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ATARI

USER

Issue 50 £1.95

June/July

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PAGE 6 ON THE ROAD!

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SSAR for latest catalogue detailing up our
latest software and hardware products
for the Atari 8 bit.

Mailbag



in



Must remember to write to Mailbag

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BEWARE

I wonder if any reader of *New Atari User* has three any light on an advert that appeared in issue 45 in the Pongola section. The advert was for a new User Group called Atari Addition of 1, Brookwood Green, Stroud, Stroud, West Midlands.

I sent off the details and received a letter telling of a bi-monthly newsletter and a starter pack of two free disks. The subscription for one year plus free disks was £6.50 which I thought seemed good value so I sent a cheque last September. It was cashed within a few days but to date I have not received a thing from them. Even an enquiry asking them what was happening has been ignored.

As *New Atari User* is the magazine of the Atari 8-bit I feel that if this was a scam I feel that it was the only one to fall for it, so maybe you could find something out for me?

**T. L. Shigham,
Lincoln**

To date we have not been able to discover more, and we have not had any other complaints so it could be a matter of things. The letters in the Pongola section are all taken in good faith and we don't know that look suspicious to us in the first place are never printed, but of course some problems may occur when sending money to 'unknown' persons. In the majority of cases it is simply our enthusiasm by someone who thinks they can run a User Group but they think that it is not as easy as they thought. Perhaps this is the case here? The steps that placed the notice was Lee Clark so

perhaps you could do the correct thing. Lee, and get in touch with Mr. Shigham and let him know his wrongs? In the meantime if any other reader has had similar problems do let us know and if this is not an isolated incident we will ensure that appropriate actions be taken.

MORE DISK ROOM

I would like to know if there is an easy way of putting more than one program on a disk? A silly question perhaps but let me explain.

When I type in certain programs from your mag such as *Snakes and Ladders* or *AUTOREUNSYS* file is created. This is all very well but a lot of disk space is left just begging to be used. Would it not be possible to write a small routine incorporating all the *AUTOREUNSYS* files for the programs on the disk? The routine could have the own *AUTOREUNSYS* to display an on screen menu displaying the contents of the disk.

Is there a program available to do this or would I have to write my own? If so could you refer me to an appropriate book as my programming abilities are rather limited.

**Kevin Trayler,
Dover**

AUTOREUNSYS files are generally created for convenience to save the user from remembering filenames. It is much easier to just load up a disk and have the program run over though, so you may, a lot of disk space appears to be wasted. All this 'wasted' space can be used however, in a number of ways. Firstly there is nothing to stop you using

the disk to store other programs as long as you don't save another program called *AUTOREUNSYS* (or it will overwrite the first one). You can write as many other programs to the disk as you want. One of course you cannot use that disk to boot up with. Just use another DOS disk and change over when you want to run a program. Secondly you can change the filenames in the majority of cases in any menu calling in 'COPY' for any other extension and run the program from DOS, although in some cases this will not work. If you change the name from *AUTOREUNSYS* to *SHARE.DOS* using option 4 of the DOS menu, you can run the *SHARE.DOS* program from DOS option 4. If you rename the file you can then use the disk for other programs that create *AUTOREUNSYS* files, removing such as you go.

Once you have renamed the files there is nothing to stop you putting a menu on the disk to select each file, although again in many cases it may not work. There are many different menu programs and you will have to experiment to find a menu that will work with all the programs you have. The basic disks that are available with each issue of *New Atari User* work on this basis well. If you buy one of these, you can take off the files and the *AUTOREUNSYS* file that runs the files and arrange them in your own disk. Be warned though that the menus are different, depending on whether there are machine code programs on the particular disk as you will have to choose the right one! There is also a disk in the *PAGE-A LIBRARY* that has nothing but a selection of menus on it and there is listed in it one there that will work for you.

Experiment and you will find that you should be able to use all of your disk to the full. One final warning, don't try to save programs to commercial disks as, although they may have lots of space space, quite often the directory has been erased and you will most likely overwrite the original program.

2008

DISASTER!

I have an Atari 800X and am new to programming. After spending many long hours typing in a very long program I decided to save it on tape. I suppose because I was tired, I typed **CLASH** instead of **CRASH**, and pressed the Return key. In about 20 seconds I pressed the Break key and after a few seconds the "READY" prompt came up. I listed the program and to my shame nothing came up. I hit the whole program.

Can you tell me if there is a way of restoring a program after making such a stupid mistake.

A. Hople,
Ipsall

Shouldn't you all done this at some time? Whenever the **CRASH** or **LOAD** statement is typed, the first thing that happens is that the computer issues a **DIR** command to it self clearing out the various tables. It has not set up ready for the program to be loaded. As this is the very first thing it happens, you would not be able to press the Break key in time to save the program. It is effectively lost. However I do recall reading somewhere that the **DIR** command does not actually delete the program from ROM and it is possible to recover it with another utility. I cannot trace the source of this so maybe another reader could discover something and maybe let us have a program we could publish?

ENCOURAGEMENT

I'm pretty new to the computing scene although I've had a Spectrum for about four years but hardly ever used it. About 4 months ago my son took a fancy to his friend's **80081**, because it had a disk in the top I bought it. He hit for £6.99 and was amazed at the quality compared with the Spectrum. I then bought an 810 disk drive for £39 and really became enthusiastic, no more hours of typing fol-

lowed by "CRASH" followed by five minutes reboots if you had been lucky enough to save it in tape.

Since then I've been amazed at how much support the 810 still has and it's a marvellous way to learn computing at budget prices. I've noticed in reading back numbers of various Atari support magazines a constant theme of poor after sales support by Atari themselves and original high prices for software compared to Sinclair. Hence the Spectrum still has several magazines on sale in the high street shops and a healthy supply of new software whereas the mostly superior Atari 8-bits are having a bit of a hard time.

If magazines are reluctant to order your mag, to open they might perhaps be prepared to display a mock cover drawing attention to your existence. A lot of my Atari colleagues didn't know that you were alive and kicking!

John Pearce,
Folkestone

What a lucky man! An 80081 for £6.50 and a disk drive for £39. Any more money they came from, what is it the magazines, are there still but given up, having done everything we can to get the message into the paper, intention but it is a losing battle. Why keep a specialist magazine on the shelf? For a couple of weeks when you can see them online at MastersParade.com and KylieMag.com? It is rare up to in the likes of you to spread the word. If you have Atari more interesting, then don't know about us, get them to post off £10 for a subscription. You know they can't be sending their money and you still benefit as well in the long run by helping to ensure that we keep going as long as the great Atari machines are around.

WON'T WRITE

I own a 1950 disk drive with a US chip but I have a problem with it or it could

be the computer, it has stopped formatting and will not write either yet it will still read. Can you help?

William Howley,
Tevens

If you check back through the letters column you have answered this one several times yet we still get lots of letters like this. Quite often the only thing that is wrong is that the job card that holds the disk onto the read/write head has become compressed so that there is not enough pressure to hold the disk against the head. Just remove the case and you will see a small screw behind the spindle which holds the disk centre. You can fit this a little and you will see a small job card about one eighth of an inch square on the top floppy board. Grab a paperclip, spread out, and work carefully, together up the end of the card taking great care not to touch the metal underneath. You should find that, once you put it all back together, the drive writes again. This works in nine cases out of ten but if you notice the unhappy truth was, then you'll have to find somewhere to get it repaired.

PILLOCK!

I have a complaint to put to all the software companies who are supposed to be supporting Atari. I first got an Atari 800 in 1979 which cost me nearly £400. These days there was software available but it was very costly, average price was about £25. Nowadays there are many, many Atari users, the software prices have come down and that's great but what is the software? I took a bus bill to what was known as Atari World to purchase some software and it was dismal! There was about 20 titles for the 8-bit. I spent was about 1,500 titles, such as Crystal Castle, Master of The Lamp, Super Poorman, Martin Douglas many others which are unavailable to many Atari users. I have about 1,000 titles that are priced, a few I

have mentioned. Why aren't these games being released? Master of The Lamp has one of the best graphics screens I have seen on an 8-bit. It has built-in music which definitely puts the Commodore to shame but the game has never been released on the Atari. I played it about 5 years ago on the C64 and then came across a copy for the Atari 8-bit.

So all you software companies out there just send this and remember Atari users aren't liars, it's you who don't make the money.

S. Ellis,
Manchester

A genuine letter? To name an software companies get some more software and format 80. Lots is running out of things to rip off. If you spend six months developing a good game and then pay for all the artwork and packaging, duplication etc., you will be guaranteed in well at least one copy but that one copy should keep thousands of Atari users happy when Mr. Ellis and Mr. Pearce have ripped it off. Good luck, eh? (Just can't understand why the software companies don't release new stuff for the Atari, can you?)

100% EXTRA DUMP

I am hoping that your readers may be able to help me with a problem that I have with my 1050 printer. I have been in search of a screen dump routine that will allow me to dump a standard screen but I also want to be able to dump an extra bit so that the dumped image will cover the width of a standard 64 page. I have written software that allows me to take a 64 screen screen and scroll it so that I can add an extra bit at the side then if I can find a printer routine to dump it, it will allow me to dump the full width. I would be grateful if anyone can help with such a routine.

S.M. Harvey
Aldon

DISK BONUS

THE AMULET

An Adventure by Peter Lister

Many of you may remember *The Amulet* being commercially reviewed a while ago and reviewed by John Sweeney in these very pages. Now disk subscribers and others can get this great adventure absolutely free on the back of this issue's disk!

THE LEGEND OF THE CIRCLE OF NINE

(While you wait to read to understand the adventure)

Many years ago, in the area of now called The Shadow Lands, there lived a noble king of warriors and wizards. There was always magic in those days and those who could manipulate the magic became powerful leaders, each with a following of followers.

Throughout The Shadow Lands many large battles were fought between the opposing followers of the warriors and wizards, often resulting in huge loss of human life, but without really affecting the leaders themselves. The only change was the arrival of Galdor. Some say that the world trembled, others have strange thoughts, but most agree that it was Galdor who brought about the formation of The Circle of Nine.

The members of the Circle were wizards who could manipulate the elements and others who were warriors and knights. The people prospered. Some of the finest areas of the land for comfort and law were planned and named the population.

Many a king of the shadow world fell to his knees before the remaining nine leaders because that they must join them.

It was now to be defined. A just war existed, a demon summoned and The Circle of Nine was formed.

The combined powers of the nine members provided an immense power for almost a century. Each had his strength however. One was the might of The Circle and another, who was not, was stopped by his powers and ended because from the lower world.

Then began the era that was to be remembered as The Shadow Wars, an age of unparalleled enlightenment. The wizards and warriors did not see the last but instead of using their magic against each other, they learned from each other and combined their powers. Magic that brought water to the land and drought, a new leader grew to the high and called his people together in the shade of the Shadow protection and they crafted a weather and wind, storm and ice and learned how to fly.

As well as the Circle of Nine and their spirit world, so were the nine leaders called to view their world as themselves. Many brought their families and many united and the community flourished and prospered.

The members of the Circle passed on the knowledge that they were well loved by the people of the land and from time to time some special gifts would be sent for the people's enlightenment and improvement. In return, the people continued to prosper but, over and over again

the Circle members, as their fathers and forefathers had done.

The golden years lasted for several generations but, it is said that great things were to be done and, sadly the golden years were to prove so unstable. As one century came to a close and the shadow world was blossoming in the face, there came news to the Circle of a new battle in a distant land and for many brought others to the ranks of the Circle members.

Legend says that once they had a new young wizard with a special following of wizards and wizards. He showed the Circle's right to rule and showed their intention to be free.

At the Shadow Wars that year was the speaker in the Circle was convinced that this was a demonstration of the land and wizard Galdor and the rest of the Circle were convinced one day would be brought of their own enlightened rights in the land.

Others know of what happened next. Some say that letters brought the members of the Circle and others believe it was the Circle themselves who said a writing about the end result, was today. Suddenly, one afternoon evening, the magic went away...

The story continues on the disk!

PLAYING THE AMULET

Your instructions to the program can be in various forms, the simplest being single letter abbreviations of the most popular commands. The following are valid single letter commands:

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| W - Move North | A - Again |
| E - Move South | I - Inventory |
| S - Move East | L - Look |
| W - Move West | O - Off |
| M - Move Up | X - Exit |
| D - Move Down | |

The following 2 letter commands will also be accepted:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| SE - Move Southeast | SW - Move Southwest |
| NE - Move Northeast | NW - Move Northwest |

The program accepts some single word instructions. Examples and brief explanations are:

ALIAS - Replace last command

AREA - For positional players, who know their way about. Doesn't load or display location description

PULL - Load and display object description (can also use the verb only **MOVE** that in other areas) or **PULL** inside the **LOOK** command will always load and display full location description

INDEX - Checks data for words and displays to screen. Also provides **OPEN** or **CLOSE** or **RESET** current game

INVENTORY - Lists everything that you are carrying

QUIT - End current session

RESTART - Restart game from disk or memory

SAVE - Save current game to disk or memory

HELP - On screen for 1 - 9000

Getting The Best From The Parser

The program recognizes many verbs and nouns plus some adjectives and conjunctions but expects your input to fit within one of the following patterns:

V - Verb, A - Adjective, N - Noun, C - Conjunction

- | | |
|--------|-------------------------------|
| VG | eg. EXAMINE SCREEN |
| VN | eg. KICK BLOOM (DOES) |
| VAC | eg. THE ROPE TO THE SUEV |
| VACN | eg. GIVE HOLLOW LOG TO HERMIT |
| VACAN | eg. OPEN DOOR WITH SMALL KEY |
| VACANX | eg. PUT BIRD IN, IN SMALL PIT |

You will see that under the above system, the maximum number of words accepted is quite limited (3 or 4). If you enter more than six words in a phrase, you will be asked to rephrase it. Similarly, if your input doesn't follow one of the above phrases, you will be asked to rephrase it.

Need the parser? (Maybe you work against it in an emergency and will return you to the screen) or do you understand and know. The parser will attempt to associate your instructions and the program will respond accordingly.

There are a couple of special cases of input involving the word **ALL**. You will only work with the verbs **LOOK** and **OPEN** e.g. **LOOK ALL** (shows objects) and **OPEN ALL** (opens all doors).

You can also use the word **BUT** in conjunction with the above commands e.g. **LOOK ALL BUT [OBJECT]** or **OPEN ALL BUT LOG**.

Multiple Input

The file **input** (program) will save several for multiple input. Although you are limited to a maximum of six words per phrase you can actually enter up to ten full lines of input. Separate phrases or instructions should be separated with a carriage return (CR) or **ENTER** or **RETURN** or **NEWLINE** or **LF** or **NEWLINE**. You should not send your input with a full program

The program will expect another instruction and will display an error message.

Saving and Restoring Games

There is an internal file history which allows you to save your current situation in memory (you could just before you're something dangerous). You can also Save and Restore to and from disk. This will save a game file formatted in DOS 2.0 or 2.1. You can have as many "Saved Games" files as you wish but each can only contain 10 saved games (0 - 9).

Screen Color

You can adjust the screen colour to suit your taste by repeatedly pressing the **OPTION** key.

Help

If you type **HELP** at any time you will be returned to the screen. There are many problems to be solved and clues are embedded in the text messages you receive.

Remember to examine everything you find, nearly all objects have one or more the **INFORMATION** or **HELP** messages. Some of the objects you find may help you, but then again... **NOPE** may not.

THE AMULET is on the **BONUS** on this issue's disk which disk subscribers will already have received with the magazine. The issue also contains all of the programs from this issue ready to run and can be purchased separately for just \$7.95 from PAGE 4, P.O. BOX 44, STAFFORD, ST16 1NR. Credit card orders may be telephoned to 0783 228028.

EXCEL DISK MAG

No. 2 (May 1991)

IS OUT NOW!

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STOP PRESS: Two programs from our first issue are **NOW AVAILABLE ON CASSETTE** - Character Editor and Amnesia at £2.95 each

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NOW YOU CAN ADD YO

NOT YOUR AVERAGE SCROLL

The fairly short BASIC program presented here (Listing 1) will print a scrolling message at the top of your screen in Graphics Mode 2, while retaining the normal editing screen below. This program can be quite easily integrated into, say, a title screen for a game, telling you instructions and other useful information.

So what, you might say? You've already seen a jerky BASIC scroll and expect something similar, but this program has a number of features which make it stand out from the rest!

Firstly it is a machine code routine which controls the scrolling and this runs in a Vertical Blank Interrupt which means you can have other things, such as BASIC commands, going on at the same time. Secondly it manipulates the Display List and smooth scroll registers so that the message scrolls perfectly smoothly. Finally I have added to the machine code routine, a Display List Interrupt, which enables an effect whereby the middle section of the characters, certainly, is brightest and the luminance decreases towards the edges.

You'll see what I'm on about if you type in Listing 1, which is the BASIC program which achieves the VBI scroll.

LIMITATIONS

As you will discover in any routine there are always limitations! However the limitations in this program are not of all vices.

The biggest is the BASIC program's use of page 0 (8000-807F), so you will need to adapt your program if you have some code requiring this useful RAM area. You could use a memory bank swap (as in the one featured in Steve Wilkinson's Machine Code Library) to move routines in and out of page 0 as required or, if you have an assembler, you can alter the source code listing (Listing 2) to your requirements.

The other limitation is that colour register 0 location 70H is used in the routine, so unless you want other text or graphics to be the same colour as the scroll text do not use this register. Again assembler language users can alter the source code to their taste.

ALTERING THE SCROLL

The actual message displayed is stored in D1H from bytes 70 to 90. One important note is to remember to put 20 spaces for full stops etc.) at the beginning and end of

your message otherwise you will not get a smooth transition at the end, when the scroll restarts.

Do you like the scroll at the top? Perhaps you want it at the bottom? Unfortunately this is not a simple task, and requires manipulation of the display list (see Andrew Watt's Display list article or Mapping The Area, for information). To give you a start, however I will show you how to get the scrolling line at the bottom of the screen.

Modify line 100 to read:

```
100 DATA
```

```
112,112,66,255,255,255,255,255,248,87,393,393,65,375,255
```

(Note the 255's are showing bytes where the required locations are filled in by the program)

Line 40: change the POKE DL+4,PEEKD99 to POKE DL+2,PEEKD99 and change the POKE DL+7,PEEKD99 to POKE DL+4,PEEKD99

Line 130: change POKE DL+2,STL to POKE DL+4,STL and change POKE DL+2,STH to POKE DL+1,STH!

Change line 100 to:

```
100 N=0:END:130,DL+4
```

(Note DL = the start address of the display list, L = the length of the display list and STL and STH indicate the high and low bytes of the start address of the scrolling message)

Other information you might like to know is how to turn the scroll off! To turn off simply type the following commands into your program or in direct mode:

```
POKE 54396,64
```

```
POKE 5440,99
```

```
POKE 547,259
```

```
GRAFFICS 0
```

This should be enough to get rid of it on all machines!

CHECK OUT THE SOURCE CODE MAESTRO!

As mentioned before I have also included the source code for the machine code routine for all you assembly language programmers out there! This is for examination and for use in machine code programs, but it is not the routine designed to interface with BASIC, so you must design a machine code routine to do the same job as the Basic program. (i.e. set up the display list. The program is well annotated and you should have no problems.

MESSAGES TO YOUR P

THE A-Z OF GOLDEN (AND NOT SO GOLDEN) OLDIES

I hope that the three hundred or so small reviews in this series will enable new and old Atari owners to evaluate games they may have missed, compare my reviews with games they already know, or help them in choosing games they may be thinking of acquiring.

These mini-reviews by no means include every piece of Atari 2600 software ever released. They represent, rather, a summation of my transactions with the 8-bit during the period of 1982-85. Also, you will (hopefully) find objective reviews of many games or titles (I either owned, played, used or borrowed during those years). This series should serve as a useful guide to the major, and not so major, releases of yesteryear.

The bulk of the reviews concern software released in the mid-1980's. At that time you could walk into your local software store and always find some Atari releases. Today, alas, this does not hold true. Your best chances of finding some of the items mentioned throughout this series is probably through the advertisements found elsewhere in these pages. Also, always keep an eye on the second-hand market.

Contrary to what other computer owners may think, the Atari 2600 range is still the best 8-bit computer system around. However, it is my opinion that only a select number of games exploited its multi-sensory capabilities to the full.

Atari software these days is not too easy to find. The items in this series (most "new" should prove to be an even greater challenge than usual for software buyers.

Happy computing, and keep the Atari 8-bit alive!

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS USED THROUGHOUT

Star Ratings:

★	poor
★ ○	poor/mediocre
★★	mediocre
★★ ○	mediocre/good
★★★	good
★★★ ○	good/excellent
★★★★	excellent

arc	arcade game
plat	platform game
sim	simulation
strat	strategy game
adv	text adventure
g/adv	text adventure with pictures
trp	fantasy role playing game
arcade	arcade game with puzzle solving/mapping etc.

fl	game is available on tape
dl	game is available on disk
cl	game is available on ROM cartridge

bud	budget priced game (\$1.99-\$2.99)
mid	mid-priced game (\$3.99-\$9.99)
ful	full priced game (\$9.99+)
imp	game is (or was) only available on import from America
ncase	no price range available, because game is very difficult to get hold of

Compiled by
Kirk Ruebottom

The price and format (tape, disk etc.) ranges quoted are intended as guidelines only. Games which were originally available on tape and disk can now be found on cartridge and vice versa. This can also affect the price of the game in quantities.

ACE OF ACES ★★☆☆
arc/sim Accolade/U.S. Gold 1988 (J,d) full

This is a reasonable attempt at a simulation of World War II aerial combat. Flying your plane over Europe, you encounter German ME 109s, U-Boats, mines etc. The flight simulator part of the program (you feel as if you really are flying above the clouds) works pretty well, but the game is let down by some average graphics and poor choice of colour. Nevertheless, flight simulator buffs may get a kick out of it.

ACTION BIKER ★★☆☆
arc Mastertronic 1986 (J) full

Mastertronic's first effort for the Atari had you guiding Clumsy Cain through a city complete with obstacle course, roller coaster, jump ramps and many other features in an attempt to find items related to his motorcycle. Initial impressions of the game (and its angled 3-D effect) are pleasing, and it does have some merit in the playability department. However, you soon notice the poor scrolling and lack-lustre sound effects and realise why it was a budget game.

ADVENTUREWRITER ★★☆☆
ut Atari 1984 (J,d) full

As its name implies, this utility will help you to write a computer adventure. Unfortunately, your adventures cannot contain graphics and can only refer to verb-noun commands. Adventurewriter is fairly easy to use and comes with a large instruction manual, but its scope is somewhat limited because of today's emphasis on colourful pictures and complex puzzles.

AIRSTRIKE ★☆☆☆
arc English Software 1982 (J,d) scarce

This one is basically an early 'Scramble' clone and nothing more. It is a horizontally scrolling 'blast everything that moves' type of game. Eight years ago it was considered fairly good. Nowadays it seems a little primitive. One of English Software's virtues are they now (I bet) Atari releases.

AIRWOLF (See 'BLUE THUNDER')

ALI BABA AND THE 40 THIEVES ★★☆☆
tp Quality Software 1982 (J,d) scarce

An early attempt at capturing the spirit of fantasy role playing on computer. You play the part of Ali Baba or one of his friends and attempt to rescue a fair princess. On the way you do battle with various monsters, and of course the 40 Thieves. All commands are input by joystick as you guide your character over the colourful multi-screen playing area. Not technically brilliant perhaps, but Ali has a certain atmosphere and excitement which many other role playing games lack.

ALLEY CAT ★★☆☆★
arc Byrnes/U.S. Gold 1987 (J) full

Alley Cat has humour, good graphics, excellent sound and is a joy to play. You may feel you're taking part in a cartoon as you help Freddy the cat avoid mad dogs, mischievous cats, sweeping brushes, other cats and lots more. This is definitely NOT a platform game. There has never been anything quite like it before or since. Unique and brilliant.

ALTERNATE REALITY: THE CITY ★★☆☆★
tp Dataeast/U.S. Gold 1988 (J) full

A puzzle. The opening theme and character creation sequence remains one of the best graphic and sound tracks on the Atari (except ARY II on computer). In the game you find yourself walking down 3-D streets, entering bars, snuffies, banks and such like. The

sun rises and sets and day blends into night. You may find yourself actually 'living' your character. The only drawback to 'The City' are an over-emphasis on combat, too little interaction with the townspeople, and frequent disk swapping. But for all this, it remains a classic.

