

2600 Connection

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Swordquest: FIREWORLD Solution

In the Fireworld comic book, Konjuro relates to King Tyrannus how the twins' adoptive parents were also killed, and how they became the fugitive thieves they were when we first met them. Tyrannus, through a spell, offers the twins part of his rule, but they refuse and gently fall to Fireworld.

The Twins split up in search of water. With the Talisman, Torr summons Mentorr, who reveals the Chalice of Light and says it will quench his thirst and more. He then disappears.

Both Tarra and Torr discover armor and weapons, as well as creatures intent on doing them harm. They are eventually reunited and pass through a gateway of flame to find a chalice. Startled by a voice behind them, Torr drops the chalice, which shatters. They turn to see Herminus drinking from the true Chalice. He hands it over to them, stating that he no longer needs it, and an image of the crown can be seen at the bottom. After Herminus's departure, the twins quench their thirst and the Chalice begins to grow. They mysteriously find themselves inside the Chalice, which is the gateway to Waterworld. Konjuro still watches.

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Interview with Absolute Entertainment's Alex De Meo

The following is an interview with Alex De Meo (Vice President/Producer/Game Designer) at the Absolute Entertainment headquarters in Glen Rock, NJ.

Q. How did Absolute come about?

Alex: The company was founded in 1986 by ex-Activision employees. The development is done by the Imagineering branch and the publishing company is Absolute Entertainment.

Q. How many employees are there in the company?

Alex: There are 17 employees presently.

Q. What are the company's plans regarding the 2600?

Alex: We presently have no plans to release any 2600 cartridges in this country. (Those that were under development were completed and

sold to other companies overseas and there are none in stock. Any future news might be given to this publication as an announcement or an exclusive blurb.)

Q. Have there been any revisions to any of the 2600 carts which might interest collectors?

Alex: No modifications have been made to any of the ones we released, i.e. SKATEBOARDIN', TITLE MATCH PRO WRESTLING, F-14 TOMCAT, & PETE ROSE BASEBALL.

Q. Are there any "Easter Eggs" (like programmer's initials or hidden rooms) in any of the ones released?

Alex: Let's see...there was nothing funny in TITLE MATCH. No, none to the best of my knowledge.

Q. Has the gambling scandal hurt the sales of PETE ROSE BASEBALL?

Continued on Page 3

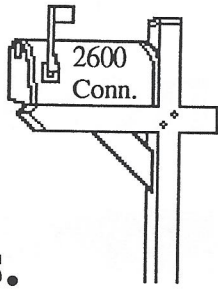
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Win a FREE Game! See Pages 3 and 7 for more details!

Letters From Readers.



Dear Editor: As a new collector, I find obtaining the seventies - early eighties cartridges very difficult. As owner of now well over 100 (some toughies) carts, I continue my quest to collect 2600 carts. The ads and companies listed in THE 2600 CONNECTION have helped me intensively.

--David Disalvatore Baltimore, MD

I'm glad we helped! That's why we're here!

Dear Editor: I was overjoyed to find, after years of searching, someone still publishing material for the good ol' 2600. Your hints on ADVENTURE (Issue 3) were interesting. Though most players have known about this for years, it's still good to reprint this bit of folklore for those that are new to the 2600. There are many other games that have these little "Easter eggs" as well. How about an article on it? In regards to the ADVENTURE rumors, there is a purple dragon — the red one. Just adjust your color and tint controls on your tv! I believe the Wizard is a myth, suggested by the game's storyline about an evil wizard. As a last note, I was wondering if you would consider covering the Atari 5200. It's impossible to find games or information on this short-lived system.

--David Allen Rockland, ME

We did an article on "Hidden Delights" in issue 2. Look for more in upcoming issues! As far as coverage for other systems, I'm considering starting up another newsletter. It would include all older, classic systems, such as the 5200.

Dear Editor: Help! I need the power supply for the 2600.

--John Senovich Waynesville, MO

It is quite common for the 2600 power supply to short out. Sometimes people think the insides of the 2600 are broken when the problem is only the power supply! Here's the specifics of the 2600 power supply: 9 volts DC, 500 mA (milliamps). San Jose Computer (1-800-726-8576) sells it for \$4.95 (\$2.50 if you buy 12). I've also had luck with a Radio Shack model (Cat. No. 273-1651A)

Dear Editor: I have a game called SCUBA DIVER by Panda. On screen, it says Sancho copyright 1983. Can you tell me what this is about?

--William W Smith Jr Bristol, VA

Quite popular in the computer world, piracy (stealing games) also exists in the 2600 world. It is hard to determine which came first. It seems likely that Sancho games came first and Panda pirated them. Still we're unsure. Sancho could have stole them from another source first.

