little Spartan and blurred in close... detail, from an... blocks and trees as decorative touches to the bridges, tanks and radar trucks which add a lot to the battle...

Most of these elements sit well with the rest of the game, but the decision to use it as a mountain rendered in the textured one of the most commonly it... from the scenery the sun always looks as though it should be... a little lower in the sky...

On all other visual fronts, MiG-29 is no slouch. The graduated skyline, the explosions of napalm and especially the burning and smoking which spews out when the damaged enemies aircraft make the game look really spectacular...

So, what level of success have Domark and Simis had? Well, on virtually all accounts, a great deal. Despite minor niggles about the textured graphics and perhaps a worrying doubt that over despite the way it loses the way during... gameplay, MiG-29 is a hugely enjoyable and far more playable... way short of a Microprose title the sheer length of speed. MiGLogich hyperelaxus delivers the goods. It's also one of the most entertaining and straightforward polygon combat flight sims around.

● Jim Douglas

PC varies

Machines running at over 12MHz will be adequate for MiG's needs. The option to turn off the graduated skyline will further aid players with slower machines. Despite the rather unpleasant typeface used in the briefing and pilot-debriefing modes, this is a fine example of clean, ordered game design, with a place for everything and everything in its place, usable of utilising easily split games from companies more commonly associated with both PCs and consolidates than Domark.

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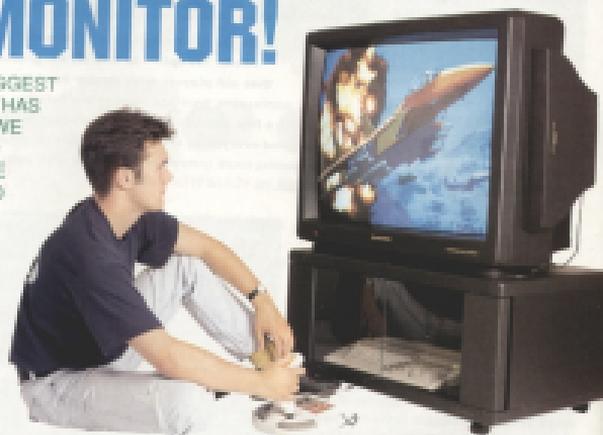
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console reviews

ver the page, console fans, you'll find the start of ACE's new console section, a suite of pages set aside in the magazine for nothing other than console games. Each month in the mag we'll be devoting a similar number of pages to all things console with the very latest titles on both import and general release reviewed in full colour.

Don't forget that all the new console games we receive each month will be detailed in our Reviews Directory section at the back of the magazine, so even if you don't find anything here to suit your tastes, you may well find something in the pink that'll do the trick.

This month's games:

91 – Road Rash
Even the dreadful graphics can't detract from Electronic Arts' new biggie; a motorcycle racing game with more throttle than you would believe. Race cross country down winding roads while fist-fighting other riders and memories. 100% smokin' smokin' fun!

93 – El Viento
MegaDrive owners never seem to tire of the slapud old beat-em-up formula and this time we've got two examples of just that. El Viento, the ugly sister of the guv'nathons some entertaining enough fighting but looks greatly appeal. Nevertheless, it's worth examining for visual novelty value alone.

94 – Pro Soccer
They said it couldn't be done and they were right! Well, they said it should be done and they were wrong is closer to the truth. Kick Off, the best game in the history of the world (official) has turned out to be a sorry old affair on the Famicom. Oh dear.

96 – Streets of Rage
Hit those scumms! Kick those dearues! Yes indeed. This is what fighting games are supposed to be all about. Team up with a mate and do battle with the evil forces that have taken over a city and turned it into a New York Bragland. Broken bottles! Knives! Superglues! Car!

99 – Jerry Boy
Jelly Boy, as it should have been titled involves a little squishy shape creating a hazard-packed land shuddering contorts and doing good deeds. Before you turn away in disgust, take a look at the review.

I's never easy trying to pump fresh ideas into a tired old genre - although with its latest effort Road Rash, Electronic Arts has had more success than most in recent times. It's essentially a motorcycle racing game, but with one novel twist - violence. Despite the game's contemporary scenario, Road Rash's designers have had no qualms about making the whole thing as realistically as possible. What you get in a nutshell is a rather hazardous blend of speed-freak bikers, known as Rashers, who race each other across the country for cash prizes. Apparently nobody ever bothered with the formality of writing a rulebook and no more or less anything goes. As a result, the days of trying to sneak past the vehicle ahead of you are long gone - in Road Rash all that's needed is a healthy right hook in order to knock the offending rider off the road!

The Road Rash consists of five individual races, each on a different track, and each with fifteen riders. EA's previous "alternative" sports games Skate Or Die and its sequel Ski Or Die have obviously been a strong source of inspiration here, as the feel is very similar, consisting of the trio of "muscle tolerance deploy" type queries in the pre-race dialogue. Each of the computer-controlled riders is named and have their own personalities - some are more violent than others.
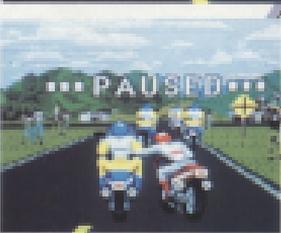
ROAD RASH

Race hard! Hit harder! Road Rash meets Super Hang-On in ELECTRONIC ARTS' latest bogs offering. But is it wheelie good or wheelie wheelie good?

The racing itself is, for the most part, of the standard Super Hang-On variety, but with a number of neat twists. For a start the tracks are considerably more treacherous than ever before, featuring hidden hazards, hairpin turns, fast running hills and all manner of distracting obstacles, with added peril provided by roadside trees, signposts and gawping animals. A nice touch is that, when one of the players crashes, rider and bike are separated by a spectacular accident sequence, often with the unfortunate biker sent skidding across the tarmac and into yet more obstacles! It's thus necessary to race back to the stricken cycle so that racing can resume.

Combat between riders is limited but effective, consisting of a basic punch, a more powerful kick and face-slap manoeuvre. The player racing on the rider's breadwinner side and can only be executed once the rider's punch or bike has cleared. To inflict a blow, and mastery of the move is vital to success, in turn because the biker can end in several great shaking forces of its own to knock you off course. When this happens it all goes a bit loose and the rider's riding going so disastrous and overbalanced swings often lead to the most of the few, their routine could be depleted by a series of blows - although a single well-timed beating be enough to dismount an enemy. Not so vulnerable

are the highway patrolmen that try constantly to pull over bikers for speeding - get caught and it's a night in jail and a hefty fine. The overall goal is to win £1,500 in prize money - only after which you can buy a new, faster bike, which is likely to see you through the rest of the game's tougher races. Reach the end of the last race and you're declared the overall winner, after which you're congratulated for your efforts before being treated to a rather tasteless commercial.

Road Rash is certainly one your fans out there - it's faster than most for a start, and once over the game, it becomes apparent that the violence aspect isn't just a gimmick, but a proper gameplay aspect that makes the game all the more fun and involving. It takes a while to get the hang of the bike, and mastery of the move is vital. The game presented is often challenging, pure speedway in a way that is novel and fresh when on the Drive. Highly recommended as Super Hang-On has never been so much fun to play.

● Gary Whitta

860 FAVOURITE RATING

	amount of game		
	speed		
	graphics		
	sound		
	playability		
	lastability		

It takes a short while to get a hang of the controls and fighting moves, but once the player is proficient, it's difficult to put Road Rash down. The only slight letdown is the small number of courses: only five - and the lack of any great variation between them, which is likely to eat into the game's long-term appeal. There's a real feeling of speed provided by Road Rash's crappy screen update, and Rob Hubbard's thumping power soundtracks provide real atmosphere. The graphics themselves aren't quite as clean as they might have been, but nevertheless Road Rash remains one of the year's more impressive MegaDrive offerings.

91

EL VIENTO

Ever seen a female ninja? Now you have, and it's all thanks to WOLFTEAM

Though many may doubt the integrity of Sega's "classic" martial arts adventure blonde, there's little arguing with its phenomenal success. Not only has it been a pop-out series in its own right, since its inception it has spawned more clones than any other console game. And while the latter in an unbearably long line may not offer any

much new in the way of original ideas, it does at least differ from all the other uninspired layoffs by casting for once as a female hero. Considering that female heroes aren't normally very popular, apart from Wonder Woman and Cleonea out of Thundercats like most, the answer to the obvious question is 'yes'. It's just a shame that the game she has to save the world in is so damn dull.

The unintelligible Japanese documentation means that the identity of El Viento and the player's unknown mean remains a mystery, but it doesn't take a degree course to work out that, whatever ninja woman's objectives in life may be, she goes around them by chopping the hell out of everything she sees. This is in fact necessary, as just about everyone that Miss Ninja bumps into on her travels is out to get her, from the Duck Tracy-type fellows who move around in raincoats blasting away to the maniac bikers and strange T-shirted turtled nab slash-who drop bizarre indestructible objects out of mid-air.

That word "indestructible" is quite an important word when playing El Viento, because if you stand to get past everything in your line of fire. If you're not really too bothered about whether your own screen hero has a wife, or not, you'd be better advised to check out one of the official Ronin games. At least they don't look like there's something wrong with the SCART lead.

it's debatable whether or not he'd bother to even pick up the 'unaged after chopping men on the first opponent time.

The game itself is just about passable, consisting of a lot of uninspired stages linked together by doors to a maze-like fashion. The object of each is basically to run up and down, lots of stairs, stab all the bad guys and find the door to the next stage. In practice, this can actually be quite

The terrible graphics are an instant turn-off, and once the gameplay reveals itself to be little more than substandard running about and killing, you're unlikely to be too compelled to carry on. What a bummer.

The most abysmal graphic the Drive has ever had to endure combine with ear-assaulting music to produce the console equivalent of dropping a bronze block on your head. Enough said!

• Gary White

PRO SOCCER

SUPER SOCCER EXTRA 700

Because of the incompatibility of Kick Off's control with the Famicom controller means Pro Soccer takes a little getting used to – and a lot of patience along the way. But the rewards are there for those who are willing to persevere – just about, and so it's a sports game its instability is theoretically tenuous. As annoying and thoroughly inappropriate how trundles away during play, and the frustration is further compounded by the indicator arrows, which in the heat of the moment can make it difficult to see what player is under your control. And without the full strength of the original's playability to back it up, Famicom owners are unlikely to be very tolerant of the low-quality sprites.

Is Kick-Off on the Famicom all it's cracked up to be?

Now. Well, it's not that it's bad, but it's certainly not Kick Off either. As reported to you exclusively by ACE last month, Famicom owners can at last experience the Kick Off legend –and of. Now it's called Pro Soccer so as not to annoy the famous Japanese cip-before comparison so-called Kick Off, and but the response of the movement on-screen changes that are part and parcel of any Amiga-to-Famicom conversion. Anybody who's played the ultimate football game (and, as many might argue, the ultimate game full stop) will undoubtedly have been somewhat wary about the prospect of such a conversion – and the finished product has more or less confirmed their fears.