ALTERNATE REALITY: THE DUNGEON ★★☆☆★
tp Dataeast/U.S. Gold 1987 (J,d) full

This is the second instalment in the now defunct series. Graphics and sound are of the same high standard as 'The City' although there is a little less use of colour. The main gameplay is essentially the same, but with a greater emphasis on interaction and puzzle solving. The designers spent a lot of time on 'The Dungeon' and it shows. One of the best fantasy role playing games on computer, and also one of the few games to make use of the 1024K extra memory.

AMAUROTE ★★☆☆
arc Mastertronic 1987 (J) full

Fairly classy game from Mastertronic, one of their multitude of releases for the XLXX. Graphics, although monochrome, are pleasing to look at and the music is well done. Amaurote is unusual, a shoot 'em-up with strategy game where you blast away at monsters from an industrial vehicle. It may well appeal to more discerning gamers as well as joystick fiends. Recommended, especially at the price.

APPLE PANIC ★☆☆☆
plat Broderbund 1982 (J,d) scarce

Much copied (I don't know why) platform game in which you guide a little fellow up and down ladders to dig holes in platforms for apples to fall through. Once they fall in a hole you fill it in again to fill them. Graphics and animation are very poor. This game would look more at home on the old Atari VCS.

ARCHON ★☆☆☆
strat Electronic Arts 1982 (J,d,r) full

An interesting and much-admired piece of software. Is it a game of chess or is it a sort of shoot 'em up? Well, in fact Archon is both. Mythical monsters take the part of chess pieces as you manoeuvre them across the board to gain strategic positions. When an opponent enters the same square you are switched to a combat screen where the two monsters battle (or shoot) it out.



ARCHON II: ADEPT ★★☆☆
strat Electronic Arts 1984 (J,d) full

Heavily borrowing from the original, Archon II features a completely re-designed board (hence new strategy), different monsters (hence new combat techniques), and slightly better graphics. Love them or hate them, the Archon games are certainly unusual, but also probably rightly so.

ARDY THE AARDYARK ★★☆☆
arc Databyte 1988 (J) full

This one has you steering Ardy's tongue through a maze-like area' based on his quest for food. Look out for worms though, because they will force you to retreat his tongue pretty sharply. Ardy is highly amusing at first (so you know of any other games which feature an ever-lengthening tongue as a weapon?), but it soon devolves after a few plays.

A-Z OF ATARI SOFTWARE

ARKANOID

arc Imagine Software

(1,2) full

Claw's "breakout" inspired game. Using your bat, you must knock out all the bricks on the top. They have different subsets (and very pretty they are too). Features include multiple balls, a rotating bat, various mazes and a lot more. What Arkanoid has plenty of is playability. Not a game to stimulate your brain, but ideal to develop your hand-eye co-ordination.



ASTEROIDS

arc Atari

1981 (1) mid

Asteroids, that Galton Game where you move a little ship around the screen, dodging debris or coming rocks which shatter and become smaller rocks, etc. Did make an authorized appearance on the 8-bit, courtesy of the Atari cartridge. Basically, a no-hills career simulation in about 10, 000,000. For the hard-core fan-up addict only.

ASTROCHASE

arc First Star Software

(3,4) scarce

Its graphics are nice and its tunes are great, but Astrochase is beginning to show its age. You'll probably be guilty of shouting your way across a four-way scrolling space battlefield, dodging the earth from various enemies. Best effect is the exploding earth scene at the end of game, when the screen bursts into brilliant light.

ASTROMEDA

arc Rhine Marketing/Budge 1987 (1) bud

A challenging challenge up at a nice price. It's all done in "limited" style as you guide your spaceship over a horizontally scrolling background. Nothing new here, but what sets it apart from the crowd is its terrific sound and above average graphics.

ASYLUM

gr adv U.S. Gold

1984 (3,2) full

A frustrating adventure with good graphics and an endless vocabulary. You move around the 3-D maze of the Asylum using the cursor keys, with all other characters (a g. talking to people) being typed as a command in the usual adventure style. Puzzles are tough, and mapping is not made easy by the intricate design of the maze.

ATARI CASSETTE ENHANCER

ut English Software 1983 (1) scarce

A useful utility containing features such as fasting control, variable list, file renamer, renaming of cassette programs, catalogue programs on cassettes, auto file numbering and a lot more. If you do not yet own a disk drive, but do a lot of programming or typing in, or things then A.C.E. can be highly recommended if you can find it.

ATARIWRITER

ut Atari

1982 (1) full

A great all-round word processor from Atari for all Atari machines. The only drawback with Atariwriter is that it is unable to display 80 column text. Available on cartridge, and its descendant "Atariwriter+" is also available on disk.

ATTACK AT EP-CYG

arc Bran Inc.

1982 (1) scarce

Word and very little more should be up which requires the Transfer disk to work on 512K machines. You move your SLUGGY CRAB through space after screen of planet lenses (depicted in a 2-D

side-on view) and blast enemy installations and ships using a cannon which moves independently of your ship. Controls are hard to get used to and the overall standard of graphics and sound make this one 90-10.

ATTACK OF THE MUTANT CAMELS

arc Lakesoft

1984 (1) bud

Jeff Miller was a renowned programmer on other 8-bit machines, so when he decided to convert "Camels" to the Atari everyone asked with bated breath. But, apart from some nice audio-visual effects (I feel he could have done better (the whole program uses about 100K of code)). Lakesoft re-released this at a budget price, so it's worth adding to the collection.

AUTODUEL

arc Origin/Microprose

1986 (4) full

Unfortunately, as with all Origin programs for the Atari, they opted for high (2481600) resolution and a technique known as anti-aliasing to obtain more than the restrictive two-colours of the Atari graphics mode. Result: fine if you have an American T.V., but on British sets colours appear as black, white and purple. Don't let this distract you too much from what is otherwise an imaginative and involving game. It's a bit reminiscent of "Mad Max" but on a large scale playing state. Well designed, with a lot of depth.

BALLBLAZER

arc Activision/Lucasfilm 1985

(1,2,1) full

Wonderfully weird game of a futuristic sport for one or two players. A light-sabre technique allows each player to have his own first person perspective view of the pitch. As each player battles for the ball, the ground whizzes past at an alarming rate. Much to merit to be found in the one, especially the brilliant graphics and sound.



BALLOONACY

arc Microvare/Tyresoft

1986 (1) bud

This formed part of the "Four Great Games" compilation which resulted at £3.99. Taking that into consideration, "Balloonacy" works out at roughly £1. It's not even worth that. Don't waste your time getting a nice fellow with a spiced helmet to level falling balloons, unless you like making your Atari look like a Z801.

BALLYHOOD

adv. Intertec

1986 (4) full

Whether or not you like "Ballyhood" will depend on how much you like adventures, and whether you prefer words of text description to pretty pictures. This one from Intertec, set in a circus, is a check-out block with atmosphere. You have a limited time to discover what has happened to the circus owner's daughter. It plays like a detective story, and some of the replies to your input are hilarious. Its only drawback is the annoying disk access after every move, which slows the game down considerably.

BATTLECRUISER

adv. S.S.I.

1987 (3) full

Highly detailed computer wargame concerning ship to ship combat in World Wars I and II. Graphics are mostly functional and play second fiddle to the wealth of game options, commands and strategies. Technical and complex, requiring extensive reading of the large game manual. A cerebral challenge for discerning wargamers.

B.C.'S QUEST FOR TIRES ★ ★

arc Sierra On-Line 1980 (1/d) mid

Intally hilarious, but ultimately monotonous game, programmed with tongue-in-cheek. You control B.C. on his shaggy motorcycle, dodging boulders, trees, flying animals etc. There is a slowly done horizontally scrolling background of sky and mountains. Casual graphic touches are provided by B.C.'s various types of crashes. Easy to complete on the easiest skill level, so you may tire of it quickly.

BEACH HEAD ★ ★ ☆

arc Access/U.S. Gold 1984 (d) full

This multi-load game is made up of several different scenarios or mini-games. These include navigating your ship through a mined sea passage, shooting fighter planes from the sky, sinking enemy ships, and leading a tank assault on the beach head itself. The mini-games range from being fast to very good the ship is an essential sequence is probably the best). Definite one to consider acquiring.

BEACH HEAD 2 ★ ★ ☆

arc Access/U.S. Gold 1986 (d) full

Unlike its predecessor, Beach Head 2 is set completely on land and has you parachuting your assault force onto an island, receiving hostages, making your escape, and finally confronting the Doctor. The four mini-games are, on the whole, well done (with the exception of the dreadful 'Escape' sequence). Action interest is provided by the few player options and the ability to play either the good guy or the Doctor. Also included are some nice graphics and unusual sound effects.

BEER BELLY BURT'S BREW BIZ ★ ★

plat Americana U.S. Gold 1986 (1) bad

This game is neither good nor bad, being merely a run-of-the-mill platform game. If you happen lean towards dodging things, running and jumping around platforms and finding ways to get to the next screen, I suppose you could do worse than spend \$2.99 on 'Beer Belly'.

BLUE MAX ★ ★ ☆

arc Synapse/U.S. Gold 1983/1985 (1,4/r) mid

'Blue Max' was one of the first home-computer games to feature a diagonally scrolling screen (a la 'Zaxxon'), giving it a far 3-D effect. You are in a World War I bi-plane and you strike, explode and blow your way through the adequately drawn battlefields. Good arcade action. Hailed in 1983 as 'superb', 'Blue Max' still holds its own to this day.

BLUE MAX 2001 ★ ☆

arc U.S. Gold 1986 (1,4) mid

This sequel was programmed by the same person, but into a formulaic setting and maintained essentially the same gameplay as the original. But what went wrong? Your spaceship looks like a pale mint. It's darn near impossible to control, and the game just fails to grab one's attention. Altogether a pretty awful game in anyone's books.

BLUE PRINT ★ ★ ☆

arc C.B.S. 1983 (1) score

A cute little game in which you must collect items to assemble a steam engine. Once assembled, you can shoot the bad guys who are chasing your jet at the top of the screen. Unusual, with features too numerous and varied to go into here. A good game for joystick connoisseurs.

BLUE THUNDER ★

arc Richard Wilcox Software 1984 (1) 16/100

An atypical historically-accurate 'shoot-em-up'. Originally released as 'Blue Thunder' and then bought up by Elite Software and re-named 'Raid' to cash in on the craze at that time. Hands up if you bought both without realising.

B.M.X. SIMULATOR ★ ★ ☆

arc Codemasters 1986 (1) bad



A challenging and involving budget release which simulates a race between two B.M.X. bikers over many different courses. The on-screen view is an overhead one, with each player looking down on the well drawn courses and races. Watch out for sharp bends, obstacles, hills, and of course the other player. Great fun, especially for two players, and the Pan Hubbard (remember him?) soundtrack is excellent.

BOULDERDASH ★ ★ ☆

arc First Star Software/ 1984 (1,4) bad/

Prism Leisure 1987 mid

Brilliant. The gameplay and its intricacies are almost impossible to sum up in a few sentences. Excellent in after-games, but be sure to watch out for falling boulders. One of those rare arcade games which will appeal to the thinking person as well as the joystick basher. Nice use of colour, exemplary scrolling and perfect sound. All in all, a sublime piece of software.

BOULDERDASH 2 ★ ★ ☆

arc First Star Software/ 1985 (1,4) bad/

Prism Leisure 1987 mid

More of the same from the talented First Star team. This time out each screen is a little harder and will require some logical thinking and experimenting to complete. There is the added bonus of an excellent title screen as well. I prefer 'Boulderdash', probably because it is a little easier.

BOUNTY BOB STRIKES BACK ★ ★ ☆

plat U.S. Gold 1986 (1,4) bad

One of the best all-round platform games. 'Bob' is the sequel to the seminal 'Biker 2049er'. There are 25 different screens to be jumped through, all brilliantly designed and nicely coloured. The high score and introductory screens are charming. Old computer magazines are chock full of hints and tips for this game.

BROADSIDES ★ ★ ☆

arc S.S.I. 1983 (d) full

If you fancy yourself as Commander at a ship in the days of sail, fighting the French, Spanish and Americans, then this game is for you. Some mechanics cover sailing, cannon-loading and firing, and ship-loading and repair plans. Don't expect marvellous graphics, but do expect excitement and terrific playability. Easier to get into than most Strategic Simulations games.

BRUCE LEE ★ ★ ☆

plat Datacube/U.S. Gold 1985 (1,4) mid

'Bruce Lee' was one of the first 'real' 'em-up' games, yet it falls more easily into the platform game category, because of its emphasis on running, jumping and dodging through a multitude of screens. Nice graphics, very playable, and with a neat two-player option.

BUBBLE TROUBLE

arc Players Software 1987 (Ld) bud **

One in a series of games from this budget software house. Full marks for originality, but none for long lasting interest. You're a bubble in a bath, trying to win other smaller bubbles whilst dodging rubber ducks, spiders and feathers! Players Software certainly knew how to use the audio-visual capabilities of the Atari to good effect, but they waste their talents on games of little substance.

BUCK ROGERS

arc Sega 1982 (r) ** scarce

An average implementation of the old coin-op game, featuring most of the elements found in the original, but without the graphical treats. If you enjoy 3-D shoot'em ups you may like it, but don't pay too much for it and don't expect too much from it.

CAPTAIN STICKY'S GOLD

arc English Software 1982 (r) ** mid

This game shines in the graphics and sound department, with some amazing opening music. Gameplay proves to be a little disappointing though. Sticky tends to turn up on English Software compilations, so keep it in this form if you can (it makes a good budget game).

CARNIVAL MASSACRE

arc Thom EMI/Creative Sparks 1983 (r) mid ** ☆

Saves everyone from the madman at the fair, and catch them as they fall from the big wheels and roller coasters. Sounds interesting, but the game turns out to be monotonous and dull. Average graphics and annoying continuous music may find you reaching for the 'off' switch after a short while.

CAVERNS

arc Titan Software 1982 (r) ** scarce

'Caverns' is written in Basic, but don't let that deter you from what is a reasonably entertaining, tricky arcade game. You'll need nerves of steel as you guide your ship from one side of the screen to the other, through caverns, laser fields, rock formations and gates. This one poses a tricky challenge for software hunters. Released in '82, I haven't heard or seen anything concerning it since '85.

CAVERNS OF ERIBAN

arc Firebird 1986 (r) ** bud

A shoot 'em up which owes a lot to Thrust (also from Firebird). You pilot your ship through a cavern system in an attempt to deliver supplies to mining depots. However, the caverns have their own defence systems which blast away at you if you come near them. Average graphics and difficult game control make 'Eriban' almost instantly forgettable.

CAVERNS OF KHAFKA

plat Comd/Top Ten 1983/1987 (r) ** bud

This is a platform game with some of the smallest graphics I've ever seen on the XL/XE. The scrolling screen is riddled with features (most of them hazards) and there is the usual plethora of objects to collect. Gameplay, however, remains like a hundred other platform games.

CAVERNS OF MARS

arc Atari 1981 (r) ** bud

A patchy, unimpressive look is the distinguishing feature of this old shoot 'em up. Basically, it's a vertically scrolling blast, with lots of obstacles on screen all over. Once you've reached the bottom of the screen, you plant a time bomb and then you must get back out in the time provided. Boring, but the game graphics and sound generally dampen any appraisal of the game's fun.

CHIMERAH

arc/adv Firebird 1986 (r) ** bud

Visually excellent game in which you are a robot charged with the task of exploring and then blasting up a large space ship. There are only four detailed rooms to explore and lots of things you can pick up and make use of. The music made for 'Chimerah' is a visual delight. The game's only problem is that it moves too slowly.

CHOP SUEY

arc English Software 1985 (Ld) mid ** ☆

Programmer Adam (Bilal) generally did a good job on his martial arts simulation (the last of the much better 'Elektrigade', also for the Atari). In 'Chop Suey' you control a karate fighter and play against either the computer or another human opponent in an arena setting. There are only nine moves at your disposal (a bit of a limitation if you are used to International Karate's sixteen). Animation of the fighters is smooth enough, but the background graphics are next none detail.

CHOPFLIFTER

arc Eroderbund 1982 (r) ** mid

Original when it was first released, but now showing its age somewhat. You control a helicopter in this horizontally scrolling shooter (a sort of last task 'Defender'). Animation of the helicopter was praised highly back in '82, but now it would hardly merit consideration. The sound is awful, no doubt due to the fact that this was converted from the Apple computer (which has poor sound facilities).

CLAIM JUMPER

arc Publisher unknown 1983 (r) ** scarce

Remember the old 'Outlaw' game of the late Commodore? Well, 'Claim Jumper' does much to that, but it also contains a lot of new features, improved graphics and numerous sound effects. As well as shooting the other player, you can also spike mud, match out for lumberwood and snakes. He must also collect gold bars and claim deeds which he can deposit at the local bank and assay office. Good fun, especially for two players.

CLIPPER

shot Program Design Inc. 1983 (r) ** scarce

A rarely seen piece of software which puts you in charge of a Clipper ship, delivering goods from East America to San Francisco by way of Cape Horn. Events to watch out for include storms, crew mutinies, turning around and a lot more. Although the game is written in Basic, some of the graphical displays (e.g. the bow of your ship) are quite pleasing. Overall though this one's a little short on substance and is too easy to complete.

CLOAK OF DEATH

grady Bug Byte 1986 (r) ** bud

Okay adventure, written in Basic but with some machine code routines. Some of the pictures are good, and the plot (alone in a haunted house), although a little thin, does have a deal of atmosphere. If you can put up with the limitations of its parser, this one is worth getting if you like adventures.

COHEN'S TOWERS

plat Delamare/Databyte 1986 (r) mid **

This game has you playing the part of the Boss's nephew, delivering mail bags to the real drops situated on various floors of an office building. There is plenty of jumping, climbing and dodging to do, and the game is reasonably addictive. Graphics and sound are adequate, nothing more.

COMPILATIONS

This is a list of the major compilation releases for the XL/XE together with the games they feature. Most of the games in the compilations have their own review elsewhere in this series.

ARCADE CLASSICS	★★☆
arc Datasoft/U.S. Gold 1986 (J,G) full	
Pole Position, Mr. Do!, Dig Dug, Pac-Man.	
BLUE RIBBON GAMES DISK	★
arc Blue Ribbon 1986 (J) mid	
Nightmare Maze, Castle Assault, Snowball, Demz, Diamond Mine.	
FOUR STAR COMPILATION 1	★★★
arc Red Hat 1987 (J,G) mid	
Escape From Doomworld, Panic Express, Domain of the Undead, Laser Hawk.	
FOUR STAR COMPILATION 2	★★★☆
arc Red Hat 1987 (J,G) mid	
Screaming Wings, Gumbler's Crisis, Don Heppen, The Search.	
FOUR GREAT GAMES 1	★○
arc Tyresoft 1987 (J,G) mid	
Jet Set Willy, Babylon, Wizard, Pongon.	
FOUR GREAT GAMES 2	★★
arc Tyresoft 1987 (J,G) mid	
Wagon Trap, Who Dares Wins 2, Killa Cycle, Spacehawk.	
GREATEST HITS 1	★★★☆
arc Databyte 1986 (J,G) full	
John Chase, Flip n Flip, Boulder.	
PLATFORM PERFECTION	★★★★
arc U.S. Gold 1987 (J,G) mid	
Bounty Bob Strikes Back, Zaxxon, Bruce Lee, Ghost Chaser.	

SHOOT 'EM UPS	★★★
arc U.S. Gold 1987 (J,G) mid	
Doppleganger, Fort Apocalypse, Super Zaxxon, Blue Man 2001.	

SMASH HITS 1	★★★
arc English Software 1986 (J,G) mid	
Jet Set Jack, Don Strikes Back, Appear!bit, Captain Sticky's Gold, Firefest.	

SMASH HITS 2	★★○
arc English Software 1985 (J,G) mid	
Jet Set Jack, Shattered Diamonds, Robin Hood, Chaser Warrior.	

SMASH HITS 3	★★★
arc English Software 1985 (J,G) mid	
Archie 2, Baby Builders, Neptune's Daughter '75, Breath of the Dragon, Jet Set Jack.	

SMASH HITS 4	★★☆
arc English Software 1986 (J,G) mid	
Chop Sucky, Hawk, Robin Cousins, Firefest.	

SMASH HITS 5	★★★
arc English Software 1986 (J,G) mid	
Chop Sucky, Eltinghilde, Meltdown, Quasimodo.	

SMASH HITS 6	★★★
arc English Software 1986 (J,G) mid	
Eltinghilde, Timezax, Fort Apocalypse, Death.	

SPOT THE BALL	★★☆
arc Creative Sparks 1986 (J,G) mid	
Soccer, Snooter.	

COLLAPSE	★○
st/at Firebird 1986 (J) bad	
One of Firebird's best (and worst) releases for the Atari. The game screen is made up of a grid of sticks and bridges and you hop around the screen, trying to change all the grey sticks to blue. Then you must make them collapse on top of one another. Fairly poor graphics and functional sound abound in 'Collapse'.	

COLONIAL CONQUEST	★★★★★
st/at S.S.I. 1985 (J) full	
Super tactical game modelled on the likes of 'Risk' and 'Diplomacy'. The scene is either the late 19th Century or the eve of the outbreak of World War I (you have the choice). The objective is to invade and capture other countries, whilst defending your own territory from the six other players (human or computer), with several humans playing, the fun increases because you can have diplomatic sessions and double dealing etc. Graphics are tacky but colourful and the game system is easy to pick up and a joy to interact with.	

COLONY	★★★
st/at Mastertronic 1987 (J) bad	
Interesting title game in which you take the part of a robot who must look after and organize a space colony. Things to keep you occupied include: planting goods, mining ferrous, growing food, killing alien invaders etc. Graphics and sound are out of the mill, but the gameplay of 'Colony' is involving and unique. One to consider.	

COLOURSPACE	★★★
st Llamsoft 1985 (J) mid	
Another of Jeff Minter's weird and wonderful creations. 'Colourspace' is described, quite rightly, as a light synthesis. Still if you can create a whole barrage of Kaleidoscope like effects, it's not a game, in fact it doesn't really fit into any category, but if you fancy creating colourful visual patterns/effects (maybe to music) then this piece of software will be for you.	

TO BE CONTINUED

WRITING ADVENTURES

BY JOHN WILSON, with contributions by GARY HOGAN, CHUCKLEBERRY, and CHUCKLEBERRY

In this, the third article of a four-part series describing the programming of text adventures, the complete listing in Basic is given of my "MedMor" adventure.

The program code is compatible with the following computer languages: Atari Basic, Turbo Basic and the Turbo Basic compiler, the last two being public domain programs available only on disks directly from New Atari Users. The same code is used for all three versions.

The Atari Basic version runs the slowest of the three, and there is an irritating delay of about 1-2 seconds while each action entered by the player is processed. Turbo Basic operates at roughly three times the speed of Atari Basic, and this is perfectly acceptable. The compiled version appears to run about as fast as a "proper" machine code adventure, actually it runs about two times faster than Atari Basic.

PROGRAM ECCENTRICITIES

The need to provide an adventure program constant to Atari Basic and the Turbo Basic compiler has resulted in a few peculiarities in the program code. Note, for example, the combination of lines 50 and 200. This type of problem will be discussed in the fourth article next issue.

Lines 8000, 8005, 8020 and 8025 have REMarks saying "ONLY FOR COMPILER". In fact, it won't do any harm if you leave these lines in the other Basic versions.

When you type in the DATA statements, be sure to type in the spaces as shown. Otherwise, the statements will not be formatted correctly when printed onto the screen.

The problem of the POP command was discussed in the preceding article. Line 8150 illustrates the use of two POP commands to keep out of a double-ended sub routine after a command to QUIT. This is bad practice, but is intended to provide illustration of the use of the POP command.

In the first two articles, several points were illustrated with exemplary lines of code. In order to prevent the reader guessing too easily what is going on, some of the names of variables given earlier have been changed for "MedMor". For example, the original string \$ROOMS has become \$K.

The BREAK key has caused me a little conceptual difficulty. Atari's innovative positioning of this key and its RETURN means that occasionally the player may unintentionally interrupt the game. In compiled Turbo Basic, this means the loss of the complete game session.

On the other hand, it should be possible for the reader to interrupt a textual program like "MedMor" in order to see what

is happening. Accordingly, line 25005 disables the BREAK key.

Leave this line in while playing the adventure, delete the line before examining the adventure.

In this construction, lines 20000 to 20020 are not used in the adventure at all. However, they do provide a means of checking program status in mid game. You can do this by pressing the BREAK key in Basic only, then type GOTO 20000. Finally,

type GOTO to continue the adventure if you are lucky; depending on where the break occurred.

Naturally, this status check can not be used if the BREAK key is disabled. I would advise using the check routine only after you have completed the adventure.

