

ACE

MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR

- ST ■ AMIGA ■ C64 ■
- CPC ■ SPECTRUM ■ PC
- NINTENDO ■ SEGA ■

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Compare the design in computer with the hardware will lead to real video action in computer games. We check out the hardware and find out where developing what...

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Our latest combat filler Andrew Smith takes a look at Star II and Star Dragon, two hot new arcade entries.



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5/10 CHALLENGE

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Get that ghetto Master gleaming, stoke up that NFL, overhaul that Walkman. Radio ACE has arrived for your edification and amusement - and it's all in glorious stereophonic sound.

Radio ACE

Tune it to the soundtrack of 161 games reviewed this issue, later to the ACE chart rankings, find out what Rob Hubbard's latest composition sounds like, check out the history of computer music, standstill on CD ROM Defender of the Crown, pick up your ears to the Radio Ace April Competition and listen to the first Reader's Composition, sent in by John Ralston after he heard the Making Music feature last issue. What? You'll have to put your ears on a dial after they've landed on Radio Ace.



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"...there will be a massive shakeout in the industry. Costs will rocket, games will become multi-million dollar productions..."

Find out why. Page.....24



TRICKS 'N' TACTICS.....63

Overed with the presence of Mike Singleton, TNT's main attraction this month is the first instalment of a special two-part playing guide to *Real Ace & Mike Cart*, using the low-down on all things *Robbery & Dice*.

Meanwhile on the CD front, there's a special coaching session on *TV Sports Football*, and some extremely useful tips on how to get going with *ADFT*. All this, plus a glut of information for the discerning - but unimpatient - games player.

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Steve Cooke gets into preview mode again, taking a peek at what's around the corner from Infocom, then moves into gear with Part One of his role-playing analysis.

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IN THE PINK

In the Pink Pages this month, the editor gives slightly mad, handy tips for computer gaming, featuring the fabulous *Bloodscape*, competition results, more news of *Play by Mail* games, a full-blown prose soccer report, plus reviews, crosswords, surveys, Nigel from Nigel, Mike Thompson, and (eventually) the final frontier in the form of the *Blitter End*.



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IMMEDIATE SEGA SYSTEM

Hardware, software and useful non-computer clobber is all on offer. Page 33

S. CHECK OUT THE GAMES.



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MicroProse Soccer



MicroProse shocked everybody when they released MicroProse Soccer for the C64. Not only had they produced a non-militaristic product, they had done it with such expertise that MicroProse Soccer has become an instant classic on that format. Now, MicroProse have released the sixteen-bit version. Just how do they compare with the original version? Read on...

The simulator provides both indoor and outdoor action with American rules six-a-side and standard eleven-a-side respectively. The time for each game can be varied between 2 and 12 minutes. Players may play against each other or one play against the computer. Selection of your team in the World Cup Competition is crucial, as it is inevitable - it is much easier to win if you are a historically good footballing nation, such as Brazil than if you are Oman or Algeria. Conversely, if you get too good, you could try taking on the might of West Germany with yourself playing as Poland. Other control options allow for extremely varied games, with effects, such as, rain, thunder, overhead kicks and banana shots coming into play.

You are presented, on kick-off, with a look-down view - not a common one, but one that works well. On the 16-bit versions, you get no-holds barred, full screen, 8-way scrolling (so smooth!) Control your player nearest the ball with your joystick, using the freedom to kick the ball in the



direction your player is facing. The position of the joystick when kicking the ball determines the path that the ball takes, such as, high kicks, banana kicks and overhead kicks. Recapture possession of the ball with a sliding tackle (the weaker the pitch, the longer the slide). Should the opposition get within range you gain control of your goalkeeper to prevent the inevitable shot from reaching the back of the net.

Throw-ins, corners and goal kicks all play their part in the game. Attention to detail is one of Microprose's hall marks and MicroProse Soccer has not been left wanting in any respect. The colour of the



players (hips), strength of banana kicks and animation replay when a goal is scored are all excellent finishing touches to an already brilliant game. Overall, MicroProse Soccer has to be the definitive football simulation - be there for the kick off!

