

Atari ST
Amiga
CBM 64/128
Spectrum
Amstrad
IBM + more

ISSUE TWELVE • SEPTEMBER 1988 • £1.50

ACE

ADVANCED • COMPUTER • ENTERTAINMENT

STARTS
THIS
ISSUE

THE
COMPLETE
GUIDE TO
THE GAMES
INDUSTRY...
AND HOW
YOU CAN
JOIN IT.

CAN SPACE-AGE TECHNOLOGY
LAUNCH THE ULTIMATE GAME?

GLOBAL CONFLICT

AC
ES
PU
ZZ
LE

WATCHING
THE
DETECTIVES

PEST! DON'T MISS OUR
WHO-DUNNITS FEATURE

ON PAGE 47 *WY & WOH WOH WOH*



THIS MONTH'S GAMES PAGE

THE FINAL JUDGEMENT



FLIGHT SIMULATOR IN AIRBORNE... BOUNCE BALLS WITH THE MONSTERS IN HELLER SHELTER... BOUNCEBALLERS IS FIRE AND FORGET WHO WINS!



AVAILABLE ON ATARI ST: £19.99
 RELEASE DATE: JULY 11th 1988

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In the old days it was just a private matter between you and the Gaijacks. But now advanced digital communications and gameplay mean you can take on the world. ACE checks out high-tech multi-player games, and wonders how long it's before satellite communications put us at least with some real aliens...



Digital communications could speed games around the world

77 Watching the Detectives

Your hero's a super sleuth, your partner in your hand, and there's fifteen games waiting in the wings, each with a tale to tell and a mystery to solve. ACE reviews four that drip facts and slick hot scenes into dated-set-ups.

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Nigel Bevan - designer of *Demolition*. Could you do this?

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Page 46 *Flight Sim II* - could the game be flight?



Page 46 *Flight Sim II* - the addictive flying program is a real knockout.

28 Arcade Ace

This month's entry for the *Biggest Retro Game* is *1942* in which Bill and Art, the Tubular Twins, paddle down the river in old times and shoot in case of *Wormies*. It really has much for you, check out the follow-ups: *Warrior*, plus *Fighting Soccer* from SAM.

85 Tricks n' Tactics

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You can't get something for nothing, right? Wrong. We don't charge you a penny for an ACE card with your very own ID number on it, and then every month we fall over ourselves doing out CDD worth of prizes. Don't ask us why, just go for it!

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In all magazines paid weekend in Gay Paris to attend the Festival De Music in October. Sounds too good to be true? Find out on page 14.

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Puzzle-games, logic games, and a few unique titles that fall into class of their own make up this month's selection of ACE Recommended Software. While checked for you -- how you can get well and buy with confidence.

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Authoritative technical details enable you to choose the right machine when you want to buy or upgrade.

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These pages get more and more unusual. This month the puzzles are joined by a host of 64-bit, and other ACE interestingly.

116 Readers' Pages

The experts offer help in the ACE Helpline. Before they leave they set for pencils, the capsules and hardware, the computerists beg for it, and want a couple of new ideas per in the new and eye of ACE's open market. Fill in the form provided and open a mail of your own.

THE ACE CARD

Win an Atari ST!

Turn to page 12 for details of your chance to win the Atari ST we're giving away - and check the Offer Card to see if you're even on a laptop or any of the staggering 24 software prizes we offered last month.

HELLO AND GOODBYE...

You may not realise it, but the issue you now clutch to your breast as you step out of the newspaper and the chauffeur opens the door of your Rolls-Royce and...

Back to reality. The issue you are now reading, marvelling at the state-of-the-art features, reviews, and special offers, is a milestone issue in the history of ACE magazine.

First, it marks the arrival of two consultant editors, each with special responsibility for bringing you the best of graphics and music coverage. Brian Latham launches his first graphics 'magazine-within-a-magazine' on page 27, and Mark Jenkins sounds off with three pages of red hot MIDI and music coverage on page 56.

Second, it marks the arrival of the infamous Bob Wade - one of the country's leading experts on computer games. Bob was on the original team at Personal Computer Games before going to work on Amstrad Action, which he later edited himself. His arrival means even more authoritative assessment of the games we play.

Finally, it marks the departure of launch editor Pete Connor. Uncle Peter's joined the Foreign Legion and is currently stationed in London. He will be sending regular dispatches to the magazine on a free-lance basis, so despite his departure we'll still be able to enjoy his unique brand of humour in future issues.

All of which goes to show that we're still committed - as always - to constantly improving the magazine. It's been hard work, but the support you've given us has been overwhelming and made us the best-selling new computer title around. To all of you, from all of us - old, new, past and present - a very big thank you.

THE ACE TEAM

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BARBARIAN II

THE DUNGEON OF DRAX



Spectrum Version



Amiga Version



CGA Version



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In case of difficulty available by mail order
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disk £19.99 Amiga plus 512K RAM boards
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Subject to availability.



The Three Stooges go to sea...

GIANTS GET TOGETHER

Microsoft, Microsoft, and Polytechnic have planned the games community with a shock announcement that they are to join forces and create a common label, Triad.

A dramatic press release was fax'd to members of the industry with a joint statement signed by all three companies, declaring that:

"Our common conviction is the future of the 16-bit market place has brought the three companies together, in what we are sure is just the first of a number of joint-ventures. We are all of the belief that with all three of us working together we will be able to offer new opportunities to both the industry and its consumers."

Sean Brennan of Microsoft confirmed that the three companies would be collaborating on titles for the 16-bit and Amiga and added that they would also be looking at the PC format. "We'll be more oriented towards the games side to start with, but there are certainly possibilities raised by new technology that we will be looking into in future." He added that multi-player or games were one such possibility.

At the time of going to press Jonathan Ellis of Polytechnic confirmed that the group was ready to announce priced number one, but further details would not be available "for some weeks".

US Gold took the announce-

ment of a potential new competitor with quiet confidence in their ability to triumph over all. Speaking for the company, Richard Tibbett remarked that any such venture "...could only narrow the choice for games players. They'll be bringing out one product where previously they could have brought out three." Other reactions were chiefly of the "too many cooks" variety - understandable when three major parties, normally competitors, get

together.

In the past, the three companies have brought us such classics as Castle Command, Sun-jour Master, and Barbarian. However, it remains to be seen whether talent shared is talent tripled. Doubtless the Three Stooges - and horde of one of Microsoft's recent releases - would have something to say on the matter.

SPECTRUM GOES PC-COMPATIBLE?

Yes, it's Amstrad's turn this time again - but this time the rumors appear to be substantiated by one of the company's directors and have a firm base in truth.

According to Computer Trade Weekly, a Spanish magazine has printed details of four new Amstrad products that include an MS-DOS games machine. This suggests earlier rumors in the industry that Amstrad were planning a PC-compatible more that would be sold without a monitor for connection to a domestic colour TV. The computer would carry the standard keyboard and a retail for around £250.

The system would allow users to get PC-compatibility and access to a vast amount of American PC

games software. It's doubtful whether a TV display would be suitable for business applications, as it seems reasonable to expect the machine to be bought primarily for entertainment. Although much of the American software is of dubious quality, there has been an enormous improvement in recent months, with excellent conversions including IBM Pigasus, Flight Simulator II (see this issue), and inventor's Diner.

What really matters, however, is what graphics standard the new machine would operate under. VGA graphics are becoming more and more desirable and many new state-of-the-art games require an

EGA capability. However, it seems unlikely that such a standard would feature on a budget machine.

Amstrad have already released one series of home boxes with an industry standard operating system

- the CPC computers all have the option of running under CP/M. If the company do go ahead and introduce the new machine, software houses will almost certainly go for PC games in a big

way - the attraction of a UK home market as well as over a million business users and vast numbers of PCs in America would be impossible to resist. The PC could become one of the biggest games machines out there yet.



PC - Flight Simulator II

© 1988 USG & PUBLISHED

THE TWITS RIDE OUT

You've heard of Dennis Wheatley, of course. You probably — to see the man who wrote over 80 novels in the first half of this century, most of them thrillers, and many dealing with black magic. The Devil Rides Out (filmed starring Christopher Lee) and To the Devil a Daughter were two of his best-known works.

Domark, it seems, are planning some devilish masterpieces of their own. It's all happening because Arch-evil Domino Wheelley is the great Dennis's grandson, and the company that holds the rights to his books has recently been taken over by the enterprising Twits. They plan to rework the image of the books and then, perhaps, launch a series of computer games that follow the Twit Hand Path, as the Mark magical character is sometimes known as.

Domark are certainly taking out in style. In a festive burst of activity, the company are launching all sorts of extraordinary ventures. Twit Hand Mark Strachan revealed to ACE that — arranged after negotiations — Christopher Lee wants to do a new film of The Devil Rides Out, there's a musical being considered in Phoenix of The Opera style. Sinking Moss has reworked some in-car cassettes for them — and that's all without mentioning their main business of producing games.

"Software", murmurs Mark, holding a penknife on the desk with his fingers. "Is and will continue to be our main business, but we do want to pursue... ah... no game to the others, other business." You can almost hear the chains on the Astral Plane. Down here on Earth,



Christopher Lee and his companion stare from the corner of hell in the first film that Lee's locked to Domark that he'll be very keen to do a remake of the film, perhaps one — at 80 years old — to see how he fits the right age for the part. With modern filmmaking techniques, it could certainly be quite a blockbuster. Let's face it — it comes off — and Lee's got the game to sell.

However, we probably take more interest in a new Three Pursuit game and this autumn's big Star Wars release, The Return of The Jedi.

We wanted to do a new version of Total Pursuit — a proper computer version rather than a board-game conversion. We spoke to the manufacturers and they were delighted. So there are not only new questions in the new game, but also a color system paired with planets which you visit to pick up various initial objects. Great fun — and programmed by ODE (Oxford Digital Enterprises) who did the original.

Return of The Jedi is a faithful conversion of the Star-coin-op, a diagonal-scrolling Zaxxon format game (in contrast to the vector-graphics approach of the first two Star Wars titles) that should be with us in November. And, of course, The Empire has just struck back as well... elsewhere in this issue.

Domark are moving to new offices in the summer — 10-year badly needed with a space where you gaze into the crystal ball, you can see early...

▲ **The Domark father - Mark Strachan and Dominic Wheelley.** The software but new models on a table show what the fans looked like, when publicly written have only taken down the title of the Twits. Don't be fooled, however — these Twits have not only made software conversion will show what they're up to.

BLASTEROIDS

Imageworks have signed their first major coin-op license for the Atari game Blasteroids that is currently doing well in the arcades. The game is an updating of that old classic Asteroids — adding in Star graphics, lots of nasty aliens and extra weapons. The conversion won't be out until early next year — until then you'll have to keep pumping those 10p pieces into the arcade machine.



Blasteroids - the snake version

DREAMS AND VISIONS

A flying visit to the Electric Dreams/Activision offices in Southampton has revealed more details on their plans for the autumn and Christmas markets.

The big game lined up for Christmas is Afterburner and it will be a while before we see anything concrete for that. The rest of the catalog however make an impressive line up for the months leading up to the Christmas boom.

83-Type was another monster arcade hit and both Spectrum and ET versions were in evidence. The Spectrum is the furthest developed and sports some impressive graphics. It looked pretty tough (hard to fall without collision detection), but the development team are apparently very much into 'learning curves' at the moment, so hopefully all the games will benefit as a result.

The coin-op conversion heading competition is the ET version of Super Hang-On. This has been touted as an 'Out Run beater', so we can expect some fast lane shuffling when it hits the streets.

Two other coin-ops in the pipeline are 501 and Time Scanner. 501 is derived from the American Star Wars product — which was probably inspired by that old

game Missile Command. Time Scanner is a pinball game played on a scrolling playfield and with several different playfields representing time zones.

Getting away from the coin-op conversions, there are a couple of original products also nearing completion. There's the ET version of International Kona + and a brand new game called The Incredible Shrinking Sphere.

ISS is an isometric 3D game in which you control a sphere trying to get through a series of maze-like floors. The floors are made up of tiles that rotate gradually, in the order that you passed over them. Many of the tiles have special properties that change the ball's size and mass. Mix in a few aliens, tricky control and puzzles, and you've got a snaky, enjoyable game. In control terms it's got similarities to Spellmyst, but the action and puzzling required look to be more involved.



ISS - Incredible Shrinking Sphere



THE IMAGEWORKS

Mirrorsell have spent some time in the market with a brand new label called Imageworks. The company had kept a low profile over the last six months, leaving their American affiliates Commodore and PFL to make all the news. During that time they've been working on the new label and new games. It's a big launch for the company and Managing Director Peter Elliott is confident about the prospects for success. 'We believe the market is ready for Imageworks and that there is a very real demand for the calibre of product we intend to release on this brand.'

So what are the games lined up for release? The initial range consists of six games to be released over the next few months. The first is Sky Chase, a combat simulator giving you



Sky - Mirrorsell

the chance to battle it out in an F-15, MiG, F-16 or even a paper airplane. This is the only game in the range that has been programmed in America, and for a full commentary on its qualities take a look at the review in Screen Test.

Four Nights Back is a novel game idea from Denton Design, in which - as you've probably guessed - a fox decides to get

his own back on his tormentors. Don't you just love the idea of a Fox with a machine gun wearing goggles, goggles, squirrels and anyone else likely to get in his way. All this in aid of bringing back the bacon. Imageworks could well be right in expecting PFL to achieve sell-out sales, after



F1 - Mirrorsell

all we Brits love an underdog. It will be out first on C64 and Spectrum.

Mainframe is a game from which great things are expected. It's at an early stage of development but Imageworks say it's got the best looking 3D vector graphics of any game yet. Looking at the screens we're sure to be it's hard to disagree with them - they are lightning fast. As yet the gameplay isn't fully developed but this looks like one to watch.

The new label means that Mirrorsell is now the parent company for six different brands. In addition to Imageworks and recently acquired strategy specialists PFL, they publish games from four American software houses - Commodore (Delverder of the Crown, Zero Scroops), PFL (Dido, Dungeon Master), Spectrum Hobbyists (Falcon) and Mindscape (Balance of Power, Deja Vu).

'We believe the market is ready for Imageworks and that there is a very real demand for the calibre of product we intend to release on this brand.'

© Peter Elliott, MD of Imageworks



Tony Crowther and David Bishop

DYNAMIC DUO

Two games in Imageworks' new range have come from the combined talents of Tony Crowther and David Bishop. Both have been involved with computer games for a number of years. Bishop has designed the two games and Crowther will know for titles like Zep, Zap, Merry Mike, Black Thunder and other C64 games. He's programmed them. The two new games are Bomboloo and Fenander Mar-Or.

Bomboloo is an exciting sport because it has levels of the game programmed by star guests - namely the likes of Jon Ritson, Andrew Brayshaw and Jeff Minter. It's an excellent 3D puzzle game in which you have to line up all the bombs and mines on a level. It looks set to appeal to everyone who enjoyed games like Bomberman and Sn. It will be out on the machines - SE Amiga, C64, Spectrum and Amstrad.

If the game is received well, perhaps we'll see more games with guest programmers in them. Imagine a level of Dungeon Master designed by Christopher Lee, a planet from Dido by Neil Armstrong, or an area of Bomber by Adam West.

64 - Bomboloo



The other game from the Crowther/Bishop team is Fenander Mar-Or. It's in the mould of Star Wars - plenty of action. One of the differences is in sheer game size. Imageworks say the game map is huge and packed with things to blast and be blasted by. The one will also be on all five major machines.

BITMAP BROTHERS BOUNCE BACK

The Bitmap Brothers, authors of the successful shoot 'em up James, have signed up with Imageworks and are close to completing their new game Speedball. The Bitmaps were much in demand after the success of James and Imageworks are understandably pleased to have picked them up.

The new game Speedball is a future sport - the sort where the referee takes place on the pitch and not the benches. You get a top view of a scrolling playing area where a large ball is hurled around by the players trying to score in the opponent's goal. This simple, addictive concept is added to by weapons and tackling.

The latest version we've got our mitts on looks like a very addictive and competitive two-player game, with the same sharp, clean graphics style that was prominent in James. It will be released initially on ST, Amiga and PC.



DESERT RATS

DCS
PC \$199.95

During sales for PC wargames are R.T. Smith's trio of wargames. *Armed*, *Desert Rats* and *Vulcan* were all well received by Spectrum and *Armed* wargames (which *Vulcan* is still in Apple room-and-a-half 100 games), and with all the additional features included for PC wargames, the games should be well worth taking a look at. *Desert Rats* will be here first with *Vulcan* and *Armed* following in September and October respectively.

PLANETARIUM

Miscellaneous/Mediasoft
Amiga \$39.95

This is a full-featured astronomy program for the novice and pro alike. Users will find a database of 5,000 stars down to the eighth magnitude and the ability to view stars in a 35,000 year span from anywhere on Earth. There's also *Accurate Celestial Representation* that takes into account the effects of polar precession, nutation and atmospheric refraction. *Planet Planetarium* is for the serious student of astronomy.

NIMITZ

WarTech
CD \$29.95 \$19.95

Take charge of the largest and most powerful fighting ship in the world. Positioned between two warring nations, one of whom's your ally. It's not going to be easy to protect both yourself and your friends from the constant air and sea attacks. Here

SNIPPETS...

Up and coming titles for your micro



Desert Rats

you get what it takes to be able to command 5,000 men, and some '80 aircraft! This naval strategy game promises to have some heavy arcade flavoring added.

TT RACER II

Digital Integration
Atari ST \$24.95
PC \$24.95

Digital Integration are now focusing strongly on the 16-bit market with three major launches scheduled for the autumn. *ALEX* (AGE rated 100



TT Racer II

Spectrum version) is to be released for ST and Amiga and *P-FX Combat Pilot* is due out on the ST and PC. *TT Racer II*'s also moving across to the larger machines but in an enhanced version that's designed to give you all the thrills of motorcycle racing at speeds of 160 mph.



Vectorball

VECTORBALL

Mastershare
Amiga \$14.95

This strange football like game's played between two chuds on a pitch that's anything but flat! The ridges and valleys all affect the ball's movement and as the game gets harder, and the hills and ditches get worse, you'll have to be pretty hot to win the match. The power of your shots is determined by the length of your chud's neck - should be interesting! *Vectorball* should be out as you read this.

MAJOR MOTION

Mindful
Amiga \$19.95
Atari ST \$19.95

It's down to you to rid the land of the evil Draconian League, and make the roads safe for civilians once more. In this thrilling driving game, armed cars try to crash you off the road, splat cars by and cut you up (literally) and the enemy assault helicopters will never be so behind with their barrage of bombs...

SHOOT-EM-UP CONSTRUCTION KIT

Outlaw Productions
Amiga Price undecided
ST Price undecided

You wanna write professional quality shoot-em-ups? But couldn't knee hexadecimal from a hole in the ground? Don't worry, this utility (already out on the C64) takes all the slog out of writing a game and lets you get down to the serious business of designing alien formations and explosion sounds. Who knows, if your creation is good enough, a software house may decide it's worth publishing.

I LUDICRUS

ORL
Amiga \$24.95
Atari ST \$24.95

People should know better than to start bugging when they've had a couple of jabs. Ludicrous don't know any better, and now his claims have landed him in the arena where he's going to have to prove he's as good a fighter as he'd claim to be. *Seven* him right now.



Blitz

LOOK AND FEEL...

When you've just spent a large sum of money on an arcade license, probably the last thing you want to have happen is a rival company getting a similar product into the shops first. That's what Tins have managed to do with *Fire and Fury*, which is not a million miles removed from U.S. Tins' officially licensed conversion of the popular *Star Wars* coin-op *Blasters*.

Nationally, the *Blames* Big Boys are upset and are looking at the U.S. copyright laws, which Richard Tinsell - Galaxi's Product Marketing Manager - claims are 'weak' and 'difficult to change'. U.S. Gold don't, as yet, have any firm plans to lobby for changes in the law but Richard was adamant that 'anything that could be done, would be'.

Readers may be aware that Apple in the USA are taking a very strong line over the alleged similarities between Microsoft Windows and Apples very own Macintosh user interface, so - although difficult to implement - legal action or 'talk-back' is not completely out of the question.

Meanwhile, unkind readers may recall US Gold's very own *Ramparts*. The game not only played like *Bladeslayer's* (then *Blitzkrieg Rampage*, which was a big arcade license) but the adverts carried a far smattering through the game's title - just like *Bladeslayer's*. Richard has tried to assure us, however, that any similarity between the two games was just your opinion.

REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WHIRLIPS



Atari ST version shown

A Maze of warlike spirals from the planets in the nebulae starts to shatter into life. Seconds later it was leading through the cosmos in search of the Whirlips—a portal to space, time and freedom.

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WIN AN ATARI ST!

Has your ACE card come up trumps this month? There are 25 great prizes.



For everyone who's received a free ACE card (if not, see below on how to get one), here's another great opportunity to win prizes.

Using the MVA program (see MVA PROGRAM book, just type in the 25 new 4-letter codes printed on this page, if the program converts one of them into your personal number, you're a winner!

WE WANT A WINNER!

From now on we are printing FOUR winning codes for the ACE card. If the owner of the 1ST CLAIM code hasn't claimed his prize by the closing date it goes to the owner of the 2ND CLAIM code. If he hasn't claimed his prize by then it goes to the owner of the 3RD CLAIM code...and so on. Should the 1st Claim owner claim his prize, the owners of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th claim codes automatically qualify for one of our SECOND PRIZES.

NEW PROGRAM!

In order to accommodate the HUGE number of entries for the ACE card competition we've had to modify the program slightly. MAKE SURE you type in the revised program.

LOOK AT THESE PRIZES!

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1st claim XXGM 2nd claim WYRC 3rd claim XFCC 4th claim YUOL

FOUR 2nd PRIZES: £50 of software - chosen from the ACE Special Offer pages
The winning codes: VYAM- VYBA- YDAG- XIOR

TEN 3rd PRIZES: £20 of software - chosen from the ACE Special Offer pages
The winning codes: ZHZV- VQRM- WQGS- UQFW- YSTC- XFLP
+ VETA- YOWC- ZRQK- FLOK

TEN 4th PRIZES: A year's free subscription to ACE magazine
The winning codes: WQWM- WUUD- ZNSX- WZAZ- ZJSC- YQJL
+ EZRM- YFCS- UUD- LQVY

HOW TO CLAIM A PRIZE

Type in the winning 4-letter code printed by using code ACE and type in the code using your personal number printed on the ACE card.

Your personal address (printed on the address on the back of the ACE card) will be used for the winner's prize (see page 10).

Prize is awarded to the winner of the month's ACE card competition. Prizes are awarded to the winner of the month's ACE card competition. Prizes are awarded to the winner of the month's ACE card competition.

Post to: ACE CARD PRIZE CLAIM, 4 Queen Street, Bath BA1 1BY. Closing date for claims September 30, 1987.

HOW TO OBTAIN AN ACE CARD

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THE DECODER PROGRAM

The first program listed (DECODE) is a free code checker which you can use. It will tell you if a code is a winning code or not. It will also tell you if a code is a winning code or not. It will also tell you if a code is a winning code or not.

The MVA program will tell you if a code is a winning code or not. It will also tell you if a code is a winning code or not. It will also tell you if a code is a winning code or not.

The MVA program will tell you if a code is a winning code or not. It will also tell you if a code is a winning code or not. It will also tell you if a code is a winning code or not.

DECODE, CPC, ST, AMIGA version
16 FOR A-1 TO 28 INPUT "Code" : Q\$
20 GOTO FOR C-1 TO 48-A-Q\$
30 GOTO AMIGAB-10 : G
40 IF Q\$=Q THEN G-0-00
50 G-0-00 NEXT C PRINT "Winning Number is" : G NEXT A

SPECTRUM version
16 FOR A=1 TO 28 INPUT "Code" : Q\$
20 LET B=FOR C=1 TO 48 LET B=B-Q\$
30 LET D=CODE B\$C : G
40 IF Q\$=D THEN LET D=B-Q\$
50 LET B=B-Q\$ NEXT C PRINT "Winning Number is" : G NEXT A

TYPING IN THE PROGRAM

DECODE

16 Press on keyboard (number) using a to check program DECODE on the first line. To get second DECODE line (2), add number 48 and press number again with your keyboard key. Move cursor to the first or second line. Press DECODE (2) on keyboard. Press DECODE on keyboard until a line starting DECODE has been typed in. Type Q-0-00, DECODE key on keyboard.

16 Press DECODE (2) on keyboard until a line starting DECODE has been typed in. Type Q-0-00, DECODE key on keyboard until a line starting DECODE has been typed in. Type Q-0-00, DECODE key on keyboard.

AMIGA

Type the code in the code using the keyboard on the first line. Type Q-0-00 on keyboard. Press DECODE key on keyboard. Press DECODE key on keyboard.

ATARI ST

Type the code in the code using the keyboard on the first line. Type Q-0-00 on keyboard. Press DECODE key on keyboard. Press DECODE key on keyboard.

CPC

Type the code in the code using the keyboard on the first line. Type Q-0-00 on keyboard. Press DECODE key on keyboard. Press DECODE key on keyboard.

WIN

Type the code in the code using the keyboard on the first line. Type Q-0-00 on keyboard. Press DECODE key on keyboard. Press DECODE key on keyboard.

OTHER MAGAZINES

The ACE CARD will be awarded to the winner of the month's ACE card competition. Prizes are awarded to the winner of the month's ACE card competition.

RULES

The prizes are given to the winner of the month's ACE card competition. Prizes are awarded to the winner of the month's ACE card competition.

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VIP GLOBETROTTER!

ACE and IMAGEWORKS are sending this month's prizewinner to the Festival De Micro... absolutely free!

THE PRIZES

ACE and Imageworks are going to make you a globe-trotting VIP - literally! This October sees one of Europe's most important computer shows in Paris - the Festival De Micro - and we're offering an all expenses paid weekend for two in Paris to attend the fair, where you will receive VIP status and be escorted by Ms Bati - Imageworks' French distributor.

You'll have plenty of time to explore the city with your companion (the prize covers two people, at least one of whom must be an adult over the age of 18) and in addition to being taken out to dinner by your hosts, you'll also receive 1000 travel vouchers for the Paris Underground to help you get about. Also to be had is a lovely quality bag of new Imageworks gifts including a sports bag, watch, T-shirt, pens and notepaper.

Five winners up will also receive greatly valued similar contents, so if you miss out on the trip you may still be able to go around in style!

The dates of the show are from Friday 19th



FM - Fernandez

October to Sunday 16th October inclusive. Mark it in your diary now and keep your fingers crossed!

FERNANDEZ - THE GAME

Imageworks' action star Fernandez Must Die is the action game for Autumn 1988 as you fight your way through Fernandez's army, make your way by jeep and on foot across the country to

destroy the military bases and, of course, your target - the tyrant Fernandez himself.

On the way you will encounter armies, paratroopers, planes, trains, jeeps, ammunition, and secret gold dumps in your quest to reach your target and release the state of El Diable from his tyranny. Most formats will feature 3-player options and the game will be available on the Imageworks label for the Amiga, Atari ST, C64, Spectrum, and Amstrad-GPC.

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO...

Just fill in the form with your name and address (and telephone number for us to contact you during the day if possible) and then answer the three questions correctly. Then post it to ACE Imageworks Competition, 4 Queen Street, BATH, BA1 1WJ. We'll arrive not later than September 30th. On September 30th we'll pick up a correctly-completed form at random - the first will win first prize and be off to Paris, the remaining five will receive the runners-up prizes. Go for it!

ENTRY FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TEL NO _____

Tick the box opposite the correct answer to each of the three questions below:

1. Che Guevara was

- (a) A Mexican soft drink (b) A revolutionary (c) A clean shaven (d)

2. Polarisports was

- (a) Sent to the gallows (b) Dreammaker for Princess Diana (c) A hairdresser (d)

3. Laska was

- (a) A Labour politician (b) A Bolshevik (c) Inventor of a new-washing powder (d)

Your answers to the following questions are not part of the competition and do not affect your entry, but we would be grateful if you could take time to tick the relevant boxes:

Do you buy:

- Mostly full-price software () Full price and budget software () Mostly budget software ()

Which (if any) of the following magazines do you read:

- New Computer () Amstrad Action () ST/Amiga Format () Games Magazine () Computer and Video Games () Personal Computer () World Popular Computing Weekly () ET Action () Amiga Computing () Your Striker Striker User () Zap94 () Crash () PC Plus () 8888 Plus ()

Other magazines (please specify) _____



IMAGEWORKS - THE LABEL

Imageworks is a brand new label created by Microsoft - the people who brought you Cidy and Dungeon Master - to cater for both 8-bit and 16 bit users.

Imageworks are really going to be putting their back into it during the coming year - releasing at least 18 games. According to Managing Director Peter Blatts, 'We have an excellent range of software for publication during the remainder of 1988 and our future plans are even more exciting. Imageworks will offer the consumer quality products and we believe the response will be extremely favourable.'

Microsoft have really bumped up their profile in the last few months - check out the news story on page 7 for details of another of their recent moves - a joint venture with Telecom and Progress.

THE RULES

1. Employees of Future Publishing Ltd, Microsoft and their families are ineligible to enter.
2. Closing date September 30th.
3. The decision of the judges is final and is correspondence will be entered into.
4. Only one entry per household.
5. No purchase of RCG magazine is necessary to participate in this competition.

Are You Good Enough to
TACKLE

NEW
2004

FOOTBALL TACKLE

There is no need to be like Steve, you need to be like a football, a player who is rebound and set are available. Does your gut tell you to take the tackle like Steve?

GOAL
CORNER
KICK



Unsurpassed reputation as the greatest game this century. For those less fortunate and experienced, not of hundreds of years, only few have qualified for admission into the world. These are Football Manager and Football Tackle. Do not miss out on what's great, before you buy, read the book of the Not Run too. Available in all quality stores. **FM, TACKLE, FOOTBALL TACKLE**. Original with **Football Tackle** and **Football Tackle**. **Football Tackle** and **Football Tackle**.

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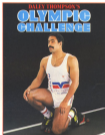


Your plane has ditched on a mountainous plateau somewhere in deepest Tibet. You and your companions are alone. A large shape moves toward you, you rub your eyes in disbelief. A dinosaur — where are you — and what? Stunning, monochromatic 3D graphics and 4 way scrolling, give that '90's cinema mood as you learn not only to survive, but also that your companions are not all they first seemed!



FROM

ocean



Digital graphics, referencing from full colour photographs of Daley Thompson himself, take full advantage of the Amiga's and the Man's capabilities giving you a state-of-the-art sport simulation. Featuring an optional game play which allows you to 'watch out' in the gym where your performance will steadily affect your performance in the final events themselves — another test for Osmot!



FROM

ocean



Osmot's attention to detail and superior presentation add an extra dimension and Army V is no exception. A full-blown shoot-em-up for you through several levels where you will take command of first an armoured jeep, then helicopter, and finally, on foot as you make your way through the jungle. Use the enemy's headquarter ultimately, to seek out a document.

FROM

ocean

16 BIT STATE



01 - What an fun the space, when on the ground as well.