SAVE/LOAD

"MedMor" permits the player to save and load part-completed games from disk. If you have a cassette player, replace the words "DISK/DAT" with "C" in lines 8140 and 8010. Incidentally, cassette saves will unfortunately not be able to use Turbo Basic, so they will have to include a slightly slower program version.

PLAYING THE ADVENTURE

The introductory text in the program is, I hope, entirely self-explanatory. Type in two-word commands (verb noun) the action, but some one-word commands will be recognized. These include:

HELP, LOOK, SAY, N, S, E, W, U, D, QUIT and ENDWAY. "MedMor" is a very easy adventure to play, being intended primarily as an aid collection to the game. It should be quite relaxed in execution input, having been well-tested during development by several players.

There are 30 mappable locations, although you do not need to enter them all to complete the game. Be sure to check a map! These locations are somewhat fixed within the huge, 300-element room array. The original intention was to provide a general framework into which larger adventures could later be introduced. However, 30 locations compares reasonably well, say, the adventures of the Scott Adams series.

METMAN

01 10000 DATA Thanks man, don't tell mom,
02 10001 DATA The computer database says
10001
03 10002 DATA The communication number is
04 10003 DATA First I need a key?
05 10004 DATA Are you kidding me? There
isn't
06 10005 DATA How will he react in
07 10006 DATA The more skills with a stick
a long time with the programmer's hand
08 10007 DATA and then in the field of
09 10008 DATA are over his feet and head and
10008
10 10009 DATA Service New Unit with a new
10009
11 10010 DATA What a beautiful day!
12 10011 DATA The more is in the night
13 10012 DATA The more is now possible
14 10013 DATA It's the same to you!
15 10014 DATA I don't understand you
16 10015 DATA There is communication number
17 10016 DATA I don't know
18 10017 DATA The door is open!
19 10018 DATA There appears to be some
20 10019 DATA as of another person's
21 10020 DATA There's some a better
22 10021 DATA It's still sleeping!
23 10022 DATA What? I don't know!
24 10023 DATA There's some a better
25 10024 DATA I don't know!
26 10025 DATA There's some a better
27 10026 DATA I don't know!
28 10027 DATA There's some a better
29 10028 DATA I don't know!
30 10029 DATA There's some a better
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95 10094 DATA I don't know!
96 10095 DATA There's some a better
97 10096 DATA I don't know!
98 10097 DATA There's some a better
99 10098 DATA I don't know!
100 10099 DATA There's some a better
101 10100 DATA I don't know!

01 10000 DATA Thanks man, don't tell mom,
02 10001 DATA The computer database says
10001
03 10002 DATA The communication number is
04 10003 DATA First I need a key?
05 10004 DATA Are you kidding me? There
isn't
06 10005 DATA How will he react in
07 10006 DATA The more skills with a stick
a long time with the programmer's hand
08 10007 DATA and then in the field of
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49 10048 DATA I don't know!
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61 10060 DATA I don't know!
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95 10094 DATA I don't know!
96 10095 DATA There's some a better
97 10096 DATA I don't know!
98 10097 DATA There's some a better
99 10098 DATA I don't know!
100 10099 DATA There's some a better
101 10100 DATA I don't know!

BUDGET DELIC

Have you considered abandoning your 8-bit to buy an ST? You may be surprised to learn that many people, having spent hundreds of pounds on Atari's latest hardware, have been quite disappointed with the quality of many ST games. Dozens of colours and digitised voices are pleasant, but they don't necessarily make a brilliant game. What about playability, addictiveness and lasting appeal? These characteristics seem more prevalent in 8-bit games than in those produced for the ST, and the latter may cost less, three times over, so why upgrade? The problem is that most software companies have chosen to concentrate their efforts where they perceive the greatest profits lie, leaving thousands of disillusioned XE/ST owners with very little to purchase.

Fortunately, help is at hand. Over the past few months a company called Byte Back have published over TWENTY different 8-bit games, and the range continues to expand, as well as releasing a few original titles. Byte Back have acquired the rights to re-release some of the top runners of the eighties. In fact, there's never been a better opportunity to obtain so much great entertainment so cheaply - you could buy the complete collection for less than the cost of three full-priced ST packages! It is of course vitally important to encourage companies such as Byte Back to maintain an interest in the 8-bit market. All you have to do is buy the software! With your support, but not without it, there should be many more bargain offers to enjoy, and hopefully some original releases too. The future could be bright if more you're not convinced, let's take a brief look at a selection of the goodies on offer so far.

By far the oldest game in the series is Jon Williams' **JET BOOT JACK**. This became an instant hit as one of the first releases from English Software, who went on to become a prolific source of 8-bit material. It is an amusing ten-screen platform game based upon the exploits of space-jogger Jack in a board game setting (he wants to attain the greatest music collection in the world by relieving musical crates from the factory, but bugs and grannies are out to stop him). There are hills and conveyor in control with subtle Jack's resolutions are yet powered limits need to be filled at regular intervals. The graphics are excellent and the music almost equally so. Jet Boot Jack is still one of the best platform games around.

Jon Williams was also responsible for **TIMESLIP**, though unlike his previous achievements this one didn't receive a great deal of publicity - perhaps because it's rather difficult to describe! The idea is that a distant planet is in "time-slip" and to put things straight you must collect a number of time cubes from each of its three time zones. The display is split vertically into three scrolling sections - the planet's surface, underground caverns and an appearance level and sub-area - which you can choose to toggle in any order, but strict time limits are imposed. The graphics are great! Watch out for a full review coming soon in New Atari News (see Squared out here in chapter 10).

The bulk of Byte Back's games originate from Red Red, who

BYTE BACK STILL CARES A



emerged as the leading Atari publisher after English Software left the scene. **LARGE BARK** is a brilliant Scramble clone by Andrew Bradford and Harvey King, who later produced the incredible **Housequake**. The original plot spoke of boarding the headquarters of the evil Tree (tree! Shockers!) and their computer manufacturers, but Byte Back have stretched the target demographics to "two industrial centres" producing suspicious household appliances. It sounds silly? As before your aim is to negotiate air cannons, robot ships, volcanic eruptions, missile launchers, laser beams and mountains of ice obstacles in order to destroy the bad-lads. Naturally, both graphics and sound effects are first class.

In **ESCAPE FROM DROMEDORF**, a group of scientists are being held captive on the planet Dromedorf and it's your mission to save them. The tank computers three distinct stages, the first of which is a platform game involving the collection of energy cells and several other activities. Next you must rescue the stranded scientists, "Chop-ster" fashion, before dropping them back at base. Finally you have to chase after three bombs which are subsequently used to destroy Dromedorf, thereby completing the mission.

For sheer 'em up' fun, **DREADNAUGHT** is a submarine adaptation of the famous arcade hit Defender. Basically it's a fast way horizontal shooter featuring multiple waves of alien craft whose objective is VCR destruction - so you'll better say them first! You do delight in both well animated players, an intricate status panel and a brilliant explosion of particles when you're hit by an alien missile.

Next question - are you brave enough to tackle the dangers of evil Otis's dungeons? If so, then grab a copy of **BOBOT KNIGHTS**. In this platform game you're required to prevent Otis unleashing his monstrous creatures to destroy the planet-world. As a distinguished knight you must battle through the maze rooms of Otis's labyrinth, avoiding deadly zombies and other nasties whilst accumulating energy and treasure. You're equipped with a handy deflector shield to fend off fire balls, which is just as well as any contact has a reverse effect on your energy reserve - careful or you could literally lose your head!

You may recall that **NIGHTMARE** caused quite a stir when a certain distributor (well known for keeping a massive mailing

IGHTS

ES ABOUT YOUR ATARI



list had never making anyone) decided it wasn't suitable for the general public. It was clearly a business notion since the game is simply an unusual shoot 'em up featuring a host of superbly drawn environments. Your job is to collect mutant insects called *Arbites* and destroy various creatures including dragons, werewolves and *Wizards*. Graphically, the overall impression is one of great attention to detail.

SPACE LOBSTERS is the unlikely title of an arcade adventure control an space hero Captain Crumbler's attempts to salvage the huge colony-ship *Colossus*, which is drifting helplessly through the Universe. The problem is that the ship is overrunning with *Bobo Devils* and newly hatched space lobsters, and sadly enough human flesh is their favorite diet! Brilliant music, good graphics and an amazing theme contribute towards an extremely playable game.

Other in Red Kot lists to look out for include the excellent '1943 clone **SCREAMING WINGS**, the visually stunning rally simulator **SPEED RUN** and the exceedingly addictive **CRIMINAL M CRISIS** (coming soon, we're told).

On a less frivolous note, a couple of recent additions to the series are **FIGHTER PILOT** and **TOMAHAWK** from Digital Integration. Flight simulations are hardly an obvious choice for 'budgetarians' since they're usually supplied with concrete manuals, charts and other extras. Byte Back have somehow managed to condense everything you need to know if together onto the cassette tape which would suggest a fair amount of experimentation may be necessary. **FIGHTER PILOT** was originally criticised for its flimsy 'bullet' protection gadget which involved positioning a plastic iron against the screen to reveal an identification code. The good news is that now you're allowed to climb straight into the cockpit without all the hassle. Close there, you can experience landings, normal flying and air-to-air combat - in practice mode for beginners or with big and menacingly for expert pilots. With no tag, the graphics are excellent!

TOMAHAWK is a follow-up simulation based upon the AH-64A Apache advanced attack helicopter. The controls take some perseverance but it's well worth the effort as you would otherwise miss the brilliant 3-D graphics, featuring more than 7000 ground objects! Once proficient in the boxes you can



by Paul Rixon

enter on to increasingly challenging terrain to liberate the way from enemy occupation. A detailed review of *Tomahawk* in PAGE 833 described it as 'a first rate, quality program offering real challenge... and lots of excitement'. What more can I say?

THE BYTE BACK RANGE (SO FAR)

ASTRODROID
COSMIC PIRATE
DOMAIN OF THE UNDEAD
ESCAPE FROM DOOMWORLD
EXPLODING WALL
FIGHTER PILOT
JET BOOT JACK
LASER HAWK
LITTLE DEVIL
MAD JAX
NIGHTMARES
PLANET ATTACK
ROBOT KNIGHTS
ROULETTE SIMULATOR
SCREAMING WINGS
SPACE LOBSTERS
SPACE WARS
SPEED RUN
TIMESLIP
TOMAHAWK
WAR COPTER

Others may have been released since the above list was compiled. The games are priced at £3.99 each and are available on cassette only, directly from Byte Back (Tel. 0506 774429) or from most 8-bit Atari dealers.

PAGE 6 WRITER

A Word-Processor For Atari XL/XE Computers by Phil Cardwell

There will be users in the Atari community, who have never used a word-processor. One of the many reasons for this could be the expense of buying a commercial product. Now they have no reason, because Page 6 Writer is a more or less complete type-in word-processor, based around one or two commercial/public-domain programs.

BASIC USE

After loading Page 6 Writer the screen colours become white text on a black background with a blue bar at the top of the screen. This bar is the command line and will display various messages and prompts. Below the command line are a further 14 lines which is known as the 'text area'. This area is used for entering and editing your document.

To start using Page 6 Writer all you have to do is begin typing. When the cursor reaches the right hand side of the screen it naturally goes back to the left hand side, one line down. If a word was being typed at that time, that too is moved to the next line. This is called word-wrap and contains a degree of flexibility in your document. When the cursor reaches the bottom right hand corner of the text area, the screen automatically scrolls the text upwards to make way for a new line.

TYPING IT IN

Listing 1 is the BASIC program and should be typed in using **TYPE 2** to check each DATA line. The listing is a touch on the long side, so I would suggest you type it in, in two or three sittings. Believe me the effort you make will be more than worth it.

When the program is RUN or AUTORUN SYS file will be created on disk which will be loaded every time the disk is booted.

When **LOADING** the program **OPTION** does not necessarily have to be held down to enable BASIC. The only difference this makes is that you will get an extra BK of editing space.

EDITING FUNCTIONS

The editing features built into Page 6 Writer may slightly differ from the normal Atari editing functions, but this should not present too many problems.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| CTRL + | - Moves the cursor one space to the left |
| CTRL * | - Moves the cursor one space to the right |
| CTRL - | - Moves the cursor to the beginning of the previous sentence |
| CTRL = | - Moves the cursor to the beginning of the next sentence |
| SHIFT + | - Moves the cursor to the beginning of the previous word |
| SHIFT * | - Moves the cursor to the beginning of the next word |
| SHIFT - | - Moves the cursor to the beginning of the previous paragraph |
| SHIFT = | - Moves the cursor to the beginning of the next paragraph |

To insert a single space use **CTRL=insert**. A better idea if you want to type in several words is to use **SHIFT=insert** as this will insert 255 spaces. A single character or space can be deleted by using **CTRL-Delete**. The effect of **SHIFT-Delete** instantly deletes all spaces between the cursor and the beginning of the next word.

To quickly move the cursor to the top of the screen, press **CTRL-H**. If the cursor was already at the top left corner of the screen then you will returned to the top of your document. Similarly to get to the end of your document rapidly, press **CTRL-E**.

To delete a block of text, press **CTRL-B** and the command line will turn red and display the message "PAGE 6-WRITER: RETURN TO END.". Each time you press S, W or P all text from the cursor position to the end of the sentence, word or paragraph will be deleted. To end this mode press the **RETURN** key. If the **OPTION** key is held-down when you press **CTRL-B**, all text from the cursor position to the beginning of the sentence, word or paragraph will be deleted.

When you use the **CTRL-D** function, the text you have just deleted isn't completely lost. It is stored to what is known as

the Delete Buffer. This prevents you from accidentally erasing too much text and then having to re-type it all. By pressing **CTRL-B** the contents of the Delete Buffer will be inserted at the current cursor position. The **CTRL-B** function can be used until the "Memory Full" message appears, and can be used as a very simple cut-and-paste facility to create data tables, etc. The Delete Buffer is cleared every time **CTRL-D** is used.

CTRL-I restores the Insert/Typeover toggle and defaults to Insert mode when Page 6 Writer is first run. Its toggled mode the command line will turn black as a warning.

If at any time you feel that your document does not come up to scratch, press either **SHIFT-Clear** or **CTRL-Clear**. The command line again turns red and displays the message "ERASE ALL TEXT: Are You Sure (Y/N)?". Confirm this by pressing 'Y' or abort it by any other keypress. Once an erase-all text operation has been completed there is no way to restore it at all.

DISK USAGE

A document can be saved or recalled to/from disk or cassette at any time.

To save your text, press **CTRL-S** and the message "Save (Enter/Filename)" appears on the command line. At this point type **FILENAME.EXT** and press **RETURN**. If the NAME is successful the message "No Errors" will appear on the command line, otherwise the "Error Data" message will be displayed.

To load a document into memory, use **CTRL-L**. The message "Load (Enter/Filename)" is shown on the command line. As with the save command type **FILENAME.EXT** and hit **RETURN**. If the command line turns green when you press **CTRL-L**, that the existing text will not be wiped out of memory, and the filename of the document you give will be inserted at the current cursor position.

DOS FACILITIES

There is an integral mini-DOS menu built in to Page 6 Writer, the idea for which was derived from the public domain word-processor TextPro. Access to the menu is gained by pressing **CTRL-M**, which displays the directory of the current default disk drive.

The first noticeable thing about this menu is that the entire directory of a single density disk can be displayed. However in order to achieve this the sector count of each file is missing. When called, this menu highlights the filename in the top left-hand corner; the highlight bar can be moved to any of the filenames by using the cursor arrow keys, but there is no need to hold **CONTROL** down as well.

- ESC** - Will exit the menu and return you to your document.
- CTRL-L** - Loads the highlighted file into the word processor. Any existing document will be overwritten.
- CTRL-D** - Deletes the highlighted filename.
- F** - Formats the disk in the default drive. There is a routine prompt to this option.

- L** - Lock. Protects the highlighted filename from being accidentally erased.
- U** - Unlock. Unprotects the highlighted filename.
- R** - Renames the highlighted file. Simply type in the new filename and press **RETURN**.
- 1-6** - Goes a disk directory from that drive number. This drive number then becomes the default, and a directory will be taken from it if the mini-DOS menu is left and then re-entered.

EXTRA FEATURES

A search and replace facility is a major feature of any word-processor, and Page 6 Writer is no exception. To use this you need first hit Page 6 Writer the string you want to find. This is done by holding down **OPTION** and pressing **CTRL-F**, to get the "FIND" prompt on the command line. After typing the string press **RETURN**, and then to find the first occurrence press **CTRL-F** without **OPTION**. The **FIND** function is fuzzy and distinguishes between cases of letters. So if you asked Page 6 Writer to find 'the' it would not stop at 'The'. Also **FIND** will stop at certain words because the string is embedded, i.e. further.

To change the found string, you must first set the replace string. This is done by holding **OPTION** down and pressing **CTRL-C** to get the "Change To" prompt on the command line. Type your desired replacement and hit **RETURN**. Now to actually change the string found, press **CTRL-C**.

By combining the keypresses of **CTRL-F** and **CTRL-C** we can effect search and replace. Alternatively you can use the global function which is accessed by pressing **CTRL-S**. This will find EVERY occurrence of the find string and replace it with the replace string, line with caution, because if the find string is embedded within another word, it will produce highly undesirable results.

My preference for screen colour may not be to your taste and this can be altered as well. Pressing **CTRL-B** and **CTRL-T** will cycle through the colours available for the background and text respectively.

To some degree, minor typing errors are also catered for. A common error is to use a character or word that is written in the wrong case. **CTRL-A** changes from uppercase to lowercase or vice-versa. And transposition errors can be fixed by pressing **CTRL-X**. The character at the current cursor position is then swapped with the character on the right.

Another useful feature is **CTRL-W** which displays the amount of free memory in terms of characters. And by pressing **CTRL-E** you are able to distinguish between true spaces and padded spaces, the ones that are used to compensate for word-wrap.

That's more or less the basic features of Page 6 Writer. All that remains now is for you to get familiar with Page 6 Writer and get ready to print it.

PRINTING

The support that Page 6 Writer offers for printing can be sophisticated, yet once mastered, you will be able to use the power of the array of features. With these new features comes a whole new set of commands as well.

To begin printing in simple, press **CTRL-P**, type the device and character identifiably (F although you can print to the disk, etc.) and you are off. In order to make your document look presentable, Page 6 Writer uses a set of defaults which can be altered by the user.

Page 6 Writer requires formatting commands to be entered in reverse video, but because the normal reverse video key is disabled, the **SELECT** key can be used instead. All formatting commands should be typed in lowercase only. There are two levels of formatting which are called **CONTROL** and **EXECUTION**. **CONTROL** mode controls items such as the page margins, while **EXECUTION** mode commands are entered out when the line is being printed.

CONTROL COMMANDS

Remember to hold the **SELECT** key down before pressing the key.

1. It used to set the left margin. Any value between 0 and 255 can be used, with 0 representing no margin. The normal default is 5.
2. Positions the right margin, with a value from 1 to 255. The normal default is 75. If the right margin value is less than the left margin be prepared for some rather unpredictable results.
3. Top margin position. The number of blank lines to be printed before the actual text is printed. Defaults to 5. If a header exists, it will always be printed on the top line(s) of the page.
4. Bottom margin position. The number of blank lines to be left at the bottom of a page, before going on to the next sheet defined as the page length less the value given here. The default value is 50.
5. Define footer. Followed by a line of up to 255 characters, necessary formatting commands can be included in the line. You do not have to set a footer to use a footer or vice versa.
6. Define header. As for define footer, if you do not want the header to be printed on the first page, simply press the **DEL** key before defining the header.
7. Include a file. If followed by a legal filename (Date-name.ext), Page 6 Writer will load the new document and continue printing as normal. This allows documents larger than necessary capabilities to be printed, in - Margin release. Used in reverse text, it should come into operation before a line is to be printed, and after printing the normal left margin value is restored.
8. Next page. No value need follow this command.
9. Page Length counter. Defaults to 60 though it may have to be altered depending on your paper size.
10. Quotations. Follow with a line of up to 255 characters. It works in a similar way to the **BACK** **REM** statement and will not be printed.
11. Spacing. Defaults to 1 for single line spacing, use 2 for double, 3 for triple, etc.
12. Blank. Useful only to those with better quality or single sheet printers, it makes Page 6 Writer temporarily stop printing until a key is pressed.
13. Controls the page width and defaults to 60 for 60-column printers. Use 40 or 132 for others.

14. A value after this symbol, indicates what number to start the page numbering facility with. Defaults to 1.
15. This causes Page 6 Writer to start printing only when the given page number is reached.

EXECUTION FORMATTING

These commands can be either at the beginning of, or embedded in, a line of text. Again remember to hold down the **SELECT** key when entering the key press.

- Causes the current page number to be printed.
- Center a line of text. Place at the beginning of the line. If you are using a 40 or 132 column printer remember to alter the page width above, as existing uses page width in its calculation.
- Edge to right margin. All text on the line following this command will be blocked flush to the right margin.
- Underline mode. Use one to enable underlining and not to disable. It will only work on printers that recognize **CONTROL** and **EXECUTION** as the underlining and off control codes.

As Page 6 Writer was designed to be specific to one printer, how does one send control codes and? As a practical demonstration here follows the Epson standard.

Firstly the Esc character must be defined at the start of your document. This can be done by holding down **SELECT** and typing an **ESC** **CHAR** letter, followed by the - sign and the ASCII value for the Esc character. Vis.

```
ESC27
```

Remember the Esc will be inverted. The Esc key has now been assigned a value of 27 so all that remains to be done is to define printer codes to other keys, to make the same way.

```
        1=14  
        2=15  
ESC27 HELLO
```

So if we now typed the line

```
HELLO
```

The word HELLO would appear in double-width, because we had sent the control codes to turn on double-width printing from the start.

CONCLUSION

All that remains for me to do now is say that I hope to provide more add-on routines if there is sufficient interest, such as word count and 60-column print previewing, at a later date. Page 6 Writer has been tested with DOS 2.0, DOS 3.0, SpartaDOS with the US Dasher, and only one problem occurred in using disks that have been formatted in true double density, but my warning.

I hope you enjoy using Page 6 Writer as much as I enjoyed writing it. I would also like to extend special thanks to my friend for a little support and to Charles for the inspiration to finish the program.

INVADERS

by A. Edwards

Have you ever sat down and tried to write a program on your ATARI without using the TRIM? statement? That's how this game came about, and without TURBO BASIC, I don't think it would be possible without some serious machine code programming.

The first thing to strike me about this language was that it is not easy to write a program in an unstructured way. This appeared to me at the time, as I was in my first year of a BATEC course, and Pascal was the order of the day. Not being able to find, for indeed afford, the SHAPER PASCAL package, the chance to obtain a structured programming language, and with a compiler thrown in, was one I readily jumped at. The range of extra commands it adds to standard BASIC is staggering, especially if you consider that you also get an extra 2K of RAM to play with. The speed increase without the compiler was alone worth the price, but when compiled, it increases to something of the order of 14-15 times faster than ATARI BASIC.

So with all this extra speed and added commands I set about seeing if I could write a decent game. The result is a version of one of the all time classics but without any machine code to sight, as you can see from the listing, nearly one is made of the TRIM? statement. What this does is to move a block of memory of size C to B, from A...

MOVE A,B,C

It should be noted that A can be the address of a string, an address in RAM, or an address in ROM. The command can be used, for example, to easily and quickly exchange a character set, assuming that the data is stored in CHARS; and the only statements needed are:

```
TOP=PEEK(100)
MOVE 108,TOP-5
GRAPHICS 2
MOVE ADDR(CHARS),(TOP+4)*256,1004
MOVE 108,TOP-4
```

This is a single use of the command, see line 420, although a very useful one, and easier than the routine given in BASIC 2B, as CHARS can be declared anywhere in the program, at any time.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

The procedures in the program are all named in such a way that their purpose is fairly self explanatory, but I will go through them now, starting at the top.

PROC SET_TEXT - checks to see if any of the strings holding the invaders are empty. If so, it sets them to null, and the variable INVS is a number to be taken away from INV at a later time to determine how far down the rest of the strings holding the invaders are allowed to go.