C & VG Game of the Month - 90%
"Undoubtedly the best football game ever produced - install it at your peril!"
C & VG

Zero Sixer - 90%
"One of the best soccer sims I've ever seen. Little touches like the rain on the pitch and banana shots really make it something special."
Zero

TQM Star Player - 89%
"MicroProse Soccer is of the highest quality - its fast action makes it far more playable than other soccer games."

RELEASE SCHEDULE

| AMIGA | SOON | ETA |
|----------|---------|---------------------|
| SPIC 128 | OUT NOW | £ 9.95 |
| SPIC +3 | OUT NOW | £14.95 |
| AMSTRAD | OUT NOW | £13.95 or £19.95 |
| ATARI ST | NOW | £24.95 |
| IBM PC | SOON | ETA |
| C64 128 | OUT NOW | £14.95 or £20.95 |

RATING OUT OF TEN

| | |
|----------------|---|
| GRAPHICS | 8 |
| SOUND | 7 |
| STRATEGY | 9 |
| PLAYABILITY | 9 |
| OVERALL RATING | 9 |



MICROPROSE

- ▶ Console competition heats up
- ▶ MicroProse launch new labels
- ▶ Rob Hubbard: where is he now?

ACE NEWS

AWASH WITH CONSOLES...

Atari's 2600-based console, the 7800, should arrive in British shops in the next month or so backed by a comprehensive range of games from the likes of Electronic Arts, Activision and Toys. Compatible with cartridges for its little brother, the 2600 console, the 7800 offers rather more sparkling graphics: 18 graphics modes are available to programmers, and they can be mixed or matched just about every which way, according to a technical spokesman from Atari.

All the machines, games are being converted from American MSX versions so that they will run on the PAL system to be sold in the UK, but new original games have already been commissioned from a software house in the north west of England. A team of imaginative programmers have apparently contracted to produce six original games per year. Classic 2600 titles already available in the States include Summer Games, Winter Games, Commando, Incredible Mixel, Dullbass, Soccer Hero and Chameleon. Per-

haps the most interesting title in the lineup is a game called Tower Toppler, published in America on the 26-bit-based latest US gameplayers will already know it as Meltdown from Hiwison.

The 7800 has reached the number two slot in America according to our source within Atari, overtaking the Sega in the race for console domination which has already been soundly won by Nintendo. Over 1.1 million 8-bit Nintendo Game Boys were sold in the States, and these days one in five American households owns a Nintendo console.

Atari refused to name firm prices for the 7800 and its software as we went to press, but the console is likely to sell for less than £80 - probably £69.99 - and cartridges are likely to weigh in at £12.95 or £14.95 depending on the complexity of the game they contain.

HAND HELD ACTION

Rumours arrive from Japan that Nintendo plan to launch their 16-

bit response to the 16-bit Sega later this year, although it is unlikely to reach British shores before 1990 at the earliest: there's still plenty of room yet for 8-bit Nintendo sales over here so it is. A hand-held Nintendo console is also rumoured to be in the offing, but only in Japan for the time being.

Not to be outdone, the Americans are working on a hand-held games machine. Rumours have been circulating for some while that Epyx have been playing a console that bridges the gap between hand-held games machines and the 'traditional' console. According to industry trade paper CTR, Epyx have confirmed that their new machine will be unveiled at the June CES Show in Chicago, and while Epyx are not yet releasing

any technical details, the unit should go on sale in America during July this year for less than \$150, which would indicate a sub-£800 price for a UK launch. Founder and director of Epyx, John Steiner, has confirmed that

the machine is due to arrive on these shores in time for Christmas next year...

Finally, a CES launch could well be on the cards for the American version of the PC Engine, and if the Engine is indeed launched in the States later this year, leading

American software developers are likely to start producing games for both the Engine and its CD-ROM drive. Further news on the disc-on games design is taking with the impending arrival of CD ROM drives in the home can be found this month in our CD feature.