As I say, it's not that it's bad, its in own right it's a fine football game – but in the process of putting Kick Off into its supposedly more powerful machine, something's been lost in the translation. Inevitably everything is there – team selection, formations, headers, free kicks, corners, aftertouch, tackling – but as far as the feel is concerned, the Famicom version is the complete game equivalent of a frozen ready-meal. For all the right words and purposes it's the same – except that it isn't.

To be fair, it's not the fault of the nice folks at Imagineer who are responsible for the conversion. The problem is that Kick Off's highly sensitive control was rigid and tuned out wasn't such on a Famicom joypad. The rapid and very delicate changes of direction required to perform the dazzling feats of dribbling and skill that made the original version so good just can't be performed properly on a four-way pad. It doesn't work. So the result is like playing Kick Off with some sort of in-built handicap. It's still passable, but to play it, well, anyone expert enough at Kick Off to master all the features on offer, the game

might be, so that all-important aspect of the game remains, for the most part, intact. I say for the most part because there are some flaws. The scrolling is fast, but on particular parts of the pitch it gets noticeably jerky at times. More worrying is the pitch design itself which, where the players are running at high speed, gives the impression that it isn't moving at all. This bizarre optical illusion can be very off-putting at times.

Admittedly, Kick Off regisns are unlikely to mean too much about this, and they'll see it as just a football game, and on that score it's not a bad effort. It's just about playable and, in two-player mode particularly, there's a fair share of fun to be had. But for those of us in the know, Pro Soccer flatters only over the counter.

Gary White

94

harlie Bronson had it easy. The crime-ridden fictional city that is the setting for Sega's latest megadrive offering makes the Bronx look like hellfire. The story goes that a once peaceful and thriving metropolis has been overrun by a secret crime syndicate run by an unknown overlord. With the police either bought off or too frightened to act, the streets have been reduced to a warzone ruled by crooks and hoods. Three cops in particular, though, have already taken more than they can stand and, after being refused permission to form a special task force to combat the crime, have turned in their badges and taken to the streets to sort things out in their own way.

Needless to say, these cops don't waste time with handcuffs or nights. In Streets of Rage the objective is simple: kick the crap out of every last lowlife in the city, on a trail that will eventually lead the player to Mr. Big himself and the final showdown to decide the fate of the city. But whatever the intricacies of the storyline, what Streets of Rage boils down to is a classic beat-'em-up in the Final Fight tradition. In fact, that is the Final Fight tradition, for this is not a lot of respects there's little to differentiate it from CapCom's coin-op classic.

The players progress through eight levels of fifth-infested cityscape, starting out in the ghettos and ending up in the boardroom furnished palace of Mr Big. Along the way the vigilante pair face a number of lesser scenes, including a tropical beach, a car park, a factory and a bridge - to one level all

STREETS

The city is in turmoil! Is SEGA's answer to Final Fight tough enough to clean it up?

the action takes place on board a boat! The fighting itself is fairly rudimentary, but all the more rewarding for it, as the control system does most of the work. From the basic combination of jump and attack controls, the player can execute a dazzling array of ball-breaking moves and acrobatic martial arts techniques. The combat is also quite punitive, as the more a combatant executes in hand-to-hand combat the player's command, but also on how he and his opponent are positioned. Attacking from the front results in a simple punch or kick, while coming in from behind opens up possibilities for complex throws and wrestling-style suplexes.

Each of the three main characters available to the player has a distinctive fighting style. Blonde-haired Axel Stone, for instance, is a martial arts expert, specialising in devastating knee-blows and a tasty back handflip kick chain. Scial brother Adam Hunter is

OF RAGE

885

By **Gary Whitta**

Well it's sport, I'll give it that. In the past Famicom gamers have played baseball, sumo, space pilot and even a little Italian plumber— but never a bit of jelly before. In fact the rather obscure title of Jerry Boy can only be put down to the Japanese tendency, as people like Ryan Abbot would delight in informing the uninformed reader, to equate L-sounds with R-sounds. Jerry Boy, see? The Japanese documentation doesn't throw any light on the subject, and after Monkey Kong was re-christened Donkey Kong due to a mistaken telephone conversation, you have to admit that anything's possible.

But enough of this nonsense. Silly title aside, Jerry Boy is actually a very cuddly, and very playable, little platform romp. Or so it seems. In the game. As far as it is possible to ascertain, the most silly-of-a-little-boy operates (control) from a little-other-jelly-head, which would explain a little man turned into a blob of blue jelly

with a face on it by a cackling old wizard. The idea is to jelly along (or whatever it is a jelly does) the various levels of the mystical world (ogre place where the game is set and re-amount human form. It's all a rather pure excuse for a Super Mario World clone that if nothing else must surely qualify as the most console game ever seen—and that's saying something.

Each scrolling stage is essentially a simplified version of a Super Mario World, comprising all the standard platforms, bouncy things, ramps, lifts,

PAUSE

Is EPIC's jelly-based game set for stardom?

bonus bits and end-of-level bosses. The twist that the whole genre hangs on is that the player's realform character is sort of like a subterranean version of Terramans-s's Tzoxx, in that it can alter its shape to adapt to its environment. In default mode it's just a little blob, but it can turn flat as a pancake to squash a pot, stand up tall and then to exhibit aerial places or squeeze into narrow spaces, stick to walls and ceilings and absorb objects and hold them inside its gelatine body where they remain visible until spat out its face use. The more often used objects are red balls which form the basic weapon against mean-looking baddies and the red history—such as level one's egg-laying chicken-things.

The control of the green underground is magnet-like (the jelly's underground in stages that play like a cross between Mario and Sonic the Hedgehog), although throughout most of the game is much slower than either of those classics due to Jerry's slow, wobbly movement. In such the atmosphere is very sedate, which suits the game's disgustingly fluffy graphics to a tee and is reflected in the feeling of fluid progress through a level as it might lack the frenetic action of Sonic or Mario, it's every bit as playable, offering just as much challenge—if not more—in the form of tricky puzzles, traps and obstacles. It's certainly one of the better Famicom games I've seen recently but for all the charm of the graphics and playability, Jerry Boy isn't a game to get anyone who appreciates a game that puts a smile on your face.

The control of multi-purpose Jerry Boy takes a bit of getting used to, but once it's mastered it's difficult to put the joypad down - no matter how frustrating it might get at times. Lots of levels ensure that premature boredom or completion isn't likely to be a problem. Cute is the key word, there are no doubt that Jerry Boy features some of the most adorable graphics around. The game is simple, fun and wonderfully tongue-in-cheek, the jelly atmosphere is bolstered well by the bouncy sound track, consisting of lots of bumpy little tunes. Fun stuff.

Gary White

MEAN MACHINES

SEGA

MEGADRIVE

SUPER FAMICOM

NINTENDO

GAMEBOY

GAME GEAR

SUPER
MARIO
BROS 3

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GAME EVER?

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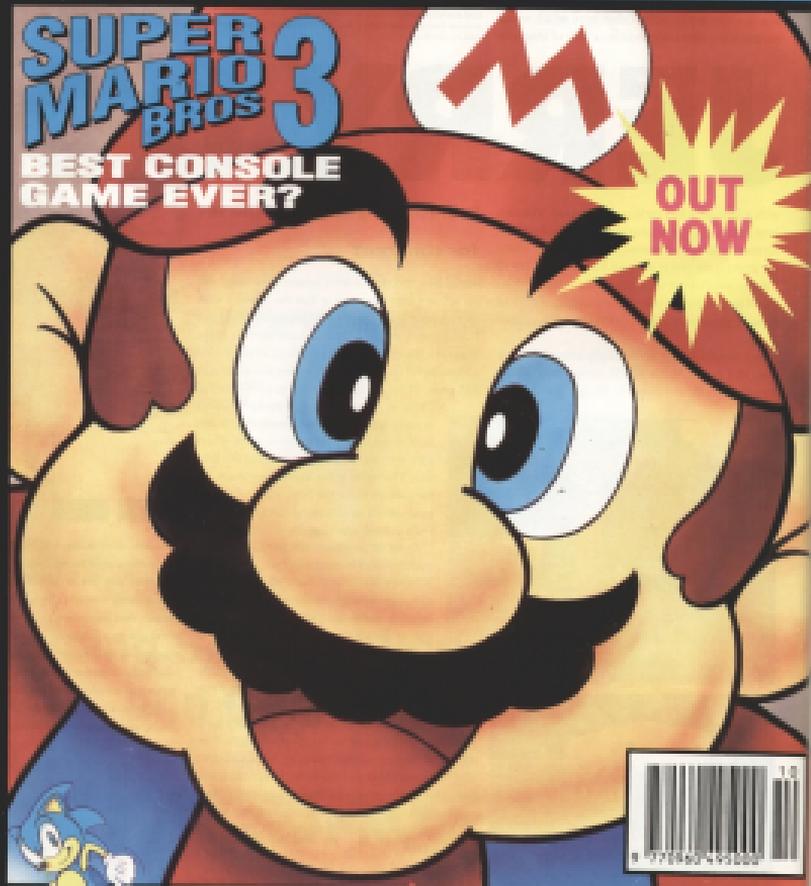
MASTER SYSTEM SONIC - FIRST PIC!

Hold The Last Page!

Well, okay, so it's not quite the last page but this, dear reader is the page we can get long after the others are all happy in being/adopted land. And so, what better use of this fascinating gem is the production schedule than to leave the page free for the last-minute previews that just happen to fly in the door at the eleventh hour. The last minute of the eleventh hour to be precise. And the lucky recipient of the treatment this month is...

REACH FOR
THE SKIES

██████████ the twilight simulator is dead - long live the war game? Finally, after years of being at the mercy of intense correlation, we would be plenty can soon have a say in the running of the battle.

The fabled nonsense that fades our heads Koronis Software Reach For The Skies, or the 8th negotiation takes us back at The Battle Of Britain. The scenario is undoubtedly the best effort of the gang as it, and all, and you don't even see it all, you won't even want to tell you why from what comes second, suffice to say 85% of us run the entire history of that famous conflict. Even the first Luftwaffe raids of July '47 to the end of them it (adapted Aug two battles been well anticipated) treating his own non-legendary gallant foe.

For most people, the name Roman Software probably didn't ring too many bells, but their flight sim pedigree is impressive.

Back in '83 PA McConnell got Roman Software to

put Spectrum Hotshot's awesome falcon into the lineup and 85', which is in to try to drive nothing Falcon Mission Disc, a fr a make of non-story that bigger and better was to follow, with the release of the much-acclaimed Von son Flight Of The Intruder. However, it was with their most recent product Falcon 3 that they began to move towards the true wargame sim. With the campaign and scenario editing features, the players could analyse future and customise their attack plans, and attack crews, producing a theatre with an advanced feel which, is where Reach For The Skies comes in.