PROC SET_FIRE - initializes the invader fire, and checks to see if first movement of shot has player. Also sets SF to 1 (used as BOOLEAN later)

PROC NO_M8 - the mothership was missed, reset all M8 related variables and blank out last position

PROC SET - when any hit by the player is detected, this routine decides what it was, and how to increment the score. Incidentally, lines 140 and 148 look about the hours-of-hand watching. (They determine which invader in which string was hit)

PROC FIRE - this initializes the players fire. Also sets FIRE to 1, again the use as a BOOLEAN later

PROC DOWN - 1 - moves the bank of invaders down one character line. Checks to see if player is over-run, if so, calls PROC REACT

DO SPRING DO - start of the main loop. This is what holds it all together. As you can see, there are no few lines here as possible, every line having an IF statement in it. Line 200 reads the keyboard and assigns a value to key, note also the use of those BOOLEAN's here, and also in lines 202,240 and 245. This is a fast way of doing things when you only want a yes or no answer, or a value of 0 or 1, e.g. in line 240, FN will be determined by 0.5 if the key pressed was a 'C' (ASC="C")-1, (240-2), and also 0.5 if the joystick is pushed left. Line 208 simply LOCKS the bank to the 005 at line 200

PROC SET - sets up an array, SETS to hold all the values for the left-right positions of the joystick. This array is then used in the routine - XPOS=XPOS+XPOS(SET). However, if the joystick is pushed left, XPOS(SET) will have the value -0.5, or the value in SET 11

PROC SET_UP - as would be expected, sets up all necessary variables and strings, and changes the necessary characters

PROC FILL_ARRAY - fills the 4 arrays that hold the invaders

PROC REACT - called when the game is over. Sets the graphics mode 2 and puts more on screen, plus a little animation and sound to make life interesting

PROC BRNET - called when all invaders are removed or between new matches the first. Gives 500 bonus and sets up next screen if invaders PROC DORSHD - does less new than originally intended, just a line of inverse spaces now

PROC PAUSED - pauses the game at any point if P is pressed. Waits for the button or space to be pressed. The EXIT in line 600 is from the DA, see the procedure

PROC SET_PLAYER - the player has been hit. Decreases lives, check there are lives left, and continue

Lines 790 and 795 are the character data

continued

```

10 0 REM *****
11 0 REM 0 *****
12 0 REM 0 *****
13 0 REM 0 *****
14 0 REM 0 *****
15 0 REM *****
16 0 REM *****
17 0 REM *****
18 0 REM *****
19 0 REM *****
20 0 REM *****
21 0 REM *****
22 0 REM *****
23 0 REM *****
24 0 REM *****
25 0 REM *****
26 0 REM *****
27 0 REM *****
28 0 REM *****
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90 0 REM *****
91 0 REM *****
92 0 REM *****
93 0 REM *****
94 0 REM *****
95 0 REM *****
96 0 REM *****
97 0 REM *****
98 0 REM *****
99 0 REM *****
100 0 REM *****

```

```

01 100 *****
02 100 *****
03 100 *****
04 100 *****
05 100 *****
06 100 *****
07 100 *****
08 100 *****
09 100 *****
10 100 *****
11 100 *****
12 100 *****
13 100 *****
14 100 *****
15 100 *****
16 100 *****
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99 100 *****
100 100 *****

```

A point to note is that the high score is stored in the area of RAM reserved for the GET UP procedure, allowing the CLR command to be used. It is then DELETED when it is to be updated. I realize that this may cause a problem with scores over 99999, but somehow I don't think that score is likely. I write it and the best I can do is 99999.

I see no point in giving game instructions, save to say that the 'L' and 'R' keys may be used for left and right movement, space bar for fire, 'P' to pause, 'X' to activate and 'S' to stop another. In practice may of course be used, but I cut on time, hence the briefest treatment.

There are no drills, the female key is not disabled, there is no loss of time, and you've seen the game before, but it is still fun, all the more because now you'll know how it all works.

I hope this will give you some idea of the speed that TURBO BASIC is capable of, especially if you notice that the program here had to be physically slowed down to make it playable since it was compiled. I can strongly recommend it to any programmer, old or new. For the cost of a cheap game, you could just as easily get this language and try your own hand. There fun with the program, and see if you can be tempted to write one yourself.

MAIN VARIABLES

MY10, MY20, MY30 and MY40 all hold the invaders

SPC0 is a general purpose 'blinking out' string
BOMB is the bomb, BOMB is the bomb blinking string

MOS is the mothership

PLS is the player

SHS is the shields at the bottom of the screen

SCS is the status display line

PS is the player X position

BS is the player bomb X position

BA is the alien bomb X position

KEY holds the value of any key pressed

SC is the screen address in RAM

PL holds the number of player lives

LEV is the height of the top alien

INC is the alien movement increment

WV is the number of waves

S is the players score

MOSM mothership X position

TUTORIAL TIME

WHY A HARDWARE TUTORIAL?

My Atari equipment is getting a bit ancient, and recently disaster struck. The symptoms were a bit strange, it suddenly went from normal operation to a screen full of random characters with a sort of white noise on the sound channel. This is pretty distressing when you are trying to concentrate on a bit of work, and it totally disrupts the train of thought. The symptoms was so severe that I assumed that I had lost my work files (do you have the self-discipline to always make backups at regular intervals?) — so I sat about trying to find the fault. Switching off and back on did not solve the problem, and one day disconnecting and reconnecting the various cable connectors around the computer, I had just decided that something in the computer, possibly the video output generator had failed when suddenly everything went back to normal. I made a little progress (with regular backups this time!) and the good old Atari kept going for the remainder of the evening.

Next evening I set to work again, but after only about five minutes the machine failed again. I found that some combination of a picture could be restored by taking the tuning of the TV channel away from its normal set point. With this trick, but fairly stable picture on screen it became apparent that the computer was still operating normally, my work was still there and all the basic functions were working normally. I was even more certain that my original diagnosis was correct — it had to be the LHF Video generator.

This erratic performance by the computer continued for some time, with periods of normal operation interrupted with bursts up of the displaced image, and all the time it got less and less stable. Something had to be done, but what would it cost? There is a kind friend provided the solution, an old 8000L that had no power supply and was no longer required. I thought my troubles were over, but after two minutes with this computer the fault occurred. The coincidence was too great — both computers could not have identical faults and the problem had to

be elsewhere. It was not the TV — that worked fine whenever the computer was not connected to it. It had to be the power supply. Fortunately George the fix is the kind friend mentioned above could lend me a power supply and this finally proved the point. Everything worked OK on the replacement modern power supply

DON'T THROW IT AWAY!

OR HOW TO REBUILD A POWER SUPPLY

using either of the 8000Ls.

I can still not certain why my power supply was causing a problem, I would have thought that almost any significant problem with power would have caused the computer to fail completely, and can only assume that there was some sort of noise or interference being generated by a failed component in the power supply that was disrupting the generated video signal.

Well I had to find a replacement power supply or fix the one I had. I ended up fixing the old one, and the job was not particularly easy so I thought I might as well get something out of the experience by writing it as a basis for this article. I hope it will be of help to some of you.

DISMANTLING AND EXAMINING THE OLD

At first I thought that since I managed to open the tough black plastic box of the old Atari power supply it would be a fairly easy task to locate the faulty component or components and replace them. How wrong can you be. I pried off the base of the box with some brute force (there are some plastic supports inside which have to be broken) and revealed a solid block of pink pottery compound with some terminals sticking up to which the main input cable and low voltage output leads were attached. These power supplies are certainly not designed to be repaired!

At this point I really decided to give up, but being of a stubborn nature I would not let it go, so I started to carve away at the pottery compound with some care in case there was a component just below the surface that would get damaged. It soon became apparent that cutting away with a hobby knife, however sharp, would take days. I went on to use a crosscut saw and wood chisels, and soon found that the contents of the pottery compound was in two halves — a fairly substantial transformer on one end and a tin plate held around some electronic components at the other. Once the general shape of these two units was identified it was not too difficult to remove the bulk of the pink plastic from around them.

The next step was to get at the plastic inside the box like the tin plate with enough care to recover the individual components. It soon became clear that they could not be recovered completely intact and reusable, but I decided to identify them for replacement. Eventually all was dismantled and the components identified, but the only parts that could be reused, apart from the transformer, were a small printed circuit board and a glass fuse in its holder.



ASSEMBLY

The diagrams show the layout of the circuit board, the layout of the components and the theoretical circuit. If you reuse the old lead from the power supply to the computer it is quite easy to identify the lead with the white stripe on the positive and this gets round the need to identify the correct pins inside the multi-pin plug.

Assembling the components is only a matter of simple soldering. There are just a couple of areas to note: first pin 2 on the voltage regulator is not connected, just make certain it is bent back or cut off so as not to touch any other connector. Second, the two resistors are connected directly to pin 4 of the voltage regulator if you are using the flat PCB design. If you are using stripboard or your own PCB design it would seem to me to be better to solder pin 4 to the board and take all the resistors from solder-crest points. Remember when soldering not to get too much heat into the electronic components, none of these used here are particularly delicate, but it is a sensible precaution to use a heat sink between the point of soldering and the component, particularly for the voltage regulator.

I have one serious cautions to pass on to you (apart from the obvious note that the leads to the transformer carry full mains voltage which can give you a nasty shock).

The power supply delivers quite a high current to the computer, so the voltage regulator and the bridge rectifier get very hot. It is essential that these two components are firmly bolted to a suitable heat sink before you use the unit to power up your computer. There is very little heat when the supply is open circuit, but it heats up rapidly when the computer is running and you are likely to cook the components if they don't have a thermal path to take the heat away. I have traced the fire plate which was around the components in the original power supply, and that does the job alright, but it does need a good air circulation.

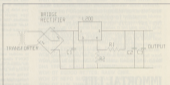
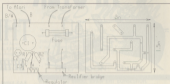
TESTING

When I had rebuilt the power supply I checked its output voltage on open circuit with a small multimeter and got a reading of 5.27 volts. This compares with 5.25 volts registered on a standard power unit. The specification plate on the power supply indicates 5 volts, but that is probably the no-load voltage which will be lower. It seemed to be about right, so I plugged into my ROMM, held my breath and switched on. What an anticlimax, everything was quite normal!

FINALLY

Many thanks to those who have taken the trouble to write to me. I am not very good at answering quickly, but I will answer everyone who includes a stamped envelope eventually. Please note that I have no knowledge of programming languages other than Basic, but do keep writing.

My address is 60 Sandstone Crescent, East Preston, West Sussex, BN26 1DQ.



THE COMPONENTS

Here is a complete list of the components. Those I replaced I bought from Magbits and I include their part identification number and current price for information.

Recovered from original power supply

Transformer
Fuse and holder
Printed circuit

New components:

Bridge Rectifier	MG576	.58
Diode capacitor 0.1uF	080203	.18
Capacitor 1000uF	EL100	.14
Capacitor 4700uF	FM200	.88
Voltage regulator L200	77340	1.48
Resistor 430	MA200	.03
Resistor 910	MR100	.03

3.78

Of course there will be some postage to add, and if you are not going to dig through the postbag compass and to recover the little PCB you will need a small piece of stripboard to assemble your circuit on and a fuse and holder - 1.5 amp should suffice. You should always be able to recover the most expensive component, the transformer, but the rating of the power supply will certainly not be reusable, so you will need a box of some kind.

THE TIPSTER



Another issue, another Tipster column, but that's what it's all about isn't it? With this being the 50th issue you could expect that I would be giving away huge quantities of nightmare left right and centre, and so I am but only if you pay me a substantial amount to my favourite charity bank account. This issue features full maps and hints for *Red Moon*, a whole host of *Quark II* and lots, lots more besides.

We start this issue's tips, maybe you'll find out that you have been giving the cardboard to the wrong thing in *Blagge's* *Highlanders* latest mega adventure. So carry on reading and be enlightened!

IMMORTAL LIFE

This issue's first tips come from Boris (brother of Yoda!). To start with he gives us the secret of immortal life in *Wolf* and finally in the Great Space Adventure *Blagge's* a little and a half! If you feel down (HELL, NO!) or (SAD!) or (UPSET) when you give life to start your journey with ordinary man and love. Boris also takes the frustration out of failed space travel. If you take these tips' short cuts and make both of them, you will find that you separate down, down which will fly on on your own and you will have every star level in all the highest part of his journey (this will be over the wall and they can join before straight away).

One final one from Boris to try you power things right opposite out there. If you go to level 10 in *Blagge's* you can have every a *Commander* right this is, check, check, forward laughter!

ST DEMO SECRETS

From my own head comes a host of secrets in which I will divulge the secret or hidden demons in a couple of ST demos.

THE SYNTAX TERROR

Move the cursor down to the first line in the credits section and type in the following:

THEUNIONDEMOGOTTLEBENWFLA

and you should be presented with the screen with all the "tips" on it.

THE UNION DEMO

Move "Charlie" along the wall until he comes to a 10x6 symbol that is at his head height and you get what must be the first *Commander* seen down on the ST.

This issue's prize winner is Tobiasz Jankowiak on the *ROCKHAM* TRAVELTIP is winning the way to Sweden!

To celebrate our 50th birthday the price next time will be

A POCKET COLOUR TV

That's right! Watch your favourite programs anywhere, anytime but only if you get into a cracking tip or maps off to *The Tipster* NOW!

THE BIG 50!

BEHIND ENEMY LINES

U.S.S. trained Tom Dickerson of Astoria, Northwest has what can only be described as a General because he has the complete solution to *CRYSTAL RAISER*. So your mission, if you wish to accept it (it, is to destroy all of those nasty enemy type people with your very own like some use to make markets, hit him, cover off designs and your team "Action Man" *Raiders* and give those naughty enemy type people head bashed hell!

LEVEL 1

Climb to the top of the red bridge gables and jump from one to another until they end. When you get to the middle levels DON'T climb on top of them as you will probably get killed by the soldiers. Instead you should go along the bottom of the screen killing the green soldiers and the grey soldiers from the right by lying down and holding them. At the end of the level lie down, swing right and holding out the knife all the while stand down the fire tower. You can also shoot the soldiers with the bazooka if you want.

LEVEL 2

Travel along the bottom of the screen using the bazooka and the knife to shoot to kill the soldiers. When the parachute falls down lie down facing right and the bombs will not hit you. When the parachute lands you can kill him just the same as for other green soldiers. Do the same for the second parachute, when you get to the steps you can kick, shoot or stab them kick them by pressing fire, stab them by lying down and pressing fire. You don't have to be lying down to shoot them!

LEVEL 3

Walk along the bottom stalling and shooting as level 1. When you get to a big white building climb to the top and drop off the end. Kill the parachute as described in level 2. You will need the bazooka for the helicopter at the end of the level. To do this go to the right as far as possible and then face left. As the helicopter lands and comes towards you shoot it. You will need to repeat this 3 or 4 times before it ends up as a heap of scrap.

LEVEL 4

Travel along the bottom stalling and shooting as level 1. Use the method in level 2 if you encounter any parachutes. At the end of the level you will have to use the method for the end of level 1 i.e. lie down facing right and hold down the fire button all the while as you could also shoot them with the bazooka. When enough soldiers are killed you are greeted with the highly original message of "MISSION COMPLETE".

Also from Thomas Dickerson is a tip for those who can't cope with *CRYSTAL RAISER*.

If you put a heavy weight on the space bar the game goes much slower so leaving you to complete it easily!

QUICK E's

To start this month's edition is one from Gary Branks from Southampton for **L-OCHD: KUNPNCK**. If you press **CONTROL - F** you get extra lives, up to 100 extra and **CONF: TRDL - M** to ship levels.

A couple of snippets come from Matthew Graham and James Hale of Leigh-on-Sea. For **ELBCK: TRAAZL: EDE** there are two tips, the first being that bouncing balls change late every bounce and that bouncing balls are the only things to change levels. The five objects that are needed to get to the second level of **HAFL: THE GREAT MIDGE DETECTIVE** are as follows:

Cigarette
Gun
Dagger
Key

And something that looks like an Alarm clock

Most levels of *Blaxxon* must have a madman pursue back by now as he wants a vast plethora of tips so lets walk through them all and see what he's got. First **JAKTEBBEREAS** - for a higher score and an extra life, just that time he rather select the following

4 player
Inbox number
Flipover defense

The other ships (not being able to move or fire) are easy ones and can be picked off quickly. Each ship is worth 1,000 points by virtue of the *Blaxxon* defense.

In **WIKLED: SRECKEN** the only attribute that a player needs is ability to win a game.

The **LIVING DAYLIGHTS** has a bug in it that has reversed the items for two of the special weapons. These are:

The job is really the ghetto Master
The ghetto Master is really the job

There are some unlisted special keys for **EDONALN: CAP: TERE: ENLAD** and they are:

OPTION - Make on - **SELECT** - Make off - **START** - Press
(to suppress every the joystick)

Help WANTED (Dead or Alive!)

Well there are just a few wanted tips this issue but all the same I know that someone out there has the answers either coding around in their head or on a piece of paper that is stuck to the bottom of a mouse or keyboard roller cap has many of my programs and:

1) I'd like to know what the average level for *Master Mystery* is having a ball of a time with **FOUR IN FREEDOM** in **THE GREAT MOON** **TRD** in *Dark Lane* in *Yagis Blaxxon* and what is the secret of the *Mad Blaxxon*. Well what are you waiting for get writing!

2) Some of my e-mails help on **JOHANN OF THE DEAD** so far in having great difficulty in completing it. It's also worth to know if there is any way to carry on from where you left off in **SCRY: APP: SERRON: SERRON: SERRON: SERRON: SERRON: SERRON: SERRON: SERRON: SERRON: SERRON**

Please keep sending in all your hints, tips, tricks and solutions or anything that you know. I will feature a fixed any responses, apart from *Talkin's*, for subscribers hints, tips and tricks. I would so really need to make as possible to make this volume the best and most informative to any Atari magazine! Get on the writing pad and pen and get writing. It only takes a few minutes work to get words into form and glory.

Send all your hints and tips to:

THE TIPSTER, NEW ATARI USER, P.O. BOX 54, STAFFORD, ST16 1DR

RED MOON

There must be a position in Upblaxxon. Tandy that knows, the Page 4 editor better than any other position in Upblaxxon.

Following on from his tips from last issue comes Tobias (Johann's) hints 'n' tips 'n' maps for **RED MOON**. As usual I've been testing my hints by typing in backwards, so much so that it's not quite "obvious"!

As usual **BUR: FRAL - KUB: LANS**.

RED MOON: CLUES

WOH OT TEG SWOC: EVAW EHT ECHSESRON.
WOH OT SSAP GDD: NODROP EHT TADM HTW EHT
SLUP DNA EVIG TI OT EHT GDD.
WOH OT BGT DROWS: TSAC HSDAIGHTSE TA EHT ERF
EVAW EHT NAF. RAEW SEVOLD OT YRRAC TL
WOH OT SSAP EHT ETLTIL ELON: TAE EHT
MOORHSUM.

WOH OT SSAP EHT NADRAUG: YRRAC DLARAME.
WOH OT TEG DLARAME: NFRUT EHT EFAS.
WOH OT EVOM EHT LLING: ESU NARWONG.
WOH OT SSAP GUTATS: RAEW KALOC
WOH OT LEVART RETAWREDNS: RAEW SAG KRAM
DNA YRRAC KRALP DNA GRRUT.
WOH OT BODOD NETTES: SAEM GMR.
WOH OT NEFO SUGAHPOCRAS: YAS SBO.
WOH OT LLK TMMU: YAS HELLLO.
WOH OT SSAP DICA LOOP: PORD EHT ELANG KMLHC
NI TL

WOH OT DLUB EGDRE: PORD EHT HROCA TA EHT
NSARD DNA SAER LLORCS.
WOH OT SSAP ERPMAS: YRRAC XFIGURC.
WOH OT SSAP DER ENL: BUR TI TUD.
WOH OT SES NI EHT MOOR FO
GNDNLS STHGL: PORD KCALB LLAR.
WOH OT KLAY NI LATEM MOOR: RAEW STOOD.
WOH OT TARR EHT HOGARD: EVAW NAF.
WOH OT MW EHT EMAD: EKAT EHT NOOM OT EHT
EROTS ESUCH.

TREASURES

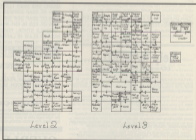
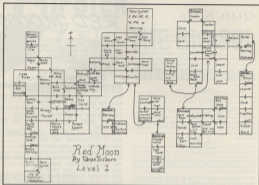
The treasures are: PEARL, BOOK, MEDALLION, EMERALD, COINS, BROOCH, SILVER BARS, BLACK BALL and the CROWN.

HOT ROD RAIDER

Hot Rod Raider from issue 42 of New Atari User has a useful bit of programming in it that allows you to use the keyboard when 'appear' or the light track when 'play' (although, when you see one - there is the password). The source includes will follow you into the barbers.

OVERLEAF - MAPS OF RED MOON

ZOOM DER



mapped by Tobias Jorborn

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YOGI'S GREAT ESCAPE

Another welcome game to fit Yogi's budget series based on famous characters from the cartoon world of Hanna-Barbera. Yogi Berra is well known to thousands of young fans, not so young TV viewers follow him for his easy reports in Jellystone Park and his evermore winning but not always successful attempts to visit the Park Ranger.

YOGI'S GREAT ESCAPE begins when Yogi and his best-of-friend Boo Boo wake up from their winter hibernation to retrace the traditional path of following innocent campers of their picnic basket.

A few days into the season, Ranger Smith receives the disturbing news that Jellystone Park is shut down and all the animals are to be shipped off to the zoo. Yogi hears of the impending closure and decides to head for the freedom of New York City before it's too late. With Ranger Smith and pet tracker dog in hot pursuit, Yogi attempts to make his great escape.

The adventure kicks off in Jellystone Park and proceeds through forest, wild west, "Mashed Potato" marsh and final recreation before reaching a conclusion in the Big Apple itself. The scenery is each level needs to be suitable as Yogi runs and bounds across countless walls and platforms. His objective is reach the exit before a countdown timer signals his appointment with the zoo. Statues, rangers, Indians and many other obstacles stand to



avoided while most chickens, calves, apples, lambs and other edible objects should be consumed to gain a useful points bonus at the end of each section.

Regrettably, with the exception of Yogi himself, the graphics fall short of the standard I'd expect from Hi-Tec. Scenery is confined to an increasingly small window in the top two-thirds of the screen and colours on the first level make Jellystone Park seem more like the Sahara Desert! There are frequent delays starting play since the levels

load in separately from Yogi-run out of town and you have to control back to the beginning. It's for nothing to overlook those drawbacks if there was casual competition but, alas, the overall effort are equally unremarkable.

On a positive note, Yogi's Great Escape is an addictive game and, though clearly not in the same class as Bull 'n Biddy two last month, it's well worth checking out.

Show your appreciation for Yogi and hopefully we'll enjoy many more new releases from Hi-Tec.

Title: **YOGI'S GREAT ESCAPE**
 Publisher: **Hi-Tec**
 Price: **£2.99**
 Players: **1**
 Loading: **15-20"**
 Reviewed by **Paul Dixon**



This is the story of two feuding, Lorraine and Lorraine, who also happens to be wizards. They built food in the small, beautiful village of Little Duffield for as long as anyone cared to remember, and seemed to spend most of their time collecting potatoes, raising sheep and doing all the other typical things that wizards were thought to do. The pair had been known to occasionally engage two manner Lorraine named his brother temporarily into a fey-fy but as long as they kept themselves in demand,

the villagers didn't seem to mind.

Then one day the peace was shattered by an unexpected occurrence. As first there was shouting, then explosions, bangs and other events that witnesses found too shocking to discuss. Lorraine later moved out to a new hut on the far side of the village. It was more than a mile's distance now - a level had begun, and the villagers knew they had better not get in the way!

And so the scene is set for FEUD, a graphical adventure based on the computer's

FEUD

attempts to destroy one another. You become Lorraine while the computer controls the actions of Lorraine. The screen view consists of detailed, well shaded scenery in the upper half of the screen and status information below. As your character moves over the landscape, the display window "flips" to reflect the changing locations. To the left, a spell book illustrates the might of your wizard.

Initially you don't possess any special powers so the first task is to explore the surroundings for some appropriate ingredients. When you acquire something useful a corresponding entry is highlighted in the spell book, but before you can use a spell you have to transport the ingredients back to base the mining in your cauldron. Once you've found a sufficient number of spells you should head to-

wards Lorraine and attempt to cast them - but watch out, or he'll do exactly the same to you!

It's not difficult to get lost in the Kingdom and mapping is almost essential. Thankfully, once you've located a "teleport" spell you can return to the cauldron quicker than it takes in my Texas poem.

This must be one of MasterLorraine's best releases yet. Great graphics, good sound and an interesting theme. If a pity there's no two-player option as the game would seem to be an ideal candidate. For the sake of word, Paul represents excellent value.

Title: **FEUD**
 Publisher: **Building Dimensions**
 Price: **£1.99 cassette**
 Players: **1**
 Loading: **20-30"**
 Reviewed by **Paul Dixon**

INTERNATIONAL KARATE

Karate simulations aren't as abundant as you'd like to see on an other screen, but someone who's experienced INTERNATIONAL KARATE for its American counterpart, World Karate Championships should have no cause for complaint. Not only is it a truly brilliant game, it's arguably better than the 16-bit conversion!