The 16-bit Sega console is rumoured to have a Nintendo 16-bit rival...



Atari's 2600 console, reportedly the machine for which Lucasfilm originally wrote StarWars. Coming soon to a High Street near you for less than £80.



GOLD AT THE END OF THE RAINBOW

German software publishing group Rainbow Arts has unveiled its links with US Gold and is to go it alone in the UK market from now on. Grand Monster Slam, the first title to be published solo in Britain, is reviewed this month and should be in the shops under the Golden Goddess label by the time you read this. Rainbow Arts is currently pondering the price point at which it will be reliving the market: their

games will be full price, but whether that means £15, £20 or £25 in the case of 16-bit product remains to be decided.

Next off the Golden Goddess line should be Circus Attractions, due later this month, and then Spectral is due before June. Flip back in the March issue for full details of what to expect from the Rainbow Arts group of companies over the coming months.



Applying to last issue of the credits in Circus Attractions, due soon from Rainbow Arts.

LIGHT FANTASTIC

In a novel deal with hardware manufacturer Amstrad, the Mastertronic arts of Virgin Mastertronic is poised to launch a new light gun for the Spectrum Plus machines and Amstrad CPC range of computers. A Commodore 64 version of the £29.95 gun is also being contemplated, but no firm decision has yet been taken on the C64 front. The unit should be available in the next few weeks, and arrives bundled with six games: full details of the titles are currently being laid up, ready for the launch. Other software houses will be invited to write games that support the peripheral.

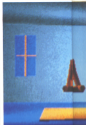
The Virgin Mastertronic light gun, which will obviously be available for the Spectrum Plus and Amstrad, and might later for the C64 as well.

NO DUNGEON ON THE A500



FTL have finally admitted defeat in the quest to produce a version of the ST version Dungeon Master for the Amiga 500. They simply can't fit the code into an unenhanced Amiga, and feel that the reduction in the cost of memory enhancement, combined with the increase in demand for 1 Meg games, means that it's not worth competing. More and more stores are upgrading their machines, thus covering wider range of the full Amiga implementation.

"Any effort to reduce the size or complexity of the game would result in a product wholly unacceptable to FTL Games" is the official line, so 4000 Dungeon Master has been ordered. Sad news for Am500 owners, who won't be able to enjoy the original game



or the limited Chase upgrade which adds new dungeons and quests to the original game.

Specter Master II is currently underway at FTL's American HQ and will be published in Britain by Blomwell in due course. Meanwhile, for full details of the latest Imagineworks, Greenware, FTL and Spectrum hobbyist products, check out the ACE On The Road in Amsterdam feature that appears on Page 14.

FOFT UPGRADE UNDERWAY

Following reviews which marked the ST version of Federation Of Free Traders as flawed, Gremlin are taking steps to ensure that the Amiga version is as polished as possible. "Everything is there in the ST version" the Gremlin response to Stewart's kindly epistle, "but we just got a little too close to the game during development. We're actively taking note of the critics while preparing the Amiga version."

Gremlin are working on a sub-manual that includes a start-up guide to FOFT and will accompany the existing FOFT documentation

in the Amiga packaging. Once the Amiga version has been tested and released, ST owners will be able to acquire the ST FOFT manual and a copy of the supplementary manual by sending their original FOFT disk to Gremlin with £1 to cover P&P costs.

Meanwhile, if you're having a bit of difficulty getting the most out of FOFT, take a peek at the 'Index To' section this month, and remember, Gremlin have a full helpline service on 0242 753425. As soon as the ST disk exchange service comes into being, we'll let you know.





3-D built in a mere 30 minutes through from Amiga, which will allow Amiga users the chance to build pictures like this from a combination of simple 3D shapes. Contact Amiga on 0433 850333 for more information.

MICROPROSE EXPANDS HORIZONS

Two New Labels Launched and Telecomm Acquired



Honde 800 riding, is the first release from new label MicroByte.