To begin at the beginning, RFTS has no missions, which is a point to be known for a start. The only decisions here are the first phases of The Battle Of Britain as agreed by, fattest (some mementoes, to which this it Luftwaffe are compelled) within and sites respectively. You can play either side of these scenarios, which means you're trying either to defend the RAF or to wing this green and pleasant land from the most in-flight of the Nazi war machine.

However, whereas previous strategy/flight sims were mostly just wonderful 'shoot-em-ups' presented with an RTS, you soon find that planning the war is as thrilling (Some crews you make to the Battle Map, whether it's moving a squadron from one airfield to another, or switching a planes to with or setting up flying. Even when you make on the Battle Map, whether it's moving a squadron or setting an aircraft factory from being over used) and you find yourself over-chances for the rest of the game.

You'll be able to man where you start, whether you're rocking it all out from One One or just depicting in at them - on imposing through mission wait you get in the good stuff half. All applicable zones functions are available both throughout the set-up and strategy stages, and in-flight; and while you say that this is merely an extension of the Flight Mission system, in no it's game a lot further with that, and controls too more of the usability of Microsoft's Flight Sim series than anything else. Basically, Reach For The Skies can be as simple as to you or as complex as you like, and will thus suit beginners and seasoned flight sim addicts alike.

OCTOBER '91 ISSUE 119

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next!

The next issue of ACE will be bigger, brighter, bolder and better than even this mighty tome. Hard to believe though it is, just remind yourself (since you're probably still reeling from the awesomeness of this issue) of the factors which make every issue of ACE so markedly different from all the other mags on the market, and imagine all then magnified by a factor of a billion. And we're not exaggerating! Oh, alright, yes we are.

FIRST of all, remember that ACE offers more depth and analysis in its reviews than any other games magazine, multi-format or otherwise. We test games to their very limit! Our six page reviews system enables us to get closer than anyone else, especially by guiding you through a level or mission of the particular game step by step, explaining exactly what the player has to do on the way. This way, by reading an ACE review, you'll have a genuine idea what it would be like to actually play the game.

NEXT, remember that our Reviews Directory will keep you abreast of every game released for your format each month. As the directory builds into a living, growing thing, you'd be wise to get familiar with it before it simply becomes too big!

THEN, remember that our In the Works section will deliver the up-to-the-minute information of the hottest of the hot games as they're put together. Once you've taken a stroll through these and our Previews pages, you'll be fully armed and informed and completely genned-up as to the following month's releases.

FINALLY, consider that ACE has an untouchable track record of breaking the biggest stories first. Not just with some half-arsed whispers and rumours but with hard facts and pictures.

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reviews
directory

...elcome to the ACE Reviews Directory. Over the page begins probably the most detailed and comprehensive review list ever! Well, that's what we reckon, anyway. The aim is to provide the best buyers' guide information on every game that you're likely to find in the shops in any given month. The first list of games are the new titles released during the month in which the issue was produced. The Still Available section details the games that have been released for the last three months. At the end of each three-month cycle the older games will be removed, since they're probably not going to be on the shelves any more.

Each month we'll be updating the Directory to incorporate the newest games, always trying to cover every release as we see it.

It's important to remember that all games will appear in the Directory section, even the very best titles will be in the Still Available pages, and games which for one reason or another just don't make it into our main reviews section (we can only give our special reviews treatment to a limited number of games, after all) will be appearing in the New Releases pages.

Unlike some mags who insist on splitting off all the games which they don't like and sticking them into a relatively inferior section, making no value judgements here, So don't be surprised to see Trailblazers rubbing shoulders with two-star games. And keep looking through the listings because there's a good chance you'll find a gem that you'll have never heard of.

We've arranged the lists, to the best of our remedial school education, in alphabetical order enabling you to get at the game you're interested in as swiftly as possible.

New Releases:

Arnazing
Arnora Golden
Aloerror
Burger Time Deluxe
Gambax
Glass HQ
Chest Kingdom
Croak for a Corpse
Defender of the Crown
Dungeon
F-15 Strike Eagle 2
Final Fight

Hicky
Footballer of the Year 2
Gunship 2000
Hunter
Magnetic Scrolls
Collection
Megablaster
Megafortress 2
Missile Command
Monster Business
Nicholas 2

Railroad Tycoon
Realball
Rolling Ronny
Socdoes
Secret Weapons of the
Luftwaffe
Silent Service 2
Space 1889
SWTV
Thunderjaws
Zone Warrior

Still Available:

Afterburner 2
Alien Storm
Atomic Robots
Bananas Bros
Battle of Britain
Castles
Centurion: Defender of
Rome
Championship of the
Clayfighter 2
Cloud Traggle's Air
Combat
Dragon Crystal
Dragon's Breath
ELF
Elvira
Face Inhancener
First's Wealth Fighter 2
F-14 Tomcat
F-15 Strike Eagle
F-Zero
Frenzy
Ghost Battle
G-Loc
Golf
Hadey Wars
Harley
Heart of China
Hero Quest

16 True Fare
Loom Raster Douglas
Killing
Jetfighter 2
Jimmy Whites
Lethal Weapon
Loom
Martian Dreams
Mortal Land
Mrgush Island
Mega & Magra
Microprose Golf
NBA All Star Challenge
Nebulus84
N-Space 3
Robin Hood
Robocod
Island
Shadow
The Simpsons
Suse
Sunday Puzzles
Elbow
Ermby Beaten

Sonic The Hedgehog
Super Professional
Baseball
Supercab Eyge
Tel-Game
Thunderhawk
Utopia
Warriors
Wild Wheels
Wing Commander 2

Give Us A Break!

Please remember, this is the very first month of the Directory and there will inevitably be some omissions and some cuts. For this we apologise in advance and promise to do our very best. If you aren't that keen, that day arrive, we've done our best so write in and let us know
scree!ty.

ACE **107**

new
releases

ARMALYTE

Price Atari ST/Amiga £25.99
Genre Arcade Blast
Publisher Thalamus

It's just as well space is infinite—it'd need to be to contain the worryingly endless airfax battles that, according to the million cosmetic rage through-out the Universe. Thalamus' latest games in vying between a million combatants is on trial updating of its C64 hit from many Galaxies past.

The plane is given the difficult—if completely unoriginal—task of fighting his way through the lends worth of horrendously-seething screens past a mean to a cursing array of really naff-coloured aliens. The secret is survival in the scourge every screen, and the machine's hardware and high-speed graphics go unheeded.

Armalyte is an assembly tribute to its illustrious 16bit-master. Technically it's excellent, with mean slick parallax scrolling (especially good on the ST version gives the machine's hardware a good graphic processing). However it lacks the inventiveness in the gameplay stakes that the other part to makes the ultimate doubling conversion so convincing worth it. Several mega-screens into the

deadly-to-the-touch scenery, I'm the basis of the endless lanes let's hope Armalyte's sub-title of The Final War is correct.

★★★

ARMOURGEDDON

Price Atari ST £25.99
Genre Simulation
Publisher Psygnosis

Psygnosis' latest 3D polygon effort conversion is a cert answer to find the fine pieces of a massive hull and use it to destroy an enemy HQ. There are six combat vehicles to try, ranging from ground-hugging tanks and hovercraft to high-flying jets and helicopters, and the player must use his skill and judgement to decide when, where and how best to use them to achieve his current mission objective. Mouse control of each such vehicle is smooth and responsive, the part of giving a good game-achieving feeling of speed.

The player can switch between the vehicles 'in the field' using the function keys this computer pro for vehicle on an earn when his figures are lined-up for the ground. On earn 'em' em battle has been between the vehicle he controls and the other five in the squadron, the outcome of each ploughing earn first into the ground. Like Carrier's Thunderhawk, the stress is on action rather than simulation, with the enemy attacking placed on the lasting-part will resemble the sense of the battle disembled man of the first-rank in the trial between the cer-

ter-action, but it's not all about drum shoot. There's an important resource-management element as well, where the player has to wisely allocate stores and decide what vehicles to deploy for the given jobs and still maintain a strong defence force to protect his own vital base from enemy.

Armourgeddon is one of Psygnosis' best games to date, with solid game-play backing up the impressive simulation elements. Thoroughly recommended ★★★★

★★★★

ATOMINO

Price Atari ST/Amiga £25.99
Genre Puzzle
Publisher Psygnosis

Hmmm, fascinating! There are few genres based around atomic physics, and even fewer interesting ones, so it should come as no surprise that Psygnosis Atomino is a puzzle game based around atomic valence, i.e. the number of bonds an atom can make with other atoms, i.e. Hydrogen atoms can make with one other atom, oxygen two or make, i.e. e.g. the player is presented with an atom at a time and has to form molecules of various sizes (i.e. must them atoms together, a molecule is only complete when all the atoms within it have all their bonds completed. For example, a molecule comprising three atoms of valence three would require the atoms to be linked in a triangle, with each of the atoms bonding to

linge, pretty graphics and simple-ergo mount-making is one of the latter play ing ★★★

★★★

BURGER TIME DELUXE

Price GameBoy £29.99 import
Genre Platform
Publisher Data East

Now this is a real blast from the past, when arcade games didn't have to throw anyone about like extra sub-standard hacker role car to get them to part with their cash. The player has to guide tiny Pete the Chef around a maze full of platforms and ladders. In a bizarre culinary exercise Pete has to make giant hamburgers by walking over the various ingredients lying on the platform below. Burger Time has to disengage from the platform onto the platform below, and he is pursued by three homicidal burger foes made from whatever can be man-made and creative arrangement of plain garnish.

These his all sounds a bit easy, but you're reckoned without the mutant and sausage foes out to stop Pete achieving his culinary creations. The burger boys can he dealt with by showering them with pepper or by squashing them beneath the burger parts—both methods are in limited supply. Burger Time is a fun little game, although the graphic as per the standard. It's probably a bit too simplistic for today's younger gamers, but nostalgic buffs will enjoy this next slice of the past.

★★★

CASTELIAN

Price GameBoy £24.99 import
Genre Platform
Publisher Triffix Entertainment

Remember Nebulus? It was a bizarre platform game starring tiny fish called Pogo. Each of its compounds difficult levels was set on a tall tower. The play-

CHASE H.Q.

Price **GameStar £25.99** Import
Genre **Race Game**
Publisher **Taito**

There can be few readers who aren't familiar with the excellent coin-op or its sequel S.C.I. What a bummer on the part of the designers to continue high-octane racing action with bumper-nerving action. The player rides on

CLOUD KINGDOMS

Price **Atari ST, Amiga £7.99**
Genre **Platform**
Publisher **GBH/Grandia**

Cloud Kingdoms is a kind of hallucinating balls, to be precise. Ditz! The old ones are the best! As Terry the ball, the player has to negotiate thirty-two bug-warbson-warbling levels, each of which flares high in the sky,

CRUISE FOR A CORPSE

Price **Amiga £TBA**
Genre **Adventure**
Publisher **Delphine/US Gold**

The plot for Cruise for a Corpse is fantastically complex. Captain Niklos' famed location, plenty of suspects: victim from the off, a murder happens and there's a murderer on the loose. A series of puzzles each needs to be cracked in order to progress. An obligatory inspector is brought in as an assistant and an on-screen notebook logs all the information you gather as an investigation. When you arrive on the scene, there's a number of characters to interact with.