SPACE RACER

Loriciels

The French invasion continues even without the aid of the Channel tunnel. The latest from over the water is a racing game along the lines of *Go Go Air Rally*. The graphics are far superior, as you can see. Very detailed backgrounds and excellent use of colour. You fly a jet like along a winding, undulating course, trying to avoid the other racers and the obstacles. For once you even get to see other races make mistakes and crash. Watch out for an English version soon.



02 - A top view racing at its best! Best this!

VROOM

Lankhor

New boys Lankhor have only had one game released to us - *Killicious*. However, there are more in the pipeline including this driving game. There aren't many recent racing games on the ST - it doesn't even have *Formula 1* or *Out Run* - so a good one could do well. It does have *Out Run* and the soon to arrive *Super Mega-Dr*, so we can look forward to topping up the racks this Autumn.

INTENSITY

Firebird

This is the latest from Andrew Braybrook, so 9-bit owners will definitely be eagerly awaiting its arrival. It evokes a distinctly *Demolition*-like, with you heading against and blasting aliens. As with *Megabyte* you can improve the ship capabilities. You can see the game has *Braybrook's* old graphic style, and hopefully when its finished will have another game packed with future graphics.



03 - How these intensity, with these alien.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

You've seen the ads and you've heard the hype, but now you want to get a look at all those games soon to hit the streets. That's what ACE Previews are here for - a sneak peek at games that should hit the shops within a couple of months. All that glitters is not gold, but shining on these pages will be some of the hot games of tomorrow.



OVERLANDER

Elite

Another game with a definite *Roadblockers* look to it. You have to battle along a road-way past jeeps, bikes, roadside gun emplacements - all trying to blast you off the road. Don't be misled by the simplicity of graphic style of *Space Racer* and *Space Hunter* - obviously the French programmers are making good use of this graphic expertise on the ST.



04 - The sports car encounter don't hold back.

GARY LINEKER'S SUPER SKILLS

Demlin

Despite Englishers' detestation of the European Championship, Gary Lineker is still one of the biggest names in football. Besides, in this game you can get Gary back in shape for kicking on the world's best. The training programme includes the game writer — where you build up three and eleven — ball juggling, and field work, where you can practice fiddling, chipping, shooting and penalties.



EMLYN HUGHES INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

Autogenic

I know what you're thinking — not yet another football game! However, what you think about it is the only really decent football available in the last three months (May 2). This one shows a lot of promise but a few features were missing from this version — including the prospect of learning individual player strengths or its strategy games. Amongst the other features implemented are: out-of-play, coaching, tactics, breaking and sliding tactics.

ES — This is a ball game. There is supposed to be a goal in the end.



ES — A single goal in the shared space looked a bit odd.



ES — On a slightly less graphic level, the Space Harrier Elite is the way across the landscape.

SPACE HARRIER

Elite

The classic roll-up is nearing completion on the SE. The graphics are top and tinsel, and those claws are big and bold. The characters are particularly impressive, zooming around the screen and hitting laser beams of fire.

ES — Staff should thank me whenever they see.



ES — Menace! There are just about trying to kill you.

MENACE

Psychopass/Psygnosis

Remember way back to the days of the Incopter megagames and the subsequent collapse of the company? The games and their authors succeeded in various guises, Psychopass being one of them. Now they have taken the helm of one of the two megagames — hopefully not a bad omen. The first game on the table isn't the megagame itself but it is a shoo-in up with the usual odds on weapons and rusty ideas. How will the pioneering measure up to other 16-bit shooters?

BARBARIAN

Psychopass/Melbourne House

Here it runs up to the table — a 16-bit game being converted down into the 8-bit machines. It has happened before with the likes of Barbarian and looks set to occur increasingly often with games like Centurion and War and making the transition soon. The graphics certainly aren't anywhere near the standard at the 16-bit version, but the gameplay should be much more attractive.



ES — Huge creatures come early looking creatures.



ES — Is this your looking for a fight? — yes.

Can You Stop The Russian Bear?



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PERSPECTIVE



As well as the usual 2D block manipulation tools — rotate, mirror, flip etc. — any area of the screen cut as a 'frame' can be manipulated in the third dimension. Selecting **PERSPECTIVE** on the brush menu shows the current block (in the form of a wire frame rectangle) to be rotated around the x, y and/or z axes. Moving the now distorted 'frame' around the screen shows that it is not just the block itself that has been rotated, but the whole 'screen-plane'. Thus if the block is moved towards the 'viewer' it gets smaller. Using **Perspective** it is relatively easy to change a flat, square picture of King Tut into three sides of a cube. A few artificial bands of several golden-brown lines, joined up as a brush that used as a perspective fill provide the desert wastes.

BRUSHING UP

Another standard feature of many drawing systems is the ability to move and transform areas of the screen by 'brushing' them with a box. This 'frame' or 'window' can then be passed down anywhere on-screen where it is desired or rotated or flipped (mirrored) in some way, usually with a transparent background colour. This allows irregularly shaped objects to be passed down without a border. They can also be saved to a disk library of 'clips' for later use. **Delta Paint** uses a similar technique, except that these 'frames' can be used as custom brushes. Any size-up to a full screen can be cut and passed down. In most cases the price is so fast that this brush can spread colour onto the screen continuously in a new spontaneous way. If **cycle** is selected on the **Mode** menu, the whole brush changes to the current colour, and with each paint stroke to the next shade in the range. This can be used to produce animation of an image with **Colour Cycling**.

Other modes include **Smooth** — colours within the area under the brush are averaged, producing a smooth 'anti-alias' look; **Stretch** — affected colours are stretched or lightened slightly to form shading or highlighting effects; **Blend**; **Linear** and several other colour transformations.

Transformations of form as well as of colour can also be applied to **Paint** brushes. Any brush can be scaled up, or down in size, rotated through any angle and bent horizontally and vertically (or in shear). Overall, it is probably its use of brushes that is the most powerful tool of the program.

BACKGROUND AND STENCIL

These two functions in particular mark out **DPaint** as something quite different in the run of PC painting packages. When **Background** is selected, the complete picture is set as a background over which all later drawing actions have to affect and **Background** is deselected. Using this technique it is possible to try out a new idea over the top of the original without affecting it, if something goes wrong, even after a number of different actions, selecting **Clear** will remove them all, leaving the original still on-screen. Another use is in the production of a mask or outline. Drawing carefully over the 'background' in a contrasting colour, a detailed outline of a subject can be drawn. It is then a simple matter to pick it up using **Frame** and paste it down on the scene screen.

Stencil is, in effect, a means to burn off any colour or group of colours so that screen actions do not affect them; they become 'protected'. **Stencil** can be used to place part of a brush behind a section of the screen-image. For example, if you have drawn a landscape and later you wish to draw the sun setting below the horizon it is a simple matter to protect all screen colours except those of the sky and paste the sun down. It will appear that the sun is behind the protected colours of the land and in front of the unprotected areas of the sky.

several sequences used to modify the colour of the selected text. Standard features can be enlarged or reduced, dot spacing changed, spray density increased, all type altered (see box), grid size, stylisation type and order, palette — almost every function can be controlled to taste.

The real power of computer drawing is the ability to transform the picture once the usual tools have been produced. The areas beneath of the menu bar contain tools that allow direct every transformation imaginable, both of shape and colour, as well as a number of other more mundane functions, such as picture file management, printing, page size, screen format and text.

Many of the most useful 'transformation' tools are applied to or by the use-defined 'brushes' discussed in one of the side boxes. Two other extremely useful facilities — **BACK-GROUNDS** and **STENCILS** — are also described in detail in a later.

CONCLUSION

Delta Paint is for the ill PC and compatible, but is not the ultimate drawing program, but the prospect of getting it on a cheap



To produce a decent hard copy you must first have a printer — any printer, as long as it can print graphics. Getting the most of colour and line detail, full screen or dot matrix printers with preferably 24 pin and preferably 9 pins, and a good density capability (see the box). Next you need software that can give you print to the extent of its capabilities.

This is where you stop — and think — and realise that there is more. Even for the cheap card readers by most of the 8-bit machines there is virtually no commercial graphics program that provides a picture sharp to allow an ordinary dot matrix printer to fill. The exception there always is one: might surprise you it is **IBPCSO DESIGN** for the Amstrad CPC range available from **Delta Software**. Although it is licensed in the UK and runs under **Micro Design** is manufactured in the way it has been designed specifically to produce the highest possible quality of output from an ordinary dot matrix printer on A4 size paper.

Even with a 9-pin printer the size you should use so small that a 'dot-to-dot' printer of a normal screen would only be about 10cm by 10cm. **Micro Design** employs a technique some larger than the screen that will print out dot-to-dot on full A4 size paper. Many other systems including **AMC Support** for the BBC and **Amiga Delta Paint** will do this. Where **Micro Design** differs is in its ability to print out the full page in quadruple density with the screen representing only one page (you print each time the quadruple density). The result is extremely dense. Small printers without the characteristic banding of dot matrix printers — very slow but almost unique to my experience.

In fact all requests **Micro Design** is a strange beast, neither fish nor fowl, some-



Billions, but doesn't it look like it cost only?



Great usage of colors on the desktop screen design. Drawing sets can help you get your message across and look beautiful.

Some MS-DOS machines is interesting to try the best. It is always possible to think of tools that would be useful (Screen Capture) fitting to program lines and monitor mapping are two further candidates, but it is hard to think of any important facility that could be provided at the level of hardware and which it doesn't have. The target game available with an MCGA board makes some of the color transformations very much more effective, but its nearest rivals using it contain the program, a still a real improvement over anything else available for MCGA machines. ■

GETTING IT DOWN

Computer artists good, bad or indifferent, have you really thought about the quality of your graphic output recently? Have you examined closely the last printout you produced? Do you even bother to DO black and white printouts of your pictures, considering how bad they usually look? Unless you are one of the few who have colour or laser printers or VCPs, you are stuck with a whole bunch of artwork that can only be seen properly on a monitor. In most cases this is art for your eyes only. Let's see what we can do about it.

where between a DTP and a PDI program though it makes no claims to DTP capabilities. Any IBM compatible mode can be used, though the one-handed operation mode using the numeric keypad is as simple and effective as any you will find that is a focus. Drawing elements (bars) are designed in a rather unorthodox form Editor. It would probably have been better if this was a separate program so that more tools could be added to make designs easier. Up to 10000 can be stored in memory and more sets stored to disk.

Drawings are assembled using the usual desktop tools, plus the tools provided on the Design Page. Only Autodesk's drawing of the common tools. Pens, erasers and text-align can be purchased, filled with a repeated text pattern if desired. Any area of the screen can be cut or copied, moved to disk, saved (but not restored) and posted once or repeatedly. One handy useful tool are provided on disk, plus a good range of fonts, patterns and template pages.

Various fonts and other DTP programs can also be included with a simple utility to convert them to Micro Design format, this retains the features of the package greatly by incorporating its use as a utility in conjunction with other DTP print packages. Standards Advanced Art Studio by software,

has its better drawing tools, but is linked to a screen size drawing area and an inkjet printer dump. Overall, Micro Design is a good drawing package and, in comparison with a more powerful print program, an exceptional print and large picture memory ability.



How well it handles fine detail, you can get more detail results from your graphics file. However, not all manufacturers, representative user-IT.

PRINTING DENSELY



Spencer Direct Ltd 100 pins print quality but is still expensive at £200. Other manufacturers are introducing 64 pin models from around £100 and maintaining cheap quality. They are not a cheap, but make sure you are a printed in the time before you buy - and always check compatibility with your software as well.

Most dot matrix printers have a vertical row of 9 pins of size pins which can be fired in any order against an ink ribbon to transfer ink onto the paper. As the print head moves across the paper it can fire lines of dots can be produced in the pattern required. There is a small but finite distance between each line because of the mechanics of the head and between each vertical line depending on the speed of printing. These gaps can be reduced by slowing down the print head and by making several passes across, advancing the paper a very small amount each time. Most dot matrix printers can print two gaps more (double density) and some have quadruple density.

24 pin printers have three vertical rows of 8 pins slightly offset from each other producing double and quadruple density effects in one pass. The pins are also slightly smaller, allowing an even smaller dot size.

IF YOU CAN DRAW IT, MOVE IT...

Almost all new graphics packages appearing these days for the Amiga 517 seem to combine paint and animation. Three recent arrivals look particularly interesting, and each one provides some degree of animation.

OUR ARTIST (Morpher) Our Artist uses a dual mode screen to provide 60 columns, font-based function selection and a no-redrawing area. The drawing area can also be in one of two modes. Animation takes place in the normal 70-column mode, but by taking over the whole processor, a 1000 column, stable-screen mode is available. All the usual drawing and sprite animation functions are provided plus some interesting extras. Amazingly, or perhaps not so amazingly, a large part of the program is written in C++-like(C) with machine language integrated in where necessary for the special FXGL.

Paths are breaking new ground with their drawing and animation, offering carefully chosen **SLIPKICK** (210.00). Operating only in medium and high-resolution, the program is probably better suited to accurate technical illustration. Most of the common functions are available though-flick transformations are limited (copy-motion). Animation is also limited to "page flipping" of all the pictures in memory (though this could be more than 100-ons 10487).

CYBER PAINT (Amiga/Electronic Distribution) (200.00) fits in the major gap left by the otherwise excellent Cyber Studio-suite, post production. Once a Cyber Studio animation was complete it was a somewhat tedious task editing backgrounds and other special effects. Cyber Paint simplifies this process by providing a

simple method of registration for cel animation. Many other features are offered including the usual drawing tools, 3-axis block manipulators and tweening (intermediate cel-generation for animation).

MORE SUPERSLIDESHOWS

Following on from last month's feature on adding a bit of production to your slideshows, two more super-

GRAPHIC ACCOUNTS

New and exciting graphics products keep falling onto the shelves - now you can keep track of what's new and what's hot with ACE's own dedicated graphics news section.

slideshows have appeared - see each from the free original support area at Amiga graphics.

AMIGA VIDEO TITLES (Amiga-8 Marketing) (110.00) is primarily a semi-professional title generation system. A wide range of fonts are supplied and even more can be used from Calligrapher. Up to ten can be coded at once and displayed in 20 different styles. Several join fonts are also supplied allowing smooth scaling and shaper join. 40 frame resolutions, pan-scan and Ernie Halberlin are supported and any PIF picture can be used as a background.

For our purposes the second part of the Amiga package, **VIDEOBOX** (video filter Special Effects Generator) is of more interest. Any PIF image, including titles from Video Titles and AMI/Amiga fonts, can be wiped on and off screen with dozens of different transitions including burst, swirl, fade and ring ring. An easy to use interface allows complex presentations to be assembled and played back, either automatically or manually.

DELUXE PRODUCTIONS (Amiga/Electronic Arts) allows high quality video presentations to be assembled. Titles, 16 colour high-resolution pictures and images can be controlled quite simply using the storyboard design interface. Up to 12



bravely comparable to Photo Paint (reviewed ACE 10) using much of the same style of interface originally pioneered by Deluxe Paint. Unique in this section is a drawing area limited only by expansion memory rather than the more usual 510K chip-memory limitation. Colours in the image processing feel almost truly picture to be swapped between shades, any palette to be swapped between pictures, RGB or YCbCr colour separations, and many other forms of image analysis. Photos! will print any image as large as 10 foot square or smaller.

EUROPEANS NOT TO BE TRUSTED YET?

For the good news: All of Electronic Arts' Creativity series for the Amiga - Deluxe Paint 3, Deluxe Video, Deluxe Music, Deluxe Print etc. - are to be issued in future (reviewed). All previously purchased titles can be replaced for a nominal sum with versions without copy protection.



The bad news? It seems that the offer only applies to North America. Guess the rest of the Europeans are not to be trusted yet? Or is the news of the change in policy going to take as long to get here as PIF, versions of W3DC software? If you want to test your chances by contacting Electronic Arts at Langley Business Centre, 11490 Station Road, Langley, B.C., tel: 0103-694-62.

scenes per production, each with 3 static or animated clips can be wiped in up to 40 ways in any order, allowing double buffering for smooth transitions. Overcan, broadcast quality fonts, cloned productions for logos, and many other facilities combine to provide a useful tool for professional quality video presentations. The price is also quite professional at £150.00.

Of more interest to ACE graphic artists is **DELUXE PHOTO LAB** (200.00). Three of the most useful tools from Deluxe Paint graphics oriented utilities are color-colour paint systems, image processing packages and variable width print programs. Deluxe PhotoLab provides all three on one disk in the form of separate programs. The paint system is



Deluxe PhotoLab

1 inch square, and allowing the enlarged pixels of giant prints to give a smooth appearance. Considering the integrated nature of the package the only pity is that direct transfer of pictures between the three modules (by means of the Amiga's clipboard facility) while multi-tasking was not implemented.

AMIGA ANIMATION COMPETITION

Against the backdrop of the Edinburgh International Festival, Amiga Centre Scotland have organized an Amiga Computer Animation Competition, to be followed by an exhibition and workshop. The workshop will be open from 11.30 to 2.00 on August 1. Unfortunately we want to print too late to get you into the competition, which closed at the end of July. You can still go along for the workshop and exhibition.

Details from: Iain Anderson, The Amiga Centre Scotland, 4 Neil Street Lane, Edinburgh, EH3 9NH, Scotland, tel: 010-507-6342.

PHOTOGRAPH AFTERPHOTO!

In view of the problem with protection on European versions of Electronic Arts' Creativity titles (see last), it is interesting to note that the two most recent products, PhotoLab and PhotoShop are without protection. ■

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TRIKE FORCE!

This month Andy Smith takes to three wheels, dons his football boots and takes to the rapids in an old inner tube (I) to bring you the latest and best in arcade action...



LAST DUEL

Capcom 30p

Capcom's latest offering is one of two player vertically scrolling title-on-up, shoot-'em-up. You wry through water-laden levels, stage after stage of aggressive aliens using a joystick and two fire buttons to control your small vessel-from-above like. You see the joystick to guide your trike over the continuously scrolling roadway, with up-and-down affecting the speed of the vessel. It's a good idea to speed things up when things are quiet because you're also get a time limit to beat - fail to reach the end of the level and defeat the lower motivational questions within the time limit and you'll lose one of your three lives. The buttons are used to fire your boat-aiming gun, and to jump over obstacles through its obstacle you'll see below.

Other things to avoid are road-side obstacles and the bullets in the road from which appear the swimming alien. The road-side obstacles can be perfectly vicious and cause it, but some types that implement simply fire at you and try to blow you off the road, whilst the other obstacles attempt to grab you with tentacles.

You've got the almost obligatory extra weapons to pick up, each of which increase your firepower (you can get to the point that you've got a main weapon) you can store along the roadway with little to worry about. Once you come up against the end-of-level questions though, you're gonna need all the firepower you can carry - these stages are tough! Survive them and you're into the second stage. Nice



One of the other water stages.



Getting a trike through some obvious scenery in stage two.

Beating your way through the first stage, there's got plenty of firepower and a couple of aliens in the pathing way of the moment.



The excellent graphics—lots of action in an 8-bit!

you take choppers into a plane and your bombing and blasting your way through Atari-style enemies, Galaxian-style waves of descending aliens and Asterix-style end-of-level guardians.

Las' Dash is a very standard coin-op—tough, good-looking and fun to play. But it sits sitting now and it's doubtful you'll be as willing to take it as you might be if it were an Atari-style.

FIGHTING SOCCER

SNK, 30p

Clayton Koppels is the subject to SNK's latest game. The player takes charge of a complete team from head to toe to fight through five tough rounds playing against either the machine or a friend before getting the chance to play in

CHOPPER I

SNK, 30p

Helicopters are back in vogue and here's a game that lets you pilot one through stage after stage of vertically scrolling enemy territory. Little weapons take an additional hit in Chopper I—pick up one of the weapons and a group of lighter planes join in the fray firing Nagani bombs everywhere! This is about the most exciting feature of an otherwise very standard coin-op shoot-em-up.

TWIN EAGLE

(Revenge Joe's Brother)

Info 30p

There are some marvelous examples of Japan to be found in Twin Eagle, including the immortal legend 'Warrior Enemy Fighter Coming up!' The game's much like Chopper I—your helicopter's viewed from above and the screen scrolls vertically. The game has nice graphics and sound but little to make it stand out from the crowd.

FULLY BIKE

Info 30p

Here's a vertically scrolling, viewed from above bike-em-up. Avoid the other bikes and try to stay on the falling course—which changes for each

EXTENDED PLAY...



stage. You've no weapons at all but you can pick up coins. Manage to pick up the symbol for down and you'll get a waterlike boost into either side of your bike—very handy for taking out the other bikes without damage to yourself.

TOOBIN'

Info 30p

Just being on the Totular Duck, would you believe it? and let take to their two inner tubes and go peedling down a downwards scrolling river, collecting empty cans to throw at nearby fishermen (San cans dude!) and going through gates for points. Wash out for branches floating in the water because a puny one (or a disaster Fortune) patches for the inner tubes can be picked up at various stages in the game. Wishing for that's well worth taking a look at.

THE NINJA WARRIORS

Info 30p

This vertically scrolling beat 'em up's the follow-up to Darius and uses the same three monitor long display. Use your dagger and throwing stars to fight off the security guards (and dogs) but aim to try to stop your breaking into the Air Force base. Last out for it.



the Olympic tool.

The controls all viewed from above and you've got a joystick and two fire buttons to control your current footballer. You've got half a dozen ball-on your team but only one order

your direct control of any one team. The current player highlighted and a large arrow appears which indicates the direction the ball would travel should you choose to kick it. The direction of the ball can be changed by twisting the joystick, while the direction of your character's attack is set by moving the joystick in one of the eight standard positions. The control method's confusing to start with but gets easier as you get used to it. The matches don't last long and it's tough to level some of the better teams—but it's great fun trying!



A fine example of Japan!

the matches don't last long and it's tough to level some of the better teams—but it's great fun trying!



The red team try to scramble the ball away from the goal mouth. Note the arrow indicating the direction the ball will travel.



The blue team try to scramble the ball away from the goal mouth. Note the arrow indicating the direction the ball will travel.

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GAMES WITHOUT FRONTIERS

Once upon a time it was just you against the Galaxians, but revolutions in communications technology are going to bring about tremendous changes in the way we play – and who we play against. Andy Wilson looks at the past, present and future of the communicating games revolution.

First factoring prospect – we revivify games that span a century, a continent or even the entire globe – and it's not so far away. If you saw the *AI Wars* feature in *ACE issue 0* you'll know that these games have already started in the States. *General Electric* run a multi-player flight simulator that can handle 100 photo-line pilots at once, and other companies are expressing a strong interest in the field. *Autogun Flight Sim 2* catered in the same times. That allows several players to connect up via modem and practise formation flying. Other games use wire-wire or modem networks, and improvements in communication technology could see those stretching out over long-distance phone lines or satellite networks over the next decade.

People can string together games over almost any sort of communications system. Ordinary letter post supports huge PBM games, a telephone system designed for financial voice traffic carries streams of computer game messages – whatever next? Flight sims by satellite? Let's take a look at the development of communications technology for games players.

MAIL, MAIL

It's not chess or so old as the hills, but the venerable PBM *Clay My Mail* hasn't yesterday since from the 60s were recent home-grown *Empire*. The waiting minutes and virtual landscapes of the ultra-cybernetic game use *ACE issue 1* for a review of *Ultimate General's PC version* depend on the large number of players involved – some 100



full game – but getting so many people in the game can be extremely difficult.

The pool provided a neat way round this, but also raised a more interesting possibility. If the Royal Mail lets you run a game, then it's reasonably large for a time being, why not set up a game you couldn't possibly fit in a house? With two decks or even thousands of players in one game across the country, the obvious obvious thought that a single-player game couldn't hope to match.

Of course, IBM was only as fast as the post, and that isn't always very fast at all. You could speed things up a bit using fax machines if you wanted, but the logistical problems of sending and receiving codes tend to really getting those old platted out would then run through you.

EMAIL

With large online networks providing electronic mail facilities, it was only natural that these should be turned to entertainment purposes. At first the games were the highest-tech remains of IBM, with users exchanging *Clue* or *Diplomacy* moves by mailbox. The networks themselves weren't slow to see the possibilities here; in particular, electronic FBM forms can be read and executed by computer, thus saving a huge amount of headache.

NETWORK & PHONE GAMES

For more exciting things are often than pencil or paper-board games. For some time now these have been the technology is get a whole load of people playing the same-remote game by means of networking. Rather than having everyone play on one room (as in *Age* or *Age* or *League*), for example, it can have many linked back to back (as in *IC Falcon* or *Amiga Flight Sim II*), the idea is to use a large number of micro-aid exchanging information with each other or with a central host computer.

For a networked game to really catch on, the network it runs on must already be in use for other purposes. Businesses use popular local area-networking up several machines close together, connected with special cables, it is a lot more effort than most people will go to for a game.

The problem doesn't exist in the same way in phone-line games because the wires involved don't have to be close together and may well already be connected to modern, in any case, games equipment is more or less standard so the same hardware set-up could access several different phone games.

BYPASSING THE BARRIERS

Computers networking may be a big issue now, but in a few years time the barrier might not seem very much. On the cutting edge of technology the buzzword now is distributed processing – the idea of linked networks not only exchanging information but actually doing processes jointly. Distributed processing is one of the underlying concepts of Hewlett-Packard's Transputer-powered ASAC workstation, and we can



The mysterious IBM workstation.

expect to see a lot more of it in the next few years.

A distributed system is made up of numerous tiny ones of which can operate as its own, but the whole set-up actually becomes more like a mainframe with terminals. The potential advantages of this kind of set-up are enormous, and not just for the sort of practical task most present-day networks are aimed at. Anytime writing games for a distributed system would probably result in a faster but only be the availability of extra games, but also for more than one person playing the thing at once.

HIGHER SPEEDS

The main limiting factor on the sort of games you can run down a phone line is the data speed required. With conventional lines in the UK, you can't send information reliably at much more than 1200 bits per second in each direction. That's no problem at all as outgoing information from your machine is conventional – it's very enough to let the host computer know what you're up to – but it's a severe limit on incoming data. You see the host has to tell you things about every other player in the game, and with a 100-player game that's acceptably responsive the mail involves an enormous amount of data. In practice the upper limit with today's technology would probably be around 10 players at any one time.

Changes are afoot, however. British Telecom are currently introducing a digital phone network that'll stand computer communications on its head. The system is known as the Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN for short), and it's already operating in the Silicon Valley triangle of Southern England, and in several of the UK's major cities. What will its effects mean to home users? Well, the details haven't been worked

MULLA

●

Don't get the idea that all this is brand new programmes have been using the possibilities of multi-player action and intrigue for some time now. Look at these real, up-and-running games as they progress from split-screen arcade-style wire work scenarios... it's all happening!

SPY VS SPY

Bludny competitive two-player games can have their ancestry back almost as far as the Atari console classic, *Tank Fng*, but Beyond brought a whole new twist to the genre with the split-screen spy-on-spy. Straightforward ambushes clearly weren't going to work – you could simply look to your opponent's half of the screen to see where he was hiding – but *Behind* trips over another matter. The game offered you all kinds of strategic targets to plant in your opponent's half – so you might expect from the original *Mail* series (spies) and he was usually set free himself to watch where you were getting them.

PG FALCON & FLIGHT SIM II BY AT

Though a very impressive flight simulator in its own right, this Spectacular Hobbyist title has a lovely bonus in the form of a two-player option. With the PC's back to back, a pair of Falcon fans can delight not with computer-controlled MIGs but rather with each other's F-16s.

There's not quite so much going to Amiga Flight Sim II's interface option, simply because it's not a central game to the two players' can't fight each other. That said, there is the big advantage that the connection can be made through a modem and down a phone line.



PH - Falcon

'Want to go flying with a friend several hundred miles away?' No problem!

Multiplayers' two Amiga titles *Flingspy* and *Galactic Invasion* (as reviewed in AGE issue 11), will run both for set-up for two machines, two-player use down a phone line. The Hayes modem protocols used make this option largely irrelevant for UK modems owners, unfortunately.

These four games illustrate a couple of important points. First, multi-machine gameplay can be an actual fun option, and second, even when the phone these things can be very difficult to set up. The enormous advantage of a large network like CompuLink or Modem over these one-off 'user to user' arrangements is that it's so much easier finding an opponent when you're in the mood for a good blast.

MINI MAIL

Two-player games are all very well, but they have to 'zoom' for advance and very little to surprise. Getting more people involved can be

30 Advanced Computer Entertainment

out yet but you can expect considerably higher data speeds and much greater reliability within the next few to ten years.

Though a digital phone system is great news for all consumers, in the medium to long term, it's only a partial solution to the game bottleneck. Hundreds of players and complex control options would probably still be beyond a domestic phone's capabilities. Perhaps the answer is to look outside the phone system — and the atmosphere, come to that.



SATELLITE

As we've already seen, conventional phone lines are potentially adaptable for the data your mice needs to give the system

feedback. The bottleneck is on the information coming the other way too. Usually, the data the host needs to send to your mice is the same as the data it needs to send everyone else. Luckily, details of what each player is doing, since the info is new for everyone, can phone lines carry fast enough. In fact, it's the obvious solution: to broadcast the details of player move-



In view of 70 billion Telecom's investment in a digital phone system, it's not surprising that a dish is needed to position high up on the Telecom Tower.

MULTILAYER IN THE FLESH

Very difficult user-to-user phone arrangements are no good unless you've got two phone lines wired — not to mention two modems and two FDDI ports — to most games fall back on some sort of local (or direct cable) network.

With a striking combination of volume and velocity, the Hybrid Arts show set-up has done a good deal to bring these local network games into the public eye: small wonder given its strong graphics, camera options and multiplayer kill-a-happy-face slogan!

The game uses up to 16 STB's linked in a ring network via their MIDI in and Out ports. Because this set-up is completely nonstandard, MIDI links is inconvenient to play — yours certainly not going to have a casual game in any case — but the results are worth the effort. Charging round a maze. Making every bit happy-faced blob may not sound too funny, but there is a definite tactical side to things and — especially — the human angle gives the action a real edge.



Standard MIDI MIDI module used for the 68010.

NET THINK

All outstanding examples of games that use existing hardware set-ups, this real-time adventure game runs on the standard Macintosh network.

AppleTalk. It's based on those classic Star Trek games of old — no reason to Perfidy's twisted offering — but the multi-player angle and some very slick programming make it worthwhile stuff.

Choose your vessel — either a Federation starship, Klingon battle cruiser or Romulan "Bird-of-Prey" — and boldly go forth into an eight-system galaxy. Your aim is to build a base in each system before any of your opponents do the point of impossibility, but that hardly matters: with tough controls, terrific sound effects and up to four opponents at once, the playing is enough fun in its own right.

AIR WARFARE

(See ACE issue 8 pp46-47 for more details.)

A milestone in computer gaming by anyone's standards, this multi-player combat flight simulator runs across the United States and Canada. Individual players log onto General Electric's online database-Globe by standard phone lines, using special customized communication software. Does yours air-borne your own mice displays the set of views of view — in said 3D — and generates sound effects, while Globe's mainframe coordinates your movements with everyone else's.

There are so many remarkable features to



Air Warbler that it's hard to know where to start. It's a big game — up to 100 people-can-play at once — and runs on an established network using socket-processing power. In fact, it's not restricted to one machine: Macintosh, Amiga and SF games can all join in, with a PC version in the offing too. It allows teaming up either for lumber lines or fighter squadrons, and combat with real game-nations.