As we went to press with this issue, MicroProse and British Telecom had apparently reached agreement in principle over the sale of Telecomm's three labels, Probed, Probed and Shaverd. No firm details were available, but it is anticipated that the HyperMasteronic group might well acquire rights to the telecoms catalogue for budget releases from MicroProse while the main labels Probed and Probed transfer to MicroProse. Further details as and when they become available.

Whatever comes of the Telecomm deal, MicroProse is clearly going to go for some serious expansion. It has been signed with three new labels under which MicroProse

will release the contents of the How can arcade line in America, while back in England the three people will be dealing with Incentive's 16-bit marketing as well as releasing Universal Military Simulator 2: Masters of War, Incentive's Star Site and Total Eclipse as they enter the month on a brand new label - MicroGlas - under which MicroProse plans to release games that require a lot of manpower to complete. Complementary to the MicroGlas label is MicroGlas, set to feature super-rich simulations: Amphibole, Harbore Horror and APT, a Honda motorbike simulation, are being to go on any day now. More details in the Reviews section...

ROB HUBBARD

★ INTERVIEW

FEATURED IN
Radio ACE

For over two years Rob Hubbard held sway over the C64 music scene, with public adulation and a fair number of awards under his belt. Then, without so much as a fond farewell, he disappeared practically without trace. ACE spoke to Rob in Foster City, California about his sudden exit...



"I had been doing C64 and other computer stuff for some time, and the ST was just starting to happen when I spoke to Mark Lewis, the head of Electronic Arts UK. He expressed an interest in my doing some sounds for them, and arranged a visit to the States for a few months, which I enjoyed immensely. I came back to Britain for a while, but when EA offered me a permanent job I just took it."

Since he had a straightjacket on the computer music scene in Britain, Rob's decision to jump it all in and move to America may have seemed strange to his rising fans, but Rob confesses his reasons at the time: "I was starting to get a bit bored with the eight-bit computers, simply doing the same sort of thing but on different machines. I wanted to experiment more and America is really at the forefront of technology."

It's a different market over there: the main machines are IBM compatibles, some C64, a bit of Amiga and a lot of Apple II OS. I first started on the Tandy IBM, writing a digital sound routine for the Tandy's four-voice sound chip.

"The main problem I have now is supporting all the non-standard sound boards for the PC, which include the Ad Lib, CMS Creative Music System, Roland MPU-401 16-voice generator, Rob's favourite, and the Music Feature Card, not to mention a number of digital to analogue converters. There are also numerous of two new sound boards which employ the Amiga's sound chip and the C64's busy 801."

"To get around this, I now compose music using the Mojave package on a PC, and store all the tracks as MIDI files. I have a different MIDI driver for each different sound board, and when the program detects specific hardware, it simply loads the correct driver overlay from disk and then uses the single MIDI file through the driver."

"The big advantage of this is that it saves so much time by having to produce individual files and it's also quicker to compose on a synth than on a PC."

So what of plans for the future? Well, like everyone else, he's waiting for the optical disc revolution to happen: "I'd have a Philips CD32 machine - which is one of about three in the country - and there are already a number of formats, with CD-i, IBM, the PC Engine CD ROM, the Tandy read/write optical disc system and the Next machine which is a 65000 machine with read/write CD drive. The beauty of all these is that they're ADPCM-based: I can simply record to disk like a normal CD."

"Although I am now able to write using conventional synthesizers, the real challenge is doing clever things with the software. I'm already trying to create intelligent interactive music on the PC, as a precursor to the arrival of truly interactive games. For instance, if I write a talking

book that plays continuously, and then as the action gets up, it'll overlay other voices to appear as the soundtrack accordingly, and vice versa. The technique is featured in my latest project, an interactive storytelling/adventure project for the PC."

Still CD32 has three channels for file streaming in 1991, which lets you run out anyone who wants to sample future sound work can listen to the Hubbard soundtrack on Kings Of The Beachfront EA (and based) on a Tandy 2000 50 or 70, or catch a snippet of his latest work on the Radio-Ace cassette.