After loading you're greeted with an atmospheric sound track and a dramatic animation giving a taste of the action to follow. The background scenery is framed by a superb drawing of Australia's Sydney Harbour bridge and Opera House.

In the background computerized opponents die spectacularly around pulsating circles of different karate moves. Initial options allow you to select a one or two player match and whether or not to have music and/or sound effects continuing throughout the game.

In each level of International Karate your objective is to inflict maximum damage on your opponent before the expiry of a timer, while avoiding injury yourself. The moves are carried out by a combination of joystick directions and trigger presses, giving a total of sixteen possible actions. Early successful hit is rewarded by either a half or full point, and a score determined by the complexity of the move and how well it was performed.

The first player scoring two or more points wins the bout and gains a bonus based on the amount of time remaining. If



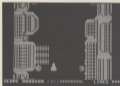
the timer runs out completely, the winner is the player with the highest score or, if it's a draw, the one who took the hardest! Later on there are special stages where you take a break from fighting and have to prove your skill at dodging weapons and smashing piles of bricks. As you accumulate more points, you're supplied with an appropriately coloured belt and eventually allowed a shot in the coveted hall of fame.

The visual delights of this game have got to be seen to be believed. The graphics really

are absolutely stunning! The disk control features many additional backdrops of world wide landmarks which load in automatically at regular intervals. The animation is fast (the speed of play can be adjusted) and incredibly smooth. Music and sound effects are also first rate.

Without a shadow of doubt, International Karate is an all-time computer classic. If you haven't got it then you're missing out on one of the best pieces of software entertainment ever devised for your computer.

Title: INTERNATIONAL KARATE
Publisher: System 3
Price: \$6.99 disk
Pages: 1/2
Reviewed by: Paul Dixon



SIDEWINDER II

Most gamers present yet another scrolling shoot 'em up from PAL Developments - SIDEWINDER II. The title is a bit deceptive since the game is not actually related to the original Sidewinder, released by Taito some four years ago. Fortunately, it's not quite as different either!

In the initial mission briefing you learn that your planet's long range weapons have detected a huge mass approaching from the direction of an alien home-world. Reports from scout craft indi-

cate that it's an enemy battle station, somewhat larger than the one you destroyed in a previous Sidewinder mission. A computerized selection procedure has chosen lucky old you as the only suitable candidate to attack the advancing menace. You've been instructed to infiltrate the station via an air lock tunnel - the catch is that it's lined with defensive units, automatic turrets, doors, and patrol drones with orders to prevent your intrusion.

Sidewinder II is a traditional vertical shooter - the aim is simply to survive as long as

possible by avoiding or annihilating the innumerable aliens and obstacles. Every so often you're presented with a chance to collect a floating capsule that can add an extra gadget to your ship, such as enhanced fire power or a limited protective shield. Any contact with the surrounding installations, or even the slightly reduces your fuel supply. There are three spare ships to reserve.

Penetration is both the audio and visual sense to a pleasantly high standard, from the variety based strongly familiar opening music to the clear, detailed and smoothly scrolling background scenery. An unusual feature of the game is that, by pulling back on the joystick you can stop the scrolling completely and give yourself ample time to work out the best route through the battle field ahead. This means that

Sidewinder II should cater for a wider range of abilities than many other games of its genre. The only bad thing I can find to say about it is that it's a rather monotonous challenge with no surprises to keep you hooked on the higher levels. However, this criticism could be levelled at almost every other shoot 'em up in existence. The amount of arcade addicts don't seem to be concerned!

Sidewinder II is one of the best budget priced shoot 'em ups currently available. It's not a patch on the old old Delta Lynx (then what isn't) but even so it's well worth the asking price!

Title: SIDEWINDER II
Publisher: PAL Developments
Price: \$2.99
Pages: 1
Loading: 1/30"
Reviewed by: Paul Dixon

BMX SIMULATOR

New 8-bit games are really few and far between nowadays but it's a good opportunity to examine some of the older titles that previously may have been missed.

Commodore's BMX SIMULATOR is quite similar in concept to their Grand Prix Simulator, which I reviewed in issue 47. The game presents a series of screen-sized circuits which the player's observer from a third-eye perspective. Two small BMX riders line up on the starting ramp, and wait for the signal - then they're off. You can opt to challenge the computer or a human com-

petitor, but in either case your objective is not only to race first in front of your opponent but also to finish the race before the expiry of an increasingly unforgiving timer. Thankfully controlling the BMX doesn't involve any 'Le Mans' style stick wiggling - you steer with the joystick and use the trigger for speed adjustments.

The graphics are beyond major criticism, although they do suffer from the curiously prevalent drawback of rider brown and yellow colouring - I'm beginning to wonder if the monitor is in need of a workout. The scenery includes lots of obstacles and other features that should be well familiar to BMX fans: 'bumps', 'stones' and rough ground to name but a few.

The sound effects comprise an excellent introductory tune by David Whittaker, several other musical interludes at



various stages of the game and a not entirely convincing 'title' tune as you lazily pedal around the circuits. At the end of each level you can select a unique 'Action Display' function to see how your performance might be improved - its slow motion, if you wish.

It's just as well there's a two player option as the solo game can prove to be more than a little frustrating. The computerized cyclist enjoys collisions immensely so no matter who causes a crash, it's always you who's sent sprawling into a heap! In all there are seven

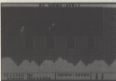
different circuits. As you progress through the levels, the time allowance becomes more and more onerous, in the extent that eventually you can't afford to make the slightest error of judgement.

Like its more racing relatives, BMX Simulator is an addictive game that's best enjoyed as a one-to-one challenge with a human opponent. The courses eventually become so demanding you begin to think they can't be completed - but then, maybe it's just take one more go ...

Title: **BMX SIMULATOR**
Publisher: **Commodore**
Price: **\$1.99 cassette**
Pages: **102**
Loading: **15:30"**

Reviewed by **Paul Rice**

CASTLE TOP



What do Frodo, Galadriel and Gollum's helpers all have in common? The answer is that in my opinion they're all programmed to assist! Over the years I've seen brilliant games, average games and terrible games but these three stand out as the worst of the bunch. In the past, Alternative Software's policy of re-releasing titles has kept them out of the 'master league table', but this time I think they've finally outdone the competition with CASTLE TOP - a game that can only really be described as 'bad

with a capital B'. It's BMX - Colossal as it still celebrates the discovery of America. Shakespeare hasn't been born and Marx has no more significance than a name in a Japanese board game. Anyway, the story is that your childlike overboarder and brat-in-law, Jessica, has been captured by the evil Lord Frederick of Alcoberry-Castle. Obviously you're pretty keen to rescue her so, as a noble knight in shining armour, you bravely head off for the tyrant's castle. Meanwhile the nasty Lord Frederick has, as

you might have expected, prepared more than a few surprises to greet you. What you must do is overcome the dangers, save the day, win the girl and put a stop to Lord Frederick's reign of terror.

The graphics in Castle Top leave a lot to be desired. I'm no American but I'm pretty certain the knights of old didn't turn out in pink helmets and fluorescent green armour. The mountains, or rather the lack of it, is another problem - instead of making the multi-coloured knight slide awkwardly along we see just 'Where you gonna die? knight's trigger, the knight jumps with an accompanying beep of the sort that beginners produce in their first encounter with the Basic 'sword' statement!

Your task is simply to guide the knight across the castle battlements, leaping where

appropriate to avoid spurs, arrows and other unpleasant objects. The jumps require an almost impossibly accurate sense of timing and just when you think you're starting to make progress, the smallest mistake can send you straight back to the beginning, since you're only provided with two additional lives. Annoyingly you can't commence a new game with the trigger but are forced to reach for a controls key instead. Here, seriously, the game occasionally crashes into a weird state of 'slow-motion'.

Let's not mince words, I think this game is **WASTED!**

Title: **CASTLE TOP**
Publisher: **Alternative Software**
Price: **\$1.99 cassette**
Pages: **3**
Loading: **4:55"**

Reviewed by **Paul Rice**

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It covers the more serious side of Atari 8
bit computing, and is essential reading for
any Atari enthusiasts.

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contact extra... contact extra ...

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Has anyone got this game? They are
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ST OR ARCADE: Best Atari 8-bit
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THE ACCESSORY SHOP

ISSUE 50

SERIOUS SOFTWARE

This issue we have continued the more software and also introduce some games software at very special prices detailed on the inside front cover and in the following pages. Some items are now sold out but there are still a selection of word processors for you to choose, from the most simple to the most complex - the choice is yours. Also there is one compact package left and lots of educational titles. As always we are able to offer these items at considerably less than the recommended price to check through these pages.



BASIC COMPILER

Compile your Basic programs into BASIC machine code! Unlike other compilers which require a separate run-time program the Microsoft Basic Compiler automatically does the work for you. You can also take the most benefit of the pre-compiled routines that you can use to write other Assembly programs. Could be used for those who wish to learn Assembly, just write a routine in Basic, compile it and study the same routine in Assembly!

Original Price £19.95
OUR PRICE £4.95

DISK ONLY

LETTER WIZARD

For those who need a little more sophistication in a word processor, Letter Wizard gives you all of the best features you would expect plus mail merge, print of selected pages, headers and footers, continuous page numbering and a whole host more great formatting styles. Although set up for Egar compatible printers on the NEC ROM-coded units can be used direct in the printer. Comes with an easy-to-use and an excellent plus a handy quick Reference card.

Original Price £19.95
OUR PRICE £8.95

DISK ONLY



PRINT SHOP GRAPHICS

The official PRINT SHOP Graphics Library consists of three separate disks each with 128 graphics and a printed and reference guide of the new style. Disk 1 covers: Borders, Special Functions, Letters and more. Disk 2 includes: Jobs, Pages, Pages, Headers and footers and more. Disk 3 covers: Borders, Symbols, Mail merge and others. It gives you all the specific graphics in the original PrintShop Graphics printing package.

Original Price £12.99 each
OUR PRICE £4.95 each
SPECIAL OFFER: ALL THREE FOR £11.00!!!

DISK ONLY

LETTER WIZARD WITH SPELL WIZARD

All the features of Letter Wizard without others but complete with a 1,000-word dictionary and the ability to locate your own special list. Includes an alphabetical word list, a new word processing tool like no other alternative. Only limited quantities are available while stock lasts at prices indicated. If you will accept Letter Wizard as plus indicated in the listing will not differ from in price with the standard.

Original Price £29.95
OUR PRICE £9.95

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INVITATION TO PROGRAMMING THREE PACKAGE OFFER!

Complete with coding sheets Basic programming has been made so easy! Despite the fact programming has been available for years, it is still not fully understood by many. This is the reason why we have put together this three package offer. The set includes: Invitation to Programming, the set of the three 1. Introduction, Writing Your First Program and 2. Introduction to Programming. Each disk has a full set of coding sheets, examples, and more. Includes all three disks and all the coding sheets you need. Includes an excellent introduction to the language.

Original Price £32.97
OUR PRICE £5.00

CASSETTES

TEXT WIZARD

If you don't need a very powerful word processor then still want to save your heart to help with producing written documents Text Wizard could be the answer. It comes in one and easy to learn word processor that has the best features such as search and replace, merge and duplicate text and alphabetical print, formatting including double column print out. The price is considerably less than the Egar compatible packages. Text Wizard will get you printing without getting you confused.

Original Price £29.95
OUR PRICE £7.95

DISK ONLY



TELELINK

The simplest to use compact package ever available, just plug it in and get started in a matter of 15 minutes. Communications program that will save you up and working in one hour. Ideal for simple access of your local Bulletin Board or for access to the major International Information Service. A typical display of text to a printer. The most basic of features but the simplest and easiest to use compact program available.

Original Price £14.95
OUR PRICE £4.00

ROM CARTRIDGE

TELETALK

An excellent information/communications package that has not been available for some time. This was one of the first full featured communications packages sold in the UK, now being replaced with Egar. It is available all on one system. The early issues were a million to the programmers. We can certainly assure that this works well! All the features you could want from a compact package plus a few you might not have thought of.

Original Price £14.95
SOLD OUT

DISK ONLY

NEW!

MICROSOFT BASIC

**DISK
ONLY**

Microsoft Basic 80 is now available for you to use with powerful programming in the standard Basic if you have a whole lot more. Microsoft Basic is ideal to use with its own program from other machines so it contains many of the commands that you already know. And there, you'll be able to learn the commands of programs with other computers, saving time and money. You'll be able to adapt programs written on other computers.

Recommended price £9.95
OUR PRICE £5.95

NEW!

MASTERTYPE

**ROM
CARTRIDGE**

Now anyone can learn to type without playing a dull-looking game. Mastertype was one of the original 'game-based' typing tutors which require you to copy words on their approach. From the first lesson of the course, that it will really be game fun. Before you realize it, you will become quite proficient on the keyboard as you progress through 48 lessons of increasing complexity.

Recommended price £14.95
OUR PRICE £2.95

CONVERSATIONAL ITALIAN/SPANISH

NEW!**CASSETTE
ONLY**

Isn't it about time you went on holiday and really got to know the people by talking their language? You don't need any fancy course language. This course that contains the complete spoken word material with interactive computer graphics. Unlike other courses that start from a grammar word sheet as you'll usually find, this course starts to get you to learn quickly and properly.

Recommended price £29.95 each
OUR PRICE £4.95 each

SCREEN DUMP 1020

NEW!

Owners of the 1020 printer/ploter will be delighted with this utility which has been unavailable for a long time. Now Atari/AtariD printers can be dumped to your IBM or ELLI, COLORO. Just load up the tape, select your hardware printer and let the software do the rest.

CASSETTE ONLY
Originally £14.95
OUR PRICE JUST £2.95

BARGAIN BOOKS

Books for the Atari 800 computer are now becoming very difficult to obtain with volume and the computer software cost of just an average program is now about £10.00. We have a selection of books for sale at a special price of £2.95 each. These books are available in paperback or hardcover. They are available in paperback or hardcover. They are available in paperback or hardcover. They are available in paperback or hardcover.

Please note that because of the high cost of printing, books orders will only be accepted if we make postage charge orders on our order form is included.

EASY PROGRAMMING FOR YOUR ATARI MICRO

**OUR PRICE £3.95**

This book needs no prior programming experience. It is a simple, step-by-step guide to writing programs for the Atari Micro. It is a simple, step-by-step guide to writing programs for the Atari Micro. It is a simple, step-by-step guide to writing programs for the Atari Micro.

THE 130XE HANDBOOK



Published price £7.95
OUR PRICE £3.00

A programming book for the Atari 130XE. It is a simple, step-by-step guide to writing programs for the Atari 130XE. It is a simple, step-by-step guide to writing programs for the Atari 130XE. It is a simple, step-by-step guide to writing programs for the Atari 130XE.

ATARI ADVENTURES



Published price £3.95
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A collection of Atari adventures for the Atari 800. It is a simple, step-by-step guide to writing programs for the Atari 800. It is a simple, step-by-step guide to writing programs for the Atari 800. It is a simple, step-by-step guide to writing programs for the Atari 800.

MICRO ENQUIRER



Published price £6.95
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A simple, step-by-step guide to writing programs for the Atari 800. It is a simple, step-by-step guide to writing programs for the Atari 800. It is a simple, step-by-step guide to writing programs for the Atari 800.

WRITING STRATEGY GAMES



Published price £3.95
OUR PRICE £1.50

A simple, step-by-step guide to writing programs for the Atari 800. It is a simple, step-by-step guide to writing programs for the Atari 800. It is a simple, step-by-step guide to writing programs for the Atari 800.



JUGGLES RAINBOW

A first computer learning tape game for children ages 4 to 6 that teaches the concepts of colors, letters, and uses right-gain letter recognition allowing the child to enjoy learning with colors and words and games they can create and play themselves.

OUR PRICE £5.95

NOW ALSO ON DISK!

DISK OR CASSETTE

JUGGLES HOUSE

Another top 7 to 6 year olds teaching the concepts of colors, words, letters and letters with Juggles House and Juggles' world game also includes a 15 program which children can try out there own letters for their names.

OUR PRICE £5.95

SPECIAL OFFER - PURCHASE BOTH JUGGLES PROGRAMS FOR JUST £9.95!



CASSETTS ONLY



PAINT LASTEST

An excellent painting program that was written for children as well as adults when released. Very easy to use with all the features you might need from an art package together with a very good manual that goes on to explain the relationship between art and computers. Excellent for children and of equal value for adults. Be creative!

Original Price £16.95

OUR PRICE £5.95

DISK ONLY

MUSIC PAINTER

An exciting educational program that helps to teach music by using colorful musical notes. Through the different musical steps to become different instruments, make the notes longer or shorter or transcribe your own songs. An excellent knowledge program to make your own great music. A children or adults after will get great satisfaction from being able to create their very own music.

OUR PRICE £7.95



DISK ONLY



CAVERNS OF MARS

Winner of one of the first Atari programming competitions, this top one of the first one that involves and contains a much longer after program game. Unusual through the screen scrolling users and working up that. Right play site and additional only one or two have made it to the bottom of the caverns to discover the secret that awaits there.

LAST COPY WITHOUT BOX BUT WITH FULL ORIGINAL MANUAL - LOWER PRICE

OUR PRICE £4.95

DISK ONLY

TOUCH TYPING

Everyone who uses a computer needs to learn up on their typing and now you can learn to type like a professional typist with this complete tutorial. Touch Typing provides a self-paced method of learning by using six practice typing letters, numbers and punctuation. The complete dictionary reads per minute, number of errors and your word points. Random selection also guaranteed to still give in three areas. Contains five exercises and instruction manual.

Previously £19.95

OUR PRICE £4.95



CASSETTS ONLY



TIME and MAGIK

These of Level 9's famous adventures in our package. This includes **LEVEL 9'S TIME and MAGIK** and **THE PRICE OF MAGIC** in one package. Level 9's Time and Magik is a game that gives you many hours of puzzle solving and exploration of the unique worlds created by Level 9. All these games have received top reviews. Now you can try them at a very special price.

Originally £11.95

OUR PRICE £5.95

DISK ONLY

TYP0 ATTACK

A typing teacher based on the Space Invaders concept to make you from your typing skills by shooting letters letters. An enjoyable way to learn that will quickly enable you to recognize the keys without having to look at the key board.

Normally £12.95

OUR PRICE £6.95



ROM CARTRIDGE



SILENT BUTLER

The all round personal finance planner that keeps track of those bank accounts, investment funds, records, records, use of benefits, and more to get important dates and generally keep you up to date on your financial status.

OUR PRICE £6.95

DISK ONLY

HOME FILING MANAGER/PAY OFF

DISK ONLY

The Home Filing Manager record keeping system that maintains notes cards on your bank, loans, bills of account, any thing related with the Pay-Off Administrator. You choose to compile an individual's financial data. The low disk also includes some top class graphics files.

SPECIAL PRICE - ONLY £1 WHEN PURCHASING ANY OTHER ITEM AVAILABLE ONLY WITH THE PURCHASE OF OTHER SOFTWARE

A Further Selection

More software for your added enjoyment ranging from adventures to arcade games and serious software. Check out Visicalc - we only have a few copies left!

PLANETARIUM

BACK IN STOCK!

Five or educational disks really in this fascinating look at the heavens. Over 1,000 stars, 88 constellations, the solar system and more than 500 objects which are depicted in this program that allows you to view the universe. You can read either our own easy-to-use ready reference, learn about latitude and longitude and much more.

1000 DRIVE ONLY
Please note when ordering if you have a 5.25/Double Disk

Normally £16.95
OUR PRICE £ 6.95

TAIL OF BETA LYRAE

NEW PRICE

Our A.S. of great software is the first "The ultimate" choice with superb graphics and music. This knowledge of a historically exciting story can be read on video by Philip Price, and the music was by Peter Dinklage. They have now set to write the "Ultimate Fantasy" games. This is one of the first computer "classics" right up there with the top arcade games of all time. Like your eye, ear and emotions in unforgettable fun!

DISK OR CASSETTE
Original Price £7.95
OUR PRICE £1.99

KABOOM

NEW!

Challenge the Mad Bomber as he tries to bomb you out of sight. Can you catch his bombs and disarm them in time? Or would you be the Mad Bomber and try to blow one of your friends? Lots of fun in this the one or two players in this addictive arcade game that you can watch the Mad Bomber and Visual Effects when it was first released. Simple yet addictive.

ROM CARTRIDGE
OUR PRICE £2.95

RIVER RAID

NEW!

This fast-moving, all-out battle adventure from Activision will have your system cranking up fast by its river-banking action bridges, waddling animal characters and fast air battles. Can you survive the rough up river to disperse the second Eye into four bits or 2 player game you can start at the lowest ever price. Available now!

ROM CARTRIDGE
Recommended price £12.95
OUR PRICE £3.95

ATARI SMASH HITS 7

NEW!

This is incredible! £14.95 of the best games for the Atari in one pack at the amazingly low price of just £2.95. It's three great quality games! You get 700 with 7 columns, 7 rows, 70 characters. They then cost \$100 if you do the software, any one of which would be a bargain at £2.95 but you get all four! You had better hurry!

DISK ONLY
Recommended price £14.95
SPECIAL PRICE £2.99

ZAXXON

NEW!

One of the all-time classics for the Atari. Excites at one standard when first found and was copied many times. Play your own version the unique 1-dimensional football shooting strategy that makes an unusual game and you will find it exciting. It's a classic game for the classroom coupled with a complete video - how long do you get? £10.00, after special, for a limited and "HOT" at the incredibly low price!

DISK OR CASSETTE
RRP £7.95 now £6.95 disk
OUR PRICE £2.99

THE COUNT

LAST COPY

What's the best time you can make in an antique store full of objects, diamonds, pearls? If you cannot be "count" you're out in the right place! This new release from Activision will allow you to see the wonderful world of a valuable well-known French antique store. Such classic objects are full of a "Museum" level adventure ideal for those who have had a little experience.

DISK ONLY
Original price £19.95
OUR PRICE £7.95

TIMWISE

REDUCED PRICE

Why not use your Atari as an electronic diary? Timewise allows you to keep track of all your appointments and important dates on a daily, monthly or yearly basis. You can also integrate with your diary and set your Atari to work. If you have a printer Timewise allows you to print out the information in a variety of ways.

DISK ONLY
Originally £22.99
OUR PRICE £3.95

VISICALC

LAST COPY

The world famous Visicalc spreadsheet is still in your hands. Visicalc will save you all of your spreadsheet requirements with all the conventional functions you could need on a spreadsheet that is 63 columns wide by 256 rows deep. All major spreadsheet functions are supported and the program even allows right viewing windows. Priced at £29.95 when first released!

DISK ONLY
OUR PRICE £11.95

PROOFREADER

Users of Visicalc will be delighted with this, the best fast spelling checker for the spreadsheet category! Proofreader may be loaded alongside Visicalc to give you instant access to a dictionary of 50,000 words. If that is not enough you can add your own words as you go. Errors are highlighted on screen for correction, automatic words can be saved and you can look up spellings.

DISK ONLY
OUR PRICE £5.95

MACRO ASSEMBLER

The Macro Assembler will allow you to create your own machine language programs and applications for these faster than with the assembler Editor. Assembler will save you money on third-party applications with our fast and program files. You can duplicate code, optimise assembly code and create lists for your programs. A Programmer's Editor is included.

Normally £19.95
OUR PRICE £7.95

BASIC CARTRIDGE

Why would you want a Basic cartridge when Basic is already built in to your machine? If all your programs, right up to your early public domain programs aren't run on the 15.25 for this will be if you play in the old version of Basic. Much more convenient than having to load in the old Basic from disk and, at this price, worth having just as a backup.

ROM CARTRIDGE
OUR PRICE £3.95

PIRATE ADVENTURE

The fun factor is higher than ever... it's all set up with the graphics and sound that only the most exciting games can give you. You'll be on the sea with the pirates of the Caribbean Islands. You can choose from three different pirate ships, each with its own unique characteristics. You'll be on the sea with the pirates of the Caribbean Islands. You can choose from three different pirate ships, each with its own unique characteristics.

DISK
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Original price £19.95
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HARDBALL

Another classic game that's never been a highly regarded game... it's all set up with the graphics and sound that only the most exciting games can give you. You'll be on the sea with the pirates of the Caribbean Islands. You can choose from three different pirate ships, each with its own unique characteristics.