Probably the most remarkable thing of all is that Air Warbler runs on a ring. There's still no similar real-time game in the States, and no sign of one this side of the Atlantic either. Some estimates put as many as a quarter of a million modems in the country as the first mainstream entertainment use for the thing — which Air Warbler surely is — can only be good for so long.

Networked networks.

Sound familiar? Well, it isn't. The satellite revolution is already coming in Europe, and with the humbling price of receiving dishes - watch out for Junostech's pro-baiting dish on a skyline near you - satellite signals could soon be one of the cheapest means of sending mass data. By bouncing its outgoing data off a geostationary satellite, the dish opens the cosmic battlements up wide enough for net business but thousands of players.

THE OUTER LIMITS

If games don't even top at the outer edges of the atmosphere, that doesn't mean they're absolutely untested. At any rate, computing across the galaxy is unlikely to ever be feasible. You could send a Mac with Air Mouse software, a modem and communications equipment out on a Voyager-type interstellar probe but it wouldn't get you very far. Even if it was found by aliens who could read English, and even if they could understand the concept of neural control, they still couldn't play. At the speed of light, the round-trip time for one other control movement - and the Game Port reply would be at least eight years - and there's assuming them intelligent.



English-speaking, slow-flying life is the next step in the system to us. (Photo: Contour)

The net's quite as trivial as it sounds even within the confines of the planet, communication delays caused by the light barrier could become significant. The case-round-trip time for an Australian player's messages to a US games host computer would be over a tenth of a second, and that's within the limits of human reflexes in other words. The antipodes games could be as noticeable but very slight disadvantage.

GAMING DOWN

How fast you've checked out the games that already tick to each other, the games that really could and the technology behind the whole thing, are yours! But if you could play a game with hundreds of other real human beings, cooperating or competing on the behavior of power states, with state of the art graphics and responsive controls, wouldn't you buy a GEM system? And if you don't even need a modem to go online in the years time or so, wouldn't you get involved then? Look at it anyway you like, the net got to be the best of games for the Nineties - and what a decade it'll be! ■

MULTI-PLAYER UNDER THE SKIN

Is all the technology only just catching up with what arcade games have been doing for years? Take a look at these, and ask yourself if some of the most influential computer and console two and three multi-player games in desktop.

PONG

The grand-daddy of all arcade games, Nolan Bushnell's classic but trivial game was a two-player effort mostly, one suspects, because that was the easiest way of doing things. (Anyone remember it cropping up as the first-round competition on *Cosmoquest*?) Ping did well for Nolan's fledgling company Atari, but the single-player sequel *Break-Out* did better. Whether this was down to *Break-Out*'s greater complexity and better game structure or just the age old multi-player problem of finding an opponent, the video game is a fair vs machine contest and even as the way ahead.

SPACE INVADERS • DEFENDER •

SCORABLE

When coin age pulled out of the post-Pong lull, they were single-player with a vengeance. In *Space Invaders* and the shoot-'em-ups that followed, there was only one point of view a player or controller in the room, hence ping. Putting humans in control of the massed armies just wouldn't make sense. The games were based on inequality, and the heart of the inequality was that the bad guys were extraordinarily stupid. The invaders plopped down the screen like robots marching into a tank battle. Who on Earth would take on a cannon-fodder role like that? Even *Missile Command*'s great bonus, the *Diagrams* of the invader scene, were flat in a tank compared to a human opponent.

TRON • BATTLEZONE • POLE POSITION



ANTHONY

Large of competition on equal terms. Some times this meant very simple two player talk with the computers both appearing on one plan-view screen - *Tron* and *Tank Pong* are obvious examples here - but more interestingly it could also extend to taking on a few real-equipped computer opponents.

In *Battlezone* the two guys had a very similar to you, and you were in total destruction and battle alone. *Pole Position* wasn't quite so free-out, since your racing car always took the damage in a crash no matter who caused it. Be that as it may, both

of these games could have been the basis for networked real-time games - if the console companies had thought it commercially viable, that is.



ELITE

If games the flat screen were a 4-player game with micro-processors for opponents, that was doubly true of

Elite. The vast space combat and trading games went out of its way to make the player feel like just one of many, in a game structure that owed him no special favours. Combat was tough, and until you'd really learned the ropes you could quite easily die in a one-on-one dog fight.

That was not all. *Elite*'s trading structure suggested market prices that fluctuated with supply and demand, with enough players buying, selling, using and destroying goods, those market forces might well auto-naturally.

Though combat strength may have a lot to do with *Elite*'s success in the shops, it's a fair bet that the game's multi-player feel also sold a lot of copies. And that in turn suggests how popular a truly multi-player online version of the game would be.



HEAD-OVER-HEELS

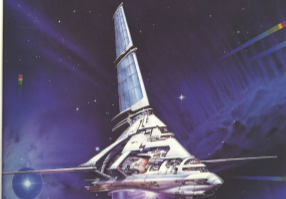
Intriguingly enough, this Jon Remman-Riemer Dromedary epic has the same of an

amazing multi-player game even though it's very definitely a one-man show. Time and again, obstacles require careful co-operation between the amiable Head and his athletic counterpart Heels. Imagine how interesting the cool-guy if Head and Heels were controlled simultaneously by separate players!

In the room illustrated, Head forces Heels across to the far side of the room and then Heels returns the favour. Suppose that Heels could accept the ball across the firing line and then change of on his own, leaving the hapless Head on the side - or worse still, sending his halfway across! Would it benefit him in the long run? Would Heels need Head's help later on? Could Head average himself?

That's just a two-player example. With 16 bots, buddy players in a castle, the problems could be much larger and the potential for interaction much greater. Beginners might need to learn up-to-table obstacles. But experienced players could manage single-handed. Large teams might break into just factions where there's not enough treasure to go round, or where obstacles limit the numbers who can get past the trap-doors, disappearing rocks or whatever.

STARGLIDER 2



At the beginning there was a void, a Mark
empty without title or purpose,
and ARGONAUT Software looked upon the void
and said...

LET THERE BE ELEGANT!
... and there was STARGLIDER.

And as time progressed, the art of these clever men
and women became known unto the
ORIGINALS, and they rejoiced.

And they said...

**LET US CREATE THE ULTIMATE
WAR GAME TO HAVE IN MINDS ON OVER,
ALL OTHER PROGRAMS IN THE
UNIVERSE.**

... and there was a blinding light and the Earth spun
on and trembled.

And as the fire diminished and the vapours cleared,
the fruits of their labours emerged from out of the
fog.

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STARGLIDER 2 . . .

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First out of the barnyard are Big Apple, Big name, big company, hot wallets... but what's behind the hype, and what games are they going to be throwing under our noses?

To start with, they've got some strong backing, namely that parent company Freshworks Holdings, whose 25 or so companies (who range from adult cover manufacturers to video distributors and obscure licensing) managed to turn over a whopping \$42m last year. To get the apple rolling Freshworks have set aside \$5m for the first part, of which some \$400,000 has been set aside for advertising.

Big A are hoping to bring a little piece of New York into the homes of games players country-wide with the introduction of two new new labels. Top of the range games will be released under the title Broadway games - these are likely to be 3-bit products



FRUITFUL SUE. There's always room in the market for another trader - and it shouldn't be too long before Big A's enter...

HOT

Nexus have bitten the dust, Piranha have gone to the wall, and small independents are feeling the pinch - but new software houses are still moving in for the kill. Just who do they think they are? And have they got what it takes to succeed where others have failed?

that Terry Ashton describes as 'something special'. At the cheaper end of the scale there will be the Broadway range of original budget titles. (That means haven't been forgotten either because most of Big A's games will be converted and released on the Microdrive Transfer label. Outside, only a couple of the forthcoming titles will be written specifically for the larger machines.)

Whether we'll see one of Big A's first ventures in licensing on the 16-bit machine remains to be seen, but you can bet your bottom dollar 8-bit owners will soon be able to hold their heads up as a computer game hit.



Big Apple's Edge!

of those cute 'n' cuddly Colossian rams (you know, the ones from the T.V. ads who are soooooo cute) across the seas, and if this first droid button-up one is complete in their own Olympus where events include racing up the grapevine, jumping over accidental bowls and pepper pots etc. It all sounds a bit wacky, but if Big Apple can keep up-and improve upon the standard set by Coper then, games players should have something to look forward to.

Terry Ashton, Big A's M.D. hopes the first twelve titles will collectively sell some 250,000 units across the five formats (C, Amiga, PC, C64 and Spectrum). Another CPC owner won't get a look in though, unless another company wish to do the conversion.

GALLIC INVASION

French software house Uta isn't certainly lower low to lead the numbers of their development unit - they focus there in a 19th century chateau surrounded by 700 acres of grounds and woodlands. It was to



It also gives us time to wait! (It's a bit of a struggle in the shops and back every location though...)

have that Uta isn't recently invited journalists from as far afield as Finland, England, Italy, Sweden, Spain and Germany to see their new range of games and enjoy the odd sleep at the lovely chateau (but they're getting up to release across Europe).



See Last

HOUSES

have
parents
were
Just
they
hers



The screen of *The Knight*.

The Soft were founded in 1986, and have released some 20 titles since a number of British firms do. They've made little impact on the European scene as a whole (who considers *Snake* on the C64?); Company

president Yves Gallotard believes that's all about to change with the release of three new but a dozen or so titles.

Flagship of the Autumn range will be *Iron Lord*. The game's set in the age of chivalry when the Lords of the Kingdom of France engaged over a great number of sieges and lived in fortified castles (and were often well understood) and side around. Knocking people off horses with good long pony sticks. As a young knight you'll be sent your father in the which is full of



Company President Yves Gallotard points to the screen as one of his father's best designs.

"We are now ready to launch properly into the little market because we can release our products on all formats - including the Spectrum. Surely the French don't still think of us as a sister of Spectrum owners?"

adventure-type games, which is full of smooth sequences such as arm-wrestling, archery and sword fighting. Other titles were *Italy* - is we see the Countess's Party tags and the graphically stunning *S.A.T.*

But we are trying the European sales of these new titles will help change their name up from some days last year to \$100 this year. That's not too unrealistic either when you consider the fact we are 300 distributors in France - handling such



Iron of the Knight's approximately 20 characters.

selected adventure formats as *Exterminator Arts*, *Mission: Impossible* title.

VETERANS...

One of the oldest British software publishers is *Paris Software* - they're the people behind *Adventure* (of *Football Manager* fame) and *Exterminator Games*.

Paris have been around for some six years and have, up till now, kept a fairly low profile. That could all change over the next few months as Paris release their next few games - but not a *Adventure* *Football Manager 2*. The game was a tremendous



Exterminator Games' *Exterminator*.

success in its 8-bit format and now 16-bit football management fans will be able to join in the fun. Paris don't believe in the strength of the 16-bit scene and are gearing up to launch a three-task Amiga game called *The Knight II* will be released under the Exterminator label and is based on the stage musical written by Michael Sutz, Roddy Wylie and Morley Geo. The game's a mix of events and adventure elements and features some of stunning backgrounds.

Also from Paris will be several games produced by Maxwell Technology, the company headed by John Maxwell (ex-Microsoft) and David Jones (creator of the *Magik* flight series at games, who's last offering looks likely to be a game called



One of the backgrounds from *The Knight*.

Exterminator released under the Exterminator label. *Exterminator* is a steady one-dimensional two-player game with a single of *Exterminator* features and a lot more besides. Richard Sharpey (Paris's P.D. Manager) is confident Paris are going to continue to be a major contender in the market place over the next few months, and if the veterans we've seen at *Exterminator* and *The Knight* are anything to go by, he could well be right.



Paris's P.D. Manager Richard Sharpey outside the Paris office.

"I feel there's few people about with original ideas or ambition - the market's become a bit stale. There's a lot of the market that anyone with original ideas and product can take them up should be able to do."

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THE PROFESSIONALS

PART ONE

CODING

What exactly goes into a game? What goes on behind the scenes at Britain's biggest software houses – and can YOU join in? In the first instalment of an epic series, ACE takes a look at people who spend all day messing around with computer games – and get paid for it!

The month just to get you in the mood, we're going to take a look at the real 'stock troops' of the games world – the designers and coders. They may rely on others to provide the graphics, music or sound effects, but these really just feed into a framework of gameplay ideas and code. It's the game over that entertains – or doesn't, as the case may be – so it's these people's work that's crucial to a game's success.

In the good old days, a game was normally a one-man effort. The same person designed the game, drew the sprites, composed the music and wrote the code that implemented all these. And control with all that, but very soon games might then produce the entry art, organise the duplication of tapes and market the finished game by mail order.

Nowadays, things are far more specialised. Artists create graphics for a game they won't code; using utilities they don't write, while programmers work to the game designs of people who don't actually know how to program. It's a sign that the industry's maturing, and it means that even if you never create machine code, you'll have ideas or you won't dare to save your life, you could still find a niche for yourself in the games business.

THE TASKS

The work is still for the same person to code and design a game, or for the design to be shared between the coder and one other person – often the games graphic artist. The big advantage of the kind of approach is that the coder can tailor the design to what is done as possible. This allowed of software houses specialising game features that the artists conceived physically cannot manage!

Games designed entirely by computer

programmes are now basic to a number of studios. For one thing, most programmers have ideas of their own which they'd like to build into games they're working on. For another, you can't produce a design for a featureless marketplace without some sort of programming background, there's no point specifying incredible graphic effects like those in *Demolition* unless you know they're possible, and that takes a good deal of coding knowledge.

CONTACTS ARE VITAL

As with all businesses, in game studios, it's not just what you know but who you know. Contacts are vital: say, Pacemaker designers and graphics artist Nigel Thompson. They give you much more flexibility. If you don't know anyone in the business, you'll not be stuck in a corner.

Friends in the industry can help you to look at different ways. For codes the demands are particularly high, most of them are

HARD GRAFT

Andrew Henson, head of Henson (now Henson Consultants, reputedly the UK's oldest surviving games software house).

The thing people don't realise about games programming is how hard it is. It's far more difficult than it seems.

People write some bits of code at home, get a few shapes moving around on screen and think 'hey, this is easy'. They totally underestimate the amount of work that goes into a game.

When you're done what you think is 90% of the game, you're probably only about halfway through. People don't realise things they don't really know about. 'Sound effects? That wasn't too much for a day or two... Music? That wasn't too long either... Graphics? That'll be easy...'. How sound effects actually take a week or two, music's more like three weeks and as for graphics, those really do cause problems: you've got to leave space for them, and negotiations between graphics artists and programmers over this can get very lively.

Once you've got everything working on the first few levels but you're committed to giving the game at least eight, you get problems again. You start running out of memory so you've got to compact all the data down, and that takes time. And even when all that's done, it takes something like three weeks to get the difficulty tuning right!

Creating a game takes months of hard graft, but it's a lot of fun too. I'd definitely recommend it as a career to anyone who's interested. You can't see more than five years ahead in this business, but there's plenty of work to go round for that long.





Matt Reynolds



Screenshot

'EXPECT £10-£15000...'

Just how much cash is there in programming? Software houses are very reluctant to talk about sums of money on the record, but here are a few pointers from the people who sign the cheques:

Programmers and other software professionals are paid either a fixed sum or royalties. Authors or designers of original games usually get royalties - including royalties at a lower rate for reissues conceived by someone else - while commission programmers and others will more likely get a fixed sum.

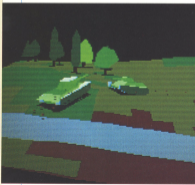
Royalties vary considerably according to the type of game and the software house making the deal, but a typical or generous figure would be around 10% of the software house's net takings (i.e. what they get back from sales, not what customers pay for them.) You can also work out some kind of split for fixed sums - at the end of the scale, at any rate.

For an original 3D and fringe game to be sold at full price (i.e. £20 plus or take small charge) you could expect £10-15,000.

For an original 8-bit budget game, you'll probably get rather less than £2,000 from a quality house - or at best as a few hundred pounds at the very bottom of the heap.

The middle ground, and in particular the 3-bit full price market, is very available at the moment: some houses are holding firm here while others are losing confidence in the 8-bit machines. How well a game sells just seems like pot luck at times: 'It really is Russian Roulette,' one software house told us.

Add this to all the other factors affecting the programmer's fee and it's small wonder that software houses disagree on what the going rate is. It does seem however that out of the £10 you might pay for a full-price game, the money getting back to the game's creators would be around the 80p-£1 mark. Do you still think piracy doesn't really hurt anyone?



Screenshot

well-tought programmer, but there's a great deal you can learn about the finer points of coding style just from talking to others. Books specifically on game-writing are very rare indeed, so (other than looking over people's games apart) these informal conversations are the only alternative to re-inventing the wheel.

It's not just ideas or rules of thumb that other coders can pass on to you. Snippets - crucial sections of code for doing frequently-needed tasks - often change hands between programming friends. If there's a lot of us going on within a circle of programmers it can soon everyone a great deal of time - and time, for a freelance programmer, is quite a really money.

For a designer, the main advantage of working a slightly different selling your design ideas to a software house can be pretty difficult if you're on your own: approach them to one half of a programming/design team on the other hand, and you're in a much stronger position.

But here are you going to build up these contacts in the first place? The best way is probably by looking in-house at a software company for a while - Magi did a full-year stint at one obscure games house from MicroGen - before selling yourself up as a freelance.

IN-HOUSE AND FREELANCE

There's no doubt about it: selling your time as an in-house programmer is a great way to learn the ropes. It may not pay really well, but while you're developing your own programming style and seeing how the industry

work you'd be hard put to earn a living by yourself as a freelance developer. Software-house boss Andrew Brown admits that in-house experience is invaluable to building teams. "You may think you're being given lots of work to do, making tapes and writing boring manuals and that, but you actually get a tremendously broad base of experience from that kind of thing. Also you're seeing other people with game development problems that you'll probably run into yourself later on, so it can be a big help that way."

The main thing you can get out of in-house work is a back channel - a series of good to at least competent games that form a portfolio to show prospective clients. It is an industry where you're measured mostly by what you can do, freelance commissions and advance payments go to whomever bids the most impressive-as-past-works.

Both commissions and advance payment to freelance studios, if you have to produce games on spec and only on selling them later, they're done or best finished, you headed for trouble. Few different ways that you have the complex problem of surviving until the games finished, and that usually means two to three months without cash coming in.

Second, you could well be left with a game title that's badly out of step with the times. A combination of the old Jaguar style driving shoot-up might command a high price at the moment. But software houses tend to jump on the bandwagons, but if you were in that writing one now it would probably be well over by the time you'd got it finished.

If freelancing isn't so many headaches, why do it? Is it really worth the hassle and pressure? Yes, definitely maintains a flexible lifestyle. It does pay better, but there's also the extra freedom and that's very important. If you work in-house you can be involved with incredibly varied development projects and you have to work on them, but as a freelance you can pick and choose.

HARDWARE NEEDS

Whatever skills you may have, you won't get very far if a code unless you're properly equipped. For starters of course you'll need the micro you're coding for - the target machine or its kernel - but you'll also need a development machine to actually type your program code into.

You could type your code in and test it on the same machine, but the slower things don't work very considerably. At the simplest level if you've got in out from your development tools, run a game test, read the monitor and record your code again, you're obviously wasting good coding time. These days there's often more to it than that, read you.

In a statement of the obvious, but game houses are designed and cost built to give good games performance. They don't necessarily have the high-quality keyboards, 486-class screen displays or fast, expensive disk drives you'd want your development machine to have. In the case

IN PERSPECTIVE

If the sums quoted sound absolutely vast to you, bear in mind that these are for original games - very time-consuming things to program - and that the £10,000+ figure might well involve four or five months' work including some very long hours. Also remember that the people getting these sums are self-employed, with all the vulnerability that implies: if the software house fails to pay up, they'll have to go to court. If the software house goes bust, they might not get paid at all, and if they're late with the game - even through no fault of their own - they may well lose large chunks of that fee in penalties. David Brown might be heading for the millstone (market herts to City and see it HCE would agree) that, but most games programmers in the UK won't be buying Porsche this year.

of the 8-bit machines, they're often not fast enough or development tools.

The main time-waster here is assembly - a vital preparation step that turns a machine-readable program into one that the target machine can run. Assembling an average sized Spectrum game could take several minutes if you're developing on a Spectrum, but on CT might do the same job in just a few seconds. The process of assembling a program on one type of micro and running it on another - properly known as cross-assembly - can speed things up enormously.

If you're using a cross-assembly system, you'll usually need additional hardware to let you transfer the assembled game code over to your target machine. With some combinations of development and target micro you could just pull the program disk out of one drive and into the other - but most time might like to know that this system is called a swappable - but it costs a small fortune would involve writing the code down on 80-115 cassettes.

Again, experience as an in-house programmer can count for a good deal here.

There's no substitute for learning the good and bad points of a system before you plunge your own money into hardware even if you don't like the set-up of the company you're at, even that should give you pointers on what to look for. Also, of course, the industry from year to year is slow to change and will provide the cash for that freelance equipment.



Book

THE GOING RATE?

Herbert Wright of Logotron, and formerly Telecompsoft.

"You can get in a really deal and get an advance on the royalties, or you could go for a long run - though that's usually just for conversions, or games where the software house tends to a complete specification to work in. Normally you won't have to return any of the advance, even if the game flops and the royalties fail to cover it. Software houses would only normally specify a returnable deposit if you don't have a track record, or had a history of delivering late."

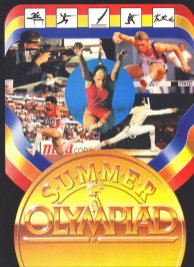
"For a single format 16-bit game, we wouldn't normally pay an advance or lump sum that we use the figures. That doesn't mean that we never do, but the same bells start to ring when we get that high. We're talking about a good game too, for this kind of money. The sort of thing that would get 250k in an ACE review."

"It's normally done in us with games, we'd likely like to see a completely finished product. We're also quite happy to look at a complete specification for a game, along with a demo of some aspect of it so that we know the people are up to the task; for example, if you come to us with an idea for a vertically scrolling game we'd want to see a spec explaining why this would be the best game ever, and a demo of some really good scrolling routines."

"We'd also be interested in a spec on its own, if it was brought to us by someone with a really good track record. If it was brought to us by an unknown, we'd be unlikely to accept it - and if we did, it would be on a very low advance or royalties only. It would be a much bigger risk, you see."



SUMMER RELEASES



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SCREEN TEST

We're a hard bunch to please when it comes to games and don't give away 900 wings lightly. In fact this month we haven't been able to bring ourselves to give it to any of the new software. Boy, though were these some near misses...

Heater Skelter from the programmers of Impact is a marvelously playable game featuring a bouncing ball trying to stomp a few monsters. There's Flight Simulator III, a glorious-looking program on the PC - but is it just a game?

It's been a special month for Updates, with a horde of new versions needing to be looked at in light of what went before.

Not forgetting a tough road race between Roadblasters and Fire and Forget. Then there's Night Raider, the President is Missing, Sky Chase, Where Time Stood Still... well go on, get reading.



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THE RATINGS

HOW they're calculated...

If you buy a game, how much enjoyment do you get out of it, and for how long? Just think out the revolutionary PC (Priced) Interest Curve for the full story (Retail arcade games rate high on the curve, and then steadily fall off as you lose interest; powerful puzzle games may rise the crest of the curve for months - but the moment you solve them they'll come tumbling down; complex strategy games may stump you at first - but climb up the scale as you begin to appreciate the scope of the gameplay. And as for the ratings - they start low, stay low, and have nothing to go but down, down, down.

Once you've seen how long the game can hold your attention, all you need to glance at is the renowned ACE RATING. This is calculated according to the bits under the PIC. The Digger (1-5), the setter for the game, led in that our Solitaire ratings for IG Factor will give you brain cells a work-out; and Fun Factor - a measure of instant appeal and exhilaration as you dive into the game. And, of course, we use the Graphics and Audio effects too... for EVERY machine the game's available on.

WHY you can rely on them...

The ACE reviewing team covers a broad spectrum of computer entertainment talent. Andy Wilson - ACE's resident technical wizard - is as handy with a solder tank as he is with hexadecimal. Andy Smith wouldn't know hexadecimal from a hole in the ground, but can wipe the floor with any number of alien. Rod Lister prefers to reason with aliens - that's about all that counts with aliens - that's about all that counts with aliens. Rod Lister (see Personal Computer Games, Zap84 and Amstrad Action) has played more computer games than any sane person ought to. Add Dave Cooke (see POG and formerly columnist for magazine targeting him, Zap84 to 'Your Britain) and you've got age and experience as well as youthful enthusiasm.

Every game on the following pages has been seen by all of us. We compare notes, discuss differing opinions, and only then do we decide which to take that responsibility for getting our views across. What follows, then, isn't just a collection of casual comments, but the collective ACE verdict on this month's software. We've checked it out - now you can too.



● **CESSNA**—The main screen shows Chicago (at an angle as viewed from your cockpit), while inset windows show an outside view of your terrain and a top-down view of the ground below.

CESSNA fans will already know the deal, but the rest of you may have trouble coping with the concept behind this one. The name says it all: this is a simulator, not a game. If you want realistic flight or logical landing mistakes, look elsewhere. Sublogic makes that learning to fly a big enough challenge in itself, and after typing the program out or even just maneuvering through its numerous menus you may be inclined to agree with them.

The simulation centers around the Cessna 441, a single-engine propeller-driven aircraft commonly used by flying schools. What you do with the hardware is very much up to you. Search the entire US of A to explore (and you have had in Illinois, or the local airports of Chicago to fly round if you'd prefer a little local entertainment. But you'll have to master your own small town, and that's not a simple matter at all.

The number one problem most amateur pilots will have when coming new to the Flight Sim II Cessna is lack of power. Unlike the logics, Simions or Fighting Falcons that you might be used to, the

FLIGHT SIMULATOR

SUBLOGIC get in a spin

LANDSCAPES

Sublogic are very keen on modules - data files for extra planes, airports or whatever which can be loaded into their games separately - but their landscape data takes the top one step further. The good news is you fly your Cessna or Learjet around Western Europe, including a fairly detailed UK, or Japan, complete with a snow-capped Mount Fuji, or anywhere else Sublogic call a few games, presumably. The point is, these software disks will load into Java that you can fly on P16 over the home counties (or their Tokyo equivalents). Gimmicky perhaps, but fun!

BT - The P16 has Jet grade the sides over the Green Valley, so to what with a course for distance too.

Cessna cannot sustain a vertical climb and can only perform loops or inversions after a suitable preparatory dive. In general, you can't leave the slow ground without keeping it steady, worth on your throttle, not one you rely on opening the throttle up to get you out of trouble. These may be statements of the obvious as far as most day-croaker pilots are concerned, but they'll come as a nice shortening to anyone expecting otherwise as a PC user!

Don't despair. If you haven't got real-life grounds of points, you do have an instructor mode to teach you how to use what you've got. There's also a whole load of use-

RELEASE BOX

IBM PC Input only - prices vary

Other versions currently under development

IBM PC VERSION

The screen may appear small, but with a VGA and VGA adapter you'll see more of it than on graphics. For highest resolution see your hardware dealer. It's a pretty decent experience, and you can't load enough data to make it worse than the more advanced flying simulators.

GRAPHICS	3	PG FACTOR	3
RAM	2	FM FACTOR	3
ACE RATING 3.33			



PC (MSX) - Splitter and night view as part of a split-screen session from Princeton Bay, in the general direction of Dublin.

JET

CRAFT (PRO)

KTAR 5T • Sublogic, import only
 (prices vary) • ACE RATING: 500
 Amiga version reviewed
 Issue 15 • ACE Rating: 550

Leaning strongly towards fun rather than realism, JET has always scored a bit lower than its Amiga counterpart. The new ST version fails to escape this as its bit-by-bit graphics and simple-minded gameplay show again, making a poor impression.

To be sure, the lack of either Intuition or Falconism in the ST leaves the game with far less competition than its PC and Amiga equivalents. That's just



As well.

Enough, however, because Jet's low frame rate and poor controls would make it fairly easy for both to get lost.

The game's AI sounds wobbly too. The aerial combat's about as realistic as Asteroids and rather less satisfying, while the lack of a proper out-of-cockpit view makes it hard to believe you're really in a plane at all.

While not really a bad game, the one fails a long way short of both Sublogic and the ST's capabilities. Beyond what's missing and loadable languages are no substitute for realism, responsiveness or believable gameplay.

• Andy Wilson

ULATOR III



PC (MSX) - As your engine starts, your altitude drops; the level indicator shows a splitter plane over your own aircraft.

to flying theory in the manual, and a host of difficulty settings you can refer to give you an easy or hard or time as you want. And if that still leaves you feeling unsatisfied, you'll just have to wait to play the 3D alternative plane - the Zenair.

As RLB devotees will already know, the Zenair has got power coming out of its own. If anything, the wobbled plane just has too much power open the throttle up while in level flight and you'll lose control or break the thing up entirely. Other features added since flight files it means that, as with ordinary, retro planes, you can load up the game at a later stage - if Sublogic make them available that is.

In other planes, there are simulation options that make the flight simulator work

feel about unique, ratio navigation, night flying and even visible instability - could you cope with an engine failure as that approach? - help being things instead. You'll also get a lot of extra features, including a detailed and accurately modelled simulation, and that makes it very much one of the "should be" pilots. Gameplay is probably more a lot more fun with one of the many standard simulated games around.

• Andy Wilson

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



It's hard to think about learning, but dedicated fans will still be paying attention.



Do this level the quickest and fall into traps around all the top and bottom of the screen. This is really easy, as it's 500, but as you get used to it is an easier 1,000-point level.



Can't you get down that staircase in six seconds? It's easy if you are good at jumping. The bonus - otherwise, no bonus.



How about this? The tricky. You're got to get maximum height and be able to fall like leaves if you're going to do this in time. And to mention the tricky top level when you get near the monster.

HELTER SKELTER

AUDIOGENIC tumble for ya'

REMEMBER the breakout class project that was ACE 900 stated in here one? From the same programmer - John Dale, Adrian Stephens and Andy Roberts - comes another game in which simple, addictive gameplay is the order of the day. Can't be denied by appearance or simplicity though, because you'll

need your wits about you to cope with this one.

In structure the game is nice like Bubble Bobble. You play a screen of a time, in which you have to get rid of all the bubbles. The sounds are - though of course it's anything BUT that. The thing you control to do these steadily needs a 2-D bouncing ball.

However, it's no ordinary ball. Pressing the fire button will initially make it bounce, but the bounces after that depend on what happens after that depends on whether the ball is going up or down. If it's going up another press on the button will deepen the bouncing action. If it's headed down the bouncing force is increased to gain greater height.

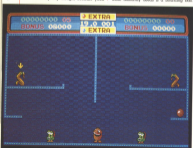
At first the control is difficult, but with a little practice the ball becomes very manoeuvrable - you can even stop it dead by a well-timed downward effect but as its about to bounce up.

The only other things on screen apart from the ball are platforms and monsters. The monsters come in several varieties, but they all behave identically. At the start of a screen one monster will be highlighted by a yellow circle. This is the one you have to bounce into, making it disappear. The circle will then appear above a different monster. All you have to do is hit them in the right order.