---

ground. All navigate to generate an excellent sense of travel and orientation...

The player detects his on-screen duster ('Batal') via the mouse. By click-ing the mouse-pointer on objects of interest, a menu appears listing the various things the player can do with the selected item. (i.e. 'Open' or 'Examine' bat boy). Movement around the yacht is effected by walking Batal from location to location by clicking on site to its current location. As it walks to its target it will automatically avoid obstacles.

The major problem with Cruise for a Corpse lies in the scenarios, though wondrous is slow. Examining the contents of a room can become quite painful, as Batal slowly turns, walks, turns, bends down, mutters the item and so on, stating the "There is nothing of interest here". Quickly returning to the parent though onerside scanning and sweeping of the feet (more't me) genera-tion. Alt too often the player's frustra-tion for clue hunting can be some-times mercilessly aggravated by the game's speed in nice read's pace. Less importantly, some of the generally clumsy text French English translation is in hot dubious in places, such as the 'interior of it in 'best it when' it-eof itself be too'...

These comments apart, anyone with the patience to sit through the occa-sional delicious will find Cruise for a Corpse a superb buy, looped with qual-ity too: It perfectly atmospheric and provoking a big enough game task to satisfy even the greatest sleuth.

DEUTEROS

Price **Amiga** £TBA
Genre **Strategy**
Publisher **Activision**

The sequel to Millennium 2.2, the same authors is set a thousand years later. The previous titles. Prior lotus this game begins a new era of spece exp-loration. The game plant must begin the mamners of the Galaxy once again. The gameplay boils down to endless

resource and manpower allocation between various departments, dealing with the occasional event that may up and so on. Although progressed well and moderately unfulfilling, Deute-ros isn't anything too slow that hasn't been done more motivatingly than where. Surely one its the strategy die-hards.

F-15 STRIKE EAGLE II

Price **Atari ST £29.99**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **MicroProse**

MicroProse make a department them their usual vigorously accurate simu-lations: that polish over. It's the flight sim equivalent of the gion and into kinds i.e. do it simple with no complications. Players have the ten-dent attract to choose between, each with various enemies for each one. These missions are track of are simple get-ing up with destroy a couple of tar-gets and so on for target fly a spot area go-aim print, with the player hoving is simultaneously defend against enemy at a low level. The detail is basically well-researched at tracers, and highly responsive to touch con-trols.

The sound option is thro' moily of the title. The mind during is electro-electronic and here you get hectonni-fire-at a low tone. But it breaks up the bunaca awful - very primacry colour spectra to the game itself. However, like most sims of this type, this is fundamentally playable game, with its great mixture of action and action. The game over-rock the basic feel of a flight fast or into and lazy those with spell, and the tempo that get the actions that it no really want it touch muddled, as with this as a good purchase.

FINAL FIGHT

Price **Amiga** £25.95
Genre **Beat-'Em-Up**
Publisher **US Gold**

Yet another in US Gold's seemingly endless string of CapCom conversions, so unfortunate (muddy) rather than Final Fight on all an well. Crude to sell so make a bad situation worse like Fault is all as well. Crude to sell and to make a bad situation worse the

Mayor's right-shorten daughter has been kidnapped by - you guessed it! - Mr Big. (This did Mr Big certainly gets arrested, doesn't he?) The player and optional partner have to fire-fight their ways through the city's warrens to rescue his. Final Fight's yet...

Final Fight is something of a first for beat-'em-ups on the home computer, i.e. it's actually quite good. The sprites are large and decently animated, the backdrops well designed and the action is fast. Someone of the down-ing involves a public camera in use to a little dodgy, but apart from that it's all as well recommended earnestly to anyone who fancies a little aggro without incurring their knuckles.

FLICKY

Price **MegaDrive £34.99**
Genre **Platform**
Publisher **Sega**

'Don't be put off by the simulation-to-the-back of the box' is probably the best bit of advice I can give about Flicky. It looks awful - tiny primary-colour sprites and juicy backdrops, bit it's actually a highly playable and chal-lenging blast.

The player controls the tiny bird of the title, The bird's darling's one-go-have-gone and get themselves lost at various locations (to rescue). There are little baddies wandering around the screen, but all eat, who the player must kill in order to collect bonus points. The more dirts you get in one go, the bigger the bonus. The game itself is then basically just a matter of running from place to place, picking up the lost brief with fire. Some may find it just to bit frustrating all first, but stick with it and you'll find that there are a good purchase.

GUNSHIP 2000

Price **IBM PC £39.99**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **MicroProse**

Nobody writes simulations like Microprose dare. This is a highly-real-istic sequel to the company's earlier mega-hit Gunship, which has gone down to a new level of the com's best-selling sims ever. This sequel is a lot more than just Gunship+. Every part of the game has been given a radi-cal overhaul.

Probably the most impressive aspect is the revamped graphics system. Using a state-of-the-art world and landscaping technique, the game's backgrounds have been modelled in startling detail, with rolling hills, mountains, valleys, cot-tages, & c's geographical features. The scene is at flight sim tech-nique is ocean. The action takes the form of a series of prim-moving mis-sions that you really want at least a basic grounding-essential, of flying technique in order to get to grips with a series of increasingly desperate scenarios, of an emergency fund been modelled to run the globe and the spac field. The 'copter control is good, and takes no end to master flight the number of the real thing, i.e. it's difficult. There are controls, the cockpit perspective makes particularly realistic, and all sorts of emergencies to deal with; a very difficult, and certainly makes Gunship 2000 are not the sort of game to casually dabble in for an hour or two-but playing-week in, it's one of the most rewarding sim experiences, then bunk it is.

FOOTBALLER OF THE YEAR 2

Price **Amiga £7.99**
Genre **Sport**
Publisher **Gremlin**

This isn't really a sports game at all. It's more like a test of the player's lowest

HUNTER

Price **Amiga £24.99**
Genre **Action/Strategy**
Publisher **Activision**

It's a cracked old, this one too fact that the game part works so well. You roam around a series of three inter-connecting islands at will, taking on missions and just generally wreak-ing havoc. By hijacking various modes of transport (tanks, jeeps, boats and so on) and the ply-ing up the plan, mix-ture of just the Hunter game for real whole decent product together, their best Mediagenic doesn't goes and pick and play-ing on them. Now, however, after the aforementioned 'decent product', how-

MAGNETIC SCROLLS COLLECTION

Price IBM PC £34.99
Genre Adventure
Publisher Virgin Games

MEGAFORTRESS

Price IBM PC £34.99
Genre Simulation
Publisher Mindscape

MEGATRAVELLER 2: QUEST FOR THE ANCIENTS

Price IBM PC £TBA
Genre Role-playing
Publisher Paragon/Empire

MONOPOLY

Price Amiga £24.99
Genre Strategy
Publisher Leisure Genius

MONSTER BUSINESS

Price Amiga £24.99
Genre Platform
Publisher Eclipse

an example of what arcade games
should be about. It's like an Atari
stood, if you know what I mean.

★★★★

NEBULUS 2

Price Amiga £25.99
Genre Platform
Publisher 21st Century
Entertainment

Rising from the forensic ashes like a
phoenix looking suspiciously like what-
ever it was before it was Astaroth, 21st
Century Entertainment aren't hav-
ing much luck at the moment. Not
only are they having some consider-
able difficulty with their MegaDrive
product, but the rats game they looked
like it could actually make them some
money has turned out to be something
of a disappointment.

The European coders responsible for
resurfacing John Phillips' original clas-
sic have done a bit of a botch job, mak-
ing the gameplay that made the first
game so excellent by piling on lots of

RAILROAD TYCOON

Price Amiga £35.99
Genre Strategy
Publisher MicroProse

The SCS Strategy Stockbook gem
makes it's way onto the Amiga, and
what a fine translation it is. Building
a railroad empire across the USA at
the turn of the 19th Century may sound
like hard work, but for those who like

their strategy is too deep. Sid Meier's
simulation of that very pursuit is has
bags of it. Playing, you see, is a
stranger now, but trust us, it is. The
feeling of power is considerable as
lay your track from one to driving the
end, linking stations, and eventu-
ally earn loads of cash.

Beginning life as an entrepreneur in
the early 1840s, you must turn a small
stake into the biggest stake in rail-
road history. Your company is in
control of every element in the deci-
sion making process which makes the
railroad work, the player must handle
two details as well as broader political
and economic issues, all at the same
time in competing when with a board
of against each other constantly.
And every element of the game is rep-
resented with top-quality graphics to
make even the most number-crunch-
ingly vertical sections of the title easy
to manage.

Meier's excellent, bloody care other-
face and the sheer precision of the
game design and bilstery compared
with the top-notch power of the Amiga
make this version of the game an out-
right winner. Wholeheartedly recom-
mended.

★★★★

MODLAND

Price Amiga £25.99
Genre Platform
Publisher Storm

Storm's temptingly cute-it sure-fire
hit in the genre. The labours among wasn't
particularly noteworthy, finding itself
amid in a sea of graphically excellent
games upon its release. New, howev-
er, the conversion seems to have
cropped up and, though just as good,
cute gem over the moment (Mega-
land's far too many crappy examples of
the genre that makes that) so.

The player must work his way
through a massive suite of screens,
collecting potions and power ups and
killing monsters with his red-hot blasts as
the only way of building them into a
throne.

The sort of work level is marked by
the arrival of an enormous end of level
bad guy such as an elephant, who,
despite looking cute and harmless, is,
of course, actually quite adept at rip-
ping great holes in our hero's body

ROLLING RONNY

Price **Amiga £19.99**
Genre **Platform**
Publisher **Virgin Games**

Rolling Ronny is a videodating strand but, his stout shale around. Fold pigeons collecting spinning gates and delivering parcels to the people on the back of each set of Robidogos streets. Ronny must get on a bus and go in a different part of Robidogos to collect more gears and deliver them (perhaps a girl).

The player must guide Ronny around making precision jumps in order to push the big oil barrels up and down Ronny's star on the top floor. The player must press the buttons at the right time to jump and also pause the game at precise moments.

The presentation is first class, apart from the cheery sound effects and music which don't so much come the endeavour of the No Fun as a spin score, suffer. When the player strikes Ronny seconds, the cartoon animation is quite good.

★★★☆☆

SECRET WEAPONS OF THE LUFTWAFFE

Price **IBM PC £40.99**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **LucasArts/US Gold**

Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe is a big old game put on a realistic level. It's also the super cast of carefully calibrated Their Finest Hour. The title comes packed with two green

SARAKON

Price **Amiga/Atari ST/IBM PC £19.99**
Genre **Puzzle**
Publisher **Virgin Games**

Games which ask the player to get tiles next to each other so that they can be removed so easily to move can be neatly put into a perfectly boring function. Basically, if you swap one large placed with tiles all sorts of strange combinations of tiles and all sorts of strange categorised tasks in that 'same, then you're peering along buttons. Basically, if you swap one large placed with tiles all sorts of strange tables and things and in that category, then you're peering along.