ROM
CARTRIDGE

Normally £14.95
OUR PRICE £7.95

STAR RAIDERS II

This version of the follow up to the greatest computer game... it's all set up with the graphics and sound that only the most exciting games can give you. You'll be on the sea with the pirates of the Caribbean Islands. You can choose from three different pirate ships, each with its own unique characteristics.

DISK

Normally £14.95
OUR PRICE £8.95

JOUST

This one's different and fun... it's all set up with the graphics and sound that only the most exciting games can give you. You'll be on the sea with the pirates of the Caribbean Islands. You can choose from three different pirate ships, each with its own unique characteristics.

ROM
CARTRIDGE

Normally £12.95
OUR PRICE £6.95

BALLBLAZER

Another new classic... it's all set up with the graphics and sound that only the most exciting games can give you. You'll be on the sea with the pirates of the Caribbean Islands. You can choose from three different pirate ships, each with its own unique characteristics.

ROM
CARTRIDGE

Normally £14.95
OUR PRICE £6.95

STAR RAIDERS 2

The original Star Raiders is updated with new graphics and sound... it's all set up with the graphics and sound that only the most exciting games can give you. You'll be on the sea with the pirates of the Caribbean Islands. You can choose from three different pirate ships, each with its own unique characteristics.

ROM
CARTRIDGE

Normally £14.95
OUR PRICE £6.95

TENNIS

Great sports action... it's all set up with the graphics and sound that only the most exciting games can give you. You'll be on the sea with the pirates of the Caribbean Islands. You can choose from three different pirate ships, each with its own unique characteristics.

ROM
CARTRIDGE

Normally £12.95
OUR PRICE £6.95

FIGHT NIGHT

BACK IN STOCK!

Great sports action... it's all set up with the graphics and sound that only the most exciting games can give you. You'll be on the sea with the pirates of the Caribbean Islands. You can choose from three different pirate ships, each with its own unique characteristics.

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OUR PRICE £7.95

STRANGE ODYSSEY

In the galaxy's rim, there are rewards galore to be found... it's all set up with the graphics and sound that only the most exciting games can give you. You'll be on the sea with the pirates of the Caribbean Islands. You can choose from three different pirate ships, each with its own unique characteristics.

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GALAXIAN

Another classic computer game that's never been a highly regarded game... it's all set up with the graphics and sound that only the most exciting games can give you. You'll be on the sea with the pirates of the Caribbean Islands. You can choose from three different pirate ships, each with its own unique characteristics.

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U.S. FOOTBALL

NEW!

Another classic computer game that's never been a highly regarded game... it's all set up with the graphics and sound that only the most exciting games can give you. You'll be on the sea with the pirates of the Caribbean Islands. You can choose from three different pirate ships, each with its own unique characteristics.

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RESCUE ON FRACTALUS

Another classic computer game that's never been a highly regarded game... it's all set up with the graphics and sound that only the most exciting games can give you. You'll be on the sea with the pirates of the Caribbean Islands. You can choose from three different pirate ships, each with its own unique characteristics.

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Normally £14.95
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SUPER BREAKOUT

Another classic computer game that's never been a highly regarded game... it's all set up with the graphics and sound that only the most exciting games can give you. You'll be on the sea with the pirates of the Caribbean Islands. You can choose from three different pirate ships, each with its own unique characteristics.

ROM
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ROM
CARTRIDGE

Normally £14.95
OUR PRICE £7.95

ST FILE



Lots of people thought the GIBBER was one of the best games of 1994 and you're in the computer world tradition you can now play it all over again with this double edition. THE NEW CHUCK ROCK is the most arcade emulated. Judge for yourself by the planets alone and the reader elsewhere, one looks good - more over Progress! One of the most intensive 3-D games has now made its way to the ST in the form of ST ROCKYSTAR from Paul Winkler and Strorage.

The original of this Barbie-like game was a sensation in 1994 for what it had to offer in the more graphic Advanced 3D world. What do you want? Budget? price? Some software companies say that £3.95 is budget in the ST world others go lower than that. But Point Lizard had to make the upgrade out of the box look with a new budget range that starts at just £3.95. Don't expect anything too exciting just yet though as the initial ones are FOOTBALL MANAGER, KARTING GRAND PRIX and 1994 BODMO, many of which are still being aimed at some dealers shelves at full price! But if it takes off in this price, no doubt we'll see many of today's ST titles in the low cost management alongside the Space games by the end of the year. Are you, feel us out, friends!

For an odd amount of copying the processor that now, from Strorage, comes CAPTAIN PLANET and THE PLANETERS which certainly does not replace the Turbo, or does it? Our children can obtain a legacy of wonderfulness and pollution, or follow CAPTAIN PLANET in the fight to clean our fast deteriorating world. During sales, the first ever advertisement felt massive and thought provoking software challenge from Multimedia. Somehow you get the feeling that between "environmentally friendly" and thought provoking they have missed out on something.

ST adventures can look forward to a mega bundle of games while IBM owners should can look themselves away forever in the coming months when US GOLF and 500 get round to their special releases. ST owners will get SAULT, LET IT BE - THE FINAL QUEST, a battle in eight levels to be freed against the forces of evil and CURSE OF THE ADAM BLOOD (already out, what you want? get it in ST or the WINDOWS, SECRET OF THE BLUE BLAZED POOL, OF MAGECRA, COMBINED OF CRISIS, BASKETBALL and many more.

You see, the ST is not so dead in the Street. But who could it? CRISIS FOR A CORPSE, not exactly better but very much better on the Game Express, though this one does play on the Superdram crossing between Drive and Optics (well, it's a bit more exotic than that, but you get the idea).

Let's get serious for a moment. How do you fancy an intelligent joystick/mouse adapter? Just in case you've developed a PMS/MSBT which allows a mouse and joystick to be plugged into the same port on your ST, just press the left button on the mouse to start the mouse on the joystick and the device immediately switches to the appropriate control. Best bit by price given but going along to your nearest dealer who is supposed to be stocked up by now. PROGRESS SOFTWARE seem to need new batteries in their computers for when adding the increased NET to their XT/M MM products they have actually got the prices lower! If you haven't spotted by now, you should think about it. If you want to supply your own (oops, the THE XMM found can now be had for £19.95, an extra half may well save you £10.00 and a full £10.00 extra to save £1.00 is a saving of £1.00 on the previous price. If you order direct and can catch them out. Progress will knock a further 25% off the price's response to long delays experienced from some mail order suppliers. Progress will now guarantee to dispatch your order within 48 hours or else give you back 25% of the price. Now if anyone wants to slip on a few bob, we'll let you know when they are coming down for their annual holiday!

SCENES FROM CHUCK ROCK



Chuck is relaxing with a few beers

... while Gary Gritter makes off with his Miceus



Chuck hunts for her in the grassy plain



... and on through the frozen wastes

John's Jottings

The Problems of Reviewing ... Tales of Adventure ... Words of Wisdom ...

Have you ever thought about the difficulties faced by the Reviewer? You go into the magazine and put your favourite magazine (this one included) off the shelf and expect to find lots of useful information about the latest and greatest games for a particular type of software (and you can). How often are you disappointed? How many times have you read a review and been lulled (or it carefully and thought "What have I actually learned about that game?", or how many times have you rushed out to buy a piece of software based on a superb review only to find that it won't load on your machine, or that even if it does, then after the first euphoric hour of play the game is so boring, bug-ridden, badly documented, difficult, incomprehensible (Puzzle?) or whatever that you give up in disgust?

There are two main problems. One is that most software is boring, bug-ridden, badly documented, incomprehensible etc. The other is that most reviewers do not play the game for long enough to realize that just quite often a second copy of a game will be accompanied by a publicly broadcast prepared by the (intentionally biased) software distributor, it is receiving less money of the reviews in the top publications are based almost entirely on the publicly broadcast plus the information on the box cover and in the instructions. If you have seen all of this and played the game yourself then you can usually tell exactly how far the reviewer got when he tried playing the game - and it is often less than an hour of playing time!

CONVERSIONS AND BUGS

Some magazines are full of glossy advertisements and leave nothing but incredibly superficialities that are game is - but don't actually tell you how well it plays, or whether that there are bugs that won't prevent you playing the game, but will stop you ever finishing if I have to try with a review of a game that I haven't completed (or I know so many that are bug-ridden).

A typical example is *Captain Blood* - new reviews when it came out a few years ago - but no one pointed out that the CR 30 conversion had three or four errors in the instructions that the editors give you which prevent you getting more than about half way through the game (how to log-on the bugs were also mentioned in issue 36, and they were fixed in later releases).

Conversions are where most of the problems occur. With most of the conversion packages on one (and then to fully test anything other than the original version, it was going to review *SAM* the same day, but it won't load on my IBM and it won't save/load on my XT. Presumably the original Mac or PC version works OK. I don't know so writing the another copy? Another one that will fail from conversions was *Demolition*. Even IBM appears to be impossible - I spoke to the programmer who converted it from the 64 and he advised me that he got bored testing it around level

100 and assumed the higher levels would work! Actually most people get stuck much earlier, usually around level 57 - you have to dodge past a leonard ball and, even if you succeed, always run out of time. The first thing you should realize is that you are wasting your time trying to dodge *UNDO* the ball - I know it works sometimes - but that is a bug! (That is why it is impossible to do it consistently enough to allow you to enter the level if it is possible if you could, but for those of you who would like to figure it, the real password is *8086*).

The worst conversion ever has to be *The President is Missing* on the Atari. The programmer who converted it obviously didn't understand the game at all so that there are blatant errors such as right moves which aren't long enough to type in some of the inputs needed to complete the game! There are countless errors in the information which you are given and, having borrowed a PC version to see how it was supposed to work, I found *THREE* pages of bugs! The game was unbelievable - but I have seen copies still on sale - don't buy it!

NEVER TRUST A REVIEWER

The reviewer is not always to blame - he is often given far too much to do in far too little time - "Please give me an 800 word or eight review of this new (M&T) game by next weekend". You then find that the average playing time is 280 hours!

A good example is probably *M.A.T.* - the first hour or two is superb even if the excellent graphics and music. But as you get further into the game you will find the gameplay is not so good and the problems are always and tedious. I have seen a number of reviews praising it very highly - obviously the reviewers did not actually try to complete the game!

Another problem is, of course, finding the right reviewer to review a game. Double games, but adventures, are always hard and appeal to very different types of people. *Darius* is worth a game a glowing review of *Liberal Britain* but issue one recommended that you get out and buy it immediately - I found it incredibly boring. Also in the last issue *John Duxbury* for *Journal Mystical* is in a "superb game of superior quality" - I would have pointed out that it was badly programmed in that the two-player option doesn't appear to work, and that it is not good value for money on my own and I, using an alternative two-player strategy taking it in turns with the joystick while the second player used the keyboard to maintain the spell inventory, finished the complete game on about the third attempt! *Witch* John fails to take into account in that not everyone can find the Holy Grail. (Eh)

One man's meat is another man's poison! I rejected the opportunity to review both these games as they didn't appeal to me personally - we always try to find the right person to review a

game, but it is not always possible. When reading a review you always need to try and work out whether the reviewer is really into this sort of game - if he is then you must not be taken in too much by his praise. If he isn't then you must not be taken in too much by his disparagement - in other words, never believe anything you read in a review!

What do you think? We believe that here at Page 9 Publishing we care a little more and try a little harder than the bigger magazines who churn out glossy reviews with no content - are we succeeding?

THE BOOK OF THE GAME!

And now for something completely different ...

Many thanks to Miles J. Foster of *Stratagems for Strategists* as it is known to those of us who have to look there sometimes for bringing my attention to some excellent books based on the *Ultima* and *Ultima* games.

Alan here now published six *Ultima* books

The Zork Chronicles by George Alan Slinger

- a fairly thin fantasy plot - basically an excuse to visit most of the locations in Zork I, II and III. Quite amusing, but you'll get most out of it if you have played the games.

Wishbringer by Craig Shaw Gardner

- apparently the incident occurred in the computer game area only one of a series of strange happenings involving postmen in Postmark - this tells of another postman entangled in the eternal battle between good and evil. All the characters from the game are there, and again you will get most out of it if you have played the game.

Planescape and Starbuckell by Arthur Byron Cover

world science fiction combining the adventures from the computer games. *Starbuckell* is still around in many, you'll find it dead, but *Planescape* from *Starbuckell* takes over as your robot companion (actually, *Planescape*'s ghost) is still around and trying desperately to get you to find *Starbuckell*. The plot tends to ramble a bit, and the story continues in *Starbuckell* (not yet published) - I didn't enjoy these as much as some of the others.

Enchanter by Robin W. Bailey

- the best one so far - a good fantasy adventure which stands by itself, but is more more fun if you have played *Enchanter*! However, it seems that when you take the scroll from the Translucent Mages to become you create the Great Tower, and although you managed to keep it trapped while you finished the game, it eventually floated its way to freedom and is now pointed to destroying the whole world. A young enchanter, asked only by a beggar and a wizard how the *Enchanter* from *Enchanter* the picture of them are your only allies as you, a young enchanter, set out to defeat the threat. All your favourite spells from *Enchanter* and *Enchanter* are there - great fun!

The Lost City of Zork by Robin W. Bailey

- if you read the *Encyclopedia Postmedia* in the library in *Enchanter* then you will know that *Dunconfero* (Lord Dromot

Flathorn's great great grandchild) was the King of *Quander* who conquered the lands across the Great Sea which later became the Great Underground Empire. The hero in a young would be adventurer who sets off to find his fortune in the great city of *Thorpe*, instead gets to be a palley, chase an son of *Dunconfero*'s son palley, and ends up trying to defeat the whole city of *Quander* in order to rescue the *Thorpe* Guild of Wizards. I haven't finished this one yet (bloodlines' diminished) but so far it is excellent.

And Popular Library have published a book based on the *Ultima* games:

The Forge of Virtue by Lynn Abbey

- another excellent fantasy adventure which is more more fun if you have played *Ultima IV* and/or *Ultima V*. It is set just before the beginning of *Ultima V* - Lord British has disappeared and the whole world seems to be going wrong. A young adventurer, with a working band of helpers sets out to rescue the fair Albion's magician brother - fairly standard stuff, but nicely done and well integrated into the *Ultima* mythos. The geography is all true in the games as you travel the road from *Phan* to *Ennari* and beyond, and you meet people like *Stavros* and *Dagon* - your companions in the computer version. Let's hope there are more in this series.

Unfortunately you are unlikely to find any of these books in your local R.H. Smith. They are all American paperbacks - I got some from *Andromeda* 0203-043-13098, some from *Forbes* (Phonix), New England St., London, and some from a friend in the States.

CHESS SIMULATOR

Another offering from *Intelligence*, this is an excellent computer chess program - the winner of the British Open PC Chess Championship 1989. For as pretty as *LittleChess*, but much better at playing chess, and with lots more features for your £24.95. It claims to be able to play up to 2180 ELO points and has a facility for assessing your ELO grade. It has all the features you could expect in a quality chess game, including lots of ways of controlling how long it spends thinking so that you can get it to play quite a strong game quite quickly.

I did mean to review this some months ago, but I couldn't get it to *Save* (before a game for me) and the *Intelligence* people couldn't help. I eventually discovered that it is a problem with the documentation - when you restore your saved game it just loads the moves back into memory - it doesn't actually restore the position on the board. To get back to where you were you have to select manually to replay the moves. The mouse control is a little awkward - you seem to have to locate the position off the top of the screen to make the mouse appear, and it would have been nice to have a single keyboard to allow you to switch between the board and the display of what the computer is thinking, but otherwise this is well worth considering if you want a strong chess program with lots of features for helping beginners as well.

Double-sided disks only, but if you have a friend with a double-sided drive he can copy all the files except *CHROM_F.PRG* (the French version) in a single-sided disk for you.

COMPILATIONS

WINNERS?

Two of the most successful games licenses around at the moment have brought out some of their better games in compilation format. From Domark we have **THE WINNING TEAM** consisting of five well-regarded games. From Team The Planet Of The Apes, we have **MONSTER PACK**, only three games here but very strong candidates. Leading them comes Shadow Of The Beast, backed up by Intuition and Maze.

These compilations show examples of the same types of games taken from different angles. The Puggnotti trio all show the strong art and sound quality that the company have been producing over the years. The packaging is a greatly understated black with muted shades of purple and the games are examples of what I feel to be their best and worst. The most disappointing game is **Intuition** which strikes me as a high-tech version of the old tank games such as *Blizzard and Desert Fox*. The object would appear to be to park your way through mine sites (I'd call them up as many ideas as possible). The graphics and screen handling seems to let down the good Puggnotti name and to me this game really lets down the trio. Possibly I am too hard on this for had any company other than Puggnotti offered this it would have received some extra allowance. Indeed had their aim been to include a Team Battle style of game then *Intuition* would, possibly, have been a better choice. **Nixxo** is a game I reviewed to full only a

couple of issues ago and this game is still as good as then. The graphics still hold the attention and the David Caraculio choice for this Death race type game still keep the nerve wringing-tinging. It is strange to note that the instructions for this fit in a far smaller space than they used to. Nevertheless the smooth wringing nerves and the interest of the tactical choice of how maintain the game's flow and excitement.

The jewel in this collection's crown has to be the classic **Shadow Of The Beast**, in its time hailed as a classic and certainly not diminished by age. It makes the package worth buying on its own terms. This must be the ultimate arcade title, the development from Puggnotti was little masterpieces *Darbaries*, this wide ranging platform and test game kept my rapid attention for some considerable time. The platform and art work in this work are spell-binding and combined with some excellent gameplay and music, prove that age does not wither strong inspiration. Of the three games this has to rank as my favourite and is a good indication of the quality of Puggnotti as a company. All in all this piece sure the compilation from being a good idea was.

The Domark offering is certainly a stronger package offering only one weak game in the form of **Vindictious**. Again a tank type game it suffers from minimal instructions and less than atmospheric gameplay. Indeed it feels as though this was added in an afterthought to fill the Winning Team's numbers. Sadly I can not see why since the other four games really are quite complete. *Escape* etc. is a wonderful atmosphere ramp, in the

constant world of "Wired science Fiction". The sprites are designed in four colour comic style and the ray gun effects, walking robotic monsters and slaves in *Blindies* all give an HQI Flash Gordon feel to the game. If Puggnotti are the *Blindies* Hall of the computer world then *Triguns* are obviously the *Deadly Warbed*. I feel that this game is possibly overshadowed in spite by *Cyberball* although on a game play and fun for all equipment operators far it is excellent.

Cyberball is another game I have had the pleasure of reviewing. It marks *Triguns*'s best conversion to date, not-withstanding *Blind* and *Crossbones*. Sadly I notice it still has the bug that allows robot players to go out of bounds and be relocated at the other end of the field. This in the *Centres of the future* and if the London Monarchs are any example the training methods of the present. The basic theory is that a team of specialised players play a variation of American Football with a nuclear time bomb. Rather than down they must achieve destinations. It is a strong two player game with several pleasing features. Even the full time coaching team are depicted in robotic form. Again good value in a compilation.

APB is another classic style game, and again is slightly different. The player needs to work a policeman's work with various arrests and charges. Score for many arrests and you find yourself fired and put in the van, do it right and the boss rewards you with bonuses. This game becomes addictive once the routines are mastered.

The most interesting and addictive game of the bunch is **Blax**. This is a sort of Tetris variant which needs the player to catch differently coloured tiles and place them to make in varying formations to obtain set point scores in order to advance. As such Tetris the way to simplify the practice levels.

Overall **THE WINNING TEAM** is probably the best compilation I have come across. It offers variations for all tastes and in the case of park that a new owner could buy to enjoy themselves at a low cost. **MONSTER PACK** seems less of a bargain, and I feel that Puggnotti could have chosen better options, although *Shadow of the Beast* saves it from being a waste of money. If I had to buy just one through it would be *Triguns*/Domark's offering.

THE WINNING TEAM
Domark (Jargon) \$29.99

MONSTER PACK
Puggnotti \$25.99

Reviewer Damon Howarth



CHUCK ROCK

A rouse the levels of eight-way scrolling, joystick-driven, beat-em-up, platform arcade game? What makes this one so special that you should go out and spend your hard-earned pennies on it?

Well, the character concept is quite nice - instead of the usual handsome barbarian with bulging muscles you get to play the part of Chuck Rock, a cowman ably aided by an enormous bear-god! His gorgeous wife, Opheia Rock, has been dragged away by the evil Gacy Gritter (you get to see all this in the intro and armed with nothing but his beer-god and his size 14 feet Chuck must fight his way across the prehistoric landscape to rescue her, meeting all the usual adversaries along the way.

The scrolling is nice and smooth and, although you are basically trying to travel to the right, you will have to travel up and down and back to the left to find your way across the platforms and past all the traps and monsters. The only useful things you will find along the way are rocks - which you can chuck! But the rocks are also necessary as obstacles and reusable platforms. These will help you solve some of the problems along the way. Elsewhere, when you find a seemingly impossible dead end you will have

to redef the aid of certain local creatures like the brown-saurus which will carry you across the swamp, and a pre-oxycyl which will fly you to an otherwise unreachtable platform. Usually you will have to gently persuade them to help - this is done by the simple expedient of chucking a rock at their head, or giving them a belly beat with your powerful gut.

The monsters are many and varied, lots of thought has gone into creating some interesting variations on the usual creature - some breathe fire at you, some divide into smaller and smaller creatures until they are finally small enough to stamp on, some even throw snowballs at you! And of course at the end of each level you will find the unobtainable end-of-level monsters - a Salamander Tiger, a Wholly Mammoth, a Loch Ness Monster and so on.

The controls are simple - just use the joystick to move around, jump and duck, and the buttons to pick up and throw rocks, do a belly beat, or kick (if you are in the air). Two of the levels have wacky areas which you must swim through - remembering to come up for air regularly. You get four lives and you can survive about half a dozen blows before losing one - but there is a trail of hearts left by Opheia which will restore your energy. The levels are split into up to five zones each and if you die you restart at the beginning of the current zone.

The graphics are superb through out - not just the monsters and the animation, but also the back-ground scenery. The dead dinosaurs littering level five are a joy to behold! Chuck Rock is undoubtedly a very high quality arcade game that will have you trying-over-and-over-again to get just that little bit further. My only criticism



“ a very high quality arcade game ”

WOULD have been that you have to start from the beginning of the game each time you lose all your lives. However Core have been in charity to allow you to restart at any time and any level, and also to have infinite energy. We will be publicising these great items. So if you get fed up with dying you only have to wait a couple of minutes and then you can get it down all the level, cheat it off, and have a go at all the levels you couldn't reach before! Why can't all arcade games provide that kind of facility?

If you have an old ST with an M2354 then it probably won't load unless you'll through Core say they can send either single-sided diskette users a third diskette to allow them to play the complete game on a single sided drive.

- **SIGHT & SOUND** - great graphics lots of bonuses, usual sort of arcade poses and poses
- **GAMEPLAY** - high quality joystick-driven arcade game - well balanced so that you can get a little further each time
- **VERDICT** - a must for all arcade game addicts



The: **CHUCK ROCK**
 Publisher: **Core Design**
 Price: **£24.99**
 Reviewer: **John Sweeney**

MAKING MUSIC WITH YOUR ATARI

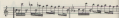
Have you ever wished you could play drum parts straight into a MIDI sequencer running on your Atari without having to input or step-time input or fiddle about using a special keyboard? Yes, I mean by hitting out the rhythm using drumsticks on your home fender? Well, now you can with the aid of a new product from Yamaha - the DD-11 Digital Percussion Instrument. It's really a wrapped-up per-set drum machine, but in order to it in each would do it a great injustice, as it offers so much more than an ordinary beat box! It quickly runs down its features will mean show you what I mean.

It can play 100 different per-set rhythms ranging through various flavours of rock, pop, funk, metal, R&B, jazz, latin, etc. Each has its own 16th and 32nd noting patterns plus two different "fill-in" patterns you can trigger at any time to provide rhythmic variety. It plays them as real elements selected from its 25 onboard sampled drum sounds, which include bass and snare drums, toms, cymbals, congas, bongos, timbales, and other percussive noises. In addition it has five "tuned percussion" sounds - maracas, shagbells, steel drums, bangles, and "orchestra bell" which can be played over a one-octave pitch range using the DD-11's eight percussion pads and footpedal.

There's also a further set of synth voices including basses, pianos, brass, and guitar sounds which can be used to provide an automatic bass/choral accompaniment to go along with the drum rhythms. There's even a built-in chord sequencer allowing the construction of chord sequences for up to three songs - so the DD-11 can provide a complete drums, chords, and bass backing arrangement for you to play or sing along with. It's not for like a hardware version of the "Hand-to-A-Box" software package I covered about in these pages a couple of issues back, it also has a built-in stereo amplifier and two speakers, so the whole thing is self-contained. The final thing on the table is that it has MIDI IN and OUT sockets so you can connect it into an existing MIDI system and/or to your computer.