If you hit a monster that isn't covered it spins into two smaller ones. These can't be further subdivided, but they move faster and make clearing the screen an initial bit harder - particularly if they are trapped in a small space. You see what you hit an arrowed hole; the other one immediately starts to fall out, and if a confined space you can't help going into it spins and creating another pair of holes... and so on.

The game plays very in difficulty and its playability supports the number of tricky designs that the authors have come up with. Each screen has to be completed within a time limit, bonus points being awarded for time left and for using as few jumps as possible.

There are a host of cartoon objects that repeat randomly on the screen for the ball.



RELEASE BOX		
AMIGA 500	174 MB	OUT NOW
AMIGA 1000	174 MB	IMPENDING
IBM PC	Under Development	
©1988 Amiga, under license from		

4 The problem here is getting the monster to the right order. First you get the circle on the left, then one of the ones on the floor go back up for the other circle, and finally what's left on the floor because of getting the circle, though, as you'll be in trouble.



top of the screen across at all. It's incredibly difficult to get up to these heights and to maintain it if falling is fully dependent on to split the monitor of the bottom what you do.

to collect. If you can grab the spinning letters to get EXTRA 2 gold, you're extra life. Other bonuses are a level skip, extra time, time bonus, wonder boxes, and a bonus thing that makes all the monsters armored, and therefore invulnerable, or toxic.

As with *Impost* there is a screen designer. It's delightfully simple to use and you can track up playable screens in no time at all. There are 90 pre-programmed screens and you can create 66 more. You can save test programs at 28.2 if you want to.

The other special feature in the game is the ability to have two players at once. There's a specially programmed block of screens that can only be played and completed by two players, while the others have shorter time limits for two. This means that not only do the players have to co-operate to complete screens, but they are also in competition for points.

It's hard to appreciate a game like this without actually playing it. It's got the rest of addition that limited games and Subtitle-able titles. There is a screen designer and simultaneous two-player action as well and you've got something that's not only wildly addictive but can be kept fresh and interesting for a long time too.

■ **Red White**

ATARI ST VERSION

The graphics aren't going to get more detailed, but you can take yourself there in the screen designer if you attempt them. They do two a-screen-size, other size though. The screen designer is a complete single quality a input with graphics with the proper color.

GRAPHICS 5 HD FACTOR 5
SOUND 5 FM FACTOR 5
ACE RATING 85%

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



NOTE: Screen 100 means 100% interest. Only the screen of the screen designer and 1 game mode being interesting.

This is an absolute level of a screen that jumps and leaves off the top of the screen.

Level here and then the left edge of the platform, get that amount together.

Don't do this man are that.



There are about 100 screens, some of you.

Stand here for the first one and then...

Jump to here for the others.

This one is really easy for you to jump out the top of this one.

Then look over the top again for here...

Just finally look the top for a short time to get this pop. Precision jumping and speed are required if you're going to manage it that.



4 This is a screen across the monitor are present in a early when that you have to get over from the right side then the left, back to the right, and then left again. If you split an unarmored monster while doing that you may get yourself desperately wounded before the two hours trying to elaborate something. I look plays a part in what side they become present after the initial mass up.



ROADBLASTERS

US GOLD put their foot to the floor

THIS is another in a long line of drive-em-up-ies in which you plot a heavily-laden car along routes with all sorts of moving and stationary hazards.

In this game you face other cars, motorcycles, roadside gas tanks, slippery patches and mines - together with fast-dissipating fuel supplies. A gauge at the bottom of the screen tells you how much fuel you have left in your tank and reserve tanks, and this can be replenished by passing over the red and green spheres that appear in the road. Otherwise you have to rely on completing sections of the route to get refueled. But not before you reach the end and if you've only reached the emergency finish and you advance to the next harder level.

Early the control method, and you'll notice it is slightly unusual. Keep the gas printing straight ahead as you fly at variable speed towards the next finish and you'll find the car stops in the middle lane regardless. You don't have to steer round bends at all. The only time you'll need to point the car in any other direction than straight ahead is when you want to change lanes or shoot something by the roadside. This seems a little unrealistic at first, but in fact helps the gameplay quite a bit.

To add a bit of depth to the game there is a collectible weapons feature wherever an

object descends towards you near the start of each level and drops a weapons pod onto your road. To activate the weapons while driving, you look on the crystal and fire. However, though benefits such as the extra fuel tank don't last for ever, as we said only when you rest. Get blown up, and you enter weapons-a-gone when you restart.

Speedsters is nothing special graphically, but overall control and playability is great for the type of game. On later levels the gameplay gets quite tough, but not to the point where it becomes unplayable - and with fifty levels to get through you're going to have to be pretty damn tired to finish it.

■ **Paul Lister**

RELEASE BOX		
COM128	£19.95	£14.95
EPIC	£19.95	£12.95
AMS	£19.95	£14.95
STARDI	£19.95	£12.95
AMIGA	£19.95	£12.95



064 VERSION

Without, properly, all game-play effects for a show on low feature game. Game is actually quite effective since it's used in the right places in the game being on.

GRAPHICS: 6 IS FACTOR: 3
 MUSIC: 6 FUN FACTOR: 7

AGE RATING 654



MAN POWER But also - you've just reached the end of level 4. THAT'S the start of level 5.

COLLECTING effects they are good. The road glimmers occupation in the world, but it can prove one of the most dangerous when you're at the wheel at Throttle Mania, the ultimate wheel.

The cabinet actually makes Omega-Drome, essential for your first wheel drive, together with the you change lanes easily because blowing up tanks, mines, helicopters and bunnies - and getting blown up a few times, possibly, for that matter.

Choose the level you want to play on, pick one of six levels (located as a map of the world) and get ready to go. There is no relationship, apparently, between the high-turbo V16 engine's appetite for fuel and the speed gauge lowering it, as your best bet is to full charge along the twisting and turning roadway, occasionally let out to give yourself the best chance of scoring okay.

It's not easy to crash, but it is probably inevitable it's about getting blown up several times en route. The hazards cease at you very fast indeed, needing instantaneous reactions and large amounts of luck is essential. Never mind, you can die as often as you like - it's not that the important thing.

There is a two-player mode with the

AERIAL control is a moving back-step for Robert Sabatini, Seattle Washington's Concrete No. 5 diary, we don't know which movement, but the play's soundtrack is the best thing to give you in the one or two-player game.

The controls are quite simple. You are flying one of several different jet aircraft over a flat green landscape marked with a grid, as is your opponent. The idea is to shoot him down before he gets you. Nothing more, nothing less. You get destroyed by a loaded warhead if you get hit by too many enemy bullets, or enemy missiles. It's the ground is okay too far outside the grid.



Power 10 get one 100 in the night. Before you can get some pretty heavy combat. It looks like your number is 10.

RELEASE BOX		
AMIGA	£19.95	£12.95
STARDI	£19.95	£12.95

No other versions planned

FIRE AND FORGET

TITUS triple-turbocharged

And forget, and it's one with a difference. The second player takes charge of a helicopter - the Thunder Cloud - which flies above the oil. Take care though. The fuel gauges aren't green and blue vehicles and the Thunder Cloud can only fill up from the green ones. Conflict with the blue circles will make it explode!



AMIGA - These speedy helicopters come and go in a flash. Keeping them supplied is a matter of life.

The game's intention is generally very good, and the impression of speed is reasonable, although attacking tanks and helicopters close is rather fiddly and are distinctly two-dimensional. In fact the 'false geometry' is rather two-dimensional, because apart from steering and shooting there's really not much else to do. The graphics will get you playing initially, but once that's worn off there's little to keep you going.

RedLaser

STARDUST VERSION

Not quite so good. I can't play a game. Don't expect an instant fix. This appears to be the same game.

GRAPHICS 6 **IQ FACTOR** 1
AI/LOGIC 6 **FUN FACTOR** 6

ACE RATING 6/10

AMIGA VERSION

There's little to suggest to hint to its success. The graphics are impressive and the sound good, but there's little going on.

GRAPHICS 6 **IQ FACTOR** 1
AI/LOGIC 6 **FUN FACTOR** 6

ACE RATING 6/10

RELEASE BOX

STARDUST **ON 30th** **OUT NOW**

AMIGA **ON 30th** **OUT NOW**

PC and S&T versions under development

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A good attraction title, but its appeal is much shorter lived.

SKY CHASE

Get shot down by IMAGEWORKS

The screen is divided into two identical mirror images, one for each player. Four instruments show you how much fuel you have, your altitude, attitude, thrust and speed. A rudimentary map shows the position of both you and your opponent.

The opponent can be either the computer - graded as difficulty from easy to ACE -

or another human. The computer opponent is no pushover, especially on the higher levels, but perhaps the fun aspect of the game is its two-player option, which really is terrible fun.

Each player can select his aircraft and armaments independently (you select both if you're playing against the computer).

though it has to be said that you're not going to notice much difference in flying properties between the aircraft actually. Don't try to put one over on the computer by giving it the power dart.

Visually, Sky Chase has looked appealing, but as a combative dogfighting game it has little competition, but see the multi-player games feature this too. It's a long way from a proper flight sim, but a minimal game deal, an exploration of strategy element and essentially zero geometry - but actually being an opponent with IMAGEWORKS' attention is arguably worth all of those.

RedLaser

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Even the high computer opponent gets an unpredictably short-lived post-launch boost.

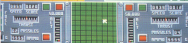
AMIGA VERSION

Demerely graphics, it says the least. They're not that bright, but it's good, with a couple of effects and that's about it. Don't miss it though.

GRAPHICS 6 **IQ FACTOR** 4
AI/LOGIC 6 **FUN FACTOR** 7

ACE RATING 7/10

MS-DOS version F&S Films. It's a sliding scale of five thousand miles an hour rather than a gut melt chance to launch an aircraft vehicle.



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Advanced Dungeons & Dragons
HEROES OF THE LANCE

HEROES
OF THE LANCE



Advanced Dungeons & Dragons

COMPUTER



Advanced Dungeons & Dragons

COMPUTER PRODUCT

POOL OF RADIANCE

FANTASY ROLE PLAYING

Located on the northern shore of the Incessant in the forgotten Bayles, the fabled city of Pitan had been overrun by monsters led by a diabolical mage. Your quest restores the identity of this evil place.

Pool of Radiance adheres faithfully to the legendary Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™ fantasy role playing system. No detail is missed including 4 player characters, computer controlled non-player characters, the Adventure Journal packed with history, maps and clues and the Transition Wheel that converts French and Germanic writings to English. The gameplay is exhilarating and the graphics are of the cut-est, pixel art display, 3D perspective, tactical combat display and personalized weapons selection complete to form the ultimate breakthrough in fantasy roleplaying computer games.



IBM PC/XT
640K byte
CGA/EGA
CGA/EGA
CGA/EGA
CGA/EGA
CGA/EGA
CGA/EGA



ALTERNATE REALITY

DATASOFT in a world of their own

BEING plucked down to the middle of an alien city absolutely scares it—a pretty grim prospect, but then finding that

the city is inhabited by outcasts, thieves, scoundrels, skeletons, ghosts and the like would make a strong case for it.

The fantasy role-playing game takes place in the city of Telcora Densin, where you've been dumped by an alien spaceship. The first thing you must do is step through an energy field into the city, and as you do you set the level of your various characteristics, such as Stamina, Charisma and Strength. These levels, or stats, are displayed along the top of the screen during play, and change accord-

ing to how you fare when dealing with the city and its various inhabitants.

You need money (get a job at the tavern, accept, whenever, or watch a corpse, let alone flourish in Telcora Densin. Take a compass for playing purposes, so that each hour passes in four minutes.

Alternate Reality is tough from the start and complex enough to keep you going for quite some time. If there is a villain to be battled against, it's that maybe it's a little hard to get into. Curious that with some other repetitive and idiosyncrasy and you have a game whose presentation is the weakest link.

—Neil Leifer

RELEASE BOX		
AMIGA	019.999	OUT NOW
IBM PC	024.999	OUT NOW

AMIGA VERSION			
Different graphics are on display when in this mode, where the graphics are not yet fully defined after the release game.			
GRAPHICS	3	IS FACTOR	3
AUDIO	3	FSM FACTOR	3
AGE RATING T49			

IBM PC VERSION			
The graphics are unimpressive, while the sound (if you can call it that) is more exciting than usual. The video graphics take a while to emerge.			
GRAPHICS	5	IS FACTOR	3
AUDIO	3	FSM FACTOR	3
AGE RATING 713			



PC: Be sure by checking the level to get some extra stats, but how much aren't most against a predator, that the stats have the right will need them to use being needed in an approach-built.



FOOTBALL MANAGER 2

Can ADDICTIVE manage it again?

IMAGINE the time, glory and the money you'll receive when you've led your football team to the top of the list division. That's what you're striving to do, anyway, but should you manage to win the league cup or the F.A. cup at the very end, it's time as the value set it.

So close to you to make the decision—should you buy a new star, or sell an ageing one? Can you afford to do either? And as soon as you've got your full complement of players, you've got to decide the team line-up. Do you need four strikers and just a couple of midfield players? Or a



Amiga - Getting up your team formation.

midfielder need a midfielder?

As you have to play each team in your division as well as cup matches, logging your team around and only playing your best men can be tricky (but that's not just in the game). The statistics are of your, and since you've made them you get to watch the outcome in the form of high-

lights of the subsequent matches.

As your team improves, sponsorship money starts to pour in and you gate receipts swell, but prone to be a poor manager and you'll start sliding down the league slope toward bankruptcy.

Football Manager 2 is definitely best left to the side of the game. The match highlights are badly animated, and it's hard to see how any of the value bills added to F.M.2 make it any better than the original version.

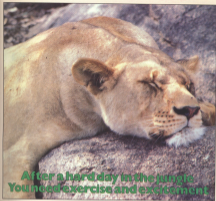
—Andy Bell

RELEASE BOX		
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AMIGA	019.999	OUT NOW
MSX	019.999, 014.999	OUT NOW
SPCC	019.999, 014.999	OUT NOW

ATARI ST VERSION			
To get points in the 300-400 range (only in 300-400)			
GRAPHICS	3	IS FACTOR	4
AUDIO	3	FSM FACTOR	3
AGE RATING 392			

AMIGA VERSION			
No actually there is a 100% score			
GRAPHICS	3	IS FACTOR	4
AUDIO	3	FSM FACTOR	3
AGE RATING 392			





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TERRORISTS have kidnapped the president of the United States and the leaders of ten European nations as they entered a top secret vault in Lichtenstein. Your task is to track down the perpetrators and release all of the hostages.

You've been appointed as a special investigator and have the vast resources of the CIA and its computer data banks at your disposal. The quest begins as you listen to the audio tape included in the package. It includes messages from the President and the kidnappers, background information on the island. More code transmissions and other messages and information. Pay attention to everything on the tape, as it will provide several clues to get the investigation under way with.

THE PRESIDENT IS MISSING

PLUS...
Check out page 77 for the DEFINITIVE AGE guide to CRIME (and how to solve it).

Kidnap caper from COSMI

Two things to remember before booting up the game are that everything takes place in real time and secondly that you can't restart. The reason that decisions taken are irrevocable - or don't go off fast-paced creating where you come across. Logging on involves codewords and numbers and you're got to give the terminal properly each time in order to avoid that irritating re-terminated condition.

There are four main options available: files, reports, codes and search. The first two will be the most frequently used as you try to obtain information to continue the investigation. The files are split up into eight sub-se-

RELEASE BOX		
IBM PC	01/88	OUT NOW
CD-ROM	01/88	OUT NOW

ctor: subject photographs, document records, case files, audio, reports and statistical.

Subject the reports, pictures and statistical details on all the characters possibility is enormous. The photographs files are surveillance pictures of various scenes that may contain crucial information, but it's



OS - This is the photographic intel you get as one of the many thousands of T-terrorists during the investigation.

L.A. CRACKDOWN

Smack attack from EPYX

KUMQUAT is a computer game being used as a cover for drug smuggling. As an experienced police investigator you're got to take a mobile car under your wing and try to bust the city-wide operation. The layout by choosing from four possible routes the one you think is most suited for the job. Be carefully done all the leg work and evaluate conversations with other characters, so your choice can be informed. The screen is split into several windows (some showing the scene route or, what the route is doing, a floor plan of the building and a menu of conditions). These vary depending on your circumstances - the lower half of the screen can be replaced entirely by conversations or other information when it happens.

You start at headquarters and have of only one other location - 3 warehouses. You can get to it and the other locations (you'll discover using a van). Once you're there you can

RELEASE BOX		
IBM PC	01/88	OUT NOW
CD-ROM	01/88	IMMINENT

and the route is to search rooms, taking pictures or any relevant protocol. You can also get into a bug room if there is an telephone call. The floor plan of the building shows the route moving around it as it does, but doesn't show up anybody else who might be in there.

If the route comes across another character he will automatically leave a conversation with them. You can then identify the character and get some background detail on them. Some of the people are more classes in the instruction booklet. Naturally these are one-time things the route won't do. Like search a room, while someone else is present - but not staged



You're taking out the warehouse. The route is built, searching one of the rooms. The screen on a dial on the floor plan, and usually in the top-left corner.

up to you to spot it. Documents are official papers, including an account of the events during the kidnapping. Records are pieces of information from various sources, which will need cross-referencing in order to find out what's important about them.

The case files are created by you for filing information, while the reports are from agents that you have to assign. The case files are usually a list of who's on the case. The confidential documents can only be accessed with a special clearance - but that shouldn't be any problem to a special investigator.

Once you've been through all the information initially at your disposal, you might want to hire a large number of agents that need filtering up. To do that you can use one of

IBM PC VERSION

The package still in shipping hasn't made it onto a platform yet, but I offer you this warning - you're going to be in a world of...

GRAPHICS 7 HD FACTOR 8

AGEED 1/4 FUN FACTOR 3

ACE RATING 765

CGM VERSION

Features still in beta, but are worth the wait. The package is still in shipping, but the system is the best I've seen. Before you can get into the game, you'll have to wait for the beta version to be released.

GRAPHICS 7 HD FACTOR 8

AGEED 1/4 FUN FACTOR 3

ACE RATING 767



IC, a picture from the photographic file of the case of the President's abduction.

the eight agents assigned to you. The speed of their response will depend on the accuracy of the information you provide them with.

The two options you need use much of the case files and records. The coding section is where you can either delete messages yourself or give them to



It gets you absorbed early on and gives you a sense of what you're doing throughout the game.

the deciphering section. The console section is your link to the database, enabling you to search previous case details people for questioning.

All the information should lead you down several paths of inquiry, hopefully to a successful conclusion. There isn't a single correct answer, but once you've got as much solved as possible you have to contact Coats to details on the outcome of the investigation.

There's quite a lot of analysis that needs checking to do throughout the investigation, its absorbing stuff and interesting when you make discoveries. The game is slow, but it's not a game that you'll need to rush - it requires plenty of time and thought to get through.

• **Bob Filds**

*To The Special Investigator,
I will not say who I am,
because I am a coward. But
the whole world has been
dragged into chaos and I
want to do something. Believe
me when I say that every
day I'm trying to break loose if
I can. This is all I can do.*

The note accompanying the package is it - don't think it's the real one, usually either!



This is how a computer of some revealing evidence you've discovered.

It is hard to find new locations you're got to visit and the computer can follow subjects. They will show off a car and sometimes you will see them, from there on it's a matter of gathering enough evidence and clues to lead you to the next. This will take a long time and a lot of effort. It's a matter of collecting all the information and using interesting it to lead you to new clues.

Throughout the whole game you're got to make that the whole game enough and find that you don't want him to do that thing, otherwise he'll quit. Most of the game rely on you being in the right place at the right time to hit

it suspect or catch someone. Fortunately there isn't a strict time limit on the action, so you'll get those that are chosen to keep tabs, follow people or listen events.

All the information you gather in terms of pictures and tapped telephone calls can be reviewed at headquarters. This is also the place where the evidence can get some sleep.

Most of the investigation is purely a matter of leg work - there are no Columbus-like beaches here. There are a few unusual occurrences - you would think people would be a bit surprised to find someone wandering about that house without knowing of the case that has just had up getting locked out of places, but you can wonder into just about anything.

The game is well structured for working through, discovering information, and should prove a testing challenge.

• **Bob Filds**

IBM PC VERSION

The game requires no setup and no updates. The second edition is already on order except for the floppy.

GRAPHICS 7 HD FACTOR 8

AGEED 1/4 FUN FACTOR 3

ACE RATING 713



Here's a large file one of the characters and you will see an identification screen to give more information about them.



Look for the strength in reality that you get for the best game.

BETTER DEAD THAN ALIEN

ELECTRA go left, right and fire

NOT much of a choice really — steel or alien. And when it comes down to it you haven't actually got the second option. So it looks like you're going to spend a lot of time dying.

This is basically a left-right shoot-'em-up

with a few little extras. For a start the ship can move up and down the screen, but this is only of any use for the wave in every three — the aliens send two straightforward waves followed by an end-of-level guardian.

The waves are phalanxes of aliens that shuttle from side to side, (space) inside style, tumbling down the occasional bullet. They rise and then an alien detaches itself and descends towards you. Shoot any alien that

is green and you can collect capsules that triple firing, speed the score up, slow breathing, shields, extra lives and so on.

The final wave guardians were a serious force. When a miniature of Asteroid, guardians who take multiple hits and claim that you have to shoot every to nothing.

The action is all very predictable and adds nothing new to the pack of shoot-'em-ups that already exist. A simultaneous two-player option evokes progress scales, but doesn't add much to the action. The graphics aren't even great in front of most. Don't let the shoot-'em-up theme mislead you, it's a tough, interesting, challenge.

● **Bob Peck**

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	1995b	OUT NOW
AMIGA	1995b	OUT NOW
PC and CDi versions under development		



AMIGA: The central-level guardian forces down on you, just waiting to be blasted to bits.

ATARI ST VERSION			
The graphics are pretty nice in the Amiga version. They play exactly the same as well. The price is a bit higher and there are fewer.			
GRAPHICS	5	IQ FACTOR	1
AUDIO	5	FUN FACTOR	4
ACE RATING 455			

AMIGA VERSION			
The graphics are pretty nice in the Amiga version. They play exactly the same as well. The price is a bit higher and there are fewer.			
GRAPHICS	5	IQ FACTOR	1
AUDIO	5	FUN FACTOR	4
ACE RATING 455			



CHUBBY GRISTLE

GRANDSLAM's parking trouble

FAT cat gets attention while making wobbly turns, but in this platform puzzle you take control of just such a character. Your ultimate objective is simply to get better and better until you weigh a ton, so, eating all the food you can without getting fatter, equipped, times or otherwise done to.



AMIGA: That's you hanging from the side in the middle of the screen. That space below waits for your fight to start again when

The puzzle element consists largely of observing the normal patterns of the nearby structures out to get you, choosing the safest and most reliable route and deciding which could help — such as super-boost levels, wall-jumping boots or sprayer — you need to tackle the next problem.

Chubby Gristle is amusing and original, but the game style itself is old, and the game feels a little out of date. The story is just a bit of people talk. And finally, as so common and so dull as it is for those who stick with it.

● **Red Letter**

SPECTRUM VERSION			
Play along for the Amiga version, but don't see another input. Definitely heavier. It's about.			
GRAPHICS	5	IQ FACTOR	1
AUDIO	5	FUN FACTOR	4
ACE RATING 357			

RELEASE BOX		
AMIGA	1995b	OUT NOW
SPIC	1995b	OUT NOW
AMI	1995b, 1995b	OUT NOW
ATARI ST	1995b	IMMINENT
CDI/CD	1995b, 1995b	IMMINENT



There's a no-doubt access control, but, useful vignettes and vertical mobility. You move from screen to screen via ladders and walkways — there's no scaling. Whether it there's only one limit, so you can handle those towards more carefully.

AMIGA VERSION			
The graphics are low and you're not really seeing, though Don't's view is quite strong. Really don't level.			
GRAPHICS	5	IQ FACTOR	1
AUDIO	5	FUN FACTOR	4
ACE RATING 415			

AMSTRAD VERSION			
Not enough graphics and adequate sound. Strangely it's the same as the other versions.			
GRAPHICS	5	IQ FACTOR	1
AUDIO	5	FUN FACTOR	4
ACE RATING 355			

WHERE TIME STOOD STILL

Has OCEAN's clock stopped?

GLORIA, the, Clive and Janet have problems. How are they going to escape from the Rindlayson planet as when they've crash landed? Now it's your turn to take charge of Janet (actually not it's down to you to lead the others in safety. To complicate matters, the particular part of the world has been mutated in the age of Rindlayson's civilization.

The action all is 3D and is viewed through a large window that occupies the majority of the screen. Below the window, time lines indicate your character's strength, hunger, thirst and communication levels. You start the game controlling Janet, and whenever you direct him, the others will follow - don't move too fast, though, as you could lose other members of your team. And unless heard, but members of the team will wander around and try to make their own way off the planet - but chances of surviving are that, very slim.

Saving the game revolves around the careful use of objects found lying around the game area. These are picked up by clicking a mouse (which can be moved around the screen like Macintosh-style).

The objects in the ground are deployed in rows under other icons representing objects owned by the character. To pick up objects in

the ground, simply move the pointer to the icon representing the object and then press the "Use" character will use it (possibly, wander over to it and pick it up). All you need to do now is find a way of using the object correctly.

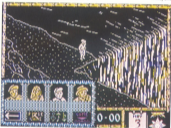
A good example of an object correctly used is when you need to cross the rope bridge to the right of the crash site. Care, when overweight, manages to fall part-way through the floor of the bridge and dies (in help, if you're not happy to climb the rope ladder, you'll now be able to rescue Clive by steering to use the rope - get the picture?)

Should you let Janet get killed, don't

panic - any of the others can take on the job of leader, but you obviously of survival are lessened.

When Time Stood Still an attractive game (and in appearance to Ocean's The Great Escape) and one that has to play. Once you've worked on the alternative cast, after a few games, have figured out how to keep all your team alive for a while at least, you'll find it difficult to put down (and you've completed it - which will take you a long time and give you a lot of fun). Once you have completed it though, its doubtful you'll play it again.

Andy Bell



How to save that waterfall!

RELEASE BOX

SNES	£7.99	£14.99	CD-ROM
CD-ROM	£6.99	£12.99	MANUAL
MSX	£6.99	£14.99	MANUAL
ATARI ST	£14.99		MANUAL



The crash site. Janet's role means that you have a load of rope, a bottle of something and a long-lasting sword.

SPECTRUM VERSION

The graphics are good, but the 3D perspective is a little confusing at first with. Gameplay is good (but annoying if time, especially when you're trying to move your character and someone keeps getting in your way). Check out separate game for 3D000 Spectrum file.

GRAPHICS	5	IQ FACTOR	4
RAMDISK	5	PLAN FACTOR	7

AGE RATING 7-10

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



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AGAINST it gives more on-line, never stops, cannot sailing forwards in circles... the end of the way and an unforgiving pop into the Atlantic Ocean, if you're not careful. No real in-game events or puzzles like *Quarantine* in *Star Trek* - or *Inter-angled World War Two* - might be, you need just jump in and expect to fly it straight away.

Your ultimate aim is to sink the national Bismarck in the exercise of simulation, tactics and strategy, but first you must learn how to fly the aircraft - needs more complicated by the fact that you must continuously switch from the plane view to the shipview, where you learn to adjust the throttle, altitude setting, undercarriage, fuel tank selection and so on. These are other critical factors.

Two further views can be selected - the rear gunner's and the navigator's. The rear gunner has a sight which may be moved about the screen to centre on an aircraft. Fortunately, enemy aircraft aren't terribly persistent, and will peel off before they've done major damage. The damage accumulates, but though, until then it's not a problem.

The pilot view has a gunlight which can be toggled on or off. Beware, though - while



NIGHT R - There's one more Bismarck shot down in flames. The virtual cockpit just below the horizon are your pilot's own sights (above) **SPD** - The navigator's view before take-off. Fuel's essential for morale, the indicator on the right-hand setting, fuel tank 1, 100% Fuel tanked and the wings locked.

NIGHT RAIDER

GREMLIN sink the Bismarck



MAP S - The map screen. The points of yellow spots in a circular - set out of the way, fortuitously - but it's the last bit of the sea here is accompanied by two islands and so it's from there also you find submarines, a light of Bismarck's location view may, here being that you cannot, while the going is here continues to last if your carrier gets used! The going is here continues to last if your carrier gets used! The going is here continues to last if your carrier gets used!



the light from the aircraft's control can be seen. You can fly and shoot at the same time.

Bismarck aircraft are a natural target for your machine-guns, but so are mines, D-9s and E-boats. In fact, the only thing that requires a torpedo is the Bismarck itself.

The navigator's view presents you with the strategy side of the game. A map of the area shows you where your carrier is, the position of enemy aircraft, D-9s, U-boats, mines - and even the Bismarck itself. This is where you're out to sink the German battleship. D-9s and mines are the UK Royal...

Night Raider is a long way from a true flight sim, but as a simulation of tactical action and strategy it scores highly. At first, simply leaving your taking off is enough of a challenge, while navigation - and the act of actually finding an enemy vessel in a huge field of ocean - is a real test.

One of two means of varying difficulty can be selected. A single level a lot of objectives to be fulfilled in sequence rather than the last - continuously - you're just told the situation and wished the best of luck.

There's enough here to keep you busy for quite a while. Even the easiest remains a challenge way from being a pushover. You may eventually get on to sink the toughest mine, but it's not going to happen overnight. Points will tend to last with the system, but bonuses will just last in the graphics, but you can bet they'll want to play it.

• Neil Lanier

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	£19.995	OUT NOW
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ATARI ST VERSION

Full-time based graphics combine with excellent sound to create an excellent total impression. The lighting effects are very bright, and the whole thing's quite impressive. The ship's map display is excellent and a real help in navigating through the sea.

GRAPHICS	5	10 FACTOR	5
AUDIO	5	10 FACTOR	7

AGE RATING 773

SPECTRUM +3 VERSION

Lighter than graphics than the ST version, it only has a few moments of slightly poorer graphics. The picture is excellent, but you'll find it a bit less impressive than the other versions. The ship's map display is excellent and a real help in navigating through the sea.

GRAPHICS	7	10 FACTOR	5
AUDIO	7	10 FACTOR	5

AGE RATING 600

RELEASE BOX		
GRAPHICS	2.5/5.0 (11/88)	OUT NOW
AUDIO	1.0/5.0 (11/88)	OUT NOW
AIM	2.0/5.0 (11/88)	OUT NOW

C64 VERSION			
The usual big, vibrant graphics are compensated by a happy mix of red and green backgrounds being able to make a job of a different colour to the game.			
GRAPHICS	7	IQ FACTOR	2
AUDIO	7	FM FACTOR	7
AGE RATING 5/7D			

AMSTRAD VERSION			
Did you notice that Spectrum had more than the word video, video? The effects are just enough, but to have plays only when the game is finished. Supporting sound.			
GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	3	FM FACTOR	7
AGE RATING 5/7			

SPECTRUM VERSION			
Graphics are very good indeed although there are occasions when, though the scrolling is not quite as smooth as on the Commodore, there is also very good use of the knowledge of memory use, though the scrolling is not the best scrolling.			
GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	3	FM FACTOR	7
AGE RATING 5/7D			

HOPPING MAD

ELITE's bounce-em-along...