The aim of the game is to click on similar tables which sit in a particular orientation, eventually ending up as quickly as possible so far as possible before the time-limit runs out. Once done, the player is rewarded with a breakdown of his score and points removed per compound from a screen, or a screen or computer over from quite an enjoyable habit.

The problem with these puzzle games, however, is that they all look similar enough to make the player want to pick their thumb and forget them. Nevertheless, those with a spot team on containing enough rich with these games which don't quite do there is always a button game.

★★☆☆☆

SILENT SERVICE II

Price **IBM PC £...**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **MicroProse**

It may have taken five years, but the sequel to one of the most critically acclaimed and perfectly adored war games is finally with us. Silent Service II features all the best bits from the first game as well as a host of original features.

Digitised graphics and sampled sounds simply confirm the Service as another milestone in accessibility, one of the most detailed, accurate and realistic be used. You can pilot an ice in a real submarine, it's obtained simply be moved, but also like an ice in a submarine simulator.

So. That's a lot of the old Silent Service. The Wolves of sub-pack feature as it seeks to sneak up its enemy warships with the utmost realism. Then it has to dive to avoid the fast-moving enemy. I can also see your progress during the other the course of the war, following the action from most areas.

SPACE 1889

Price **IBM PC £TBA**
Genre **RPG**
Publisher **Empire**

This is an RPG which shares many similarities with Empire's Martian Dreams, set in the past and on other worlds. However, this lacks the atmosphere and graphic quality of Empire's game and the plot is too linear – cut often feels as though they're being led along a pre-laid route. It's rather simple, and could act as a good intro to the world of RPGs for the uninitiated, but the more experienced players may feel the game a little too simple for today's gaming public.

★★★☆☆

SWITCHBLADE II

Price **Atari ST £25.99**
Genre **Arcade**
Publisher **Gremlin**

Some seven months after appearing on the Amiga, Switchblade II – one arguably one of the best arcade moments to currently reach the Atari ST – is now available on the Atari's most favourite flavour of the gaming world's own characters and continues with the action being whizzed through as with conviction before.

Hiro, our trusty hero, must once again run and jump his way through a variety of the most twisted levels in order to find and finally destroy the evil Havok. Armed with his ever-present fire-blade, Hiro must try to collect the power-up icons scattered around the level in order to give himself a fighting chance against the various nasty creatures.

★★★★☆

PREMIER MAIL ORDER

We are on stand No 124 at the 16 Bit Computer Show. Titles marked * are not yet available and will be sent on day of release.
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Please state make and model of computer when ordering. P&P inc. UK on orders over £5 UK. Less £1.00 and Europe add £2.00
per item. Elsewhere please add £3.50 per item for Airmail. These offers are available Mail Order only. Tel Orders: Mon-Fri
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TECHNOCOP

Price Megadrive £34.99
Genre Arcade Blast
Publisher Razor Soft

Technocop. What is there to say? This futuristic frazzer which deserves a mention, quite apart from anything else for its incredible music graphics, was originally produced by Gremlin some years ago (on computers on the Nintendo's heh). Now here at last it is in all its glory. The action's a bit of a... pleasure, although it's a matter of debate as to whether they'll actually want to or not. Basically the new mega-racing game is an unremarkable mess as the Omni HQ theme with cease-role on whirling shoot em' bits.

☆ ☆ ☆

THUNDERJAWS

Price Amiga £19.99
Genre Arcade Blast
Publisher Domark

Does the rarely element which lies behind the evil Madame Q has launched a new and dastardly plot - to build an army of genetic mutants to take over the world! This well-meaning but infinite translation is from the sunny clime of Tangier parts from the Ocean. To be fair, the majesty of the care laps have been a long way short of classics here selves, but Domark seem to have an especially rough time weeding them onto computer format. Where, a P.X... P.O.'s famous and that the graphics, but it plays and Crashious.

Even the tinny element which has

proved to be the conversion's downfall is the tongue-in-cheek Lawe of the Game: graphic style of the original. This very factor, which at least helped the com-op look a damn sight more interesting than it was, has simply made the bingo version look pleasingly dung.

The players' aim is to work their way through a set of levels combating Madame Q's murderous forces and collecting hostages along the way. The first-level-style graphic in an utterly sense setting, shooting it out with enemy divers and ferocious obstacles allow. Weapons can be collected to improve the firepower, but nothing can improve the diabolical animation and dull, un-dolentic gameplay. The turgid measured shoot em with the players striving about gaming does as unremarkable manner. Enough, enough! Take it away!

☆ ☆

ZONE WARRIOR

Price Amiga £19.99
Genre Arcade Blast
Publisher Electronic Arts

Zone Warrior - EA's re-badged but frankly very unremarkable.

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still

available

BONANZA BROS
Price Megadrive £34.99
Genre Arcade Blast
Publisher SEGA

Bonanza Bros proved to be a something of a stand-by with Joe Public due to its peculiar graphic style and enormous angle on the team-up format. The player/objectives are blatantly obvious, though. Two amusingly conceived and heavily guarded buildings on each screen must be, err... robbed. Having already made a bit of a mysteries for themselves, there's a substantial reward on the Bros' heads meaning that every available law enforcement officer in creation tries his best to stop you and leave you hanging to rights.

The game uses a unique split-screen to allow players to split up forces, this is no bad thing for a spot of mutual protection. Between the two player feature there's a salesmanlike of the building, allowing the players to plan their routes efficiently and attempt to avoid the guards and avoid the routine. Overall the game is a fairly enjoyable romp, with some hideous cartoonish animation in places adding gospel to the fun, but like many negatives games its integrity is questionable.

★★★

AFTERBURNER 2
Price Megadrive £34.99
Genre Arcade Blast
Publisher Sega

The epitome of the arcade blast, Afterburner is a classic piece of Naff. And this conversion isn't half bad, flying as F14 into the screen, the planes coast fly through 15 stages, blasting away enemy fighters with his substantial number of to-die-for plus missile and limited mine missiles. Extra fighters can also be downed by using homing missiles too.

The game is fast - very fast. In fact, in some sections it's as swift as the arcade machines. Performing a 360 degree roll by hitting hard and fast to dodge enemy fire is a thrilling and understated experience ad it works far too well in simulating quite how mindless it all is.

This is the sort of game that the Megadrive was built for. At the other end of the Sonic scale, even though it's another arcade blast, Afterburner does a surprisingly good job of drawing exactly what the Megadrive is capable of, so long as you don't look to deep.

Even though the game's nothing to scratch, the graphics certainly doesn't come up anything of value, it's fun the definitive afterburner-a conversion, and, just like the coin-op, is heavily flawed.

★★★

ALIEN STORM
Price Megadrive £34.99
Genre Arcade Blast
Publisher SEGA

Alien Storm is a real smoker in the plot department. Once again aliens are over-running the Earth and it's up to the player (and a possible friend) to kick their eight body back to the alien nations from from whence they came. The player has a choice of either the wise-cracking Gordon, Karla blaster-wielding figure - Earth's last line of defence - stand ready to save the world of alien domination. There's the heroically named Gordon, more Karla and the fearless-blooded- why shooter who between two of you but have various to this mechanical 'help'.

Together they have blast their way through eight levels of alien frills. The uncanny stroll them left or right has the player shoot the enemy and blast away before the screen to them to walk in the main section, but also of this wall-staying blasting movie game. In particularly the constitution around the screen the player has to certeh everything.

The gameplay itself is fairly straightforward and frankly from that decent bottom-scroll- movie game. Bashing endless levels of alien grime becomes downright dull after a while and with some overtly unimaginative sonic bullshings.

Together they have blast their way through eight levels of alien frills. The uncanny stroll them left or right has the player shoot the enemy and blast away before the screen to them to walk-in. There are various to this mechanical 'help'.

★★★

BEAST BUSTERS
Price Amiga/Atari ST £25.99
Genre Arcade Blast
Publisher Sega

This is a computer conversion of the coin-op which proved so popular in the Uni-loving arcade goers. It's basically on another Op Wolf clone but here as the extreme twist that instead of man-hungering machine guns are grasped to a versatile extension of the Undead who attempt to stop you busting the devoured city alive. Borrowing heavily from the Romero horror films, Zombie dogs, Zombie dragons and all manner of evil creatures can be literally blown into bloody bits of goo.

The graphics manage to capture both the look and the feel of the arcade and virtually all the beasts are present, but there's no denying that the inevitable substitution of a mouse for the coin-op-mounted Uzi is distinctly unsatisfactory. Gun-touting maniacs of an blast-and-fire-touch into it will find the screen-tearing amateur it all which boils down to a lot of tapping. Even though it's an attractive arcade version, left the player cold after a short while. The main pace is too inaccessible sounds, such as the

★★★

CASTLE OF ILLUSION
Price Megadrive £34.99
Genre Platform
Publisher SEGA

The Evil Mizrabel, jealous of Minnie Mouse's beauty (who are they kidding?), has unceremoniously lagged the beloved Mickey Mouse and imprisoned her in the bonded heart of a mysterious castle atop a hidden mountain. Being the selfless and heroic fellow that he is, Mickey boldly sets out the enchanting castle in search of his true love, and encountering a host of fairy-tale beings and wrestling the devious Mizrabel along the way.

Using dozens of ropes and a leap, Mickey traverse plants in a bid to reach the Mizrabel. There are some original touches, such as the

★★★

CASTLES

Price **89.99 £35.99**
Genre **Strategy**
Publisher **INTERPLAY**

★★★☆☆

CENTURION / DEFENDER OF ROME

Price **Megadrive £24.99**
Genre **Active Strategy**
Publisher **Electronic Arts**

★★★☆☆

CHAMPION OF THE RAJ

Price **Amiga £24.95**
Genre **Action-Strategy**
Publisher **Gremlin**

★★☆☆☆

CHOPLIFTER 2

Price **£29.99**
Genre **Shoot 'Em Up**
Publisher **Nintendo**

★★★☆☆

CHUCK YEAGER'S AIR COMBAT

Price **£39.99**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **Electronic Arts**

★★★★☆

DRAGON CRYSTAL

Price **Gamegear £25.99**
Genre **RPG**
Publisher **Sega**

★★★☆☆

ICE HOCKEY

Price **Gameboy £24.99**
Genre **Sports**
Publisher **Nintendo**

★★★☆☆

ELF

Price Amiga £25.99
Genre Arcade Adventure
Publisher Ocean

As Canadian the Elf, it's the player's task to outrun the overthrow from the the points naked clutches of fruitcase

★★★

THE EXECUTIONER

Price Amiga £35.99
Genre Arcade Beat
Publisher Hawk

The Executioner is much a attempt to

F-117A: STEALTH FIGHTER 2

Price IBM PC £39.99
Genre Simulation
Publisher MicroProse

Your chance to pilot the fighter Plane in The World is now available in glorious tech-rich sum all up take whatever you're called on to do in the pilot's seat. The aircraft falls in the modern-day when we are thinking rediscovery of the cinema of the pilot fliers so to cinematic to this in adventure.