Dear Editor: Do companies still make 2600 games?

--Miram Walter Seattle, WA

To our knowledge, the only company currently developing games for the 2600 is Atari. Nowadays, most companies choose to program games for the latest and greatest systems. Who needs zillions of new games when there's already such a large library of 2600 games out there already!

Dear Editor: I own an Atari VCS and quite a few carts. I was wondering if there is any difference (besides shape) between the new 2600 and the old VCS. Also, is there any way to finish SPACE INVADERS? I have gotten very far but have never beaten it.

--Daniel Norris Tomales, CA

The newer 2600 (Jr.) isn't really that much different from the old style VCS. It's the same chips and circuitry, but more compact. Older games like SPACE INVADERS were programmed to play infinitely. Once the maximum score is reached, it rolls over to 0 again. I think it would have been more fun if the game would have stopped and awarded the player at the max score instead of rolling over to 0. JL

Send your Questions and comments to:

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Make Check Payable to: Tim Duarte

Interview With Alex De Meo Continued...



Alex: It's hard to gauge what effect this has had because there is no basis for comparison. By this I mean, there isn't any other baseball game by Absolute to compare. Also, what if the scandal had not occurred at all? Who can tell? I started out with the concept of creating the best baseball game around. The Pete Rose endorsement was not a primary factor.

Q. Which 2600 carts sold the most? The least?

Alex: I don't have the exact sales figures handy either way. I do recall, however, that we received numerous reorders for TITLE MATCH PRO WRESTLING.

Q. Has the War in the Gulf increased or decreased the demand for military games?

Alex: Again, I do not have the sales figures at my disposal. But, I have to say that if the potential buyer did not notice F-14 TOMCAT on the shelves before, then the Gulf War would have definitely made this game more noticeable. It would be able to stand out among the rest.

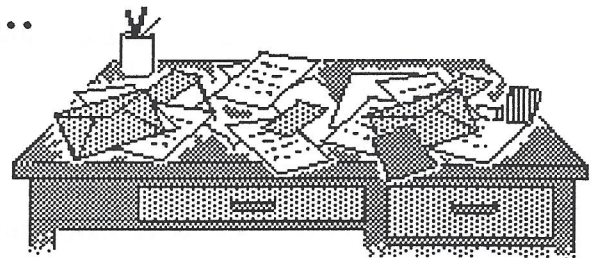
Q. How long does it take to create an average 2600 game?

Alex: Originally, it took 6 months to complete a game and it was usually the work of one programmer. Now it only takes 3-4 months because many time-saving routines and programming aids have been developed. Additionally, the work is usually divided up among several people. Some work on graphics, audio, or another phase.

--The interviewer, Al Backiel, has been an Atari 2600 fan and collector

for many years. He is a contributing writer and lives in Ridgewood, NJ. He is presently attempting to obtain a small quantity of the overseas releases for resale to collectors. Titles, price, and quantity have not been determined yet. The carts have to be re-acquired from the overseas vendors. They may not be fully packaged and may be in PAL (European) format only. At least one is totally finished. It's called MY GOLF and was released in Australia. There will be an ad placed in The 2600 Connection when they become available.

From The Editor's Desk...



This issue marks a one year anniversary! Many changes have taken place since the first issue. The issues are getting bigger! I'd like to thank all of the people who have contributed and subscribed - you keep the newsletter alive! Still, many people want us to publish more issues per year and cover more game systems. Bi-monthly (6/year) is a possibility. However, it would cause me to increase the subscription rate. How do you feel about this? My intention is to keep 100% coverage of the Atari 2600 system. What do you think of a second newsletter -The Classic Video Game Connection- ?? It would cover ALL older systems. Please take some time to fill out the survey on page 7 and return it. It's very important. Close to 150 issues of #4 went in the mail from April-June. As of this writing, we have 64 subscribers. That's not too bad, when you consider the market. My original goal was to get 20 subscribers. We've made it! Again, thank you all...

Tim Duarte, Editor

-News & Notes-

* You can expect some more 2600 games from Atari. STREET FIGHT (\$14.99) is "coming soon".