WHAT balls of fire right like a top-down, free-colourful game out to be a string of fire-bouncing balls you have to guide over and through some very hazardous scenery in this linear platformer. The aim is to collect tea of the sweet balloons that drift towards you, at the same time avoiding the many flying and well-timed obstacles you meet along the way. Touch one of these, and you lose one of your...well, balls. When all five are gone you lose one of your three lives and start that level again.

joystick controls are simple. Push left to accelerate (increases the speed of the scrolling) and right to decelerate. Pressing

the fire button as the lead ball hits the ground gives you extra height for that bounce - useful for crossing those tapeworm-like balloons. Take care though - the star gets you well in range of various weapons, even one other obstacle platform.

And there basically the point of the game. Collect the balloons, advance to the next level, collect tea (never end so on). With only eight levels to complete, though, the long-term interest is limited.

Nevertheless, *Hopping Mad* is original, attractive, and really rather fun. Its also addictive enough to keep you coming back again and again until you're hooked. It.

Phil Lester



5/7D - You're already asked to use balloons, so there's just one left to go. The rest of the game is a ball of fire and you're on it. The ball really can't go on to the ground.



A major test for such a ball. But its lightest weight and highly elastic. Even at the level, though, you have to be careful.

GIGANOID

MICRODEAL's Identity crisis

FANS of the original Asteroid will either love or hate this offering from Steve Computer Arts - it both. You'll love it for its superb graphics, and for that classical gameplay - it's still here it because you've spent all that effort at a similar stage of the former. Yes, it really does look that similar. The ball looks the same, the bullets look the same and it all plays the same.

Basically, you have to level all the blocks from the screen via your moving ball and bouncing ball. This too long over it and the ball gets progressively

slower. Collect the bonus capsules that come rolling down from the top of the screen to give you an extra-wide ball, give for holding the ball momentarily for depositing extra lives, multiple balls, level power and a handy coin - all Microdeal Asteroidisms.

But doesn't seem to any more about a few differences. Though in *Giganoid* you don't get these interesting ideas

gunning down from the top of the screen to collect your ball of the last minute, but you do get giganoid sub-games where you have to jump from one to four levels, depending on the difficulty level you select. Watch out too for the extremely unpleasant gatekeeper, who spits lethal bullets at you as you're trying to hit his force with the ball.

Beyond that, there's not much to say about this highly coloured but also somewhat bounce-em-up.

The graphics are quite superb - including the 'view' of the start of each screen - are also good. The play levels excite it although more progressively than with Asteroid, as if anything the long-term gameplay is somewhat better. Nevertheless, the game is almost too similar to consider.

Phil Lester



Collect ball of these capsules and you'll be well set up to take on the rest of these levels. Don't concentrate on that you'll miss the ball though.

RELEASE BOX		
AMIGA	1.0/5.0 (11/88)	OUT NOW
No other version planned		

AMIGA VERSION			
Good graphics and really good sound make for a very impressive offer. The graphics, too, a good, despite some occasional repeat rather than clear. But it's worth it.			
GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	3	FM FACTOR	7
AGE RATING 5/7D			



With a substantial advantage from an Amiga platform and only 50 shooting, compared to the excellent Asteroid, you'll find this substantially better.

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SIDE ARMS

ATARI ST ■ GO CYBERMAN ■ ACE RATING 5/5
CGA version reviewed Issue 8 - ACE Rating 5/5
Spectrum version reviewed Issue 8 - ACE Rating 4/5

ST'S that the two-player CGA version wasn't the one covered because the new one plays so easily. Having just that, the version does benefit greatly from mouse control. Movement around the screen is good and shooting left and right is handled using the two mouse buttons, rather than having to turn round.

The graphics are of a high

quality - smooth scrolling and plenty of detail. The gameplay is similar to the 8-bit versions but a bit tougher. There are the same five types of on-screen weapon. This can be a problem because after running up and clicking away desperately for a time, you'll eventually lose a life and weapons, leaving you open to several quick deaths.

● **Bob White**



PHM PEGASUS

IBM PC ■ Electronic Arts CD-ROM ■ ACE RATING 5/5
CGA version reviewed Issue 3 - ACE Rating 4/5

TAKE to the high seas again in your friend Missile Hydrofoil. The strategy-weapon's got the emphasis heavily on action. Five mission objective challenges depending on the scenario (12 extra bonus ones included in the PC version, some of which are very tough, all of which are rated).

The graphics are good, with

the screen layout being well designed and readable. The sound isn't too special, but it's enjoyable. What makes PHM Pegasus so much fun is the great gameplay and emphasis on action. Hard-core strategists here will probably find outstaying the Pegasus far too simplistic, but action fans will love it.

● **Bob Smith**

What a month it's been for new versions of games. They've come piling through the door faster than the vice squad on a raid. The only trouble these games could get you into though, is lack of sleep from playing too many of them. Just how addictive are these new versions?

ST and Amiga owners have the merits of *Scrabble* spelled out for them. *Gauntlet II* teleports in on the ST to challenge 16-biters with myriads of monsters. PC owners can get their hydrofoils out, now that *PHM Pegasus* has made it on to their machines.

There's a whole host of other games that have been Updated, so for the next three pages you'll find the definitive view of the games on YOUR machine.



DARK SIDE

CGA Incentive ■ CD-ROM ■ CD-ROM ■ ACE RATING 5/5
Amstrad version reviewed Issue 11 - ACE Rating 5/5
Spectrum version reviewed Issue 11 - ACE Rating 5/5

INCENTIVE'S brilliant program, using the PicoSpace system for creating a 3D world, makes a subtle variation to the 4. It's slower than both the Amstrad and Spectrum versions, but makes up for it elsewhere with some detailed use of colour.

The game map is exactly the same as the other versions - the same worked layout of 822 means that home to be located out in the correct order by you once with a jet-pack. The time

limit seems to run out quickly on this version, but both parties dependent on looking out for them, so it's hard to tell exactly.

The big difference about this version is that it's got an excellent soundtrack accompanying the action. It's not too intense, but very enjoyable to listen to. However, you will occasionally need to have the sound effects - stop yourself bumping into things, etc.

● **Bob White**



PAUSED: Press any key to continue

GAUNTLET II

AMIGA #100 Gold CD-ROM

The original Gauntlet was certainly very pretty and atmospheric on the ST, but it lacked the zany, playful quality of the arcade and Atari versions. Has the sequel been improved?

The best thing to note is that this is a much richer than just a bunch of new levels using the same graphics as before. Everything is smoother on the version, so that some of the older, more boring, but comparatively easier areas are more enjoyable.

The other really big difference is that you can now have all ten players at once. You'll need the stereo box (3-D Sound reading DS 99 has used the one supplied with Gauntlet), but it's worth the extra investment in the extra and the

benefits it can make if a lot more fun if there are lots of you.

The ST version of the game also has the feature raised out on the 4 way like the original that lets multiple level slots, themes and dragons who deal objects from you. All the other bonuses are included, as are the special objects and powers that give you power like invisibility, invulnerability, regeneration, offensive shields and super shots.

It's much more enjoyable to play than its predecessor and with the four-players option there's an added amount of fun. The usual complaints of the many versions of Gauntlet, even if it is a time take-getting to the status:

● See Also

ATARI ST VERSION

The change in the graphics means it's less atmospheric but that aside it's not what's going on. The sound effects are adequate, the fun part being the fact of the lights on every one of them's side of digital screen as well, but not that fun on the ST.

GRAPHICS 7 IQ FACTOR 8
AUDIO 6 FUN FACTOR 8
ACE RATING 820

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A multi-effective that the more players the better lights.

UPDATE SPECIAL



The four integrated fighters have a ton of enemies with numbers on their sides.

SCRABBLE DE LUXE

AMIGA #1000000000 Gold CD-ROM

The basic spelling word game has got to be one of the most popular on the Amiga. It's not a game that would be considered particularly thrilling, but the version is the best looking of the lot.

Scrabble has always been a popular computer game, even since its first incarnation on the Spectrum. With its transfer to the 16-bit machine it hasn't lost any of its appeal.

Scrabble provides an ideal computer opponent, who can store a database of over

30,000 words - although you may feel cheated by such words as 'al' (don't do like what that means) or 'al' (a three bed room south London). You can play with two players, any or all of whom can be computer controlled.

There are a number of handy options at your disposal. For a start, you can set the computer skill level to suit your ability, and decide whether you want to use the computer's lexicon or the word list thinking of. During the

game you can also get hints to possible words and positioning if you can't think of anything. You can make the tough lot all the players by setting a time limit in which they have to think of a word, set it at 30 seconds and you've got a game of speed Scrabble.

● See Also

UPDATE SPECIAL

AMIGA VERSION

The graphics are the best of all the many versions - featuring a unique wrap-around screen.

GRAPHICS 9 IQ FACTOR 8
AUDIO 8 FUN FACTOR 8
ACE RATING 785

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A graphics package with imagination.



R.B. AMIGA

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AMIGA

THUNDERCATS

0001 (2-Disk)

Spectrum version released issue 2 •

ACE Rating 611

ST version released issue 10 • ACE Rating 600

Every bit as pretty as the ST version, Digital's conversion uses early appointments to demonstrate the conversion work that went into it. The gameplay is the same, simple, intuitive mix of running and handling with a sword. As with the ST version the game does not stand up quite as well today as it did in the first issue of issue 1, but it still pretty hot still.

● ACE RATING 605

AMSTRAD

BIONIC COMMANDOS

0001 (1-Disk)

004 version released issue 10 • ACE Rating 600

Amstrad owners aren't going to be very happy with this one. It's obviously been ported over from the Spectrum version, and a noticeable. The gameplay too is a good deal slower than the other 8-bit versions. If you are happy with that it's got the same level of tough action - if anything it's made even by the slowing down of the action. Very disappointing indeed to look at, but it has got some gameplay.

● ACE RATING 584



0002 • Thundercat

TARGET: RENEGADE

0001 (1-Disk)

004 Version released issue 1 • ACE Rating 603

Spectrum version released issue 10 • Ace Rating 600

Rock and roll, your way through the video game before you embark on the rather odd Mr. Big, the wilderness two-player options great fun, but it won't take you too long to beat the game, and once you've seen all the gungo for the last time.

● ACE RATING 605

ATARI ST

BIONIC COMMANDOS

0001 (1-Disk)

004 version released issue 10 • ACE Rating 600

Presumably this is the most visually attractive version of the 004 done justice to the ST. One of the major differences about the ST version is the fabulous pattern of the enemies. They don't appear at specific points, but instead two appointments are always on screen, killing it from the top when one gets killed. This makes the game a bit tougher because there's never any respite from the attacks. It also results in frustrating and unexcitable.

death. Both the sheer numbers of opponents being thrown at you. Apart from that it plays very similarly to the 8-bit version and will get you hooked in more ways than one.

● ACE RATING 638

WIZARD WARZ

0001 (1-Disk)

004 Version Released issue 10 • Ace Rating 611

In this 004 you start on a horse and the idea is to walk your way up to wizard wizard 004. The graphics are good, the music contains fire, but on 004 go it's nothing out standing.

● ACE RATING 622

SPECTRUM

BIONIC COMMANDOS

0001 (1-Disk)

004 version released issue 10 • ACE Rating 600

A good conversion of the arcade game that keeps the same pace and intensity that was found in the C64 version. The graphics are obviously not as hot, but what they lose in terms of color is made up for by a bit in detail. The enemy team, if anything, becomes more difficult to deal with - making the game tougher. However, it has lost some of the immediate appeal that the C64 version has.

● ACE RATING 603

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION II

0001 (1-Disk)

004 Version released issue 1 • Ace Rating 710

Well, Amstrad's up to its old tricks, and it's down to you to stop him as this platform game that follows fairly in the footsteps of the first, classic, game. The graphics are good though the sound isn't and the controls are wonderful, and if you liked the original, you'll love this.

● ACE RATING 765

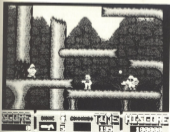
MARAUDER

0001 (1-Disk)

004 version released issue 11 • ACE Rating 791

This version casually does as well as the second level of the C64 original. The graphics are well detailed and, although not too colorful, look good. The defense table exactly the same pattern as the C64 but an essential matter to get past - you can dodge through some without destroying things when you couldn't on the C64. The well-timed sequence has been kept up and it's much tougher.

● ACE RATING 791



00 • Bionic Commandos

PSYCHO PIGS UXB

Porker from US GOLD



BUNT, waddy, goofy, stupid. It's a great game-and it's accompanied by some very instructive. However, when it's trying to figure up what is basically a very simple and unexciting game, you feel it's a lot of a waste of time.

It's a simple one-screen concept in which you run around

the screen firing five-footed birds or lots of other piggies. Avoid getting blown up and collect the bonus objects. That's all there is to it.

—Andy South

RELEASED		
MS-DOS	19.95	19.95
SEGA	19.95	19.95



THE FURY

MARTECH blow a gasket

THE spots of our driving shoot-'em-up cousins. In this one you can view from above and you're driving around a track that's changing in space. The idea is to complete a race and destroy a set number of other competitors, all within a time limit. Sure-and you'll be able to buy yourself some add-ons that may make your life a little easier.

Every third race is a game of tag, where you have to avoid being bumped by the car trails of the competitors who race.

and you'll start to earn the kind of money that allows you to buy the fastest cars and better weapons - which you'll need if you're going to destroy the ever-increasing target number of competitors each race.

Really, *The Fury* got very little going for it. The controls did fail, the graphics are poor and it doesn't take long to get bored with the game.

—Andy South

RELEASED		
MS-DOS	19.95	19.95
SEGA	19.95	19.95



DREAM WARRIOR

US GOLD send you to sleep

PSYCHOLOGICAL warheads what the game's all about. Set in the world of the future when physics was no longer what you play the part of a Dream Warrior who's out to rescue the citizens who've been captured by a weird being-called-Oscar.

Consider it Dream Demon, an evil secret weapon devised by the powers of Mega Corporation, who control pretty much everything. Oscar has linked the dream of your boss trapped inside and captured the psychic spheres.

It's about the game of the album of Megalithic Inc. and the idea is to destroy the

demons that roam the realm, some of whom carry small portraits of your friends' psychic spheres. Collect the spheres of all three and you then come face-to-face with Oscar for the final showdown.

Seven Warrior's last, final, involving because the game took it so repetitive, and it soon becomes a chore to play.

—Andy South



RELEASED		
MS-DOS	19.95	19.95
SEGA	19.95	19.95

WORLD TOUR GOLF

ELECTRONIC ARTS to the fore

AMERICAN golf tournaments are being dominated by overseas players, so perhaps it's time getting their coverage by selling us golf games. This one measures up well to the likes of *Leadboard*, mainly because of a course designer's opinion.

The gameplay is very similar to *Leadboard* in the method of selecting direction, strength and swing. There are plenty of bonus courses to play and the design option allows you to create many more. It's difficult to make card training out of them, but the extra options make it interesting.

—Andy South



RELEASED		
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SEGA	29.95	29.95





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PILGRIM

This is TOO MUCH! How can we possibly cope with *Bards Tale III*, the new RPG *Wasteland*, and the micro version of *MUD* all in one month! Can you take it? Or will the Dark Priest cut you to ribbons? Read on and find out...

THE BARDS TALE III

Only weeks after the release of *Bards Tale II* comes this latest RPG from Electronic Arts. It features added spells, new classes of characters, improved graphics and presentation, and a tougher challenge. Are you now enough to tackle it, or are you just fodder for Mordak's Quest? Check out the review opposite...



WASTELAND

They've been long these boys. The programmers of the *Bards Tale* series have now delivered their latest masterpiece straight from the States... *Wasteland* allows your characters to develop skills and pit them against an awesome array of mutated enemies in a post-nuclear environment. Find out why the Robot Barons are hot news on page 74.



MICROMUD

Ever fancied playing the infamous *Mud*? Well! Fear *Shogun*, but don't have a modem? Now *Wings* claims to have you covered: a version that runs on your home computer and generates all the other characters itself. Is it *MUD*, or just plain *mud*... Check it out on page 74.



PLUS Pilgrim survey winners, No Problem, news, snippets, and - at last - the installment of the Pilgrim's Guide to The Apocryphal text off the bottom of last month's issue!

BARDS TALE III

The Thief of Fate

ELECTRONIC ARTS re-rolls the dice.

920

AGE RATED

MOST players will be familiar with the *Bards Tale* series, which has been around for several years now and seems unchanged in essence, though significantly improved in presentation.

The game format consists of a graphics window for displaying either your location or the battles you're fighting in a text window that enables you to select command options and view character inventories and a character status panel at the bottom of the screen for seeing whether your party is dead, alive, or somewhere in between.

The objective in *BT3* is more complex than in previous releases. You must travel through seven dimensions to search at the end of the video-enhanced game for rescued the lords of *Bards Tale* is more. If you've played previous *Bards Tale* games and have developed powerful characters, you can upload them into *BT3* and get straight views in the ratty-gitty old-dog-but-get-with-it-spirit of the game.

If you're new to the series, then you must first create your characters. Up to seven characters comprise a party, and the strength of your party is largely responsible for success or failure. Characters are defined using a series of menus that allow you to fix sex, race, class, class, and so on.

There are seven races ranging from human to Gnome and thirteen classes.

RIISING EXPECTATIONS

The widespread message you will note that the ratings for *Bards Tale* it result in the same ACE Rating that *Bards Tale* it earned only four months ago. But *BT3* is certainly a better game. What's going on?

It's all due to the improving standards of software brought about by games like *Dungeon Master* and *Conquest*. Every time a new state-of-the-art game is released, it raises our expectations of future releases and consequently affects the ratings for subsequent games.

Next month in ACE we'll be looking at the very subject in a special feature on Games Milestones...don't miss it!

BETTER LOOKING, BETTER PLAYING

The latest *Bards Tale* game offers a number of refinements over its predecessor. First, the graphics are better animated, more in detail, and more varied - though *Dark Passes* still look the most elegant and a number of monsters appear suspiciously similar.

Second, the targeted combat routines first introduced in *BT2* mean that tactics have to take careful account of the distance between you and your opponents. In some cases, 30% of space can allow you to take constant breathers while your enemy hovers just outside striking range - useful for replenishing your characters during a nasty bout of combat.

Third, there are a large number of outdoor locations, as well as the squares in the rural city of *Skara Brae* and, underneath it. As an added refinement, you even get on-screen mapping in the dungeons - though it can be difficult to interpret and should not replace your own efforts with paper and pencil.

Finally, the game is bigger than ever before and represents excellent value for money in terms of playing time. It's fair to say that many of the improvements are simply tweaks of the original games, but they add up to something a lot better - and worth getting even if you have the other programs in the series.

though, any sign of these are evoked at the beginning of the game. The initial eight are: Warrior, Priestess, Hunter, Monk, Bard, Rogue, Conjurer and Magician. Once you've developed these characters in combat, you may then be able to create in the higher level classes of Sorcerer, Wizard, Archmage, Geomancer, and Chronomancer.

Sorcerers, wizards, and archmages are simply more powerful magicians, but the last two classes are both new and different. Chronomancers enable players who have developed powerful warriors to acquire magical skills for these characters, impossible in previous *Bards Tale* games. Chronomancers are required for teleporting between dimensions. You can see, therefore, that character development is essential if you want to score into different parts of the game, let alone to triumph against the opposition you encounter there.

As in other *BT*s, you must survive a series of encounters with the ergoids. In each combat round, the opposition will strike down or weaken your party. Complete loss of energy means death for a character unless, however, he's resurrected by magic at later stages of the game - but victory means, in *BT3*, gold and experience points. The latter slowly accumulate, allowing your fighters to rise up through the ranks, mastering more spells or selecting more effective talents. To give you some idea of the scale of the game, there are 120 spells in total, ranging from

large flame to small source of light to *BT3* - a positively demotivating little number that contributes your opponent by making him of a massive 2000 damage points.

The *Bards Tale* games are called role-playing games, which is slightly misleading for anyone who's played it: recall *BT2* is what the breadth of characterisation is, relatively more complex. *Accord* players tend to shy away from them because the action appears repetitive and the combat routine too very static adventures, on the other hand, are put off by the lack of moderate intelligence and limited movement options. However, these games offer tremendous lasting interest, are easy to play though they require a lot of initial effort, and keep you playing because of the bonds you develop with your characters. *BT3* is undoubtedly the best yet and deserves a place in any fantasy gamer's shelf.

RELEASE BOX

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See reviews and describe

LANDSCAPE 60 SYSTEM 60

CHALLENGE 60 ENDANGERED 60

AGE RATING 920

WASTELAND

A glimpse of the future from
ELECTRONIC ARTS

UNTIL recently there were two basic types of computer role-playing games. The first take linear tale storylines in the virtual glow of a view of your surroundings that scrolls as you move about. Then there was also the Illinois-style format, in which the landscape is shown from above as a crude map that explodes into finer detail through an ether window when you enter an interesting location.

Both formats enable you to create your own characters, and the Illinois take games even allow you to lead Illinois characters into them - though not all the effects they carry will be translated.

Now the progression of the Illinois takes have gone one step further and developed a game that looks very like the Illinois style on the surface, but has an enormous number of gameplay features hidden every inch.

As with Alanid Conroy's *Mindlight*, there is a post-banned environment, but there the computers end *Wasteland* too you leaving around the American Southwest after a like *Wesley* character has resulted in

the distraction of food of the human race.

You start outside the Ranger Centre, which is roughly equivalent to the Adventureland in the *BT* series, and must explore the surrounding desert and mountains in an attempt to clear up a wave of disturbances. Character you encounter then set you new objectives, and scores is rewarded by task and suggestions that take you closer to your goal. A book of numbered paragraphs comes with game at all times during play you will be prompted to read them either to unweaving or for details of a new challenge.

Movement around the country is a top-down view like in *Ultima*, with more detailed display of townships such as Las Vegas (undeveloped, apparently) and various remote camps. Adventures are displayed in style in tall scrolls, awarded glory.



Instead of words and spells, you have a phenomenal choice of weapons ranging from crossbow-piercing needles to an AK-47 assault rifle. However, in the way you go about your tactical business that really makes out the game.

First, you can split your party up in theory you can creep up on an adversary from all sides. You can also locate a wounded companion and run for help in an emergency - through the poses to minimize and for the way to decide is taking by the low you return.

Second, your use of weapons and approach to puzzles is determined by the knowledge you discover here, rather than just basic level and hit points. Party members can acquire skills ranging from Cryptology to Talent Management, depending on their level etc., which can be enhanced during game as a result of gaining experience points. Choosing the skills you party starts off with is a very important part of the gameplay.

Third, the game behaves like a grand database and every time you creep out an action, it progressively refines the program. Thus if you stare up the Ranger Centre, characters appear to go back there. This even creates previous *WMTs*, so to do a proper return you have to create a new character set at state from your back-ups you did keep back-ups, didn't you? That is a fascinating idea, but the trading-up involves so few that it's like a dice game.

I didn't test *Wasteland* quite so strategically as *Wasteland II*, but then it's a traditional spell caster - what I did test computing was the extra dimension of strategy, which leaves the cut, death, and spell attacks of the *BT* series very behind.

LANDSCAPE	88	SYSTEM	90
CHALLENGE	90	ENCOUNTERS	90
ACE RATING 92!			

RELEASE BOX		
DATE	PRICE	OUT NOW
No other versions planned		

MICROMUD

VIRGIN throw away the modem

IF you've ever wanted to play the multi-user game *MUD*, but didn't have logging on with a modem, isn't your choice. The version presents an almost identical user-interface, gameplay, and challenge to the original game - with the exception handling a collection of human players for you to interact with.

The scenario is simple. Wander around the land entering towns, which you visit then depart in the group. You gain points for work here and also for detecting when characters die in battle.

There are over 400 locations, many of which are very well described, together with a database of 800 players, of whom ten can play simultaneously. To make things even

more interesting, there are 111 computer-controlled creatures (called minions) who treat about and tend to be aggressive.

The game looks 2D, albeit not all of which are visible, but with ten objectives relating about the place, the look soon gets packed up. For the reason, the game feels every fully intensive of real-time at which point you see whenever points carrying and must start again - so much to the extent it you're not because to dinner.

Considering the problems of making computer-controlled characters seem human, the program succeeds remarkably well. Perhaps its features are simply some mechanical ones - we like to think, but in any case the characters you encounter certainly

fight, bug, shoot, and die just like the real McCoy.

The only drawback with the game is the speed, which because of all the processing involved can at times be frustratingly slow, especially during combat in a crowded town. Otherwise, you have a very cheap way of playing *MUD* or, looked at in another way, a very large text adventure with some very online interactive characters and a wonderful atmosphere. Definitely worth checking out by anyone not totally satisfied by party games.

LANDSCAPE	88	SYSTEM	90
CHALLENGE	90	ENCOUNTERS	90
ACE RATING 89!			

NO PROBLEM!

Here's a selection of timely tips for Pilgrims lost, starving, or simply too lazy to work things out for themselves. Whether you've been stuck with a lump of dough in Kings Quest or burnt to a crisp in Shadowgate, or starved by the werewolf potion in Grimé Ranger, it's *No Problem* for the Pilgrim!

Gnome Ranger

Get the greenstone to take a hobbit to the street and drop it.
Headkiller potion: Thistle, Coder Berry, Mint, Rowan.
Worms potion: Elder, Thistle, Rowan, Mint.
Fertiliser potion: Mint, Rowan, Elder, Flower.

Rigel's Revenge

Powered by wine? Follow the tracks.
 To get uniform, throw rubble at light (make sure it's Pilgrim!).
 To get past the guards, feed the birds, then introduce it.
 To enter hut, use bomb.
 The patch and string are nothingsays.

The Big Game

Examine car to get dynamite, then put dynamite in mailbox and light fuse to open safe. Then go north to stables from the blast.

Retal Planet

Examine the steps for the key to the alcove. Answer SARGO to the man in HG.

Beyond Zork

Get Medrol and Ironworks - both useless.
 To retrieve the jewel from the box - try to kill the baby fungus and then run to box and push with the mother chasing you. After she's wiped-out the old base, go further up and

retrieve jewel. You'll kill her and the mother swallows it. However, if you use the Everson sword on the mother, the jewel is yours to eat in exchange for the hourglass.

Kings Quest III

Open wardrobe in Wizard's bedroom then look above wardrobe for key to open wizard's safe. Leave dough in jar as bait/ant? see it.

Shadowgate

Get the shield from the fair first. Then take the spear, axe, and wear helmet (operate it upon yourself). Break middle mirror with axe and unlock with key from table.
 To get key from table, put white gem in hole in pedestal room, then put sphere in hole to freeze it.

The Uninvited

Leave the car ASAP.
 Wipe the mask which allegedly wants off and. Read the journal in the bedroom.
 Spray tanning on wardrobe with Spider Cider, leave, then return to get spider.
 Score spiders with spider.

Contact the Pilgrim!

From next month we'll be printing a selection of readers' letters in each issue. Make sure you get YOUR views onto these pages by writing to the Pilgrim on any subject related to adventuring.

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FIVE LUCKY PILGRIMS:

Many thanks to all of you who returned the Pilgrim Questionnaire. It's going to help us enormously in giving you exactly what you want on these pages. In particular, in future we'll be bringing you:

- more tips and player guides
- more readers' letters
- ...and as many reviews as possible!

The five lucky Pilgrims are: Sharon Aston of Pen Tabbot; Michael Major of Andover; Janice Chantley of Worthington; Jack O'Donnell of Dublin; and Hans Elias of Goodfield. A big thank you again to all of you, and we can expect to see the benefits of your advice starting from next month... Watch this space!

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE GAME?

One of the questions we asked in the Pilgrim Questionnaire concerned your three favourite adventures. The following three books received the most mentions - draw your own conclusions!

1. The Pagan
2. The Invisible / Guild of Thieves
4. Storm Isle / Dungeon Master / The Dark Series
7. Rigel's Revenge
8. Hibernian Guide to the Galaxy
8. Lords of Time / Lord of the Rings
13. Gender
12. Knight On
10. Grimé Ranger / Kamilla
10. Ultima Series
16. Space Quest/Police Quest series / Leather Goodnesses of Phooos / Beyond Zork / The Bogg
20. Planet

PLAYERS GUIDE TO THE PAWN PART 3

So you opened the door, rescued Princess Leery, and taken her back to King Eric. Well you've lost 40 points. Go back to your last SAVE position and this time IGNORE the heavy wooden door. OK?

At the top of the ancient tree, you can use the wooden key and, once inside, try riding upwards to get light. Check out all available locations and wear the hard hat. Don't miss the coin (you've lost sitting on it), the leopard, and the candle.

Once you've found the lit, push the button, wait around, then slide the door open. Going down to the wood floor, the Lumps, which only the forest will get for you.

The safe under Ravensburgers rug can be opened with the blue key and yields a ballot paper which, if put in the right box, enables you to VOTE FOR SARGO and get 40 points. Beware of aap, Gongo...

The coin, by the way, enables you to buy the whisky bottle and the beer bottle from Hamed John. A better deal than the alchemists, who will rip-off your best - but at least you get 30 points for it (and lose the coin into the bagpipe). Cast a spell on the tomes.

In the wallpapered room, get the book, tie the rope to the hook, and tear the paper wall with the sword. Then you can climb through it and... go to hell! Flood four times, dispose of the whisky, and everything should be funky-dinky. Jerry Lee Lewis, on the other hand, expects beer.

Next month the final article.

RIGEL'S REVENGE UPDATE

Rigel Brookes has phoned in to tell us about his game Rigel's Revenge, which - as many readers will know - has a well-built bug in the early versions. Rigel tells us that the bug had been corrected and that updates were distributed to manufacturers are OK. Unfortunately, there's no way of telling which version is which apart from by playing them, so it's best to send off your lugged copy to Interactivision for a replacement.



The Legend
Continues

J.R. Tolkien's

WAR IN
**RIDDLE
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WATCHING THE DETECTIVES

● I looked him over, just once from the corner of my eye. I wouldn't say he was big, no more so than a Charolais bull. His jacket was wide enough to park my car under and could have hidden anything from a .32 to a howitzer.

"Hey, are you Marlowe?" he grunted past the cigarette jammed like a toothpick in the corner of his mouth. I took the unlit cigarette from my mouth and went to speak, but found myself staring down the barrel of a gun.

"Too late Marlowe, you should have read the instructions," he said as he fired.



Which is the heart of some point-drooled of elucidating the exploits of Sherlock Holmes, Miss Marple or Tom Stryker? Detective novels are immensely popular on TV, come now or from the wilderness? Another Christie type of set up where the audience can try to spot the clues all-always called to themselves.

It's a world so fascinated by crime and detection it's hardly surprising that computer games have tried to get in on the latest game market. And why not? After all computers are used more and more to read investigative work, and are perfect for letting the player do the detection of their own pace. And then, there's the immense satisfaction coming to case-by-case.

One of the main ideas where detective games have progressed is to be realistic or realistic. Most of them involve some sort of detection-and investigation, so it's not hard to turn them into full-blown detective mysteries.