★★★★

F-14 TOMCAT

Price RRP PC CTRA
Genre Simulation
Publisher Activision

F-ZERO

Price Super Famicom £39.99 imp
Genre Racing Game
Publisher Nintendo

FRENETIC

Price Amiga £25.99
Genre Blast 'Em Up
Publisher Core Design

G-LOC

Price GameOut £29.99
Genre Blast Action
Publisher SEGA

GHOST BATTLE

Price Amiga £25.99
Genre Arcade Blast
Publisher Thalion

GOLF

Price GameBoar £25.99
Genre Sport Simulation
Publisher SEGA

HALLEY WARS

Price GameGear £29.99 imp
Genre Arcade Blast
Publisher SEGA

HATRIS

Price Gameboy £29.99 (import)
Genre Puzzle
Publisher Bullet-Proof Software

Atari Falchion is the Franklin mind behind the time-devouringly addictive Tetris. Now he's back with Hatris which, like it's forebear, is deceptively simple in concept. Pairs of different hats fall from on high. Arranging the pair left or right and rotating the two to mix and stack hats of the same type. Stack five hats together and they disappear. The longer the players survives the faster the hats fall. The game is over when a stack reaches the far top of the screen. A Variant of the popular themes but thoroughly diverting and addictive as an Underground station at rush hour. The players ingenious.

Hatris takes a while to get into but eventually becomes as engrossing and addictive as its illustrious forbear. Recommended to all Tetris addicts (and who isn't?).

★★★★☆

HEART OF CHINA

Price IBM PC £44.88
Genre Adventure
Publisher Dynamix/Sierra On-Line

Many genres allude to the role of "interactive movie" but never manage to deliver the goods. Fortunately Heart of China is one of the few games which is actually deserving of that title role. You are the role of Jake, a down-on-his-luck pilot in the grasp of tortured vision in 1930s China. Your mission is to rescue the wealthy tycoon gal Kate Lomax, he then ends up in the Far East.

Unlike most games it doesn't concentrate solely on one character, allowing the player to switch between the members of the cast and adding puzzle to its film-like atmosphere. Also the numerous puzzles can be solved from a variety of different angles. Heart of China also has multiple endings which make the game enjoyable to play over when completed. To round it all off

nicely there are also some polished arcade sequences, though fortunately these can be skipped if they don't appeal. If you like anything within the adventure genre Heart of China comes highly recommended.

★★★★☆

HEROQUEST

Price Amiga £29.99
Genre RPG
Publisher Gremlin

Hero Quest was one of the best-selling boardgames of last year, and Gremlin look set to capitalise on that success with their computer conversion. A game for one to four people, players can select to be one of four characters (or all 4 playing alone). Wizard, powerful magic, limited strength; Elf, little magic, normal strength; Dwarf, good strength, can detect traps; Barbarian, heaps of strength. At the start of each game you must choose which of these to be, the object being to venture across the maze-top counterparts. Players must complete the various quests set in a series of scenarios, each of them concerns a different character. And when you've finished the game, the editor allows you to create new ones.

The game plays identically to its table-top counterparts. Players must complete the various quests set in a series of scenarios, each featuring a different character. Dexterity and magic generates orcs, skeletons, mummies and zombies. Using magic and brute strength the character slaughters all and sundry on his way to the magic weapon to aid them on their blood-thirsty task. These are genuine monsters, progress murderous quests, atmospheric soundtracks and superb attention to detail make this a worthy addition to the RPG genre.

★★★★☆

IN YOUR FACE

Price Gameboy £19.99 (import)
Genre Sport
Publisher Jaleco

In Your Face is a basketball game which features some superb presentation. It has only one skill level, but four players are offered, adding characteristics to choose from. The gameplay is simplistic: the player uses one button to jump and shoot the other to pass the ball, stealing the ball and other moves are initiated by moving around the court using the

by simply turning into the opponents. This makes the game easy to get into, but provides little long-lasting. There's also a two-on-two option for some kick-off style action, but we anticipate total self-destruct here.

The game's major problem is the play area – it's too small for boxing which means the view is continually scrolling the action round the ring to suit a serious thing but for Colombo screens 'draw' the images 'stickily'. Nothing special. In Your Face is definitely one to leave On The Shelf.

JAMES 'BUSTER' DOUGLAS BOXING

Price Megadrive £34.99
Genre Sport Arcade
Publisher Virgin

Oh dear, in the light of infinitely superior beat-'em-up games, James Buster Douglas is not so much on the ropes as on the stretcher.

Take no prisoners in Boxing games rely on speed, presentation and a whole range of moves, but here the player-controlled fists are not superior to mincing or a bit a bit. Buster can offer as many as three elements, as the truly crappy fight scenes are clearly a substantive reduction through sheer tedium than anything else.

Blobs slow and thoroughly uninspiring graphics of the boxers double if that here scenes are not that better. And even if there were, no one in their right mind would want to wade through these tedious and insulting encounters.

JETFIGHTER 2

Price IBM PC £39.99
Genre Simulation
Publisher Velocity/UK Gold

Is a comedical matter, Jetfighter 2 tries to stand up entirely as a normal flight simulator.

JIMMY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND SNOOKER

Price Atari ST £24.99
Genre Sport Simulation
Publisher Virgin

Archer Maclean, whose programmer of 40's and Dropzone, is probably the last person you'd expect to write a snooker sim. Cue games have been around since the beginning of computing, and hardly ever been done well. But with Jimmy White's Whirlwind things seem change at the slightest and once you go. But even with the advent of 3D graphics most of them have actually been shocking in terms of realism.

I had now. The table is viewed from behind the cue ball so the player can line up shots as if on a real table. The 3D playing area is spot on, and it is a real joy to get stuck into colourful modelling matches which drop sown characteristic into overhang dots, each slab across the billiard cushions, and, as always, it is possible to put on side, and there are a number of nifty camera angles available to check up on the action.

Two player games are the best, but hours of enjoyment can be available for the lone gamer. As far as I'm concerned, Jimmy White's Whirlwind is easily the best snooker sim ever, and could well turn out to be the best sim on the Atari. If you love snooker in any shape or form, you'll find it compulsive viewing.

KA•GE•KI

Price Megadrive £34.99
Genre Beat-'Em-Up
Publisher Sega

Ka-Ge-Ki is a large-hearted beat-'em-up. You play a burly muscle-bound hero who beats heaven and hell out of the town scum who all want to chop you to bits. With seven enemies to beat, and all intent upon beating the stuffing out of you, there's only one way you can deal with them all – simply wade through and mash the block-shaped enemies.

For a beat-'em up Ka-Ge-Ki is distinctly underpowered. The range of moves is limited apart from moving the player can punch, jab, jump and... er, that's it. Sure you can just about do high kicks and low kicks but these are played just as high or low any block. Once the game play is substandard and the game just isn't satisfying enough, shame.

LOGICAL

Price Amiga/Atari ST £25.99
Genre Puzzle
Publisher Rainbow Arts

Logical is a bit of a mishmash, a thought-provoking fast-action game which is genuinely as addictive as the falling-block Tetris. The game is arcade-coloured balls that roll around from a series of coloured wheels which drop down channels into revolving, disks, each with four two-coloured slots, and is unloaded. The idea is rotate the tiny-coloured disks and connect in order slots from to get you these to shuttle through and each.

MAGIC POCKETS

Price Amiga £25.99
Genre Platform
Publisher Renegade

The Bitmaps much-liked and upbeat-selling love is a strange but clever. It looks great, has a simple enough to learn gameplay system, and there is a chunk of stuff to explore, but it doesn't become a piece of class action. To me scants, however, it just doesn't hang together.

The narrative in Magic Pockets is where your intrepid hero must travel through four worlds, retrieving his lost possessions along the way and overcoming a host of oddball enemies before he can leave.

Imagine Mario crossed with Speedball and that's what you get. Nearly. You get a peculiar fitting version of these monsters which is utterly characterless and tends to enjoy a to to enjoy hitting enemies. The main method of dispatching enemies is to use an array of tornadoes which your hero summons up, and using each a rick after all the player can punch off the opponent.

MANCHESTER UNITED EUROPE

Price Amiga £25.99
Genre Sport
Publisher Krisalis

With Kick Off 2 currently holding the football crown, it's a brave company that launches yet another footy game on to the market. Mind you, with the glorified name of Manchester United behind it, the Krisalis marketing experts, maybe Krisalis are not taking such a risk after all. The plus plan...

compare to either the US3'14 Corp, European Cup or the Cup Winner's Cup. Before a match the player can adjust formation, tactics and comparative statistics which are immediately readable in a pretty positive process. However important games will be played to issue that this can all be skipped.

The game is displayed in pseudo-3D which gives a more dynamic view over animation and graphic folks. As so no doubt the players control the ball control, and there's a huge variety of moves available including kick-by-kick shots, chips to the side, as well as volleys, headers, etc. You can take goals with the MU Europe isn't that OK a but it's a good footy game for those looking for something different.

★★★★

MARTIAN DREAMS

Price £RP PC £26.99
Genre **RPG**
Publisher **Origin/Mindscape**

Imagine all the 19th Century characters you've ever heard of to meet, plus them all in an experimental spaceship, and then - by adroit Of intent - blast them all out into space. Continuing the tradition of H.G. Wells and Jules Verne, The Martian Dreams with a small cast of entirely solidable wandering around Mars.

The game is driven by a series of time sensitive from the Red Planet. Along with a great sense of humour as Freud, Sigmund, and Nikola Tesla, the hero has to reason through their problems by taking with folks, using items and exploring their environments. This isn't sophisticated gameplay, but with a strange and bewitch almost-there, and the interface there's a lot to commend to this game and if you've got a keen eye for something different.

★★★★

MAUPITI ISLAND

Price £RP AT/Amiga £26.99
Genre **Adventure**
Publisher **Lankhor**

The Martian Dreams game interface is superb - the game is entirely mouse controlled, although keyboard commands can be used for shortcuts. The game is devilishly puzzling to solve this some desolate beach areas graphically adventurous game but it's a superb test of mind is a superb and engrossing, addictive challenge a quick start. The complexity and graphics combined with excellent game play, and a fine emphasis on getting you involved through extensive, personal involvement that the player to take over the tangled investigation of Maupiti Island.

MARVEL LAND

Price £RP Megadrive £34.99
Genre **Arcade**
Publisher **Namco**

There's nothing wrong with cutesy or simplistic graphics - what we at ACE object to is the downright bad platform variety as opened in Namco's latest console effort. But the old desires of mind is really are a bit - no time to even attempt to prevent right by playing the game of platforms and collecting items despite the visuals, which look fine. You've been produced by a piece of Namco hardware. Most folks that they've been produced by a plot which makes the player wince at every thing the hero must and it's a shame having to do some of these awful things but with a mixture of slick child armed with a blunt razor. Marvel Land isn't and MU 99 which cost a pack on Nintendo's classic that there isn't much to say about Marvel Land's platform. So at least the MU. But in some respects MU Europe is that they'll wring every last drop of fun out of the music market gameplay here. There's plenty of time for the myriad in Magaticus out there. Great music though.