PADS AND PEDAL

It's those percussion pads and footpedal that make the DD-11 so different from ordinary drum machines. The circular rubber pads are big enough to hit with drumsticks at your hands if you prefer, and they're "touch-sensitive", so by hitting them harder you produce a louder sound. Any one of the DD-11's percussion sounds can be assigned to the pads and footpedal, allowing you to design your own drumset. You can then play it as a drummer would, providing the whole rhythm part yourself in real-time. Alternatively, you can play along with any of the per-set rhythms, adding your own little



John S Davison's regular guide takes a look at a new Yamaha Drum machine

touches as required. It even has a "sequencer bypass" feature, which cuts out the per-set rhythms while you play your own drum fills and solos! It captured the footpedal can also be used as a start/stop switch or for triggering automatic fill patterns, intro/holdings, or synchro break.

When hit, the pads and pedal also generate MIDI Note On messages, which are transmitted via the MIDI OUT to trigger sounds in other instruments in your MIDI setup, or the recording by a sequencer program running in your computer. Once recorded the rhythms can be edited, quantized, and otherwise fiddled with in the usual way. They played back on the DD-11 via its MIDI IN connection. So now the DD-11 functions as a drum expander module! You can also get at the tuned percussion and synth voices via MIDI, so the DD-11 can also act as a multitrack synthesizer, albeit a rather limited one.

I have only one criticism of the DD-11. Firstly, you can't program your own customized rhythms into the box itself. You have to do it externally using a sequencer. Secondly, it doesn't transmit or respond to MIDI clock messages, so you can't synchronize it with a sequencer. In both its playback mode to that of your sequencer. But then at this price level you can't have everything.

HOW DOES IT SOUND?

The DD-11 produces sounds similar in quality to those found in the latest Yamaha PS5 synthesizers, i.e. more than adequate for home use. They're quite full bodied, clear, and generally of good quality, especially if played through external amplification and speakers via the line-out sockets. However I did find the sample lengths rather short sometimes, e.g. cymbals don't sustain so much as I'd like. The tuned percussion is less successful, in particular wood drums and orchestral hit sound rather thin. The synth sounds too were no real match for a proper synth, but then you could hardly expect them to be.

Considering it's much more than a straight drum machine, the DD-11 is a real bargain. So, if you're looking to expand the percussion side of your MIDI setup make sure you check it out. There's nothing to touch it at its price of £1499.00 cheaper if you shop around.

If you're wondering why there's only one page of Making Music this time, it's because I've had to scuffle some space to make room for the Sound Sampling series starting in this issue. Accordingly, details of the new PS5 synthesizer and patch editor promised in the last issue will have to occur next time.

MASTER TIME

Those 8. Ware guys have been busy again, and this time have come up with a neat educational program called Master Time, designed to help teach children to tell the time. It's supplied on one single-sided disk and the latest version runs in colour on any ST/XT.

Master Time consists of three major sections, called Master Clock, Master Watch, Master Time, Play House, and Doodle. The first three are concerned with the serious business of learning to tell the time, while the last two are bonus games included as light relief.

There's also an "options" screen from which you can determine how the program operates. You can decide how the movement of the minute and hour hands are linked on the analogue clockface - e.g. permitting the hour hand to move halfway between the hour marks on the full hour, or to jump in hourly increments, or to be completely independent of the minute hand. It's also possible to set the number of questions the program asks before increasing the difficulty level, and to decide the form in which the time is spoken. Yes, this program uses sampled speech, with choices of analogue or digital style. I.e. whether 10:15 is spoken as "quarter to eleven" or "ten fifteen". Finally, you can also turn the program's screen off, and after leaving it you'll soon realise the value of this option!

MASTER CLOCK teaches time telling using an analogue clockface. This shows quarter and half-hour markings plus the actual minutes value against each of the normal marks. The face is also colour coded to indicate "past" and "to" the hour. Overall, it's rather like those kitchen time teacher watches made by Times and others. The clock's hands can be independently moved by clicking on "hour" and "minute" buttons,



and after setting them you can click on a "watch" icon, which they speak the time in the chosen style. The speech samples were produced with an ST floppy cartridge (what else?) and are quite clear and easy to understand.

The program's voice asks you to set a specific time on the clock. Actual time requested depends on the current level reached - these correspond to half hours, full hours, quarter hours and "random" times to the nearest five minute band etc. It's a pity there isn't another level which goes down to individual minutes. The requested time is set by clicking on the hours and minutes buttons as described earlier. If correct, the voice congratulates you and you're treated to a "random" sound. Otherwise you can try again or perhaps click on the "help" button, when the program stops the minute hand from the hour hand to the correct time, speaks it, resets the hands to 12 o'clock and then prompts you to try it yourself!

MASTER WATCH is identical in concept to Master Clock except it uses a digital watch instead of an analogue clock. Also, it speaks the time in digital style unless set otherwise on the options screen. Incidentally, you can return to the options screen at any time to change settings. Unfortunately this means whatever module you were previously using, or rather annoyingly you have to start again from level 1 when you re-enter it.

MASTER TIME contains the features of Master Clock and Master Watch. You have both time-

pieces on-screen simultaneously, and can choose to set the analogue clock in the time shown by the digital watch, or vice-versa. There are two speech buttons, one for each timepiece, so you can independently check the time currently set on each one. Normally such would be spoken in the appropriate style, but if this is confusing the options screen allows you to have them both spoken in either analogue or digital style.

The two bonus games are very simple but nonetheless fun, so children will find them an interesting break from their time-telling lessons.

PLAY HOUSE is a "Simon" type game, but instead of having to remember an ever increasing sequence of colours you have to remember the positions of pigs appearing randomly at the windows and doors of a house. To win a round you have to click on the windows and door in the same sequence in which the pigs appeared at them. **DOODLE** is a very simple drawing program which contains one of those old "Dolly & Mabel" toys. It allows you to construct pictures or patterns from straight lines drawn in any of eight directions, six colours, and five line styles. Lines are drawn by clicking and holding on direction arrows which control the movement of the drawing style.

In summary, I really liked Master Time. The one part into its design shows everywhere - in its stand apped through big, colourful graphics, its sensible options, extensive use of user to speech help facility, and even the inclusion of these two simple games. However, it's the program's use of sampled speech which puts it in a class of its own. So, if you need a program to help teach your kids to tell the time, make sure this one's on your shopping list.



Title: **MASTER TIME**
 Publisher: **B. Ware Software**
 Price: **\$17.95**
 Reviewer: **John S Davison**

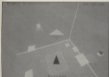
THE UNDEFINABLE!

ALPHA WAVES

Alpha waves are defined as brain waves emitted when a person is in a state of relaxation. They were discovered in the 1930s, and were one of a quartet of brainwaves signifying various levels of mental activity. It was later proven that various cycles of light and sound could produce the same effects on the brain and stimulate certain muscle or attitudes. The discovery of these mental facts was a Dr. Hans Berger although I do not believe that he could have envisaged his discoveries being used in such innovative and subtle ways as this software can under review manage to show.

The experience, for it can hardly be described as a mere game, of Alpha waves is a little surprising, for although there is a possibility of a game for points and attempts to make goals the whole aim is the non-competitive relaxation and stimulation mode. This is the sort of program Jeff Minter has tried to achieve over the years and it involves controlling pyramids that gently bounce around computerised rooms looking for an exit. The game really is that basic, but there are a great deal of relaxing and peaceful Jean-Michel Jarre type sounds to accompany this almost free fall like existence.

The game mode is probably the easiest concept to grasp than I shall start there. The player's objective is to guide a little pyramid through 100 different 3D rooms.



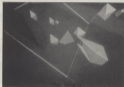
Each room offers a different problem and method of escape, although all rooms have exits or platforms to bounce upon to gain the necessary height to leave before time runs out. Although the concept is extremely basic the gameplay is quite different and once it is realised that control over the shape is a little limited - it can move forward and backward or left and right with no real problem - gaining and maintaining height is all a matter of propelling the object from various platforms. This made of pyramids is free and you miss the platform you wished and your pyramid sinks slowly and gracefully to the floor never to be seen again. Of course nothing can be so un-complexed and the game includes some most disturbing creatures that will try to 'booster you' out of the way and deflect you from your intended course. If that does not make your job hard enough some rooms need keys to exit and they too must be found.

Indeed there is a hint of a platform and holders game here although the leisurely style tends to disguise this feature enough to maintain the illusion of great originality.

The colours and sound are striking and most atmospheric. I found myself being concentrated purely because of the magnetic effect of the combination of white and sand colours, the graphic quality is very strong and needs colour to make full use of the game. Indeed the game uses its basic palette to the sound and colour and thus more than some games they are its very foundation.

Once the frustration of bouncing has reached your playing fingers

this task of the alternative methodised, non-competitive mode. This allows you to choose one of the 100 areas which relate to various areas of the brain. The alleged effect is 'booster' option is to stimulate that area of the brain by the focus on unstressful play and thereby allow an almost meditational high to come upon



the participant. I must admit that in playing this I did not necessarily feel the inner peace or relaxed attitude the writings led I ought to but I was impressed with an innovative use of ideas and psychology in new software.

My overall impression is that the addictive nature of the game will make fairly quickly, and that it is a different form of Matrix Meditations or similar games. The fact that the exit actually colored down and retained the screens that related to peace and harmony strengthens the producers claims that the colours and music have an effect. I on the other hand found it induced frustration of many intervals and left me feeling that inner relaxation and power is better achieved with a good CD and a glass of finest milk whisky.

If you have pretensions to rediscovering post- or hippies then this software will certainly bring back memories of Woodstock and those strange squiggly of lamps so beloved of the Beatles and Timothy Leary. If such references mean little or nothing to you then definitely try before you buy, but because there are some may be situated in your cognitive brain created Memorable I shall write back less early than I had and get the Kaffee from the marketplace.

- **GAMEPLAY** - Fairly psychedelic, easy to control but possibly a bit dated when it comes to Alpha cloning.
- **SOUND AND GRAPHICS** - Both superb, this is the heart of the game and it shows.
- **OVERALL** - An interesting experience, worth looking at but I prefer real music and proper light shows.

Title: **ALPHA WAVES**
Publisher: **Infogrames**
Price: **£24.99**
Developer: **Damon Rowboth**

PD WORLD

Paul Rixon's

Which aspect of the ST would you most like to see improved? The keyboard? The internal connectivity? Most people who use their files for purposes other than playing games would say they'd like to see a better (and desktop-Apple-clone) graphical interface. Atactic's graphical interface has changed very little since the ST first appeared in 1985 and, whilst it's made a valuable contribution to the ST's success, similar environments on other machines are far superior. Most users will still find good considerably more advanced.

Even Atactic themselves, who aren't interested for competing in retail, have finally recognised that the time has come for the original desktop to receive a comprehensive revamp. Last year in Germany, where Atari have traditionally been taking most seriously than elsewhere, they got off the wrappers of a brand new desktop designed for the TT workstations. The TT desktop occupies more memory than has fitted in current ST machines which means that there's room to park in a wide range of improvements. These include keyboard short-cuts, the ability to place the icons on the desktop and a completely revised multi-tier control panel. Extensive reviews have appeared in ST World (ISSN and ST Applications (ISSN) magazines to find that the new desktop will also be fitted to the STE, but this isn't a great deal of comfort to existing owners, especially since the new version is not compatible with pre-STE ROMs as hardware upgrades are out of the question.

The only affordable way for most serious users to test these desktop ideas is to invest in a software-based application. **NEEDSIE** is the most well-known commercial solution and has rightly enjoyed extensive coverage in all the major Atari publications. Needsie is clearly an excellent package, but it isn't exactly cheap - so what about the competition?

Among the earliest successful attempts to tackle the ST's desktop deficiencies is a shareware program called **VISION**. This requires a system with two-disk



VISION comes with its own economy white GEMINI-based options for whole desktop

drives or at least one megabyte of memory. **VISION** provides an altogether different environment to the traditional GEM desktop. It doesn't use icons, but it does have a selection of unusual bottom-up menus (as opposed to drop-down ones) which provide access to a multitude of DOS

commands, modified on top of the MS-DOS and UNIX operating systems. They include the standard disk operations such as format, copy, delete and others, and also some less obvious ones that have to be entered to be appreciated. At the click of a mouse button, you can display free memory and disk space, check the status of your printer, search the files and 'touch' them with the current time and date. There's a built-in screen saver, a handy on-screen digital clock and a mini-calculator that shows the current year and month by default. All the options have keyboard short-cuts to benefit

the experienced user.

By far the most useful feature of **VISION**, particularly for hard disk owners, is that it enables you to specify up to 32 files which can then be executed with a single mouse-click or key press combination. The DOS menus have ready-titled slots for common applications (more but there are also three empty slots which can be filled with any type of programs you wish. Programs that aren't defined in this way have to be loaded via an 'execute' menu option and the normal file selector. The full **VISION** system makes its features or high resolution only for those users; there are also a range of icons (or icons) but for those people who conduct their computing on a television, the disk includes a separate version. This implements the 'tabs' facility of **VISION**, so you can have a handy menu of commonly-used software, but it doesn't offer the DOS commands. The whole disk is packed with various utilities and simple demonstrations. If you find **VISION** indispensable, the authors would appreciate a suitable financial contribution for their efforts - in return they offer to send you a computer magazine named and regular updates. This isn't a very new idea so it would be wise to write first before sending away any payments to the States. It'll be interesting to hear from anyone who has done so recently.

ENTER GEMINI

If **VISION** sounds like too much of a technical upheaval and you'd prefer your desktop to look more like the standard Atari one, why not test drive the **GEMINI DIRECTOR**? This famous shareware utility is very much like Needsie and although it's obviously not as powerful, it might well have all the features you need. As suggested by its name, **Gemini** wasn't designed as one program, but two. The thinking behind the concept is that WIMP environments

are all very jolly for some purposes, but at other times it would be much easier to use a traditional Command Line Interpreter (CLI). Gemini therefore consists of a friendly graphical front-end called Venus and a CLI, known as Magpie.

Apparently the name translates from German into something about a Pinguin who lives in a shell. Magpie is an option on one of the menus in Venus. The CLI incorporates an incredible 46 functions which are generally modified as UNIX shell commands. This means you have either got to get accustomed to typing things like 'cat' and 'ls' instead of 'Type' and 'View', or if you don't want to mess with UNIX terminology, use the latter contained in to define some other words instead. You can also assign the function keys to various operations. Start up files can be created to progressively reconfigure the system to your requirements.

Venus provides a host of advantages over the standard GEM desktop. Instead of a single disk icon there are 4 to choose from, and in place of the usual file icons there are 21 alternatives. You can enter rates in the form of Roman numerals to determine when the different icons should be used. The contents of a disk can be viewed with small or large icons, or HTML with the usual sorting criteria or in an unsorted state, which is ideal for re-arranging an ALTOS table. Windows can be ordered to match out alphabetical lists. The big plus that's again especially valuable in anyone with a hard disk is that file icons can be dragged onto the desktop. It's then possible to run programs just by clicking on the installed icon, which avoids having to search for and then open up the appropriate folders. A minor annoyance, however, is that text files can only be viewed through the CLI. If you choose an option by mistake, you needn't panic as an 'undo' feature will restore the previous state. There's also a recoverable trash can that prevents us with when you suddenly have second thoughts about deleting that 'corrupted' file. The shell contains lots of alternatives too, though the catch is that most of it is in German! However, enough has been translated to allow you to fully appreciate the system. More recent examples of this disk may well have more English text than the copy I received. The Gemini Desktop is available for two megabyte machines with DOS 1.3 or later, although you might find an earlier version elsewhere for TOS 1.05 which includes Venus and Magpie as separate programs.

BACK TO NEEDEDK?

No, you're still confused that Neodesk is the answer to your problem? Below you sign away forty pounds of your hard-



Top: NEEDEDK, try it on a demo first. Below: other views of NEEDEDK and GEMINI

wared settings, ask for a copy of the **NEODESK 3.0 DEMO**. Like the Gemini Desktop, Neodesk has both a graphical interface and its own built-in command line interpreter. Though it also boasts a copy of all other existing functions. Reviews of Neodesk 3.0 have appeared elsewhere (check out the Editor's review by NEW GEMINI USER #47) so I don't intend to repeat what's already been said. Obviously, the publishers don't want you to just try the demo, they'd rather you paid for the real thing, as a number of options have been disabled in the demo version. His copy and more operations appear to work, but don't really, and you can't format a disk. For another program or more the desktop configurations. You can experiment with most options, such as the marvelous text editor that enables you to define unique icons for your files, but there's generally a hitch that prevents you com-

pleting the task - for example, you can't save the icons you create. Incidentally, even after you've bought a copy of the commercial package (as you probably will once you've seen the demo!) you'll be wise to explore the Public Domain.

NEODESK ICONS is a disk containing two you might expect (because of pre-defined icons to use with Neodesk - this could be invaluable if like me you don't have the patience to fiddle with the icon editor) anyway. Neodesk 3.0 has more features than you could possibly imagine - so why not try out the demo and see for yourself?

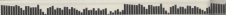
There's a don't forget to check the Mercury update bulletin or grab a copy of the **PRICE & Catalogue Disk** for information on the latest programs. All the disks added to the Mercury are first subjected to the rigorous PRICE evaluation procedure. Kinda makes you feel sorry for the ones that don't get it!

HOW TO GET THEM

All of the disks featured in *PC World* are available from the **PRICE & ST** library. Each has a prompt/reference code which you should use when ordering or making enquiries. Please contact **PRICE &** if you don't have a copy of the **Accessories Price Bulletin** and check the system requirements for each disk. The **PRICE & CD** **PRICE** **DISK** containing a full list of disk names and contents is available from the library, priced at £1. The disks referred to in this article are:

87119 - NEEDEDK
87120 - NEEDEDK ICONS
87121 - GEMINI/NEODESK
87122 - NEEDEDK 3.0 DEMO

Please use standard debit or credit cards or £20.00 cash for less at times.
Write to **PRICE &**, P.O. Box 94, Bickford, ST16 5DP.
Telephone 0783 21333 or 045 2585 8433 with credit card orders.



SAMPLE THIS!

In which John S Davison discovers that you can turn sound into music even without any hardware

Technology has been responsible for many major innovations in the world of music in recent years, making possible such developments as MIDI, synthesizers, and samplers. The first two mentioned have already been covered at length in these pages, but sound sampling hasn't. It's now time to put that right, so even the most lowly users will be looking at how YOR can start making music for even just existing sounds) using sampled sounds - via your Atari computer, of course!

A SAMPLER?

Let's start by defining what a sampler is. From a musician's viewpoint it's similar to a synthesizer - both are electronic musical instruments; one produces an irreproducible wide range of sounds, and can be played from a keyboard or via MIDI. But there's one fundamental difference. Generally speaking, a synthesizer's sounds are built up from internally generated sound elements, while a sampler uses "recordings" of real sounds as its sound starting point. It can digitally record *ANY* sound directly into its memory cells and process it in various ways then trigger its playback at any required pitch. The only problem is, dedicated samplers tend to be horrendously expensive!

From a technology viewpoint a sampler is remarkably similar to a computer. In fact, it doesn't take much additional kit to turn your Atari into one. It can be done inexpensively too, bringing sampling within his reach of everyone. We'll be looking at ways of getting started later,

but before that let's have a quick look at how sampling works.

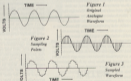
ANALOGUE TO DIGITAL

All sound can be thought of as pressure waves propagated through the air. We can pick these up via a microphone and convert them into a continuously varying signal voltage which carries them in electrical form. The signal waveforms may be visualized by graphing its voltage against time, resulting in something like Figure 1 for a simple sound. Such a signal is described as an "analogue" signal, because of its essentially continuous nature.

Digital computers like the Atari 520 each work directly with this analogue signal. By their very nature these machines can only deal with data presented as discrete values. So, the signal must first be digitized - converted into a series of number values representing it - via a technique known as "sampling". Basically, this involves "taking a reading" (or sample) of the analogue signal voltage at known intervals of time (e.g. every 100 microseconds), converting each into its numeric equivalent, and storing the results in an array in memory. Figure 2 shows conceptually how this works - the height of the vertical lines represents the signal voltage value at each sample point, and the distance between them the sample interval. This "analogue-to-digital conversion" is handled by special add-on hardware, usually provided by cartridge kits to plug into the computer's cartridge port. Once sampled the signal may then be easily manipulated by software, e.g. displayed graphically, edited, saved to disk, replayed etc.

Surprisingly, your Atari can (nearly) sample sound without additional hardware, as it already has a built-in "digital-to-analogue converter" capability thanks to its sound chip. It's achieved by storing the original sampling process - at known time intervals successive values from the data array in memory are converted into voltages, which eventually drive a loudspeaker to recreate the analogue sound. If you graphed these discrete voltage values you'd find the overall signal would only approximate to the original analogue signal, as shown in Figure 3 in exaggerated form. Its similarity to the original depends on the "resolution" and "sampling rate" of the hardware used, so we'll see later in the series.

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SAMPLING FOR EVERYONE

Sampling isn't the hard task it seemed in 1986, when a small company called 2-Bit Systems Inc. the MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) library guru) produced their innovative Replay cartridge. This allowed a 48K Atari II-bit machine to sample sounds directly from an analogue audio source, perform simple editing, and play them back via the TV monitor. You could even use the sounds in your own programs if you wished - a technique now widely used by game programmers everywhere.

The package also included the DigItrom and DigItrom programs. DigItrom turned your Atari into a programmable drum machine by loading in a set of sampled drum sounds and playing them from a simple grid based sequencer. DigItrom went further - it could vary the speed of the digital-to-analogue conversion process and hence replay sounds at different pitches, allowing tunes to be played on a single sample. Admittedly the sound quality wasn't marvellous, but this package set the direction for virtually all computer based sample development from then on.

Believe it or 2-Bit Systems launched ST Replay, bringing sound sampling to the ST. This used similar principles to the original Replay, but achieved higher quality sound through better hardware and software. Since then 2-Bit have steadily improved the package, bringing out successively better versions and additional spin-off products, such as Replay 4, Replay II, Replay Professional, and others. They've also changed their name to Audio Visual Research and teamed up with Microsoft to market their products.

ENTER THE SOUNDTRACKER

Microsoft, Commodore launched the Amiga, third best. I hate to admit it, but it's internal sound chip knocked spots off the ST's. It was designed from the start to work efficiently with sampled sound, and could produce stunningly good results - it's stereo too! It didn't take long for the Amiga PD programming crew to begin exploiting this, resulting in the famous "SoundTracker" programs - a term now used generically to describe all sample sequencing programs.

Soundtrackers are like vastly improved versions of 2-Bit's old DigItrom. DigItrom's software, basically, they allow you to load a collection of sound samples into memory and to trigger their play-

back at any pitch from the built-in four track sequencer. Literally ANY sound can be used. You could, for instance, play a laser using the sound of a champagne or breaking glass as well as more traditional sound. You can usually play up to four different samples simultaneously, and rapidly switch between any of the samples held in memory to obtain a wide range of different sounds within a musical piece.

Even though the original ST's weren't particularly efficient at handling sampled sound it could still be done, and ST soundtracks eventually began appearing. The first was Microsoft's Quartz. More recent was the TCB Tracker, reviewed in issue 47. There are now Public Domain soundtrackers available, and the best are already in the Page 6 PD Library. They're quite amazing programs, and deserve further mention here.

PUBLIC DOMAIN SOUNDTRACKERS

There are two main types of ST soundtracker. The first is a "player" program. This simply plays back a soundtracker music "module", which is a file containing both music data AND the sampled sounds it plays. Page 6's PD Library now includes several disks, each containing a player program plus assorted modules. These were ported over from the Amiga (amongst others, hence their title - Amiga SoundTracker Volumes 1 to 5). The player programs in very basic - it just loads and plays music modules. A much more player is the Equinox SoundTracker, with its cleaner user interface and colourful graphics.

These disks are a revelation. If all you've heard is the ST's coarse woody internal sound, the samples provided include various drums, sounds, bass guitars, synth sounds, brass notes, strings, steady sound effects, and even rap style vocal samples! They're sequenced together into some very exciting material all to everyone's taste perhaps, but maintaining excellence. Sound quality can be surprisingly good, especially when created through your hi fi system.

If you want to create your own music you'll need the second type of soundtracker program, of which ST NoiseTracker is an excellent example. In operation it's almost identical to the commercially produced TCB SoundTracker mentioned earlier, and produces results that are easily as good.