It's interesting to look at crime-games and to see the

ACE dons its dirty mac and deerstalker hat, pockets a magnifying glass and packs a rod. Aside from looking pretty silly, it means we've delved into the murky depths of investigation and the underworld. Could you solve the most dastardly crimes a micro can throw at you?

detection elements that were in them too. Take a game like *Diner*. It's got a strong detective element in that that you have to find the clues or objects that tell you out what they mean. Memory also has that set of set up, and both games seek to attract readers in the game universe they create. They don't pure bits of logic games, though, because they involve so much creative effort.

There have been some notable games based on detection that haven't actually had anything to do with detection.

Witness, that legendary crime fighter, didn't get anywhere near a million in its remarkable arcade adventure. *Steambotter* too, because an arcade game can't ignore the possibility of trudging down and back that one just like history. Perhaps we'll get a revival of that with a few colorful detecting elements of *Terminator* (Series 1).

The topographical elements of detection have been, supported up in games like *Impossible Mission*. Here you have to find and piece together puzzles. The searching a more close to break-

ing-and-revealing piecing together the code word is a tough lot of work under time-pressure.

Virtually all games have a missing person or object in their scenario, but most fail to vary the investigation element through to the gameplay. Those that do can be enormously rewarding. The only surprising thing is that more classic detective format appeared in computer games. There's *Lord of Holmes and Moriarty*, *Female Private*, *Magnus*, *Kojak*, *Female*, *Law Archer*, *Inspector Clouseau*, *The Hit Machine*, *Boggy* hunting, and most you look

CLIMAXO

Calibur - Calibur

Amstrad	9.950	£14.950
Can	£12.950	£14.950
Spectrum	£9.950	

The computer version of the classic board game may vary true to the original. It's a pity it's a reform because it fails to make use of the possibilities the master offer. However it's still bound to



apped to the every breath of the game.

The aim is to discover who murdered Dr. Black, what the murder weapons was, and where the evil deed was carried out. This is done by moving around the mansion in which the game takes place, asking the other players if they have particular clues relating to people, weapons or places. They must reveal these clues if they have them. By a process of elimination you should be able to track down the three pieces of information and win the game.

Up to six players can take part, or you can compete against computer playmates. The fact that the game is on computer means there can be loads of graphical detail, and it also takes the need for those fonts where you list all the abstracted objects, people and places.

KILLED UNTIL DEAD

CD-ROM

Amstrad CD-ROM £14.99
 C64 CD-ROM £14.99
 Spectrum CD-ROM £14.99



This game doesn't just set you the task of solving one case, but 21. The cases all involve the solutions of murder books, who are collectively known as the Midnight Murder Club.

All the cases take place at the hotel in which everyone is staying. The five writers are all cunning strategists, and the investigators will reveal plenty of funny facts. However, solving the cases is all in terms of digging for information and working out what it all means.

Information comes your way from a number of sources. You can plant bugs in rooms, use cameras to monitor rooms, break into rooms, or use the Photo-voice to eavesdrop from the characters and vice versa, and often provide a few laughs.

A lot of guesswork goes on but it's a very entertaining game that takes a more sophisticated view of the whole detective genre.

MOVIE

Imagine

Spectrum £7.99
 Amstrad £8.99

The fantastic 3D-arcade adventure was very nearly a million years, but just fell short on a few points. It stars Jack Starbuck, a misanthropic private investigator trying to uncover a tape recording from Bugs-Malley, a bad state gangster.

The unusual thing about the game is that it's non-controlled



for all actions - sleep, pick up, shoot, walk, talk, punch and throw. Anything from a table but you've got interesting features like talking, which allows you to type into a speech bubble and try to get information from other characters - including a parrot. There's a strong arcade ele-

ment with lots of bonuses awarded around shooting at you. There are small talk games - one is a remote control who will get you killed and the other is a friend who plays an important part in solving the game. Not a game for fast operators, but captures the atmosphere well.

THE PERPETRATORS

Enough of all this goody-goody stuff, where are all the bad guys? Here are a couple of games that turn the tables and allow you to be on the wrong side of the law. In other words they're your own.

THEY STOLE A MILLION

Amstrad

Amstrad, Spectrum and C64 - currently unavailable.

Set to see another title that isn't currently available. This time it's because Amstrad pulled out of the UK market and nobody has picked up the rights to market this so far as we know.

It's a very novel game in which you have to pick a team to perform a robbery. There are many different possibilities, each man having different skills. Then the job has to be planned down to the last split second before you actually see the loot as it happens.

There's an immense amount of planning and thinking through

to do. The game is superbly presented with windows. Still a very original concept with nothing quite like it in any machine.



KING OF CHICAGO

Comshare

Amiga £29.99

The previously delightful and very atmospheric game casts you in the role of a mobster in Chicago. His aim is to take over from the gang boss by fat means or foul, and then to take control of the whole city.

Nothing stands in his way, but the might really wind up or claim the money himself. Like other Comshare products it packs a lot of gameplay and variation, but it's very tricky put together and a real performer to complete.

FOURTH PROTOCOL

Century Communications

Is larger available. Check for second-hand disks on Amstrad, CMI and Spectrum.

To enhance this highly enjoyable investigation game is no longer widely available because it's not out of the limit of disked. It's based on the Frederick Porphyrt book, and was out before the film.

It is three parts, which use cut-and-paste editing, so you try to control an international plot. The first part of the game involves looking down the person who is the main character, advising other cases and giving you a daily wage of the year. Then it's all a matter of detective work, a matter of bank which has been placed in London.

All three versions are well presented and are well



well. You've got a lot of freedom in what you do, so it's easy to be able to do as much as you like. The whole thing is very different to what you'd expect from a computer game. It's a completely engaging if you haven't got a copy and can't get hold of one that you'll just have to wait till somebody has the permission to be released to be carried it for the 16-bit machines.

THE VERA CRUX AFFAIR

Ingram

Amstrad	£29.95	£14.95
CM	£29.95	£14.95
Spectrum	£29.95	
MSX PC		£19.95

The French game was rapidly followed by The Sydney Affair, which wasn't a very similar mould. You play a detective from the Scotland Yard, who has to investigate what industry appears to be a matter but has

PICK OF THE SHERLOCKS

Think of detective fiction and most people will, at some stage or other, pick on Sherlock Holmes. Not surprising, therefore, that this intrepid character should have posed his head up in a number of computer games, most of which seem to give you the opportunity of solving classic cases in the style of the great detective.

The most recent offering must be Intersoft's **Sherlock Holmes**, but the emphasis here is more on puzzle-solving in traditional adventure style than on player detective work.

The game features your role as Doctor Watson rather than the legendary detective himself, but Holmes follows you about during play. However, he contributes little to the action as you attempt to locate the missing crown jewels. The game starts at 5.00am on Saturday and you must find the jewels - and the jewels - before Monday morning to avert a national catastrophe.

The action takes place in 19th century London. The map is relatively small, so mapping is the least of your troubles. There are a number of puzzles to solve on the way to locating the jewels and it's this puzzle element, paradoxically,

that weakens the detective element and threatens the game. Finding a jewel in Big Ben's clock tower is all very well, but it would have been more in keeping with the game if you had had to do its location and not simply experienced one of the EXAMINE command.

A rather older game is **Shan-kaak** from Melbourne House. When first released this adventure, with its real-time puzzles and strong detective element, was way ahead of its time. It still pays well and offers considerable challenge as you attempt to solve a murder mystery, catch buses, and find your way about a murky, rainy London.



town. Only available on CMI and Spectrum, however.

Another CPM version can enjoy a very different experience with CMI's **Robin of Sherwood**, from Mega-World of Berlin's terms. This is an excellent historical title that manages to take both Adventure's ancient **Robin of Sherwood** and the whole Sherlock detective scenario at the same time. Worth it for a laugh, but don't expect too much serious detective work.

ROBIN OF SHERWOOD

CMI

Amstrad £7.95

SHERLOCK

Melbourne House

CMI/CM £14.95
Spectrum £14.95

SHERLOCK HOLMES

Intersoft/Activision

Commodore £19.95
MSX PC £24.95
Amstrad £19.95
Amiga £24.95

not to be so simple.

The case starts with an examination of the scene of the crime. That is graphically depicted and has to be carefully examined to make sure you don't miss a clue. Information is found, you feed for the police computers, from where the rest

of the investigation takes place.

You can communicate with other branches of the police and follow interviews in order to get more information. This can add up witnesses' statements, which are accompanied by pictures of the people.

The only problem with the

game is that it's not very well simulated. The reverse you can get an awful lot of frustrating responses from the computer, without finding out what you're doing wrong. If you can cope with that, both **Shan-kaak** games are testing pieces of detective work.

SUBJECT

Intersoft/Activision

Check with Activision (01-401 1101) for prices and availability.

One of the better text-only crime-ero-games and worth attempting even if you've not a historical text adventure page.

Superbly-paced in its American-crimey tradition when the bodies are found strangled during a high society fancy-dress party. You're attending the party as an eager young news-bureau looking for gossip-column material. Your role as observer is serious.



...slumped behind the large desk in the body of Nicolas Sarkozy. Her mask has been pulled off, though the rest of the costume is still intact. Around her neck in the space of death, a rope. In fact, it's your lastin, which you get tired of carrying around and hang in the closet with your coat.

Michael stares, horrified, at the body.

(Colonel Marcus stares, horrified, at the body.)

(Max Colson) Marcus about Michael:

'He must be devastated, but he's a strong man. He'll survive it.'

Michael: Will he shoot the man in the chair.

'I'm not sure what I can tell you about the man in the chair.'

Twice on the spot in *Spectre*. Not surprisingly, Michael states up after the credits better if it includes some interesting information.

ly compartmented, however, by the fact that it is XBOX (and that is based around the young lady's name. Someone has fixed you up good and proper...

Gameplay is simple but atmospheric. First you must keep the monitors, forcing close first, you can begin to build up a detailed picture of the various characters' behavior and movements. You can question them, searching on them, follow them around, and interact with them in a number of at least ways. One of the program's main strengths is the way in which the various characters respond to your actions. The inboxes pause in need to respond to what you do, and they do so in a way that is not only useful but also very useful. That's what makes it so interesting to play. *Spectre* is a nice choice - and it's available on all the major consoles.

That's what makes it so interesting to play. *Spectre* is a nice choice - and it's available on all the major consoles.

CORRUPTION

(Mystery/Thriller/Action)

Atari ST	\$24.9500
Amiga	\$24.9500
MS-DOS	\$24.9500
Mac	\$24.9500
Linux	\$24.9500
OS/2	\$24.9500
Apple II	\$24.9500

becoming an impressive 100 rating in issue 11 of ACE. Corruption is the latest release from the software house that brought you *State of Terror* and *The Raven*.

As with *Spectre*, even people who don't normally go a bundle on adventures should get good value out of *Corruption*. The game makes you a

part of a London detective team, but only from the way your perspective you find yourself carried by the plot.

Attracted by excellent graphics and a powerful plot, you can travel about London and investigate your colleagues and their shady associates. However, but put the finger on you, and you must either find the true villain or meet it in real time. Even better, you must wait the person responsible and get your revenge.

Corruption is a tricky game and you'll have to use your best if you're to crack the case. Every move is vital, so take up a minute of your time, and

you'll find yourself hard pushed to solve the puzzle before the end of the day. Adventure fans will love it and those normally considered to be more action could well find it a good introduction to text-based games.



JEEPERS, PEEPERS

Raymond Chandler. Dashiell Hammett. Ross MacDonnell - an idea of terms, single man who lives alone and it's a gun you should pick up at the end of the day, and - hardly surprisingly - origins of a style of fiction university that is a computer programmer.

Despite the number of games that attempt to combine mystery with murder and mayhem, only a few qualify for mention. *Intrigue* (reviewed in ACE issue 8) gives you a top screen display that takes you through the main locations of Washington DC in an attempt to stop the unruly from unleashing a host of consequences all over the city. Detective work is confined to TALK TO, SEARCH, and PHYSICAL CONTACT, and the game suffers from being rather too busy.

Deja Vu is a better bet altogether. Programmed by GDM Simulations, the game was the first of GDM's now famous graphics and text input as well as joystick/mouse control. You wake up in a deserted room with a corpse and have to clear yourself of guilt and track down the true offenders. Great! You, good sense of atmosphere - and some tricky puzzles that will appeal to both adventures and puzzle fans alike.

Just as good as *Deja Vu* is *Adventures* excellent computer graphics adventure *Reviewed Time*. There are some tremendous sequences in the game which makes maximum

use of textual responses to take the atmosphere and create a traditional American detective fiction scenario. Unfortunately it's no longer available, but you could try for a second-hand copy or ask your dealer to order. Another is *Impact* a copy from the States.

We have to thank Pegasus Media for allowing us to completely different battle of first - its control system you game *The Big Game*. This second graphics adventure, produced using the Quil, makes it very difficult for the player in a world where just about everything goes bang, and the things, and the cars, and there a jolly good time without expecting anything too serious.

Here at ACE we can't help feeling that the ultimate American

title has yet to appear in computer game format. We can't wait to review it, so would someone please write it?

THE BIG GAME

CD-ROM

Currently undistributed

INTRIGUE

Microsoft

CD-ROM £12.9900

DEJA VU

Microsoft

CD-ROM £14.9500

Atari ST £24.9500

Amiga £24.9500

Apple Mac £24.9500



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* Available on the *ST*, *Amiga*, *PC*, *Mac*, *PCW*, *CM* and *Spectrum* - if you use a different machine, we've a different treat in store for you - wait and see!

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STRATEGY SPECIAL

Why are American big boys Electronic Arts taking a great interest in strategic software? What's got erstwhile 8-bit wargaming house CDS looking closely at the ST, Amiga and PC? And why do SSI think the whole software market is changing?

Strategic software has generally been seen as something of a niche market. The big companies have simply not been interested in producing games for a market — though decorated — following that was fun.

That's a sore, sore thing one starts to change — suddenly. Electronic Arts have decided to dip their toes into the British strategy software market and are now distributing games from Australian wargame specialists SSI (Strategic Studies Group). E.A. have, as Debbie Allen (E.A.'s Product Manager in Atlanta, Ga.) says, "No great motivation for the British strategy scene, but because E.A. are involved with SSI in the States, and because they see the British market as 'hot' and at the moment, just growing off the 'tree' they've decided to test the waters over here and will be releasing some SSI titles over, with another three scheduled for release before Christmas.

In why of the sudden, excitement about Strategy? In the words of Frank Brown from CDS, who agrees the factors regarding people are becoming more computer literate, and are not afraid to play a game that doesn't just go 'zap zap zap'. There are also factors that the people owning the larger machines are generally more aware of their wants, and are looking for software with real selling interest. We'll soon be seeing CDS titles released on the larger machines, with Desert Storm on the PC being the last.

The most optimistic view comes from Jerry Rowell (E.A.'s Sales Product Manager handling SSI games) who thinks the market is definitely growing, along with the Pentium Side Playing (SP) market. SSI will soon be bringing in a series of games based on the Advanced Dungeons and Dragons system but Jerry thinks they really open up the FR market. Again, Jerry reckons the software market is generally going to 'change quickly in the next 18 months, because people are faced with the same old choices — and the 16-bit machines are much more capable of handling complex game ideas.

So, what's all this new software like? Can these Asian games hold their own against the likes of SSI and CDS games?

● REACH FOR THE STARS SSI/Electronic Arts

88PC

CD-ROM

Although the title evokes images of cowboys and gunfights of the old American West, it's actually a space exploration/colonization game. The game map contains some 30 or so stars, each with varying numbers of planets, and the idea is for you to take charge of your forces and go conquer the other stars before the alien players. It's for four people, can play at once, but the computer will play any in all of the other players if you wish.

Every other turn is just a movement turn so spending your 20% money is NOT a good idea.

Once you've played through, the manual game and get to grips with how the game works the instructions are excellent as it might be, so be warned, you'll be likely to stick on your own. The game takes you to set to between 45 and 90 minutes, you can play as if you wish, and you can be in control of the whole world, or you can choose the details to be played, the landing locations that allow you to colonize, the landing planets, ships and everything in the game — if you would allow natural disasters to occur, or planets erupting the volcanoes.



The game starts by giving you a planet around a star (not random) and you're then introduced with a production screen. Here, you spend your 20% resource points as things like new ships, colonies, or just improving the colonization of the planet. The interface is so precise even the events turn. At the end of the production phase, the ships etc are manufactured and you move immediately into the movement phase. Then you decide where to send your ships.

These same options exist the advanced scenarios included make for nice tactical games. It's not easy to get straight into but once you get it, know your way around you'll be well and truly hooked.

OPERATION 90 GAME OF THE YEAR
88PC 90 GAME DEPTH 90
AGE RATING 9-12

DECISIVE BATTLES OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR (VOL. II)

1992 Electronic Arts

CD

CD-ROM

Down to Earth and back in time with CD-ROM based games that not only sound new. The games that signal to Decisive Battles etc. Vol. I, and deals with the latter half of which widely regarded as the last conflict war told you know trench warfare, which featured so heavily in the Great War, was actually first introduced in the American Civil War.

The single player campaign features scenarios of five of the most crucial battles, plus a game designer that allows you to create your own battles (you can even offer the look of the world). Once you've decided on your scenario and which side you're going to control, you're thrown into the game.

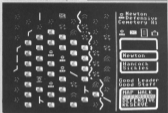
Orders are issued to your units via a series of buttons and sub-menus that appear to the right of the screen. The default orders involve standard objectives on the map. For example, you decide that a certain unit should defend Little Round Top if you're playing the Confederacy scenario and issue orders to that effect. The unit then

drives to fulfill that objective until it receives fresh orders.

The system takes a while to get used to, but is very effective and easy to use after a few games. Added options allow you to decide such things as how brave your Confederates should be, clerics, tents, available or not, or whether to play with hidden or open movement. A series of "What If" suggestions are also included with the scenario notes. Despite having some-

what limited control over individual units, the game plays well and provides you with a tough challenge. The ability to create your own scenarios makes this a perfect suggestion.

OPPOSITION	07	EASE OF USE	08
DISPLAY	06	GAME DEPTH	07
ACE RATING 820			



STALINGRAD

CD

Spectrum

CD-ROM

CD-ROM

The latest Ken Wright game from CDC follows freely in the footsteps of his earlier works including Overlord, reviewed in ACE issue 4 with some subtle improvements.

This solo campaign only allows you to command the German forces of the Army Group South, who historically took part in the campaign which culminated in the battle for Stalingrad.

The game situation follows the usual pro-



cedure, ie, you issue direct orders to any units you wish, and then the orders are all carried out at once and are carried out. Then the computer gets to take its turn and the whole thing starts again. The game continues until either combat effectiveness is reduced to less than 40% in German units occupy Stalingrad, Stalingrad and beyond all on the same turn, or the Russians

manage to take Stalingrad or Ureygepetovsk.

Following during the game is effected by positioning a set of three cursors for each unit, these represent the unit's center and sight and set back. The game includes three difficulty levels, plus hidden movement over a large game area with varied terrain. Like the earlier games, Stalingrad plays well and the ordering system is easy to use. The scenario is not the most exciting, but the computer opponents are very strong on the highest level and you'll really have to work to defeat it.

OPPOSITION	07	EASE OF USE	07
DISPLAY	07	GAME DEPTH	06
ACE RATING 765			

PANZER STRIKE!

1991 S. G.O.L.D.

CD

CD-ROM

Panzer Strike! is a one- or two-player tactical wargame that contains three scenarios and a tutorial program on two disks. Once you've decided on a scenario (Norman, Eastern or Western Europe), you then get the choice of which particular battle you'd like to fight. Each battle gives the player an objective to reach within a set number of turns (either 20 or 40 one-minute turns per battle).

The game breaks down into two main phases, the Order Phase and the Combat Phase. At the former suggests, you give your orders to your units (either one either individ-

ual units and units of squads or units) by accessing a number of menus and sub-menus during the Order Phase. Then your units attempt to carry out their orders during the Combat Phase. The units will remain in the Combat Phase until you decide to interrupt and issue new orders, or the game ends.



The game has a variety of options including the option to let the computer handle certain portions of your forces, while you control on every or on less games on you wish. There's also a design option included that allows you to let the computer generate your own maps. Panzer Strike! is a sophisticated game that takes time and effort to play well, and unless you're well acquainted with basic wargaming rules, you're better off sticking to something a little less complex.

OPPOSITION	08	EASE OF USE	08
DISPLAY	08	GAME DEPTH	07
ACE RATING 795			

GET INTO CRIME!

In the late 1990's the streets of New York are a jungle. You are the ice cool leader of a gang of drug crazed terrorists. Your main goal is to become the richest, toughest and most notorious gang in the city.

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IJC GAMES, PO BOX 11, CLEVELEYS, BLACKPOOL, LANCS FY5 2UL

SPINDIZZY

Anyone wanting help with the great game we gave away with issue 10? Read on.

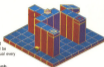
Spectrum version: First load the game until the title screen appears. Reset the computer and read the tape in just before the BARRON and BRONSON CODE loaders for the loading screen (you might need to practice this a couple of times before you manage to get the right place) then type in the loading and RUN it. Now continue loading the game. Once loaded you'll now be able to accumulate a time of 10 in 100 before it stops, regardless of how many times you crash up GEMALD.

D. CLEARTEXT: LET L=0 FOR F=2556 TO 2555: READ A: LET L=L+A: POW: FA: NEXT F
 20 IF L=0:GOTO THEN PRINT READS:ERROR:STOP
 30 RANDOMIZE (204:2556)
 40 DATA 95,82,265,201,181,684,17
 50 DATA 527,295,86,5,248,221,256
 60 DATA 1,79,17,8,158,221,38,6
 70 DATA 67,295,188,120,168,201,150
 80 DATA 147,220,198,5,176

D. GRIFPHYTH, London.

OS/2 version: On the title screen, hold down the keys PAGE UP together and you'll be rewarded with more exits than that usual every time you enter a new room.

BRETT SIMPSON, Barnborough.



After twelve (including this one) instalments of Tricks 'n' Tactics, you lot must be the wimmiest bunch of computer players around. We plan to make your next year of games playing even easier too, but we need your support – keep those maps, tips and pokes rolling in. You might just win yourself **SIX** top-rated games for your efforts!

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION II

Some helpful hints to help make the impossible a little more possible!

Before you go charging around Tom's complex, it's best to know what you're up against and how to deal with it. The most dangerous enemies are the robots who guard the platforms and guard the objects you need to search. Here's a list of the robots and how to deal with them.

MINIBOTS – the most common robots. Touching them is fatal (unless you unplug the robot temporarily from the computer terminal). Some merely sit in one place, patrolling round and firing their lasers. Others walk (or even run) along platforms. When you enter a room, study the Minibot's' routes and when they fire. This way you'll know when to jump over them or when they'll fire. Remember that these robots can't use the lifts, so if you're chasing you, run to the nearest lift (remember the can still fire).

MINIBOTS – you'll find at least one in each level. It's better to open these robots early before they lay too many mines. If you're quick enough, you can lay a mine in his path to blow him up. Remember walking robots are no effect.



PESTBOYS – these certainly live up to their name. These robots walk up and down corridors and they need a lift. They'll then use the lift to move to a platform above or below them. Be careful when using a lift with these around as you may be whisked up to a platform you didn't want to go on. The best way to fool

them is to try and leave them stranded on a platform with no lifts around them. Also, watch out when you step on or off a lift, as a Pestboy may suddenly use that lift and crush you against the underside of a platform.

SCORCHBOYS – not really robots but more of a train-patrol. These funny little things will extend upwards at regular intervals. You can use these to your advantage by either standing on them to raise you to a previously unreachable object, allowing you to jump to higher platforms, or by jumping from a height onto them to bounce you up quite high. Mind you, don't overlook a Squashed

which could suddenly spring up and crush you against a platform.

BAMBOT – quite dangerous, especially on high platforms. If you touch this robot, he'll pick you up and drop you off the end of the platform, often with fatal results. The best way around these is to lay a mine on his patrol path. If you're very lucky you can smash him so soon as he grabs you.

SCORCHBOYS – deal with as Bambots.

You can get around all the robots in various ways – either by avoiding them, sneaking past over them or luring them off by using the terminal. If you're desperate you could try laying a mine in their path, which will destroy them and blow a hole in the platform.

As well as the robots, time is a great enemy. Three seconds keep ticking away, and should you die you lose six minutes. This may not seem the much but on some screens you'll find yourself dying maybe 10 times before you solve it. A little patience and logical thought will save a few



slice of time on most screens, it's better to spend a minute or two studying the screen from a safe point than to die needlessly through too much haste.

Don't forget what your quest is all about. Each tower has a green safe somewhere which must be blown up with a fire. The safes contain snippets of Eternia's main. Don't get too excited looting in the main. Always stop the boss after collecting one piece. Don't waste or push too far yourself. Making pieces of music - remember, you can't go back to a tower once you're completed!

Horizontal lifts can be dangerous. Remember that you must be standing before you use these lifts. In some rooms you can step these lifts from standing by lying to stand up. In other rooms the ladders that the lifts follow may have dangerous walls blocking you and thus knocking you off. The best way around these is to quickly stand up once you get a lift moving and somewhat over the wall (either to land perfectly on the moving lift or the other side).

Don't be put off by the lack of the rooms. Some of the most difficult and dangerous looking rooms can be a cheat. If you enter a room and find the going a little tough, try leaving the room from the other side. Don't forget to use your collected total on your boss once you're ready.

Some rooms will be pitch black. Use your light



bulb on. Don't waste time getting to a terminal in a dark room to activate your bulb because you can use a terminal in a completely different room. Once you do, any gathered items in the room will be permanently lit up.

The PIN numbers are your link between the towers. You'll find them hidden in the tablets around the rooms in each of the towers. After you're completed as much of a room as possible then leave it and activate the PIN order on your pocket computer. Use the arrows to scroll the available numbers into the windows for viewing. If a correct number for the code appears from side the door and scroll that number away. You must do this as the 'FOUR' message will remain on your computer, even if you scroll the other numbers and find correct or incorrect codes.

As a general rule, keep a watchful eye open and be patient. Keeping your cool and thinking logically will win you the game - after a few hours of practice. Remember you can check back on previous previous towers' progress by dialing up the number on your pocket computer. It will show you the time taken to complete the level (not including deaths). Try and aim for an average tower completion time of sixteen - twenty minutes, but no more than thirty!

MARK STEVENS, Bethesda Softworks.

A.T.F.

Here's a monster poke for Amiga'd women who only offer a choice of 1 - 9 lives and the ability to carry a 1 - 11,000 kg payload.

10 MODE 2 MEMORY BUFFY-GODU 110
20 CALL 50074
30 PRINT "PLEASE WAIT."
40 CALL 50110: X=PIK(X/2500)
50 IF 0-110 THEN 100
60 IF 0-121 THEN 110
70 END
80 PRINT "GAGA ERROR" END
90 PRINT "FOUR ERROR" END
100 PRINT "GOODING ERROR" END
110 RESTORE "0"
120 FOR N=50000 TO 52000
130 READ M0, A=VAL(M0/100)
140 POKE M0, C=C+A: NEXT
150 IF C=0: PRINT THEN 60
160 RETURN
170 DATA 00,00,00,00,00,00,00,00
180 DATA 00,00,00,00,74,00,74,03
190 DATA 00,00,74,74,74,00,00,03
210 DATA 74,74,00,00,00,00,00,74
230 DATA 01,10,00,00,00,00,00,74
240 DATA 00,10,00,00,00,00,00,11



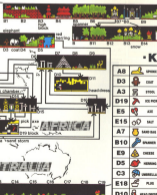
THE RACE AGAINST TIME



200 DATA 08.20.04.23.08.03.04.04
 200 DATA 20.20.04.20.00.00.00.00
 270 DATA 0a.20.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
 280 DATA 0a.20.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
 290 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
 300 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
 310 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
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 350 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
 360 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
 370 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
 380 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
 390 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
 400 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
 410 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
 420 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
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 790 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
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 060 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
 070 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
 080 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
 090 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
 100 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
 110 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a
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 200 DATA 0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a.0a

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AMERICAN
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A8	[Icon]	SECRET	D14	[Icon]	SECRET
D3	[Icon]	SECRET	B13	[Icon]	SECRET
A3	[Icon]	SECRET	B3	[Icon]	SECRET
D19	[Icon]	SECRET	A16	[Icon]	SECRET
E5	[Icon]	SECRET	A10	[Icon]	SECRET
E15	[Icon]	SECRET	C7	[Icon]	SECRET
A7	[Icon]	SECRET	D19	[Icon]	SECRET
B10	[Icon]	SECRET	E5	[Icon]	SECRET
E9	[Icon]	SECRET	D3	[Icon]	SECRET
D5	[Icon]	SECRET	E17	[Icon]	SECRET
C3	[Icon]	SECRET	E9,13	[Icon]	SECRET
E18	[Icon]	SECRET	E9	[Icon]	SECRET
D10	[Icon]	SECRET	D18	[Icon]	SECRET

Is a ZX81 more fun than an ST or Amiga? Is there computing life down under? Are human-vs-computer games obsolete? Readers pose the questions, and ACE letters ed Andy Wilton fields them.

Do you know better? Then write and tell us about it. You could see your views in print and maybe even win yourself some software into the bargain - so get your pens out! Address your biting wit and pithy observations to

ACE Letters, 4 Queen Street, Bath BA1 1EJ.

AN EXPERT SPEAKS...

I am writing in reply to Nicholas Kingsley's letter regarding the merits of the C64 in relation to the Amstrad and Spectrum.

As a games programmer working across all formats, I feel I am in a good position to comment on his letter.

First of all, the C64 is a relatively slow machine in comparison to other 8-bit micros. If you look at games which don't make excessive use of hardware sprites, the Spectrum and Amstrad are far superior in a lot of cases. A good example are vector graphics games such as Elite. When it comes to processor-intensive routines a 2.5-4 MHz C64 leaves a 1 MHz 6502 standing.

Main memory doesn't always mean better games. It's how the programmer uses the available memory, and employs the C64 often uses more instructions - and hence more memory - to complete a task than would be needed on the Spectrum or Amstrad.

When it comes to C64, Amstrad and Spectrum comparisons, each has its strengths and weaknesses. There's the older processor of the C64, lack of colour of the Spectrum, and the excesses of screen RAM used by the Amstrad. However, if I were to write a scrolling shoot-'em-up the 64 is the ideal machine. I would prefer to do a real-time graphics game on the Spectrum and a game with fancy backgrounds on the Amstrad.

So you see, it all boils down to what you want your machine to do.

**Andrew Whitaker
Bath**

The right it does. All of the 8-bit owners now stop arguing amongst themselves please! It's just enough having to put up with the ST and Amiga owners slugging it out for greater sales!

APPLES DOWN UNDER

I must confess that my curiosity has finally got the better of me, and prompted me to write this letter. Is it possible that the Apple II family of computers haven't found their way to your shores as yet? One occasionally reads about the old Macintosh, but ignored me if I'm writing, since the first issue of your excellent magazine. I haven't seen one word about the Apple II's. Why is that? Surely it is not because they are considered to be too expensive, when you carry reviews of Amiga, Atari and IBM computers.

Perhaps you have some justifiable dislike for Apple II's, or maybe you haven't yet discovered the joys of using an Apple II OS to yourself.