★★

MEGA LO MANIA

Price £RP Amiga £24.99
Genre **Arcade Strategy**
Publisher **Mirrorsoft**

Released amid a bunch of God-sim that are still coming thick and fast, Microsoft's offering has fared better than most, steering sufficiently clear of the Big Daddy Populous while not being afraid to borrow little bits here and there where appropriate.

Set on an alternate planet, Mega Lo Mania is all about the quest for power. You take control of a tribe and defend it against the ravages of four other tribes. You have hit points to spend, which constantly broadens about a quite standard Mega Lo Mania, and figuring out just where best to position your crack troops, which although rather sparse in terms of graphics, and attempting to work out the strategy and keep the game busy and engaging. There's lots of gameplay and an excellent battle system of the elite combatants which Mega Lo Mania has to fight to succeed.

★★★

MERCS

Price £RP Atari ST £26.99
Genre **Arcade Shoot**
Publisher **US Gold**

While at a peace mission to central Africa, the President of the United States has been kidnapped by a murderous band of fanatical revolutionaries. For no diplomatic reasons the recovery of the leader of the free world falls to a crack team of mercenaries - the players. A conversion of the CapCom's arcade shoot-'em-up and retains the right-way scrolling splatter-and-destroy feel of the original. There's an amazing array of weapons in the course of the game which make the player jump to the action of the same shoot-'em-ups ever created. This conversion has been reduced to a step down the mobile of the screen. In one-player mode it's fun, but as two-player mode things gets very crowded. ★★★

★★

MICROPROSE GOLF

Price Atari ST £34.99
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **MicroProse**

The unmistakable Microprose style comes to visit the golf course with the realistic emphasis of the sport. This mode is great though an accurate but complex golf simulation game. The accurate and detailed course options and rules make this one of the most playable and enjoyable golf games. The course options can be set realistically as far as club choice goes the player a tough challenge to ensure the kind of accuracy and flexibility in the main game that every hole proves a test of skill but a yardage and slope make this for the sheer challenge and accomplishment and detail with some really fine challenge that the sport golf games could be.

★★★★

to give way to workmanlike platypus landscapes and the familiar strength of acrylics to smear licking emotions.

The struck tab it two followed down the cosmo in jerky all until it lands and the whole business can start again.

All bases are covered and the presentation for the most part is top-of-the-key, but the big rewards are reserved for players willing to take extra tumble hours to perfect their galling ability rather than mean ignoramication floats.

★★★☆☆

NBA ALL-STAR CHALLENGE

Price **Genuinely £24.99**
Genre **Sport Simulation**
Publisher **Flair**

Yet another Gameboy one-on-one basketball game. This succeeds over to Your Face by virtue of keeping all the action on one nasty screen and thus avoiding the terrible blurring of Jabez's offering. In addition, there are five sub-games of a really accurate where games are particularly difficult to 'seated' basketball but their actual pleasure variation is very limited too the other is more PD because of his even complex names which, although making it hard to to hunt, at least makes the game get-and-go scoring in the way too. It's easily Tetris but a worthwhile purchase nonetheless.

★★★☆☆

ROBIN HOOD

Price **MM PC £30.99**
Genre **Arcade Strategy**
Publisher **Millennium**

Mercilessly extending the philosophy of the recent batch of Lincoln green success, Millennium's competently underrated version of the tale is surprisingly unengaging.

Presented in Populous-style, the game picks up the classic storyline of Robin of Locksley being touched out of his lands by the evil Sheriff of Nottingham, deserved by his people and off to feed the forested.

The player, taking the role of Locksley, must rescue a crowd of men and set about doing away with the nasty sheriff none and off. In fact to control the peasants and take their loaves to mobilisation — the purpose being to tie them together in gangs to rescue dumbled and plundered, and much to make to a sense the all-round hero and restore the rightful king to the throne.

The gameplay begins with a couple of tutorial missions against small-fry oppressions where real-set short stops you all sorts of useful skills such as lamp-lighting gleaning and burglary over the foresters' sway. This is shortly a much larger game, a refreshing amount of game-play that sees you heartily engaged as the game spins on – the whole edifice backed with the rousing doesn't help things either.

★★★☆☆

PREHISTORIK

Price **Atari ST/Amiga/IBM PC £19.99**
Genre **Platform**
Publisher **Titus/Entertainment Int.**

Yet another game that proves in spreading the myth that the ancestors existed in the same time as the dinosaurs. This one puts the player in the role of Ak, a hairy hunter with a hydration jar of a stomach. Alk has to grab and survive as in all manner of prehistoric beasts before food can be grabbed and pinched and then transported to his cave for eating.

As is standard with these two-fingered platform jump-fests the object is not so much reach the end of the level for its own sake as to attempt to survive as achieve adversaries that have to be whacked over the head before they can

be commenced faces. It's this latter food that, along with the pits and spikes that have to be jumped, that provide the game's main obstacles. At the end of each level, announcing Ak's unending hunger, there's a teasing match against a giant two-headed enemy. Defeat Chefs guardians and the next level awaits.

Prehistorik has little to recommend it to any department. The sprites are squeaky but very small, the backdropping is dreadfully ill-lit and routed merely performed, and considering the collision is moving on the many dull-to-get-through screens, the action is dire. The pixel-perfect nature of much of the jumping doesn't help things either.

★★☆☆☆

R-TYPE 2

Price Amiga/Atari ST £25.99
Genre Arcade Blast
Publisher Activision

SHINOBI

Price GameGear £26.99
Genre Beat 'Em Up
Publisher Sega

SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND

Price Amiga/Atari/PC
£25.99/£25.99
Genre Adventure
Publisher LucasArts/US Gold

THE SIMPSONS

Price Amiga £25.99
Genre Platform
Publisher Ocean

SLIDERS

Price Amiga/ST £19.99
Genre Puzzle
Publisher Palace

SNEAKY SNAKES

Price GameBoy £24.99
Genre Platform
Publisher Nintendo

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

Price Megadrive £29.99
Genre Platform
Publisher Sega

SUPER PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL

Price **Super Famicom £34.99** import
Genre **Sport** Simulation
Publisher **Jaleco**

The Great American Sport makes it onto the Famicom with a bit of a rush. There are so many of these sports cart-like games that you'd be forgiven for taking it for granted. This is the best of the bunch so far...

TAIL GATOR

Price **Gameboy £29.99**
Genre **Platform**
Publisher **Natsume**

Hot Tail Gator sets your Gameboy and you'll be forgiven for thinking you'll be getting a poorly-put-together old thing. Watch on the rear end of this lovable toothy little reptile and...

SUPER R-TYPE

Price **Super Famicom £55** import
Genre **Shoot-'em-up**
Publisher **Irem**

Apart from Gradius III, shoot 'em ups on the Famicom are a little thin on the ground. So Super R-Type comes as a real treat. Basically it's R-Type 2 with more than a few extra bits...

UTOPIA

Price **Amiga £25.99**
Genre **Arcade Strategy**
Publisher **Gremlin**

The quality of this cute, complex sim is quite...

THUNDERHAWK

Price **PC £39.99**
Genre **Simulation**
Publisher **Core Design**

Most flight sims require a great deal of practice before any reward can be gleaned from them. All those keyboard controls and miscellaneous aircraft functions do quite a lot to put off anyone looking to dabble. Core Design have done away with that...

WARDNER SPECIAL

Price **Megadrive £39.99** import
Genre **Platform**
Publisher **Taito**

There seems to be a trend in current...

WARZONE

Price Amiga/Atari ST £20.99
Genre Beat-'em-Up
Publisher Core Design

Once again a powerful revenge organisation has invaded countries around the world, and so fate would have it only the player (you) maybe a friend have survived. A shoot-'em-up set this is it in the classic mould of Xenophobe, the screen scrolls downwards while all manner of enemy forces pour onto the screen for you to mow down. As their name suggests Core are currently...

The main opponents are troops with rifles and are basically cannon fodder to any half-decent foes, destroying along the way are various other baddies armed with indirect grenade launchers allowing them to fire in the next week. The reinforcements scattered throughout this is...

Despite some new touches Warzone is basically a just that Warzone which is not necessarily a bad thing. The graphics and sound are nothing but that level, good nonetheless. Where it really succeeds is in the gameplay here really is very smooth, but after a while there is little to keep the interest level really fairly two pieces.

★ ★ ★

WING COMMANDER II

Price IBM PC £34.99
Genre Arcade Shoot
Publisher Origin

Wing Commander was the space epic about the Wing Commander games, they took durned good. The trouble is there isn't really much else to say about them. WC2 attempt that's a bit harsh but here too is the sequel to the much talked about and little played original, it's a case of more of the same.

Intertellar war with the Kilrathi continues and you're back behind the controls of your Tiger's Claw has been decimated by invisible Kilrathi stealth fighters. As the sole survivor of the assault, the player finds himself alone, the fame behind Kilrathi contenders that the attack did goissue-it and must then find a traitor to coincide but it is all there elsewhere here in track them down and exonerate them in such a...

The missions available to the player to try out use ranging and change in order. In accordance with the development of the plot. At the start, when you have the...

Graphically excellent although particularly gruesome kind and that the objects in Wing Commander II certainly isn't a hell's of a job or a case of this dope and the landscapes have a bit of a "do with other more realistic texture out there role play please about wing trading is one bundled present appeal.

WILD WHEELS

Price Amiga/Atari ST/Amiga £24.99
Genre Sports Arcade
Publisher Ocean

Another bizarre little game, this time covering Pole Position with Kick Off to produce a future - but oddly absorbing - car-based future sport where vehicles take the place of the humans in a standard five-a-side football game played in a giant stadium.

At first glance it looks nothing special, with tiny vehicles whizzing and leaving track can be manoeuvring-your-player across the pitch, but playing the thing reveals a...

★ ★ ★

newsagent
reserve

You all know what a ball-busting corker of a sophisticated read the next issue of ACE will be, and yet, there are still niggling doubts. And we understand that. We understand that it might be a bit rainy or there might be something good on the telly on the morning you'd previously decided to go and collect your issue.

But it's all a bit dodgy, what with ACE zipping out of the newsagent like there's no tomorrow. The day you go down there, you may well find they're all gone. And that would be too bad.

So, in a caring, sharing, flare-wearing way, we're pleased to present our solution to your problem. A revolutionary concept in publishing. See what you think.

Dear Mr Newsagent,

Lazy and forgetful fool that I am, I cannot be trusted to make my way into your store on the day that ACE is published (ie. the 8th of each month).

As a result, I live in constant fear of missing one of the issues - especially next month's which I understand will be especially excellent, what with its free supplement and all that.

The solution? Please, Mr N. Agent, reserve me a copy of the next issue of ACE magazine when it next comes into your shop.