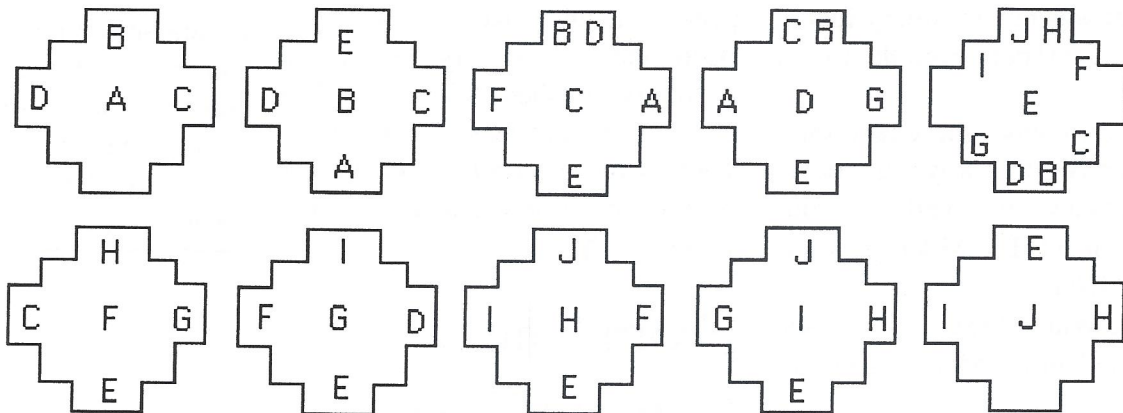
* We apologize for the Pleasant Valley Video Games "mysteries". PVV may have gone out of business. Letters and telephone calls are not being answered. Some readers have not received catalogs. Even worse, some readers have sent money for orders months ago and have not received the merchandise. We'll keep you posted.

The 2600 Connection Presents -

Solution By Russ Perry Jr.

<u>Room*</u>	<u>Skill & Action Sequence</u>	<u>Objects</u>
A	Tan Goblins	—
B	Lime Snakes	—
C	Dark Blue Knives	Shield, Amulet
D	Light Blue Flamedragons	Shoes of Stealth, Cloak of Invisibility
E	Olive Firebirds	Rope, Chalice, Armor, Dagger
F	Pink Goblins	Talisman of Passage, Oil Lamp
G	Dark Blue Snakes	Water, Ring
H	Salmon Knives	Short Sword, Warrior's Sword
I	Green Flamedragons	Food, Grappling Hook
J	Blue Salamanders	—

* Rooms are named only to help identify them here; they were not distinguished in the Fireworld booklet in any way.



<u>Room</u>	<u>Doors hidden without Chalice</u>
E	C, D, G, H, I, J *
H	J
I	J

* Sometimes rooms C, D, F, G, H, I, J or other patterns, presumably depending on what you have done or are carrying. Is this important?

Note that room J is unreachable without the Chalice, except...

In the upper right hand corner of a room, you can 'warp' through the upper wall to the next room by getting into the corner and pressing the joystick diagonally down and to the right. To make this easier, press up and then rotate the joystick clockwise (up, right, down). The warp will take you to the room corresponding to the nearest top door (upper right). Using the warp means not having to carry the Chalice to get into room J (Salamanders).

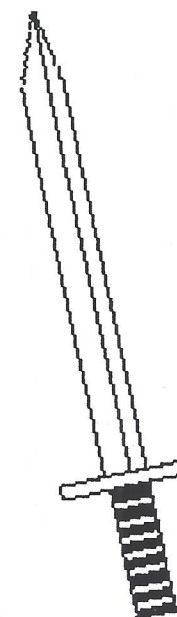
<u>Object</u>	<u>Property</u>
Amulet	Makes Goblins easier
Chalice	Opens up hidden doors
Cloak of Invisibility	Makes Firebirds easier
Dagger	Makes Flamedragons easier
Leather Armor	Makes Salamanders easier
Shoes Of Stealth	Makes Knives easier

Coming Next Issue...
 The Solution to:
Waterworld

The Solution to Swordquest : Fireworld

The rope sometimes wanders back to the last clue room, but I don't know if there is something special about this phenomenon.

<u>Clue*</u>	<u>Room**</u>	<u>Items**</u>
00	A J	Chalice Food, Oil Lamp, Ring, Shoes Of Stealth
01	B I	Rope Cloak of Invisibility, Grappling Hook, Talisman, Water
02	C H	Amulet Chalice, Grappling Hook, Leather Armor, Talisman
03	D G	Cloak of Invisibility Oil Lamp, Ring, Shield, Short Sword
04	E F	Shield Food, Oil Lamp, Ring, Rope
05	D E	Cloak of Invisibility Amulet, Leather Armor, Talisman, Warrior's Sword
06	J D	Food Dagger, Oil Lamp, Shield, Short Sword
07	B C	Grappling Hook Dagger, Food, Oil Lamp, Rope
08	I B	Water Dagger, Leather Armor, Oil Lamp, Talisman
09	B A	Warrior's Sword Amulet, Chalice, Leather Armor, Talisman



* How these clues relate to the comic book is unknown.