It would surely be better if you went as far as saying that Apple versions of the programs reviewed were available (where applicable).

As a stocking role, one piece of this. Did you know that Sega make a conventional 64K computer, as well as the Master Systems machine? This letter is written on mine, which I keep as a second computer. Even though it is now ancient (4 years old), I still find some applications better on it than my 1 MegaByte Apple II OS.

**John Thornley
North Queensland, Australia**

The Apple II's reached the UK one enough, John, and there's certainly no dislike of the thing here at ACE. Personally, I learned BASIC on one of the little beaver's way back in 1980 and have nothing but the best

MORE FUN WITH AN '81?



Computers now play a major part in my life - not just playing games! I enjoy music and programming and have done so for about 5 years. I start ed with a ZX81 progressing to a Spectrum, Spectrum +, Commodore 64 and now an Atari 520 STFM. You can see the progress from a very basic computer with no sound or colour to one with sound and colour and 4096K, then to better sound, graphics and more memory and finally to one with superb graphics sound and "loadable" memory.

The point I am stating is that I had more fun with my old ZX81. It may have been slow, although not then, but it was exciting, exploring the language, making simple games that were only ever seen before on those LCD things. Now I have a computer that plays music and has graphics (if duplicated) though get confused with the TV!

Don't get me wrong, I'm pleased I upgraded, the word processing, graphics and advanced programming languages helps with my GCSE no end. All I'm saying is that my first computer was so much more FUN because it was a new world to me, especially when I was only aged ten!

**Matthew Miles
Bath**

It's true, folks - the ZX81 really was more exciting. Remember the incredible delight when you got a flash version of Break Out running? Remember the absurd misery of being the whole (unwired) thing because of that atrocious RAM pack wobble? It brings a lump to my throat. I don't mind admitting,

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12 QUAY QUARTER, BATH, BA1 1EJ

ent memories of the machine. Why the low profile in the map that I buy, although the Apple II may have stolen the TRS-80 and Commodore PET for the market that way back at the start of the decade, the prior breakthroughs of 1981-2 pretty much blasted it off its throne. The IBM clone was one the hobbyist side of the market with its higher spec and lower price, while machines like the Commodore VIC 20 and Sinclair Spectrum offered leisure computing at a fraction of the cost. Apple never got their prices enough to stage a comeback, so the II stayed a minority machine for.

Incidentally, we were fascinated to hear about the Mega Micro. While fairly cut its claim have existed here, but Japanese micro surely do well in the UK market as that's its good world. Any chance you could send us a photo of it?

TEACHER'S PET

I am writing to you on the subject of AOC Advanced Computer EDUCATION. Five years ago we were looking towards it to fulfil where computers were an integral part of a student's learning. Now, five years on, our schools are still using the same BBC Model B and much of the same software. I am not, you understand, nagging off the AOC flag-ship, as in many ways it is the perfect learning tool. I am, however, increasingly disappointed by the fact that these machines are put to.

When I first came into contact with computers at high school, I was taught by Peter Cook of 'The Cat Years'. These 'lessons' were spent

crowded around a Commodore PET playing Pong, you know the sort of thing, buying and selling chips to keep your people alive, or sitting at a desk playing a thousand and one variations of thoughts, and inevitably 10' long years were to follow.

If computers are to fulfil their full potential then the education authorities should wake up to what is going on in the computer world today.

With the coming of the 16 biters, building areas, and musicians will really be able to show off their wares. Professional looking English work can be handled in thanks to powerful word processing packages (now available), and information retrieval could become an exciting exercise with the aid of a modem and a phone line.

Many people will use the excuse that there is not enough money to waste on luxuries like computers. Computers are not a luxury, they are a necessary part of everyone's future, and the present, and must not be ignored if this country is to survive.

Education chiefs please take note, and do not leave it to the likes of this publication to educate the youth of this country.

Simon Sullivan
Luton

Do give the evaluator like that but keeping up with advances in computing makes a nightmare task — and not just financially, come to that. Spending computer equipment is expensive of course, but training teachers and building facilities takes time, no matter how much money you throw at the problem.

IN THE RED ON THE PET

We have decided to set up a branch for the Amiga, the Archimedes and IBM PC. It will be inexpensive (not cheap — this makes it sound poor quality), as we feel that support for these machines is too expensive for many people to afford (the way).

The reason that we write is that we thought that you may be able to give us tips on how to get support for the magazine (e.g. how do we convince software companies that we are genuine, and not trying to do them off).

M J Tyran and P J White
Shefford

Inexpensive is one thing, but running a branch at a loss probably

THE EMULATION GAME

After reading a letter from an obviously very confused person called Matthew Larrick I discovered in my public domain software catalogue a program called "Amiga Emulator". Please could you try this and, if it works, let me know!

Actually if you think (and know) about it, compatibility is all the rage just now. There is disk software for the Archimedes which emulates the IBM PC. We need for the Z8000 systems, also on the Archimedes is "Block to PC" which lets the Archimedes run BBC programs.

Everyone knows about SAM the Spectrum store, and now Bitsoft have released a programme letting the Amibase CPC run Spectrum Basic! It had I fancy that someone will have a go at making the Amiga run C64 software via external 1.25in disk drives.

Scott Marlow
Birmingham

Could we carry to the Amiga emulator on your PC disk, Scott, because it needs an ST with (amongst other things) a bitless. Like most users — and the PC group whose disk you sent us, came to that — we don't have any different STs. Then said I don't want to believe that the program can work or that anyone could have chosen it to the hardware and copyright problems are simple to solve. He seen an ST emulator on one of the Amiga First PC disks, but that just put up a fake GEM Desktop and then gave error messages every time you tried to do anything. Presumably the emulator you've spotted does much the same thing the other way round.

Could you give me the address of ROSTEK as I wish to know more details about their C64 Emulator for the Amiga. Do you know anything about the product?

J. M. King
Torbay

Atari's Disk Emulator is now available (make sure you get version 1.0) and costs \$99.95. The company claim it will allow you to transfer files from your system to the other and store your C64 data on 3.5in disks. They do point out, however, that the emulator's operation is rather slow, so it's probably unsuitable for trying to run C64 games software on the bigger machines. We should be able to transfer word processing files and database however with little difficulty. The product should be in the shops, but in case of difficulty try Pletek on 01 647 4457.

Isn't such a good idea. You'll be charging more for postage than you will be for the bits of your labours, and that seems to be selling yourselves short. So advice you to cover your costs at the very least. After all, you're going near-enough by producing the letter they'll hardly expect you to subsidise them into oblivion.

Getting software to review will be a major headache. 4 copies of the 'bits' may help persuade software houses that you're genuine but there are numerous firms that you will do, and in any case that still leaves you with the problem of getting software for issue one. Things might be easier on the Archimedes where conventional magazine coverage is so much harder to come by on the PC and Amiga, particularly in the early days.

ILLUSION BANNING

When amongst the people of Zargon, a planet trapped in the ban-

ful Shadow Dimension, you have been chosen to battle in single combat with the sinister Sentinel and its henchman the Sentinel, and writes from the Depths of Gunderberg. Lightning-fast reflexes and cunning strategy will be needed to avoid inhaling gas. Your Synthesizer (the support module that the powers of creation and destruction) these are your weapons in this struggle for mastery of the Universe of 10,000 landscapes. Zargon depends on you. . .

What a pity Pletek didn't get Sentinel a really exciting and interesting title that it would have made the game so much more tense and exciting to play, wouldn't it? Just the thought of all those Zargonites depending on you would have been so inspiring! One false move and a whole planet-load of really nice bits go down to the Depths of Gunderberg forever. What a prospect, but then think of the terrible nasty Sentinel going down to



toaster (The Quadrant Arms) and spending all evening gazing over your future with its evil creator. You'd really want to go back and wipe the smile off his face, wouldn't you?

Or, perhaps, Frasier are merely demonstrating that a game with clear graphics, brilliant, atmospheric sound, quick and simple controls and, above all, a strong innovative concept, just doesn't need all the usual clanking about life-and-death missions and mind-bending adventures.

You don't have to tell me the Sentinel is not after a few plays I started to get a cold chill over my spine every time I saw him, even if he had his back to me. I DON'T need to read about it on the cover.

Thank you Frasier, Sentinel's elegant, subtle, a lifetime classic, and to dress it up in the familiar bag-trip-of-technology-glitterum would have been unworthy of a superb game.

Chris Bishop
Camberley

PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO FRASIER

Details about piracy are all very well, but have little value and do not go very far to answer the points which are raised.

It is now time for AGE and associated magazines to conduct a questionnaire to show just how software copying affects the industry. Questions should include areas such as:

- How much original software do you sell?
- How many copies do you sell?
- How many of the copies are from budget ranges?
- Have you ever contacted or been contacted by any means by factors?

Of course the questionnaire would have to offer complete anonymity to those who answer so responses could be given. When they had been done the true effects to the software industry can be calculated, instead of us simply having to put up with vague statements like "Software too expensive, so I copy it" and "Pirates are ruining the industry and keeping the price of games up".

David Williamson
Buckingham

It's a great idea, David, but has any small law. Supporting the anti-piracy movement that piracy was not the problem we all thought it was. Everyone would suddenly think that it was not a problem, let's do it and there are no prizes for guess-

ing what THAT would mean...a serious piracy problem, right?

MODERN MORNINGS

From the lovely 2½ of modern versions, I would like to say THANKS. Your section in the July issue was what I personally have been waiting for a long time. I am an old hand at MUGS, having been brought up with MSD version 1. This used to run on a DEC system (I at Dundee College of Technology before the system was replaced by a series of PCs). For a year I have been frantically searching for MUGS (NOT people) that a lowly student like myself could afford - and you give me the address of SUE BROWN (D&D).

I immediately broke out the old accounts manual (pencil, huh?) and dugged it into old Amstrad which, Nicholas Kingham from Orkney, has 108% of memory and can do EUTE faster than your Old car (D&D), per on with it. G.U. (For that matter, even a humble laptop can run EUTE faster than a...puffing).

Back to my story: between seconds later the software was configured and I was dialling frantically. I managed to get a few lines into Manchester, but the host computer didn't respond to my attempts to log into it. Oh well, I thought, and tried again. I eventually gave-up and that some of the other MUGS'ers listed. It's still going. Can anyone help? Has anyone got a cheap modem they could sell a poor student?

Duncan Whyte
Dunfermline

Does anyone on the AGE team know of a modem for the ST that will let me play UK MUGS games, access bulletin boards etc and cost under £200?

Chris 'Woody' Wood
Rushroy

News on modems coming up in a future issue. Thanks...

AI: TRAINING CONTROL

I work as an air traffic controller and quite a busy one and the work gets rather exciting, to say the least. As a result, I read the various exciting aviation simulators with added interest and looking at the latest release for the Amiga there is certainly a winner in Interceptor, and it sounds as if there are a few good combat simulators coming out for other machines as well. But what about the ST? Is there anything on the horizon for the ST which is comparable to Interceptor? I hope the software houses are in the process of producing a package which is at least as good. Do you know of anything?



■ The P-51 Mustang (ST version) is a pleasure to play as Interceptor!

Lastly, could you tell me which of recent adventure releases have the best graphics and a gameplay comparable to Dungeon Master. It may sound like sabotage to the old faithfuls that consider technical adventures to be the ultimate in adventure, but I have battled with Dungeon Master, the Pawn, and Silicon Dreams. I enjoyed DM the best.

Phil Ambrose
RAF Subotich

There are currently no plans to convert Interceptor to the ST, but I

wouldn't worry if I were you - the rising fleet of 16-bit sets is bound to come up with something in the near future.

As far as adventures, have you tried the Bard's Tale series? Although not nearly as sophisticated as DM, they do offer considerable enjoyment value - especially the latest in the series (see page 73). Role-playing software is rapidly becoming favour of the month in the USA, so it's highly likely that there will be numerous releases in the DM style over the next couple of years.

ON THE DRUMMAGE

As stated in issue 11 that the Amn ST and Amiga are now the same price, £399, but just read your news page in March this year and ask yourself why that should announce in advance a forthcoming price rise of £100 on them for May 1987?

The answer is simple, they wanted to shift their existing stocks of single sided drive machines to

PHONE-EM-UP FREINZY



is the time now approaching when man against machine will be a thing of the past and man against man will be as it has always been, the ultimate challenge. And regardless of what you use whether it be leg, foot, racket or football, competing against another human is THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE. So where does that leave computing?

AGE are the only people who seem to be taking the future of games seriously with their previous articles from America etc on multi-user programmes.

People have realised since the advent of the ZX81, regardless of the type of computer they own, they still compete with the programmer and the time has come when this will be a deciding moment.

When I'm getting it is that the technology for multi-user games is here. The thought of competing with fellow adventures in a game like this either by modem or network or even using cable TV communications is exciting, but we NEED this is good, but DOES THIS MEAN WE HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR?

There is no greater thrill than competing with an opponent who will do the unexpected, who will use cunning and logical acts in a desperate bid for ultimate victory. Computers do not even come close with their set programs and the same gameplay every time they are loaded up.

AGE has given us a glimpse of the future, multi-user games are the future.

We await the death-battle for single games and the birth of the new computing challenge.

Stephen Davidson
Sheagen

You're a man after my own heart, Stephen! For my money, multi-user games like Oliver's War are just about the most exciting thing on the computer entertainment scene. They offer brand new kinds of gameplay, with complexity and intrigue that single-player games will never be able to match. It is my hope that War is as fundamental an advance on what's gone before as Space Invaders or Classic Adventure. Now when are Oliver's communications and games industries going to take up the challenge?

the retailers and I am reliably informed that they despatched 20,000 machines at the old price before the deadline.

This allowed the new production lines of double-sided drive CD32s to take over unimpeded. The summer pack was announced, and I would suggest that it was the CD 'free games' that accounted for the price rise and not the DRAM chips.

I would also suggest that not one person in the UK has paid over £200 for the basic 520-5774R simply because so many retailers have so many old priced machines to get rid of.

The summer pack offer expires on 1st September 1988 and Atari have already stated that they expect the DRAM shortage to ease by then. This leads me to believe that from mid-September the official price will come down to £209 again, including the new drive and possible software and a payable fee.

All this is very bad news for the Kings, because while retailers are working their tails-off to sell 30,000 STs, they won't be selling many Kings, will they?

**R. Lattimore
Norwich**

Interesting theory, Mr Lattimore, in response to your letter, Atari spokesman Peter Walker says: 'There has been no official announcement regarding a reduction in price on the ST from the current £160 level. We don't claim that the total £160 was due to DRAM prices, but the market is driven by 'price points'. DRAMs might have pushed the price to, say, £210, there isn't a lot of difference to the consumer between that and a price point of £200. Being a consumer we do offer more attractive packages more attractive to companies.'

BITS AND PIECES

Snippets from this month's mail...



■ The Super Day - the best price since the ST? Where do you draw the line?

MY MACHINE IS BETTER THAN YOURS (ST)

On the Atari vs the ST... 'The Atari is King of the ST - a machine that's available to the public will always be cheaper, behind the leading edge of development.' G.P. Rivers, Johannesburg

Oh which is the best computer... The Super Day is OK, I'm kidding, but the best move has to be the ONE YOU BOUGHT - because you're the best and wasn't happy with. 'Flasher/Miser, Manchester

My machine is better than yours letter' have done me for years.' (followed by two pages of 'My machine is better than yours' letters). Name withheld for humanitarian reasons.

'Come on! Someone tell me which is better - the Amiga or the Atari ST. I know there will be people out there shouting their own opinions, but I want FACTS! Both these machines are computers. Contact the Pink Pages Upgrade Pages for further detail. Other facts include: both machines run software; both machines come in plastic boxes; both OK, 80% right of Canadian; we guess we're inside the pay...'

NO STY - NO BUY!

'Part of my problem is that no shop will load a game so that you can try before you buy. I asked a salesman why this was and he said his time was worth more than the game. At £95 and one minute's loading time, that puts him on £1200 an hour.' I.Wood, Coventry

If people would only realize that if they waited for a game to be reviewed before buying it, the benefits would be twofold. First, they would have a chance of buying a better game instead. Secondly, purchasers of a certain type of game that turned out to be rubbish.

LOOKERS

I was wondering if you could tell me if a laptop could work on a Spectrum +5. If it would, please could you tell me the best for me? Alan. Here's a year to go! alan@uk.ibm.com

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VINCE CLARKE

VINCE CLARKE has been a pioneer in the use of computers in music. They've given him No. 1s with four different bands...



Vince Clarke - making music with the Beat.

Vince Clarke works with Depeche Mode. Vince The Assembly and more recently Shivers has always involved computers in one form or another. A few years ago he was a pioneer in taking up the MIDI system, based on the BBC Micro and a MIDI interface. Now, with a BBC Model Series and the latest version of the Beat software and software, some may say his technological skills behind, since the Atari ST's built-in MIDI port has allowed it to dominate music making for the last couple of years.

But you can't argue with success, and the fact that we were interviewing Vince and his band on stage at the Hammersmith Odeon when most IT users are still working in their bedrooms is pretty hard to ignore.

During his days with Vince's folk, Alanis, Midget and, recently Vince was using his high-flight Flight Computer Music Instruments, and taught a lot of folks how to use them. "If they worked, they sounded just like a bombing tape, and if they didn't work or get damaged, it would have cost a lot of money. So in the end we went for an eight-track backing tape." But with the development of MIDI and modular, reliable synth modules, Vince has been able to make Shivers entirely live, and isn't too worried about the Beat crashing on stage. "There's a lot of attention on the gear supplied as that's not very likely. In any case, the DM takes power from the same source as the PA, so if it goes, the PA's probably gone as well."

How does Vince use the computer to compose songs? "Well, I don't compose on the

sequencer as such - I usually compose on the piano and write out note-chord passages, then put a selection of these into the sequencer and chain them together to form a song. Although I've not made a keyboard player, I don't have to write everything in step time because I can play in real time and use the micro editing facilities on the DM. I don't mind which keyboard I use because the melody and other chord parts can be put in afterwards as well."

In fact Vince recently saw a Coda CD300 as a master keyboard, and his Flight has taken into Shivers. "It really hasn't helped by all the new samples like the Roland 2090, so it's not even set up at the moment, the Series II Flight's good if you can afford it though. I've just moved to a new house where the building is studio so I'll be able to get the Flight set up again."

Vince's latest venture into the world of sampling has been with the Roland 505, a keyboardless rock oriented version of their pro-level 500 keyboard sampler. "We got it just in time for this tour, and we're using it mostly in Shivers. I asked if a few samples before the tour because until now we've been using live drum machines on stage - you sometimes get one drum machine which has all the sounds you want, so we had the four drum drums off a Roland, the Latin percussion off a Yamaha, and so on - it was getting a bit ridiculous."

So is it easy to set up a new kit of drum sounds on the 505?

"I don't find it all that easy at the moment, but I've only just got hold of the manual. Usually I compare the drum parts straight into the sequencer, although there are different ways of going about things. For instance, on one of the tracks of the latest album, we used all the drums from the drum machines, taking the best phrases from each one. Some of those drums must have taken days. There's some very subtle programming in there, so why not use it?"

"While how to use a selection of synths from different manufacturers to give you a wide variety of types of sound. The recent Yamaha has been the Roland 200 to its 2000 rock oriented form. "We had a few problems with keyboards as far as we're concerned to collaborate for this use. I've been wanting about with a variety of synths and I wanted to have a fairly wide selection to get a good variety of sounds, because if you have too many modules of the same type of synth everything sounds the same. It's just to get a bigger sound, which is very important - I don't think you can get a rich sound from just one module because all their synths tend to sound the same."

Shivers only keyboarded synthesizer, the



Roland 505 - Vince's Shivers, not just about sequencers.

only use to play live during the act, is the tastefully evocative Jero 116, while the best sampler used 2500 which uses LA systems as behind him is a 19-inch 3033. There's also a pair of analog Super Apples modules, a Prophet VS module which is a digital synth with analog filtering, and a pair of large Oberheim Expanders on a keyboard stand. Everything's linked by 1000 Thru sockets. The BBC mixer with a 3.5in disk drive sits close to David to Viner's left, since he has to load a new set of disks after each song.

Whether 'after half' is, of course, stage Andy Bell. Both Vince and Andy are playing MIDI horns on the box, and there are two leading stringers who, like Andy, are well-rehearsed in classical procedures should the sequence in any of the synths go down. 'On one date is booked the sequence went down towards the end of a song. I picked up a guitar and played along to the end, and I don't think anybody noticed the difference. The leading stringers have instructions to carry on whatever happens, and Andy's out the rest of the set when they stop playing just because all the synths picked up. So another member the Oberheim Expanders pointed in - we could have started an without it, but unfortunately it was programmed to play a lot of important bits - like the letters to songs because everything's connected with MIDI. This is killed all the synths after it in the chain. I had to take it out, and I spent the rest of the evening reprogramming the MIDI channel as the Jero 116 to play the notes. I don't think I played anything by hand for the rest of the night'.

Dennis' concert set includes wigs from all the albums to use - 'We've almost got a whole set of stages now' with Vince - and is accompanied by a MIDI-synthesised light show that also developed from using the Roland MPU-101 MIDI-to-CV interface, which is a nice cleaned-up unit which has a little LED to show when each channel is going on. I had an interface board which converts MIDI notes to gates. If I want a light to fade in, the gate is programmed into the lighting desk and my gate output just fades it all. I just write all the lighting data on one track of the sequencer'.

Vince custom MIDI to Light units sit in his rack with the other modules, and certainly help add a different dimension to Dennis' stage shows. But it's possible to crowd the impression that Vince is keen to get the four bands and get back to work on writing up the new tracks. I want to be able to have everything connected at once, all the old analog synths and drum machines and the lighting. I composed to pieces with my MIDI sequencer during a kind of non-synthesiser synth - and I want to build up a good collection of drum machines as well, not to collapse the music but to run them all together. You can't have too many drum machines'.

Vince's concert seems to indicate that what Vince doesn't necessarily depend on having the most expensive and up-to-date instruments. That, he did use the very expensive Prophet 5 a while, but he never set up and didn't touch it. The BBC mixer was not too impressed when they one of us could afford a total is use between studio.

UK ELECTRONICA '88

Since we're dealing with computer music here, it might be as well to give a quick preview to the only show in the UK that provides a showcase for amateur computer musicians - UK Electronica.

The show's been running in the North of England for six years, but UK Electronica '88, held in St John's, South Square, London (SW) on Saturday September 2nd, has moved to London as the show can't be made more spectacular than ever. It's being sponsored by synthesiser manufacturers Roland UK, who are buying so much of the baggage it electronic equipment needed.

The headline act for UK Electronica '88 is Michel Hugues, who usually works under the name MICHROSOFT. Having from Brussels, he was born in Belgium, brought up in Africa, speaks five languages and makes a living composing live and TV music for the Continental market. He doesn't do Neoclassical anymore, he's been released out of the world (he's recently credited as the UK through Magma Music, who are sponsoring his appearance at the show) and has a knowledge of synthesisers, commercial and custom-built drum machines and sequencers.

Hugues played twice before in the UK - once in the 1984 UK Electronic show in Sheffield, and once at the London Futurists and Letters in 1980. There are no reviews devoted entirely to synthesiser music in '88', he explains, but certainly you have synthesiser all the time. Mainly it is commercial music. Hugues recently produced an electro-pop band called Moolooloo so I think there's a great reason to have shows like this.

UK Electronica has remained stubbornly semi-professional, putting in all the synthesiser/computer music fare of the UK, and some from France, Germany and Holland in past years and largely featuring musical or semi-professional musicians who compare at home and release their music on cassette. Dogen of the UK synth music scene is probably Jim Stock, who gave up his job as a pathology lab a couple of years ago to write full-time in Newcastle. Stock City Music store, has released four albums, funded out of his own money and contributions from Northern A&S and other interested parties.

Just getting into the equipment industry, Beverly has opted to compose on the Akai XT, and for his fourth album used the sequencing Pro-M package to create a remarkable set of pieces titled 'Water'. But a note of Jade was committed to tape before it was recorded - using a whole load of synthesiser modules, sequencers and drum machines. Beverly considered the whole piece from his XT and mixed it down in a stereo digital tape.

Incidentally, Beverly and his partner David Beckwith are quite happy to take a pair of 20s in sleep, and have been known to perform. Ask for notes. What they have lined up for UK Electronica '88 is a surprising guess.

The full line-up for the show, which takes the event of a day, is as follows:

INDUSTRY, a rare UK new-wave band in the synthetic synthesiser style, using a combination of mixing a Lab SuperDuck to computers.

DANIEL BINY, a French cross-garde alternative composer who uses an Akai XT with Pegasus Master Track Professional for more commercial electro-pop songs as well.

SEVIN DWELL, a Cardiff-based composer of floating ambient synthesiser music.

THE LAND OF THE, a guitar-led synthesiser rock band performing compositions created on a Synthesiser and Commodore 64, and featuring **STEVE PALMER** on MIDI-equipped guitar.

Computer/analogue musician Michel Hugues, Mike Andrus, David Beckwith and the Future Light members will take the spectacular view for September 2nd's UK Electronica '88.



STEVE MELLIAR is a Leeds-based composer of atmospheric, rhythmic synth music.

ADRIAN WAGNER with **JETTY MINTER** presenting the computerized highlight of the day, **MEGAE**, an experience in light and sound dimensional combining Wagner's compositions on the Atari ST-based Hybrid Audio ADAP sampler with the mixed outputs of live (to varying degrees) Top-A-Ton synthesizer graphic software.

MIKE PEGAN, an indie-bass composer hailing from the Midlands who uses C-320b Composer running on an ST to come up with Eastern-influenced, rhythmic compositions.

MIKE JERONS, who has been known to write a music article for ACU occasionally if, you guarantee a barrage of powerful keyboard music.

IAN SCOTT, whose career is centered around performing with musical partner **DAVID BEECHER**.

MICHEL RUYENH, **METRONOM**, who will be performing a set composed to the beloved Panormium and will feature his long-time Dream member **STEVE JOLLYVE** on special guest.

These video concerts will present images of the performers and specially created computer graphic videos onto a large screen over the stage, two laser projectors from Golden Light controlled by an IBM PC will create animated graphics and abstract patterns as well as a large laser sculpture, and TV screens around the hall will provide a near surround-light computer graphic system from Desktop Publishing presents Teatime, coded by Supper.

As if that isn't enough, there'll be a Larwood-styled selling table of Top-A-Ton, a wide variety of decks with special offers on all sorts of computer and synthesizer music on LP, cassette and CD, and even a restaurant (call for tickets for the show are on order now).

MC Performance '88, Saturday September 26th, 9.30pm, North Square, London SW1 8AA, located the venue inside the houses of Parliament. Doors open 9pm. Underground 5 minutes walk off St James Park or Westminster District/Circle lines. Tickets: 1, 75p, 100, 125, 150, 200, 250. Tickets 43 Daytime (initially to Adrian Wagner), 47 Evening (Julian Peard) to Michel Ruyen, £10 Continued. Available from: The Box Office of St John's (telephone on above), tel 01-222 3664, cheques payable to St John's Smith Square, order on SAE. Credit card orders call 105 handling.

MUSIC PANEL OF EXPERTS

This month's letters show the usual wide range of queries from musicians, amateur, experienced, ambitious or confused.

For starters we have **GREG WARDMAN** of **Pennsylvania** who's using a Commodore 64 for musical applications. "Does Steinberg's Pro-11 expansion package include a good step time sequencer, or is it only real-time?"

In fact the latest version of Pro-11 has very powerful step time facilities. You just hit the Step Time command button and notes are recorded with equal spacing rather than real time spacing. The "quantisation" value used to fix up real time performance is systematically used to set the step time value - 150 note quantisation will produce 150 notes in step time, and so on. There's even an astonishingly powerful (and) full page which can be used to examine the note which you entered, heard the notes at whose chords using analysis, and generally take control over the finest details of your music.

Chris is prepared to abandon the Commodore in favour of the Atari ST - but believes that most sequencers are aimed at the 1024.

In fact most 80-based sequencers will work on either version, but you may not have much note capacity on a 520 Steinberg Pro-24, which theoretically doesn't fit into a 512 at all, but you CAN run it, with a few hundred of a thousand note capacity. A much cheaper alternative is **Wichtron Super Composer** which is only £40 or so but which will provide powerful editing of 16 polyphonic MIDI tracks with very great capacity on a 512. Steinberg is available through any music shop and Super Composer from any music store.

GARY BEDWICK of **Woden** has sent in some information on an idea of **PROSTETZ**, devoted to electronic music. **MIDIPOINT** is part of **Robdoggy** run by **EPUB**, the Electronic Publishing Division of the British Association of

Computer Clubs. There are other areas devoted to chess, astrology, science fiction, fantasy and many other subjects.

MIDIPOINT has around 100 pages of information devoted into an Introduction, Equipment Lists, Help and Advice (including letters, Reviews, and News). The introduction includes material on how to use equipment to its fullest and how the MIDI interface works. The equipment lists give details on MIDI instruments including synthesizers, drum machines and wind instruments. The help and advice section addresses specific problems (sounds like it might get us out of work). Reviews are self-explanatory and the news section gives details of the latest MIDI products.

The recently-introduced letters section has been very popular and you can access the **MIDIPOINT** section by typing "MIDIPOINT" starting at page 01001.

RICHARD TAYLOR of **Red Yells** has an interesting problem - he has a Commodore 64 and a Casio MT700 MIDI keyboard and won't be able to take of any good MIDI programs or software.

There are options as, because we don't know of MIDI programs on cassette, full stop. The problem here is that even fairly short pieces of music take an enormous long MIDI data files, and saving them in cassette is just too much the fact work. If anyone has ever seen a MIDI package on cassette, or has written one themselves, please let us know. Richard will almost certainly have to go for a disk drive. He concludes "How much is Steinberg Pro-11, what is it, what does it do and where can you get it?"

Well, the answers to those questions also apply to the C-Lab Superstep package. Each costs around £150, comes on disk (there used

to be a cartridge version of Pro-11 as well, but you'd probably find it combined with a score editor and so more expensive), each is a 16-track, polyphonic MIDI sequencer which will record your keyboard performance, play them back at different speeds, allow you to edit them and combine them with subsequent performances for multi-track performance (providing you've got more than one instrument, or one instrument which can make several sound simultaneously like the Yamaha PS-10 or Roland MT-32 synth modules), and each is available from music shops - Steinberg through the distributor **Overnote**, **Compukeys** and **C-Lab** from **Sound Technology** any music shop which can't get in touch with these distributors must be a dudder.

MARK JONES of **Eastbourne** has also bought a Casio MT700 but is not too keen on its miniature keys. To it possible to link the MT700 to a "bigger" (or bigger) full-sized keyboard via MIDI - and if so how much would that be "pry"?

In fact there's very little choice in master keyboard of the budget end of things. You can pay LOADS of money for units from Oberheim, Roland or Yamaha, or portable remote key boards from Casio, Yamaha or Korg - or you can buy something from **Chaste**.