Oh, actually, now you mention it, if you could deliver it to my house, it'd be doubly good. (Delete as appropriate)

Yours sincerely

Name: ....

Address: ....

....

....

CHASE H.Q.

Price **Commodore £29.99** import
Genre **Rave Game**
Publisher **Taito**

There can be few readers who aren't familiar with the excellent coin-op or its sequel S.C.I. What a treatment on the part of Jive designers to continue high-octane racing action with rampant motorcycling action. The player takes on the role of an Arresco enrolling Micaw

★★★★☆

CLOUD KINGDOMS

Price **Atari ST/Amiga £7.99**
Genre **Platform**
Publisher **Logotron**

Cloud Kingdoms is a load of balls — bouncing balls, to be precise. (Ha! The old ones are the best). In fact, the ball, the player has to negotiate thirty-two huge multistorey building fiends, much of which flower high in the sky, collecting all the gems that line in the

more widways. Very fun to take one you to leave the paths. else he'll fall in his doom is the real tester. This isn't as easy as it sounds - Terry's villains body beware wildly off walls and pillars, and parts of the 'wheel-type' landscape are known to have a mind of their own. There's a password to get you through each level of the maze of treasure just over the first couple of

★★★★☆

CRUISE FOR

A CORPSE

Price **Amiga £TBA**
Genre **Adventure**
Publisher **Delphine/US Gold**

The plot for Cruise for a Corpse is best is started in the Agatha Christie- looked murders, diary of suspect- cruise ever, and eventually when the player is invited to a Greek tycoon's yacht for a birthday dinner. When he arrives, quite something unexpected is about to happen upon the scene and the whole crew - he attends no one until the player's own investigation begins. Much of the game is devoted to searching the yacht and interviewing the suspects to find the murderer. Every has to have some kind of alibi, naturally, and early indications to solve the famous

★★★★☆

fiction

LAST MONTH on LOVE ON THE GREEN BAIZE...

"If only dad could see us now."
"Yeah."

"These pesky Hexagons. As long as they're around, we'll never get to the top of the professional Snooker ladder."
"Relax, Bob. Tonight we will ensure that those pesky Hexagons will never bother us again. Tonight we will be champions of the world."

"Ladies and Gentemen, I have an announcement which will change the face of Snooker as we know it and send the Hexagon twins into exile forEVER!"

Now... the thrilling conclusion of... LOVE ON THE GREEN BAIZE

LOVE ON THE GREEN BAIZE: BOOK 2

Dogdish took one more step forward and sneered a disgusting sneer at referee Len Jones. What few decaying teeth he had left were coated with a thick brown sludge created by Dogdish's filthy craving for nicotine and other drugs, which he took regularly in a failed attempt to enhance his otherwise miserable existence. He slid his blackened fingernail under the flap of the envelope and tore it open. Then he thrust his hand inside and produced a black-and-white photograph, letting the envelope fall to the floor - the papery thud sounded like a sledgehammer hitting a glass anvil as it echoed around the hushed open-air stadium.

"What is the meaning of this outrage?" Len Jones demanded, booming. He'd been in the Snooker refereeing game for forty years, and he wasn't about to stand for any of this hullabaloo. He was already reaching into his pocket for his cosh (which he always carried for professional tournaments) when Bob Dogdish's slicky, lisp-inflicted brother Rob hobbled across the floor like a malformed hunchback, sniggering like an asthmatic hyena. "Aaah, you will shoon shee," he cackled, dribbling on the marble floor as he did so. He snatched the photograph from his brother's hands and held it up to one of the many TV cameras, which were beaming this pictures live around the world.

"Behold!" He exclaimed as the camera and the audience caught its first glimpse of the photograph. Twenty million people around the world held their breath - and several hundred commited suicide - as they saw it. It showed, quite clearly, the beloved Snooker World Champions Rex and Dex Hexagon selling heroin to young children outside a primary school.

"You shee?!" Rob hissed. "An... an anonymous source provided us with this photograph late last night. The source also provided us with this statement" - he produced a wad of typed sheets from his crumpled waistcoat - "which gives a detailed account of how the confounded Hexagon twins sold a variety of illegal narcotics to innocent children, and used the proceeds to bribe several top Snooker officials, so that they could become crooked world champions. Not only that, but we've evidence that the Hexagons watered down the purity of the heroin they sold using crushed Snooker chalk - STOLEN Snooker chalk! So now you see, such heinous criminals could never be allowed to be world champions! And with us as the Number One contenders, we hereby assume their title. All hail the new world champions! Officers, take them away!!"

Still there was silence. Save the clicking of boot heels on marble as two burly policemen strutted out from the wings into the auditorium - and towards the shocked Hexagons. Before either Rex or Dex could protest, the cuffs were slapped on and the disgraced Snooker-twins were frogmarched from the stadium, as Rob and Bob laughed horribly. "You shee, my dear Brother," Rob whispered. "Our roushe hash worked. Shoon the Earth will be in our grashp. HA HA HA HA!"

Rex and Dex sat under the blazing lights of Sun Hill Police Station's Interview Room 1 looking at the incriminating photograph on the chipped wooden desk in front of them. Their hands were cuffed behind the chairs and they were doing their best to shield their eyes from the anglepoise lamp's blinding light. As the first beads of sweat started to trickle down Rex's brow, an awesome shadowy figure appeared from out of the light - and switched it off. It took the brothers' pupils a few seconds to adjust, but when the haze finally cleared they couldn't fail to recognise - it was the staunch, no-nonsense yet ryggedly-handsome form of DI Frank Burnside from out of The Bill.

A few seconds passed, then Burnside loosened his paisley tie and leaned across the desk towards the two brothers. "I've got you bang to rights, you slaaags," he growled, holding up the photograph and accompanying document. "I've got the full SP here. You're gonna be doing hard porridge for this unless you squeal."

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THE END

[Fiction text columns — partially illegible]

An industry on the edge.
A conspiracy on the rise.
A magazine on the issue.

Once, he was programmed to slay off
the industry.
Now... his mission is to protect it.

THE BLITTER END II

This time he's back... for good

Yes, yes, alright, Blitter is reprised to be dead, and so Never, it is. You're looking at a new, refreshed, revised Blitter. It's not that the old BB was so popular, and the industry is in such a state of YBb and days, you can smell it...

***

Everyone had a right to laugh at the closing eight of the BCBB Silver, Bad's Court Jester, some had the luck to Foster, the Means time spotted gold-crumbling on the parts of the Thetare. Crum's Gate Blitter was having more of it, and perversely sported Weston, apparently, amid cheers and applause from the team. He means have followed BB and been informed that Weston could pass the party on the Thetare. Crum's Gate Blitter was having more of it, and perversely sported Weston, apparently amid cheers and applause from the team of the old industry games. As good for the eight away with the rest of the industry if only he'd come up with something better than "Yr...' John said it was else. No, I know. Even Blitter know knows.

***

Hard as it is to believe, by the time we got to the back of the magazine, we sometimes find ourselves short of interesting things to write. So is the case plus words. So in a rather poor attempt to fill up the remaining spaces. We thought we'd tell you about how some of the industry's top-level people started out in less glamorous professions.

Virgin Games' Marketing Manager Andrew Wright may be a high-roller today, but twelve years ago you'd have found him selling priceless curtains and handcuffs in the newly-formed computer department of Hamley's toy shop in London's Regent Street. Interestingly enough, Andrew was actually demoted from Assistant Floor Manager to Sales Assistant for kicking a fellow worker in the genitals! Because he was picking on traces." Wright claims today, Some things never change, it seems...

***

Former Activision supremo and now boss of Accolade UK, Rod Cousens presided two entry into the industry in entirely different circumstances. When he was working for Imagic, Rod was the one who demonstrated Tron arcade machines at trade shows dressed in a technobuckle, an old US Gold bowl of uncompromising alimony, and it wasn't just Tron, No,

***

Before Mark Cotton became advertising manager of GenerationSM Uon and The One and later moved to head up Microprose's European operations, he used to earn a bob or two by selling ice cream and fast food in Herrn Blue/wr a catering cart into the wilds of Sussex! And while still maintaining that Herrn has nothing to do with MarcNow short idea that would like to point out that we know nothing at all to do with this sale.

***

Certain members of Emms's board of directors have seen the seamier side of life, too. Gary Bracey and to be a trainee manager for Littlewoods Pools in Liverpool, while Paul Paterson used to dress up as a gorilla to deliver singing telegrams!

Just to round up the best of the rest, Emap's development manager Cody Foster worked in a factory manufacturing brushes, while Don Morgan the man behind Elite once worked for South Wales electricity board also working behind a bar at Hartbury, and Image Design director Nigel Pea once a cable worker for a cable company. Amiga Power's consultant editor Stuart Campbell used to be a holiday rep and added in writing adventure games for Quicksilva under the name of David Dickinson...

***

How as ACE Enames are knew only too well how difficult it can be for you to wade your way through the mound of computer magazines now read each month. Yes, the world of software reviews is a battleground, so to give you an extra helping hand in adding through the entire publication purchase decisions, we provide for you. The Ultimate Guide To Games Review Scores.

I couldn't believe it when I loaded this up!
Actually I could, because I saw it last month when I did the Work in Progress.

The hatter you buy,
Could it be lost by a blitter the game construction, and I've only got one in-the-left answer ask all that waffle, to this will have to do.

It's been the game way going to the game I said it was rubbish the month and I'll probably say the same next month. Buy this.

Sous of the power was getting to grips the same preview to groom, we loved it for you. The Definitive Guide To Games Review...

I couldn't believe it when I loaded this up!
Yeah, because I saw it last month when I did the Work in Progress.

The hatter you buy...

***

If you're a little bemused by the grab-out queries in the Gam-s review pages (p. 57), fear not! You'll understand it's not that in our otherwise thorough quest for editorial-wide genetics the key or something got into the system and the mistake wasn't spotted before it was too late. But if once bright point-on-price the sentences look together, they spell out sentences in the same as the ones we'd like to see.

***

Apparently the latest magazine craze is to take really old games that nobody buys anymore and slap them off the racks with new packaging. Rei Mackay Rei was quick a good idea, so in the great tradition of stealing someone else's good idea, we're done something similar.

SPACE INVADERS

PUBLISHER: N/A · PRICE: N/A · AVAILABILITY: N/A

Ooh are the ones. This genre is about as tasty as a tofu haggis. When I was walking down Argyle Street in our late the other day. I was thinking "Well I'll be Neveruncle". Just this game's some old... I've been on them for over ages, and get good at it, and the player-labels is not as good as Atari 800/monkeys and, there's a whole school to be earnings here and... Never to scratch into your eye. No, here it is, the second coming. Space Invaders II.

It's their best game yet!
It's their best game, and comes in a carry case too!

The depth of the strategy is incredible!
I can't make head nor tail of it, but the...

big Rick musical is very impressive.

And so in fact. There's only so much filth and slander you can fit on a page

I'M COMIN' TO GET YAAA!

ocean

WWF