NoiseTracker is supplied complete with ready to play samples and music data files, so you can get started right away. Documentation is provided on the disk, and the program also has a useful built-in help facility. You can load up to 32 individual samples, each up to 848 in length - memory permitting. Limited sample editing facilities are available, and you can save/load individual samples too. Incidentally, all these PD programs seem to use a common format for



modules and sound samples, allowing easy file interchange between them.

The music in built up across four independent tracks, giving access to four different simultaneous sounds. It's constructed from command steps, each of which can trigger any note using a selected sound, optionally with vibrato, portamento, or arpeggio effects applied. Up to 64 steps are grouped together into a pattern, and patterns may be strung together to make up a complete musical piece. They may also be reused as required where repeats are needed. When complete the whole piece can be saved to disk as a module file. Playback can be through the TV monitor or better still, to your hi fi through the outputs of a Replay, Promax Designer, or MY 85 sample cartridge if you have one.

Overall, SoundTracker is a fantastic program and unbelievable good value at only £2.95 from Page 6. The only thing missing to MML, to allow you to play samples direct or record into the sequencer directly from a MIDI keyboard instead of the ST's keyboard. There are however several only found on commercial packages such as Quartz, Star Trek Sound, and the Replay packages, which I'll be looking at next time.

That's all for the introduction and a taste of what's cheaply available. Next issue I'll continue the theme looking at commercial packages including Microsoft's new Amiga Playback cartridge, which brings superb sounds to ALL models of the ST. Until then, get yourself a copy of NoiseTracker and start experimenting with this fascinating way of making music with your ST.

MIG-29 FULCRUM

A 1,300rpm on 90th August 1988 a small piece of aviation history was made when two MIG-29s (SU70) commander Pulcrum landed at Farnborough, the first Soviet fighters to land in Britain. Their thrilling demonstration flights were the bit of the Farnborough air show and sent the aviation world wild with excitement. Since then the aircraft seems to have become an unresisted 'status symbol', and was inevitably destined to star in computer games and simulations. My only surprise is that it's taken so long for the first simulator to appear, and however for this go to Bonami's MIG 29 Fulcrum.

EXTRA GOODIES!

The program is supplied in an impressive coloured box containing one single-sided program disk, a small ring-bound book (pages 100), a poster showing a detailed cutaway drawing of the MIG-29, and a superb 128 page book packed with full colour photographs and details about the MIG-29. This alone would probably cost about £20 if bought separately.

The program itself follows the usual combat standard format, but overall seems simpler than many other programs of this genre. There's a training mission written in which you learn to fly the aircraft and to use its weapons systems on the practice flying ranges. The weapons include cannons; unguided rockets; and Agatd air-to-air and Kevay air-to-ground guided missiles. With training completed you can try the various missions, of which there are only five. These have you stopping on an American submarine trapped in ice off the Siberian coast, landing the Chinese air force a lesson or two in dogfighting above the Great Wall of China, standing up to nips and ninjas in the Middle East.



tracking terrorists inside the USSR and destroying their base, and finally taking out a nuclear facility, again in the Middle East.

SIMPLIFIED PANEL

The main screen shows the usual instrument panel and forward outside view. I was disappointed by the panel, as the instruments are much simplified representations of the real thing. Mostly they're just black dials with needles, with no attempt made to put any sort of numeric scales on them. They all work as you'd expect, but there's no way of sensibly quantifying what they're telling you! They're really only intended as backup instruments, for use when your Head Up Display is out of action. The HUD normally displays a direct digital readout of essential flight data such as heading, height, and airspeed - except when it's been shot away by enemy fire, of course! The navigation system has been simplified too - all mission waypoints are given, so you can't miss your way.

I was also a little disappointed by the outside view, as there's no much in the way of scenery detail - it's mostly clear sky and either land or sea with odd outposts representing roads or rivers and large pyramidal shapes representing mountains or land or islands in the sea. Potential targets are quite well done though, these being fairly realistic 3D graphic creations. They include that ubiquitous ship of sea (which did a nasty job in one aircraft accident), oil installations, nearby buildings and road networks. Enemy aircraft are well portrayed

too - and they manoeuvre quite realistically.

You can also view all around you in 40 degree increments, and this, coupled with the pilot's helmet mounted weapon aiming display, means you can lock a missile onto its target without having to fly the aircraft directly towards it. Sensory! Other viewing options include the 'mainline' eye view; outside views of the aircraft; and views from the viewpoint of the enemy and your home base control tower.

CONTROLS

Primary flight control can be via joystick, mouse, or keyboard and surprisingly I found it preferred using the mouse. The aircraft handles very well - not quite to the ProFlight (reviewed in last issue) or Flight Simulator II class, but it's close. The author has obviously tried to keep the display frame rate high for realism by using sparse graphics, and has also put a lot of work into the flight dynamic aspect of the simulation - and it shows! The aircraft is very manoeuvrable, and you can even perform the famous 'tail slide' which showed the events at Farnborough in 1988! Landing seems most 'grit' - it took me several attempts to learn how land in one piece on the runway. The key is remembering that the aircraft isn't necessarily flying in the same direction the nose is pointing!

BELIEVABLE

My initial reaction to MIG-29 was one of disappointment, mainly because of the 'simplified' aspects mentioned earlier. However after flying it for a while and getting into the mission I found I really enjoyed using it! The main reason, in fact, is that it handles in a believable manner, so the graphics become of secondary importance; and the missions, although not difficult to complete, do seem to have an addictive quality. Overall, I'd rate the program as more of a 'beginner's' flight simulator - it's not bad, but experienced fighters have would probably expect more for their money.

Title: MIG-29 FULCRUM
Publisher: Bonami
Price: £34.95
Reviewer: John S Davison

LOCOMOTION

Old West issues enter the scene of this particular budget offering and not surprisingly the game is about trains. The player is in control of the small train that takes the towns of the West and it is your job to ensure the train gets through and defeats the "badies" evil intentions.

The game is joystick controlled and features split screen play. Half of the screen shows an Old West steam train chugging along the track in search of fuel tanks and water towers to repair damage it suffers on the way. The top of the screen gives a wider range view of obstacles, potential road changes and the positions of the train and players that attempt to stop you.

The train runs about down the WPI flying machines with its smoke stack but has to find ways to avoid anything on the

track that might run into it. As the game progresses becoming more and more difficult the obstacles become more varied. For instance level crossings appear which do not block your train from Roundhouse track, forests and the hellions and bombs that attack from above. The game is very colorful with good use of sprites although there are on occasions some problems with sprites disappearing and then re-appearing back out of nowhere.

The game feels as if it has been programmed in DOS or something similar, although there are no credits to suggest this. This does not, however, detract from its value as the game has everything I like to find in an arcade game. There is a great deal of originality and thought present here,



plenty of colour and is well guided although slow. The only problem that I encountered was a sporadic slowdown for the train to do what I thought it would.

Other small points that liked me were the way the first returning to the beginning after a terminal crash wiped on a way last life. I would like to have seen deeper levels. I did like the bonus screen that appeared and shooting flying planes with a sitting clock train proved quite therapeutic.

In conclusion this game offers really good value and the prospect of enjoyment for less cost is really in the north the best it can become most addictive.

FACTS

Title: **LOCOMOTION**
Publisher: **Byte Book**
Price: **£2.99**
Developer: **Danish Horwath**

SIGHT & SOUND

The graphics are generally precise and colourful and although some of the sound is a little rough the whole package is generally sound.

GAMEPLAY

Well guided although fairly slow with a sense of humour evident from the programmer.

VERDICT

A little slower than best looking and adding in with budget collection.

FACTS

Title: **SUPER MONACO**
G.P.
Publisher: **G.L. BOND (08540)**
Price: **£28.00**
Developer: **Danish Horwath**

SIGHT & SOUND

Good colours and fast music. A strong arcade conversion.

GAMEPLAY

Fast and furious, marvellous of some practice to progress past the first practice.

VERDICT

Nothing to stop the steam out from the competition. If you are a race game addict then this will give you your fix.



SUPER MONACO G.P.

track progressively higher up the order. Ranging from 7th to 1st for through to at least

1st. No Nigel Mansell like exits allowed in this game!

The game allows for control from mouse joystick and centrally the keyboard although this is only acknowledged on the Amiga version. Complacently the game is very strong giving good views of both the track and the cockpit of the car with filled-in 3D perspective view as the Daytona sets about the strip's borders of the Piston. The course seems to be a fairly good simulation of the real thing although when compared to some pure racing games such as the Formula simulator it feels very one dimensional and would be swept. Perhaps it is because

the game was originally conceived as a game for the arcade that the difference between payable handling and computer simulating becomes apparent. As with the Piston and its ilk, this is at best a very good game whereas some of the better 16-bit racing games are in fact quasi-simulations. This is where the real user must make their choice. In a game this software does a creditable job at entertaining but on a thought provoking grand Prix game it fails.

The game also suffers, as does much of US Gold's arcade conversions, by having a cut, multi-language instructions sheet. I am always suspicious of games whose manuals spend most writing on the different variants of loading a game into one of many machines than on the game itself.

SKULL AND CROSSBONES

Yo Ho Ho! A wacky-looking game from the busy no-brainer! This game is in the back and slash mode associated with such careful and dramatic pieces as Shakespeare and *Barbarian 2*, except this one is in bright colors, has very controllable characters and an adventurous storyline. Furthermore this can be stored as a train game since two players may cooperate in being about the enemies downfall.

Briefly the plot consists of the Pirates One Eye and Red Dog having their ill gotten booty transported by some anonymous and named to alternate parts. It is their mission, and they choose to accept it, to recover the loot by fighting their way across a capital of colorful screens. The gameplay involved in this is pretty tricky, allowing for a great deal of

joystick wiggling to lose than normal effort. On the other hand, the various action situations played

afford the screen with the potential to perform the elaborate tricks of Douglas Fairbanks and Karl Lennow with impunity. The game begins fairly steady although once the first proper encounter is found, the fighting heats up. There seems to be very few alternate strikes however, and turning your gears round can occasionally be trickier than running the enemy through its paces!

Graphically the game offers large and lively sprites which blend profusely over a various state of injury is obtained. It is abundantly clear that this game was made to attract large audiences on arcade machines and the



translation is very good indeed. The sound is more than lively like and very golly in that the control system could be more responsive, although the game itself runs quite fast enough. There is a strong element of movement and a little more thought than immediately seems apparent is needed. Sadly it is not entirely straightforward and there are occasional glitches, sometimes more in stick rate and on more difficulty is available. There is though some opportunity to experiment but strength through searching and slapping the goodies discovered in transit and loot.

On the whole a most enjoyable game.

FACTS

Title: **SKULL AND CROSSBONES**
 Publisher: **Demois**
 Price: **£24.95**
 Reviewer: **Darren Hewarth**

SIGHT & SOUND

Very bright and colorful with excellent music and a cracking good tune

GAMEPLAY

More than adequate, but sometimes a little sluggish in its control

VERDICT

Good fun, slightly messy if you don't like guns, it must be said to have TV game appeal

FACTS

Title: **HARD DRIVEN II**
 Publisher: **Demois (Demigod)**
 Price: **£24.95**
 Reviewer: **Darren Hewarth**

SIGHT & SOUND

The graphics seem slightly dated now, although the game does not suffer in this. The sound is reasonable and not overly obtrusive

GAMEPLAY

Some wonderful action game with slight touch of extra realism, that makes it

VERDICT

An excellent experience, most think more than the average but possibly not enough if you already have the first one



HARD DRIVEN II

computer owners via the Commodore port.

The graphics seem to still very blocky and reminiscent of the Elite style of 3D spatiality pictures but the game is very playable.

There are very few other differences about the actual game, indeed apart from the fact that traffic seems less careful about you than in the original I have great suspicions that this is almost the self same program. The Track editor though is most entertaining and thus allows the game a fresh dimension of interest. The manual explains in good detail how to achieve the desired course, indeed one of the most striking things about this software was the surprisingly efficient manner. Certain other arcade conversions ap-

proaches could take note of how full instructions add to the game's enjoyability.

The sounds in the game remain fairly similar to the original, and do not provide any excitement. Perhaps as individuals for sampling and sound creating, however reviewers become more blasé about the normal sounds of engines and squealing of brakes, still they are there and they do add somewhat to the overall effect.

The course editor is a pleasure to use and allows for either well planned track construction or a much it and one building method that seems to be favored of the British Motorway construction units. Every thing is more controlled and colour coordinated. Sadly only one course may be saved to disk so reconstruction is for keeps as it were.

STOS

COLUMN

Welcome to another great issue of New Atari User's STOS Column. By the way, did you know that this is the only magazine you can buy all the stuff that supports STOS? I am writing this a couple of weeks before the Computer Shopper show in London for a fact. That Marabata will not be there 'cos they are busy meeting others somewhere nice and big. I heard!

Since you will not get this issue until after the show it's a bit pointless talking about it, but in case you were there did you spot the guy with the pony tail talking to a stressed old lady and a fellow who looks as if he were fitting a wetsuit? Don't get those there is one, but which one? ... In two months time have in for the next exciting instalment of 'PICTURES FROM THE MIDDLE-FOOT SHOW' where you can find out my true identity.

Enough fun, STOS 3D is almost complete and should be finished enough for a review for the next issue (then again ...). STOS VMS is complete (thanks to my mate Tony Manney who co-wrote and designed it with me) but it's feature is considered at the moment and finally there is a STOS 512 extension available soon (I haven't seen it yet but Aaron

Pathegill of the STOS club tells me it lets you access the Blitter, run graphics ports, new sound sample control and handles other bits and pieces.

COMING SOON ..

As the traditional summer slump for the computer industry approaches the time for software development begins. Fun School 4 is in the early stages of production and should be out for the ST in September-ish. I have seen some early previews and it looks pretty good. Another package that is being lined up for release soon is called RACE CARTRAIL, release dates are uncertain (it might make it out before the summer) and this new looker runs better than PMS (which is quite a beast). Because I'll be at Eids Cartrails at the start of a new range of educational software, I can't wait to find out more!

A REAL CRACKER!

We have one real program now, but what is a program if not three you ever looked at. These brilliant demos with the 3D shapes made out of different coloured balls? I have and always wondered how they could calculate the positions of the balls that quickly, but then the secret was revealed - THEY CHEAT! If you pre-calculate the positions of the balls for every frame they will be plotted you can store the values in memory and get away with murder!

The program we have here has been written by STOS vice lid Richard Gale (a Richard). It comes in 3 bits and you really need a freshly formatted disk to store the stuff as you don't want to type it in and find out there is no way to save it. The object that will be drawn is a nice big Helicopter which rotates and spins at its rotablates.

Now you must type in that nice long upper hex (TABLE 1) into the IMPDATA program stored on your ROM administration disk. (Full instructions for using this

and a replacement for CATALOGUE have been published in a previous issue. Save the upper bank as a file called 'HELICOPTER'.

Okay, done that and saved it? Now type in PROGRAM 1 and wait for a while, it will generate 40 frames of the helicopter and will store the values in bank number 10. After it is finished the program will save out the bank as HELICOPTER.MEM.

I won't do a translation of the program 'cos it's a pretty complicated thingy. I'll try to do a nice simple one for the next issue so that I can reveal how to create your own shapes.

Okay now type in PROGRAM 3, which is the program which will display the finished object. It loads the raw banks we have just created so remember to make sure they are on the same disk, that it will be easiest. Okay so it runs a bit but not steady, but if you own a copy of the STOS Complete it really goes along.

SAVING SPACE

Well, as you may have noticed the program sizes are slightly bigger this time so that's all for this issue.

If you want to find out more about the STOS club write to:

Aaron Pathegill
1 LOWER MOOR
WHIDDEN TALLEY
BARNSTABLE
NORTH DEVON
EX32 6SW

or phone
0371 235-44

Remember to tell him where you heard about the STOS club!

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```

Left - Listing 1 which continues with the second column overlap - don't forget to type the rest in!

Listing 2 to be typed in after the table overlap has been entered and Listing 1 above has been run

```

10 load "HEL,IMP,IMP",10
20 load "HEL,IMP,IMP"
30 New off = turn off ; flash off ; hide on ; update off = auto turn off = stop
40 X=turn:left:5:11 to start:left:comp:11,"PUL"1:44 ; for left to 25 a colour
1,turn:0:2:0 ; next 1
50 Imp:left:0 ; R:IMP:0 ; P:0:0
60 repeat 1 P:IMP:0:IMP:0 to next 5 ; guess left ; turn ; until 1:0
70 repeat 1 P:IMP:0:IMP:0 to next 5 ; guess left ; until 1:0 P:IMP:0
80 for P:IMP:0 to 0 ; guess 1:0 ; next 1:0 P:IMP:0
90 for P:IMP:0 to 0 ; guess 1:0 ; next 1:0 P:IMP:0
100 guess 1:0
110 for 1:0:0:0 to 1 step-1 ; R:IMP:left:0:0-P:IMP:left:0+0:4 ; update
1,turn:IMP:0:guess:IMP:0:1:0:0:0:0 ; update ; next 0 ; update off 1
120 update turn ; next 0:1 ; stop back ; update

```


LOST PATROL

It is June 7th 1969. A US helicopter returning troops from a period of 11 'to' R in Saigon crashes in the remote central highlands of Vietnam. The seven survivors of the crash must trek across 87 miles of enemy infested terrain in order to reach the nearest US base at Da Hoi. You are the leader of this team and you must organize the team so that you can reach the base. A grueling test for the best of teams, but you have the added disadvantage of having a very limited supply of ammunition and food.

Lost Patrol is a war strategy/survival game which is controlled mainly from a map of the area. You must guide your small team through the jungle and keep the morale high. An action screen you will find villages where you can speak with the inhabitants, sometimes they will prove to be friendly, sometimes not. On many occasions on your journey you will be either ambushed or pinned down by a large group of enemy soldiers. On these occasions the action swaps to an arcade sequence where you can shoot the offending V.C.'s or lob hand grenades at them. At other times, men who you have sent out to 'scout' the area will come across lone soldiers and must engage them in hand to hand combat. Here the action again switches to an arcade 'base' style game where you must beat the living daylight's out of the offending V.C.

The secret of success of Lost Patrol is choosing the right man for the job. When

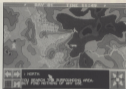
dealing with a sniper, you must have the shooting to your support teamman. If possible, you should let your resident tank belt an attack handle the lone soldiers. It is all a matter of personnel management.

Morale is the other major factor to be considered. I have now been shot, still live and blown up multiple times, by my own men, because the morale level was so low. Supplies of food and sleep are two very important factors when considering the well being of six other men. If you can't judge their feelings correctly then you will have to deal with reality in the ranks.

Graphically the game is fairly impressive. There are some very well drawn scenes of depressed looking American soldiers trudging through the Vietnamese countryside. There are also scenes of villages and patchy fields. As well as these 'wall's there are a number of animated digital sequences for you to watch, such as your group slowly wading through the swamps. The arcade scenes are not as exciting as their representation however. The scenes here are not

quite as lively well drawn, nor are they animated well. One 'bad point' of note is the hand to hand combat sequences, where the animation is so fast that it is very difficult to control your character. In terms of sound, the game does little to inspire the imagination. The obligatory sampled machine gun fire is backed by some classical music which, thankfully, can be switched off.

I am not the greatest fan of war games, especially games which try to gain entertainment value out of something as serious as the Vietnam war was. Also, the current state of world affairs does not make the prospect of playing a game based on a real war particularly desirable. Lost Patrol is a very violent game, and whilst war is all about violence, I don't really see why we have to have games to glorify it. Whether Goussard are saying 'war is hell - here we go forward!' or not I don't know.



However Lost Patrol is not at all my cup of tea. Despite my personal feelings however about war games, Lost Patrol, viewed as simply 'a piece of software' is fairly good, and very entertaining as Goussard as they are not catered for strategy games.

Lost Patrol is a very 'big' game. It runs on three disks and there is obviously a great deal of code. The action is rapid and as a piece of strategy software I can do nothing but praise it. It does manage to bring home some of the problems of command, especially when your men aren't inspired yet!

My overall conclusion about Lost Patrol has taken a great deal of thought. Whilst not 'appealing' (as it were) of the theme of the game, I can appreciate that as an achievement of programming, it is very commendable. The game is varied and complex, and I can well imagine that any fans of this style of game will take to it very well. It is easy to control and easy to learn, and the graphics and sound are far above average. In terms of presentation, the only criticism I could make is that the instruction book is dreadful!

■ **WORTH A SHOT?** - The graphics are mainly very good, although let down in places. The music is awful and the sound FX are reasonable.

■ **GAMEPLAY?** - A very challenging game which will take a great deal of thought to complete.

■ **VERDICT** - Commendable step away from the mainstream arcade scene by Goussard.



Title: **LOST PATROL**
 Publisher: **Goussard**
 Price: **£19.99**
 Reviewed: **John Gibson jr**

B.A.T.

In the 23rd Century, you are an agent of B.A.T. - the Bureau of Aerial Transport-Industrial Time relations in a dimension the evil Vanger who is threatening to take over the planet Soliana with futuristic weapons, gain control of the vital energy matrix, Klugep, which makes space travel possible, and make himself the master of the Galaxy!

Your first problem is that you can't understand half of the inhabitants - most that - the right mouse button gives you access to B.U.D.B. - a Multilingual Organism Database implanted in your arm. You could manually select a particular language, but a few minutes spent working out how to program B.U.D.B. is not only provide automatic translation, but also warnings of when you are hungry, thirsty, tired, ill or injured will save you a lot of time later.

B.A.T. is completely mouse-driven. Normally the screen shows a superb view of your current location and the mouse icon dynamically changes to indicate exits, machines, people willing to converse with you, people willing to sell you things and so on. Actions such as conversing, buying, eating, checking your inventory are done by pointing at pop-up menus.

If you select a machine then the mouse is used to drive the machine in an appropriate manner, e.g. you can fly a Drop across the desert - this is a flight simulator where the mouse is used as a joystick. If found the controls a little sluggish - and the lack of a directional indicator makes navigation right on impossible if you go on the desert floor you have to click alternately so left and right at high speed to improve your steering power!

Once you have explored Terrapole you could start by playing a primitive arcade machine to the red light district - a little care and patience will give you enough



money to buy three fields, weapons, and ammunition so that you can survive against the robot assassins who are out to finish your mission! If you find you the screen flips to a shoot-em-up with no warning - you have a couple of seconds to click on your force field and your weapons, aim at your telepathic enemy, then start clicking as fast as you can in order to destroy him before he takes down your force field.

The people of Soliana are represented in different ways. Some are people in the pictures with whom you can have very limited conversations, but most, including all the automated characters who wander across the screen are just scenery. There are at least two very important people whom you have to find and make friends with - you don't get very many clues as to where and when to find them - but you will easily recognise them as they pop up at the side of the screen. But the most important ones are the wandering inhabitants of the city who do NOT appear on the screen. Instead your mouse icon will change to an "interpellation" (I spelled above) icon - click quickly on the right mouse button and you get a set of menus so that you can talk, buy, sell, steal, attack, etc.

Underneath all this there are look alike, as do all Skunks, Swabbers and Strikers, so you never know if you are talking to a new one or wasting your time repeating the conversation you had 10 seconds ago! These guys are critically important as they have some of the items you need to progress - e.g. a 500-Club Card, a Permit. Unfortunately, it can be extremely hard to find these and if you don't do it early enough in the game then the clues may have led them or hid

them stolen from them - your only option then is to start the whole game from the beginning again!

Eventually you will reach the underground tunnels - these can be explored using a track - you can click left, right, forward or backward. There are three problems down here - one is the number of guards - make sure you are well armed! Second is the fact that the controls don't at first appear to work at all - the secret is to use the RIGHT mouse button! Third, turning a corner is VERY confusing. If you

turn left into an open corridor then you will turn 90 degrees to the left. But if you turn left into a doorway you will be turned through 90 degrees to the RIGHT and end up facing the door which leads back to the corridor you just came from! Also, you can't tell whether an opening is a doorway as a corridor until you try it. I think French means could work differently from now!

The sound is superb - a variety of loud tracks which are played through an 80116-cartridge which comes with the game. You need to either plug in some headphones (aha, there is no volume control and it is LOUD) or connect it to your hi-fi. You DO need to have the sound on (obviously with the music off) in order to hear people shouting from you!

- **SECRET IS SOUND** - superb pictures, great soundtrack (as long as you can reach your hi-fi)
- **GAMEPLAY** - lots of variety, but very easy to get stuck
- **VERSIVE** - Could have been great, I think they tried to put too much in and failed to maintain the quality throughout



Title: B.A.T.
Publisher: US&W
Price: \$29.99
Reviewer: John Sweeney

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