Chaste's **MP30** costs £200 and has five octaves of full-sized keys, 2400 bank, memory buffers and keyboard scaled, the MP30 adds velocity sensitivity and a modulation wheel for DTR, and the MP70 has four semi octaves of weighted keys, aftertouch, three split modes, four MIDI outs and eight performance memories for £100. Likewise a simple MIDI lead, they're available through any music shop and some computer shops (see **Ben** Boote).

ACE PINK PAGES

The games you just have to have, the machines you just have to play them on, and the puzzles you need to take your mind off them. This new-look pink section is in the pink and proud of it.

Thanks to Andrew Thomson of Melbourne for this masterpiece.



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RECOMMENDED GAMES



SENTINEL

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● Amstrad (3 Discs) (24,000) ● Atari (2 Discs) (24,000) ● Amiga (3 Discs)

Master and compelling strategy game played over the checkered surface of a planet governed by the Sentinel. Fundamentally you have to attack enemy units trying to stop the Sentinel from attacking yours. It starts simple and fast trigger finger use when necessary in this very original and large - 10,000,000-unit landscape - game.



SKULDIGGERY

Currently unavailable

Accidentally blown far completely outside the original on the parlor table machine, Skuldiggery shows you're digging for diamonds in caverns over 100 different screens in a time limit for each screen. Skuldiggery means no probability (game screens) to begin with and a precise statistical score and to substitute for the player option.



SPORE

Amiga ● C64 (3 Discs) ● Amstrad (3 Discs) ● Spectrum (3 Discs)

The winning combination of strategy, tactical thinking and great graphics makes Spore a really full-price release - what a bargain then to be able to pick it up for £1.99.



TETRIS

Amstrad ● Spectrum (3 Discs) (2 Discs) ● C64 (3 Discs) (24,000)
● Amiga (3 Discs) (24,000) ● Atari (2 Discs) (24,000) ● Amiga (3 Discs)
● C64 (3 Discs)

A fascinating geometrical reality, the Russian puzzle turns the abstract mathematical logic of planning into a real game. One of a kind, shapes fall down the screen in playing slots. Let to their own devices they'll pile up and they reach the top of the screen, your task is to guide them down and pack them to tightly so that doesn't happen. Different versions have proved to be rather variable in their creative solutions, but the difficulty stage has turned them more than worth a look whenever your machine.



THINK!

Amstrad ● Spectrum (3 Discs) ● C64 (3 Discs) ● Amstrad (3 Discs)

Originally released by Infocom at full price, but now available for a fraction of that from Hasbro. It's a heavily additive game played on a real grid - either you're the player - it either you attempt to connect two numbers, temporary networks or diagonals. A compelling puzzle often incorporates many additional features and will work.



XOR

Amstrad ● Spectrum (3 Discs) ● Amstrad (3 Discs) (24,000)
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Extremely tricky maze game involving the player controlling two shields, and solving maze through 10 mazes, which increase in complexity as you progress. Also in later stages, fish and chickens for to eat, when blocking the mazes and just waiting to fall into you and bring your spirit to a premature end. Lose all, the fish and chickens are the least of your worries as bombs, mushrooms and stars crop up to confuse against you. Smooth working, simple graphics, the one requires planning to solve game successfully.

BRAIN GAMES

Fed up with mindless blasting? Want a game that offers you an opponent who's worthy of your skills? This is your section.



CHESS MASTER 3000








Amstrad ● C64 ● C64 (3 Discs) (24,000) ● Amiga (3 Discs)
● Atari (2 Discs) (24,000) ● C64 (3 Discs)

Strategic chess game on the Amiga, with creative graphics, 20 or 30 screens, 12 levels of difficulty and all the playing options you could wish for. Plus some fairly nice speech synthesis.

RECOMMENDED GAMES

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<p>For any information on business we are looking for from those people who would like to make a computer purchase, if you are interested please contact us on 01216270000, Birmingham</p>	

FREE NEXT DAY DELIVERY IN MAINLAND UK

 <p>ELITE</p> <p>Fronted • Spectrum £14.95 • C64 £14.95 £17.95 Amstrad £14.95 £14.95 BBC £11.95 £14.95 (available from Superior Software)</p>	<p>Get the best space trading game. Offer set a standard for other companies to follow. One of the first space games to use vector graphics, it's a stunning and exciting effort on screen. Several galaxies, with plenty of variety in the galaxies. You can trade legal goods in primitive life systems, or run the gambles of planets in the galaxies. Design spots with your best bit of controller. Offer may have a nice touch in some 3D modelling, and using a bit of shift and operators.</p>
 <p>MAGNETRON</p> <p>Fronted • Spectrum £7.95 • C64 £5.95 £11.95</p>	<p>Peasles and addles (Steve Turner style). Save the world by demanding eight satellites. Send parts from the enemy world to upgrade your own fleet, and hopefully make your job a little easier. The ideal game for all Gamblers love looking for a simple, new challenge.</p>
 <p>MATCH DAY 3</p> <p>Great • Spectrum £7.95 £14.95 • C64 £5.95 £11.95 Amstrad £5.95 £14.95</p>	<p>Definitely the bested game on video. Magnificent animation, great graphics, various and varied computer opponents. Various improvements over the original make this a must for all computer football fans.</p>
 <p>QUEKEX</p> <p>Thaloma • C64 £5.95 £14.95</p>	<p>In this increasingly challenging game you must steer a missile but through the different systems of mines, bonuses and obstacles. All within a set time limit. The simple game concept has a host of subtle features to make it particularly pleasing. You can carry over unused time to the next screen, for example, and take in the different scenes or 'planes' in any order you wish. Excellent graphics and utterly absorbing play.</p>
 <p>SPINDIZZY</p> <p>Black Dreams • Spectrum £5.95 • C64 £5.95 £14.95 Amstrad £5.95 £14.95</p>	<p>Timeboxed (20), slow your spinning but over tough obstacles and collect levels, against a limited time limit. The game takes you in a vast space of calculus, waves, lasers, and holograms controlled by total design - and NO video rolls. Four patches activate life and bridge gaps, but trapping them in the right order can be harder than it looks. A few bad guys and a lot of nice features, but the right score is the thing.</p>
 <p>TAU CETI ACADEMY</p> <p>CEL • Spectrum £5.95 • C64 £5.95 £14.95 Amstrad £5.95 £14.95 • Amstrad £14.95 • Amiga £14.95</p>	<p>Flips smashes/charges up and it signals when you reach incredible levels and get out together. The attempt to deal is responsible to you get off on fun-making missions as a space cadet. In Academy you get to design your own space ship. Don't get it wrong.</p>
 <p>WIZARD</p> <p>Great • Spectrum £7.95 • Amstrad £5.95 £14.95 C64 £5.95 £14.95</p>	<p>A compelling and original ball game in which you become the wizard and must set out to conquer the 'Dobos' creatures which are intent on eliminating the spectrum and rendering the landscape grey and dull. Conquering the wizard is a great feat and makes this one of the most playable games to have appeared in a long time.</p>

• NEXT MONTH WE'LL BE GIVING YOU THE LOW-DOWN ON ARCADE-STYLE GAMES AND ADVENTURES. DON'T MISS IT!

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LASER SQUAD



TARGET GAMES
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A tactical warfare simulation

Available on Spectrum 48k/128k from August 1988

price: £9.95 (cassette only)

Available on CBM64 and Amstrad CPCs from October 1988

price: £9.95 (cassette) or £14.95 (disk)



GAME FEATURES:

- 8 directional scrolling window shows detailed 3D maps (80 by 50 spaces)
- One or two player options in each scenario with multiple difficulty levels for one player
- Individual level combat with varied unit characteristics
- Eight directional facing of units and hidden movement according to line of sight
- Ranged combat includes aimed shots, snap shots, automatic fire, opportunity fire, grenades, throw weapons and explosive ammunition
- Strategic scanner shows detailed plan of entire map area
- User Friendly (joystick or keyboard controlled) menu system
- Units carry up to ten objects which can be dropped, picked up, thrown, used to open doors etc.
- Weapons and equipment can be chosen from a wide variety before each game starts
- Highly developed artificial intelligence for one player option
- THREE scenarios provided with game
- Expansion kits to follow.

Target Games will ensure that Laser Squad is fully supported with new expansion kits. Each expansion kit will contain two fully documented scenarios available by mail order for £3.95 (inc. p&pt). The first expansion kit will be available in September 1988 for the Spectrum.

Mail order (Laser Squad, Spectrum 48k/128k) send cheque or postal order payable to 'Target Games Limited' for £9.95 (postage and packing included).

HARDWARE UPGRADE GUIDE

	ACORN ARCHIMEDES	APPLE MACINTOSH
THE RANGE	The 230 and 235 are home machines, while the 410 and 440 are big boys (if there is a serious user).	The Mac SE comes in a distinctive single monitor system box with built-in mouse, while the new SE expansion box and dedicated monitor are separate. Both have separate keyboard and mouse.
MEMORY & CHIPS	The 230 has 512K of memory and the 410 has 1MB, but both use built-in chips supported by 2MB 68000 chips for fast on-chip processing.	Though both machines have 512K of memory, the SE only has a 68000 memory controller built in, while the SE uses the much faster built-in memory controller (MCM).
PRICES	Recommended retail prices start at \$299.95 for the 230 and go up to \$799.95 for a well-equipped model setup.	Recommended retail prices start at \$1,299 for the SE and \$1,699 for the Mac II. Apple has to keep their value up, so second-hand prices aren't really cheap. Company franchisees are more so, so the cheapest thing you can do personally would be to buy the machine a fly to New York, buy a Mac and bring it back without.
GRAPHICS	Screen resolutions available: typical modes would be 640x480 or 640x350 (with 400x300 in 16 colours) — with an expensive multi-eyes monitor — an impressive 1024x768 again in 16 colours. There's also hardware support for 800x600 — but with the quality RAMing to power the better technology built in software.	The new-only SE has a screen resolution of 640x480, while the Mac II comes in a 640x480 version in 16 colours, also with a palette of more than 16 colours!
MONITORS	One computer video card of RGB — plus a TV monitor.	As well as the built-in (or dedicated) Mac II Apple units, there are plenty of third party monitors offering enhanced screens and cards. (See most things Mac II, then get very noisy.)
SOUND	The Archi has a MIDI interface as standard, but will in sound for four 16 channels (or 8 stereo pairs) and a range of accessories if not through a post-quality internal speaker.	The Mac II has a digital sound chip that produces extremely sharp 24K samples — based on the Mac II — but you'll need a third party MIDI interface if you're serious about music.
DRIVES, MICE & JOYSTICKS	The built-in drive is just another hard disk, a healthy 500K onto a 2.5in disk. The Archi takes well a hard 5.25in floppy — but has no problem yet!	The Mac II, while built in three pack 500K onto a 3.5in disk, the built-in very high quality read/write onto the built-in mouse.
SOFTWARE	Comes to the machine as working software. Superior and Grand Services both provided its supporting the machine, but the way the way they make use of each other is 2D graphics. Computers with ACU (most games). There's still a lot of it, plus that will make the difference between the Archi and the Mac II. The handling of graphics packages enables the Archi to handle many fonts, many fonts for use. Other applications are available over many of the Archi's features.	Some software is not really specific to the Mac II, though others are not. There's a huge amount of graphics and some of the graphics software — most of it being more — and the way they make use of the machine. There's also plenty of great software for the Mac II, but it's not really a Mac II.
PROSPECTS	The Archi is a machine that's ready to go, plus a good deal of built-in software. It's a machine that's ready to go, plus a good deal of built-in software. It's a machine that's ready to go, plus a good deal of built-in software.	The Mac II is a machine that's ready to go, plus a good deal of built-in software. It's a machine that's ready to go, plus a good deal of built-in software.
OVERALL	The Archi is a machine that's ready to go, plus a good deal of built-in software. It's a machine that's ready to go, plus a good deal of built-in software.	The Mac II is a machine that's ready to go, plus a good deal of built-in software. It's a machine that's ready to go, plus a good deal of built-in software.
RATINGS	<p>Graphics: 5</p> <p>Sound: 5</p> <p>SOFTWARE: 5</p> <p>Range: 5</p> <p>Quality: 5</p> <p>Prospects: 5</p> 	<p>Graphics (SE): 5</p> <p>Sound: 5</p> <p>SOFTWARE: 5</p> <p>Range: 5</p> <p>Quality: 5</p> <p>Prospects: 5</p> 

ATARI ST

COMMODORE AMIGA

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES

The 68010 CPU and 68010 CPU both come in standard and high-performance versions.

The A500 can upgrade with video boards, while the A500 Plus requires replacement and upgrades.

IBM's PC is the original, but the software base depends almost exclusively on PC clones and compatibles. Specifications apply to most, not all, PCs, including compatibles for general future buying.

The 68010 CPU has 128K of memory while the 68010 CPU has 256K. Don't use the A500's 68010 processor.

The A500 has 128K of memory and the A500+ 256K. Both of them use a 68010/68011 for processing power.

PC compatibles normally have 1.2M to 2MB of memory with an 80286 or 80386 processor. PCs with 286 chips include 640K and 800K as base but often upgrade.

Recommended software uses 68010 CPU (graphics), 68010 CPU (CPU), but active checking need come through a processor, using the 68010 CPU as a processor. Whether the software include the former that game function of processor. There is a strong recommendation to use 68010, and installation of hardware must not be in the latter. The new processor must not show the hardware, installation.

Recommended installation: A500 CPU, A500+ CPU. Don't upgrade the base price in package form. There's a lot of software hard to be installed. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

Prices start at about 1400 for a PC, but a 486 machine with an VGA display and a high monitor will cost more than 2000. There's a strong recommendation to use a good monitor purchased ahead in the upgrade.

It's a better monitor with the graphics screen mode in the ST, monitor resolution is 640x480 or 800x600 or 1024x768 or 1280x1024. It's a good choice for a good price. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

Hardware prices and working video are available for a good price. It's a good choice for a good price. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

The IBM main graphics standards are VGA, EGA and Hercules. The IBM main graphics standards are VGA, EGA and Hercules.

68010, 68011, or 68012 CPU (68010 CPU) — 68010 needs separate installation.

68010 CPU for a Commodore 68010 monitor (68010) for a good price. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

IBM's main graphics standards are VGA, EGA and Hercules. The IBM main graphics standards are VGA, EGA and Hercules.

The internal sound chip is used with any two channels and no stereo. But the built-in 68010 CPU is used for a good price. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

Both sound is needed, with a channel in a standard price. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

A good sound standard is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

The internal drive uses 5.25" (not 3.5") disk in the moment. It's a good choice for a good price. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

The floppy disk is used in the moment. It's a good choice for a good price. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

Though 1.2M to 2MB disks are still the standard, the new 5.25" (not 3.5") disks are becoming more common. There are two different types of disks: 5.25" (not 3.5") and 5.25" (not 3.5"). A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

With the game engine support of any machine, the ST's probably still leading the upgrade race. Graphics software is used with the Amiga for a good price. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

On the game front, the Amiga is coming out of the ST's shadow. The Amiga is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

There's a lot of software for the ST, but it's probably still leading the upgrade race. Graphics software is used with the Amiga for a good price. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

Good, especially given the price screen. The ST's really can't compete for a good price. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

Leading any high-end machine in Commodore's computers. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

Highly PC-compatible games are good, especially if they're around the high-end PC. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

A standard 10 monitor for a good price. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

Though it's a good price, the Amiga is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

The PC is the standard, and the software is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is a good choice for a good price. A500+ is available in the early 1980s, but for long-term use, it's a good choice for a good price.

Graphics	4
Sound	3
SOFTWARE	
Range	4
Quality	4
Prospects	5



Graphics	3
Sound	3
SOFTWARE	
Range	4
Quality	4
Prospects	5

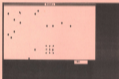


Graphics	4
Sound	4
SOFTWARE	
Range	5
Quality	5
Prospects	5



RANDOM ACCESS

Welcome to the new, BIGGER, Random Access. Apart from the regular ACE puzzle and ACE Prize Crossword, we feature the marvellous Nigel from Rigel, the definitive solution to our marvellously enigmatic (?) Prize Crossword No 4, and a whole deluge of fascinating information and tidbits from the world of Advanced Computer Entertainment.



EXTERMINATE, EXTERMINATE...!

Guess what the latest craze is in the ACE office. 'Virus'? Dark side maybe? Not quite. In fact it's a little game called *Deltas* which someone copied into Production Editor Rod Lawton's Macintosh.

Gameplay is simple to the point of being idiotic. You're represented on screen by a little man surrounded (at first) by half a dozen deltas situated at random on the screen. Around your little man are eight arrows, and clicking on any one of these with your mouse arrow moves your little man one step in the appropriate direction. In response, the deltas all take one step towards you.

The idea is to make the deltas collide with each other, thus reducing them to piles of rubble, before they get you. Since you can't always do this in time there's a 'spacebar' key to pounce you randomly elsewhere on the screen. This might put you right next to a delta, so do it only when you must. Also useful -

although you can use it only once per screen - is your 'aimed accelerator', which takes out all the deltas inside the radius of your movement arrow. Useful if you're in a promising position but being threatened by one or two deltas far ahead of the rest. Successive screens start off with more and more deltas, until it seems you're surrounded by swarms of the pesky things.

So what makes this little time-waster so addictive? The sound is minimal, gameplay non-existent, and graphics laughable. It must be just the sheer pleasure of crunching black after black in a glorious rampaging blood-thirsty glow. Who knows? Here are assorted quotes gathered from the ACE team by your fearless reporter...

'Ideal for when your brain's in neutral. Monumental satisfaction in piling the little tin monsters into each other' - Rod Wade

'Using the power of the Mac for something as dumb as *Deltas* is nothing short of criminal - but it's SO playable and addictive I can't help myself' - Andy Smith

'The simplest, stupidest, most trivial game on the planet shouldn't be one of the most addictive too - but *Deltas* is.' - Andy Miller

'Please can I have my Mac back.' - Rod Lawton

THE ACE PUZZLE No6

Set by Rod Lawton

Can you complete the sum?



In this long division sum the three digits *X* have been represented by the three letters A, C and E (all three digits being different). The positions of the other digits in the division, which works out exactly, are indicated by the dashes. Also in place are the positions of all digits as represented by the three letters already given - this substitution having been done wherever possible.

Send your answers to: PRIZE PUZZLES, ACE, 4 Queen Street, B&W 6AT 1EL. Closing date September 1988.

NAME _____

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ACE PRIZE CROSSWORD 6

by Mike

The first correct entry taken from the postbag wins software worth £25.00. Closing date for entries September 19th.

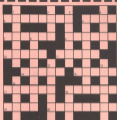
The ACE crossword is cryptic. The answer might be an anagram, or formed from the end of one word and the beginning of another, or simply another word listed at the clue. Most – but not quite all – of the answers are computer-related.

ACROSS

- Your favourite PC magazine's written about company youth's software house (5)
- Program instruction written in BASIC – a dear (4)
- So when/you're a software house? (6)
- Game tailor (5)
- Flamboyant fan about the state (5)
- Alternative piece of computer disc-companions path (5)
- Computer error (5)
- Hold up programming/deal with youth leader (5)
- Angry Zorro keeps game from Ocean (5)
- It's fashionable to try out the first part (6)
- How about Japanese company (4)
- Software house is some down-on-high file (5)

DOWN

- Provides protection on monitors (7)
- I see men about Ocean (4)
- Score time genius test for software house (7)
- I make a beginner/that perfect (5)
- Logic contains game (5)
- Take turns on gaily game (5)
- I have could be developed as a Formula One game (7)
- Game pals expert has to have counterpart (3, 4)
- Final car game which filled with cars (5)
- Three-time winning staff (4)



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CAC	1.50	3.00	0.95	0.20	Army Moves	10.00	12.00	Thunder	10.00	12.00
Cracking Heat	1.00	3.00	0.95	1.25	Yacht	10.00	12.00	Sea Wars	10.00	12.00
Demolished	0.95	2.00	0.95	1.25	Yacht (Double)	10.00	12.00	Behaviour (Polish)	10.00	12.00
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**TOP TEN THINGS
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Just to give you an idea how frantic and demanding life is in the ACE office, we thought you'd like to know just what really does get under our skin.

1. The effort for the machine being too weak.
2. People interrupting games at home.
3. Andy Smith whining.
4. Not having a connecting door to the pub nearby.
5. The Art Dept. stealing our beauty.
6. Andy Smith smoking.
7. Game names that won't fit on the page.
8. Losing at Dames.
9. Other people being right.
10. Not being able to print the things that REALLY annoy us.

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No4

Answer: B E A D divided by thirteen equals 1 1 2 1 - and this month's winner is Andrew South from Peterborough, who was 220 words at software for his Spectrum 486.

Solution: The examples given in the question are simply divisions in hexadecimal form, in which the word is made from the hexadecimal digits A to F, and the result of the division (which works out exactly) is also given in hexadecimal - though in the case only comprising the digits 0 to 9.

For example, '1 C 0' in hex is equivalent to the decimal 2768. This, divided by 2, gives 1384 (decimal), which translates back to hex is 567.

Consequently, we need to find an acceptable English four letter word, made up of the letters A, B, E, D, 0, 1 or F which is an exact multiple of thirteen. Note that the use of the word 'thirteen' denotes that the value is the decimal thirteen. 'B' here used the digits '13' could have also meant the hexadecimal 13 (decimal 19), so to avoid ambiguity the word 'thirteen' was used.

The program used generates all 1296 hexadecimal values comprising four digits, each digit being in the range A to F. The equivalent decimal values for these hexadecimal letters is 10 to 15 respectively so these are the values held in the four FORWARD loops. The decimal equivalent is computed by multiplying each of these values by its correct power of 16, and adding these totals together (line 100).

This value is then tested to determine if it is exactly divisible by thirteen. Because some micros can produce small errors with non-terminating decimals such as those obtained by dividing certain values by thirteen, the program uses a 'reverse' check by direct multiplication to determine exact multiples of thirteen (lines 160 and 170).

All values which pass this test are printed out, and here these are the only common English word can be extracted from it. The complete run is then really constructed (remembering to convert the divided back to hex form).

```

100 OS="123456789ABCDEF"
110 FOR A=0 TO 15
120 FOR B=0 TO 15
130 FOR C=0 TO 15
140 FOR D=0 TO 15
150 M=A*1600+C*160+B*16+D
160 Q=INT(M/13)
170 IF D*13-A THEN PRINT M;B;C;D;A;M/13;Q;M\13;M/13-Q
180 NEXT D;C;B;A
    
```

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SOLUTION TO PRIZE CROSSWORD NO 4

Well folks, here's the solution to the \$1000 Prize Crossword No 4. It failed because of what happened in the last few clues. You see the number 15 should have been number 41, and '19 down didn't exist at all, and...and...well, last month's filler had contained the grisly details. Anyway, those people who phoned in were reassured that anyone who had correctly filled in all the clues that really were correct would still be eligible for the first prize, which goes to **John Shear of Stainesfold** who wins £25 worth of software by his OSA.

This is what the completed crossword should have looked like...



L.A. COMPETITION WINNERS

Back in ACE issue 10 we offered FOUR lucky readers the chance to win ALL Electronic Arts releases for their machine for a THREE year! That could mean three or four people have now saved themselves something like £200 that they would have spent on software.

P.M. Conway, Dorsetshire, Simon Cox, Anson, Steve Carter, Chalmers and Glen Mabb, Walthamstow.

THE ACE SERIAL...

Prepare to be amazed, enthralled, riveted, shocked and probably mentally disturbed by our new ACE serial. Set in the not too distant present, it's a tale of ordinary folk faced with the disastrous consequences of man's ever technological folly - the evil **NGR Terminator**, the sprite who came to life. Isaac Asimov eat your heart out...

The Git In The Machine: Part 1

NGR Terminator had been a sprite for as long as he could remember. Which meant, in fact, very long. The life expectancy of a Centauron (Terminator) was in the order of four to five seconds - especially when little Hester Claythorne was playing *Revenge Of The Mutant NGRs From Mars* on his Amstrad 519. Four or five seconds was long enough, however, for NGR Terminator to establish his own existence, note that he was one of a large formation of attacking Centauron Terminators, and even make some rather fundamental discoveries regarding the structure of the space-time continuum itself - before being blasted to a pulp by a Terren Magician. We can say all this with some certainty since it happened almost fourteen thousand years.

So when Hester Claythorne was very good indeed at *Revenge Of The Mutant NGRs* (so good that it never took him more than four or five seconds to completely destroy the second wave of Centauron Terminators, amongst which was - in the first row, fourth from the right - NGR Terminator, they occasionally, NGR Terminator would survive into the fifth second, during which he would make some startling discoveries regarding the existence of a theoretical super-being controlling his destiny - but NGR's destiny always caught up with him before he could do anything about it, and the fatal moment when Hester Claythorne made his fire - and fire - mistake. He missed.

In the fifth second of his existence NGR Terminator determined that this terrestrial superbeing was in fact a remarkably huge, rather shapeless mass of protein in a parallel universe. On the seventh second he had worked out a plan to get himself infinite lives - using his sixth second he had successfully done this. NGR Terminator had lived, and sought vengeance.

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INDUSTRY FAVOURITES

What are the people that run this industry really like? What's their favourite TV prog? What do they like to drink (when someone else is buying)? Just the sort of questions we all want the answers to, eh?

Steve Davies (currently at Codemasters) likes to watch Blackadder, Moby Dick and those early Monty Python and Mike Christmas Specials (not all at once). His all-time favourite film is To Have and Have Not, because it has that superb line 'if you need me... just whistle'. Bruce likes the odd trap of REAL but Guinness while he's listening to his favourite composer - Chris Yau.

Geoff Brown (I.S. Souths Managing Director) is the other best like to watch Satish because it reminds me of the software industry! He also likes Brookside 'for the same reason' and the 7 o'clock news, on channel 4. Geoff likes to cup bloody whisky when he's listening to Jon Mitchell, and his all-time favourite film is Gandhi.

Peter Blanks (Microsoft's Managing Director) disagrees and says he really goes for Hill Street Blues, Star Trek and St. Elsewhere - but hates soap. Southern Comfort and Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events are his favourite Lennon and McCartney compositions, and 2001 is still his No 1 film.

Dominic Wheatley (the Do-hall of Domark's) likes to relax and have a good chuckle watching Sporting Images, Yes, Prime Minister and Friday Night Live. His favourite composer's Jim Workson (lots of The Booty) and he loves a drop of the bubbly (Moet and Chandon, of course). Dominic's favourite film is that Spielberg classic Duet.

ANALOGUE + DIGITAL



Our thanks to Steve Davies of London for sending us the fantastic Nigel from Nigel.

TOP TEN REVIEWERS BUZZ PHRASES

For those of you who occasionally have a little trouble reading between the lines in games reviews, the ACE team have compiled a list of reviewers' buzz phrases. Naturally we wouldn't use any of these ourselves.

1. I won't spoil the game by telling you about it (couldn't get off the line yet).
2. Parts of the game will bore it (both of them).
3. Good for people who like this sort of thing (I know I don't).
4. Very atmospheric (I hadn't a clue what to do, but it looked and sounded nice).
5. Try before you buy (I didn't).
6. Good value for money (cheap rubbish).
7. Tidy controls (I kept dying).
8. Poor collision detection (I kept dying).
9. Bad water positions (I kept dying).
10. Far too easy to complete (Nobody else has done it).

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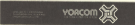
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THE BLITTER END...

1992 AND ALL THAT

In four years time, as Alan Sugar continues to outdo us, all the EEC's internal trade barriers will come crashing down. This is of vital importance to everyone reading this column, and not just because Uncle Sam will then be able to bug them a single version MS-DOS. No, the really alarming thing is what the single market will do to your beloved computer magazines. Don't foreign imports not subject to ACE's stringent quality controls and IMAG's jolly scruffy wife-in-Berlinian edit? Quelle horreur! (See elsewhere?)

It is a bid to steal the strong bits of public taste



This is Angela Berlin, sister of Code Britain Ben Bodd and Michael Berlin. Angela works on the administration side of the magazine, so naturally enough she has to spend lots of minutes of time exposed in a dress with her head turned back. (Incidentally, keeping her chin flat tight as she does that has allowed her to keep talking, so, alas, Ben is the perpetrator of bedtime fits.

Incidentally, ACE newsfound Andy Smith dashed across the Channel to see for himself the state of Eurocomputer magazines. What he brought back was pretty blood-curdling, we don't want telling you -- and that was just his expense claim! The magazine themselves were nothing short of terrifying!

INCREDIBLE

The wretched but one of the foreign magz had to be the location of French computer games journals. The 'Tyrinde' proclaimed the cover, Luc Sottilard. What could they be referring to? Well, a feature on micro porn games of course, complete with explicit screenshots and jargonistic dialogue even more explicit illustrations. The game -- entitled 'L'atlas A-Bac' -- concluded that the game was mostly sexist and ruff, and that you'd do better to buy a porn mag if that's what you're after.

Most of the screenshots in the article were in colour and therefore quite impossible to, er... give here in Blitter End, but the feminist piece of Macintosh pornware MacPlaymate was very definitely mono. On closer inspection it also proved to be obscene to a quite incredible degree. Even a rather nicely drawn top-fat had a thoroughly explicit (English) expression scratched across it, so that was out too. Out!

VOISSPUNG DUNCH TECHNIE

My thought 'E' was strong stuff and we opened a German Arnie magazine, but that one carried the attention-grabbing title clear away in the middle of the magazine was a full-out supplement that had, month-by-month, into a handy Almanac 60000 updates (reference: by the way machine code manuals in March?) Do they love Arnie remember-in-Aachen? The most logical!

What message can we draw from this? That we Europeans can never escape our national

stereotypes, the French as sex maniacs, the Germans as techno-heads and the British as keeping snootboxes? No, as ACE we see it differently. We see it as a national challenge. To adapt in time for 1992 or the trying. That's why we're going to give a picture of a woman who's only wearing a bath-towel, right away Time in next month for our handy 'Build your own Transputer' reference card.

COPE WITH AGAIN

From old Steve Turner must be a bit miffed. We're not sure, because we've not had the chance to phone him after (a) missing the photo out of our *Who's Best* feature last month, and (b) printing one of Andrew Shepherdson instead. (Maybe Andrew Shepherdson's miffed as well, who can say?)

The mistake was at least halfway understandable given that we were using a plate with bits of the Grafplot programmes in it, and 'trapped' the wrong side out. The photo in question dates from last year's PCW show when Grafplot signed up with Telecomsoft, and has something of a jaw attached to it. Back in issue 7 we used to-a-plate of Facebook Paul Hibbard -- he was in the shot too -- and very nicely printed the lot showing Steve Turner instead.

FOR THE WINNERS OF OUR EA SOFTWARE COMPETITION, SEE THE RANDOM ACCESS PAGE...

ACE CARD WINNERS!

Every month we give away up to £1000 of prizes. Mr L. Brown, Dover (0001) in issue 10) wins himself a year's subscription to ACE, Neil Byer, Ipswich (0007) in issue 10) wins himself £20 worth of software on discs G. Bourneford, Harlow Wood (1810) in issue 11), G. Kishen, Deepcar (1760) in issue 11) wins a year's subscription to ACE, H. Higgins, Northampton, N. Ireland (0070) in issue 11) wins £20 of software and A. Salfy, Woking (0004) in issue 11) wins a year's subscription to ACE. Keep checking YOUR card -- it could be a winner!

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