** Have to place the single object first.

The poem on page 2 in the comic book has the phrase "add to seven" in larger type. This indicates that the page number of proper word clues must have digits that equal 7 when added together.

<u>Clue</u>	<u>Word</u>	<u>Clue</u>	<u>Word</u>				
6-1	force	27-1	find	The Correct phrase is "Leads To Chalice Power Abounds".	<u>Title Bestowed By Atari</u>		
7-2	power	33-4	cup				
13-4	the	34-7	chalice			# of Correct Clues	Valiant Stripling
16-1	leads	43-4	abound			One or Two	Master Pathfinder
25-1	to	48-3	released (misspelled)			Three or Four	
				Five	Knight of Chalice		



New Game Reviews

By Tim Duarte and Al Backiel

MOTORODEO is my favorite of Atari's four new games for the 2600. In this game, you get behind the wheel of those 4x4 vehicles with monster tires. After selecting your truck, it's off to the course. While racing, you'll encounter ramps and springs. Points are awarded for jumps, spinning in mid-air, crushing cars, knocking down walls and other tricks. You'll also have to work your truck through mud bogs!

The game also allows a practice mode. This is a good way to become familiar with each of the obstacles in the course. It's set up in a split screen similar to **DRAGSTER** (by Activision). This allows two players to compete simultaneously (a very nice feature). Players can also select between playing for points or reaching the finish line in the shortest amount of time. Overall, the game play is excellent. **MOTORODEO** is a welcome addition to the 2600 cartridge line. (TD)

XENOPHOBE This Bally arcade coin-op translation is the worst of the bunch. I think Atari sometimes forgets that the 2600 has limitations. The game starts with a nice title screen, but it's downhill from there. The graphics are less than average and occasionally blink when too many objects appear on the screen.

The object of **XENOPHOBE** is to retrieve scattered hardware pieces throughout a space station. At the same time, you destroy any aliens, or Xenos, that are in your way. It's not that easy, though. The game is set up in a split screen, but lacks a simultaneous two player

game option. Why is it that **MOTORODEO** has this feature but **XENOPHOBE** does not? This is one of the most disappointing factors of the game.

Although I didn't get very far, the game has eight levels to conquer. I wish the programmers at Atari would have taken a bit more time and effort in completing this game. **XENOPHOBE** seems as though it was rushed and programmed quickly. (TD)

SENTINEL is the first light gun game for the 2600! It works with the XE game system's light gun. I doubt there will be a separate 2600 model light gun. This game is a fun, frantic shoot 'em up which requires intense concentration. I was playing from about 5-6 feet away. The manual doesn't give any recommended distances.

The object of the game is to protect your sentinel (or orb) from the onslaught of scrolling enemies by shooting them down before they can inflict too much damage. The gunsights on the XE light gun aren't much help because they don't line up with the targets. The graphics are not spectacular, but the smooth action of the aliens makes up for this. There are 4 levels with a boss at each end. I was able to reach the start of the 4th.

All in all, it's not a bad game. I found it addictive. It took me awhile to get used to the light gun. Hopefully, there will be more light gun games. Perhaps a war simulation, shooting gallery, or a police firing range would be a good idea. (AB)

IKARI WARRIORS [I.W.] The best way to analyze this game is to compare it to two very similar games; **COMMANDO** [Com.] (by Acti-vision) and **FRONT LINE** [F.L.] (by Coleco). Here's a chart for comparison:

Obj \ Games	I.W.	Com.	F.L.
Tanks	●		●
Grenades	●	●	
Helicopters	●		
Bunkers	●	●	
Bridges	●		●
Levels	?	8	?
Battlefields	2	1	3

While the games are closely related, each game has a different "feel". Besides obvious terrain differences, elements such as walls, foxholes, cacti, and forts make each game seem unique. For example, there are no tanks in **COMMANDO**, but it has the best graphics. **COMMANDO** also requires you to kill a certain amount of the enemy in order to finish the round. **FRONT LINE** doesn't have safe areas. If you stand still, the enemy will surround you. **IKARI WARRIORS** is the only game with helicopters and seems to have unpredictable tanks.

All three games scroll vertically and the object is the same in each game: Destroy the enemy! Don't expect **IKARI WARRIORS** to have two player simultaneous action like the arcade coin-op. Obviously, there wasn't enough memory to program this. **IKARI WARRIORS** could have defeated these other two games if it had this feature. (AB) 