ACE LETTERS

Time for some new topics old light-wad decreed, pausing only to offer a measly £25 in prizes this month. And that to an oppressed minority! If you want to try to 'prize' open the Editor's wallet, get your yourselves in the post:

ACE LETTERS - 4 Queen Street Bath Avon BA1 1EJ.

MONEY FOR VALUE?

Why is it when you buy software for the Amiga or ST it comes in a box big enough to get ten disks in, let alone one? Also when you open the box you have to dig through piles of adverts and books to find the disk.

When I buy software all I want is a box big enough to start the disk in and information on what keys to press to make it work. Also the screen shots on some of these boxes have not the slightest thing to do with what's inside.

After digging through the adverts and other assorted bits of paper, at last I found. No, it's not the manual - it's a book about the life story of the sprites on the screen.

I lay out down on my back, cut down an other assorted junk, and cut down on software prices.

C & Shaw, Wrex

Here. And there was everyone thinking that retailers, posters and other goodies in the box made the software of the more worth owning. (Was the marketing man got it all wrong?)

OK

Time and time again you hear people moaning and grunting about the price of software. If the software is too expensive, why did they buy the computer in the first place? If someone else bought it for them, they must have asked for it.

I used to own a Spectrum Plus too with over 370 games, and out of all of them I don't have one tape. All my states had between 25 and 100 copies because they said the price was too high.

Now I own a Sega which I have had for a very short time. The games cost between £15 and

£30, and all the games I have played have been worth it.

My idea, everyone, was: Are games really expensive?

Daniel Work, Kent

Not so far as most software buyers are concerned, that's fairly clear. But 370 original Spectrum games, even if most of them were budget titles or bootlegs with magazines, represents a large investment. Not everyone could afford such a collection of games.

Moaning about the price of software and 'greedy' software buyers does no good, I agree, and is generally unjustified.

No matter how little spare cash you've got to spend on games, you'll find no solution to wanting more software than you can afford. It's that, every bit as much as filling your pockets without paying down of the shop. The trick is to buy games more selectively - and there's no reason why two friends shouldn't exchange original copies of games (provided it is a genuine copy) and backup copies aren't needed.

OK

FIGHTING PLAN

During our lunch hour four of us decided to pop into an amusement arcade near our working place in Central London. Inside we were very surprised to find that, other than a female under supplying change, there was absolutely no sign of even the slightest female game-playing female.

Could it be that the average British male has found something which is more appealing than the over-average (but elegant) British female?

The next day, a visit to Virgin Records confirmed our suspicion - the computer department was infested with the male-only species of the human race. Not even our

short misdeeds and key black lights attracted their attention.

So that's it then. In the not-too-distant future, men MAY stop writing for the pygma, MFF get the computer to make the dinner, or men MAY say not tonight darling, I've got a computer to feeding when. There four other girls known as the Breakie 3 babies WILL fight to bring females into the arcade, bringing into computer games stores and females back into the British home as the NO 1 interest of the British male.

Have! Easy, by playing games ourselves.

Janet, Anita, Susan and Chasula, London

Best of Luck! And for the time being, that closes the debate on women and computing. Vote for a new topic.

POSITIVE EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE?

It's not only a parent, but also a Foster Parent. In view of this, please would you send my name and address if you print this letter.

In reference to Adam Worley's letter about chestnutting having little or no effect on the majority: this opinion can be reinforced here, I hope. I have in my case a 5-year-old boy who has had a very disturbed start to his life. Having the need to monitor him at various times in various activities, brought forward many observations.

We recently purchased an Amstrad CPC 464 for the three children in our home. The first aggression and tantrums our little tender boy has had dated early, and which even a qualified therapist was unable to prevent, were released through the backsets, bootsets, blocksets etc etc he played.

My message is this. Let the do gooders experience the problem, but many normal parents face from day to day. A computer

ON THE SPOT

This letter has a strange purpose. The purpose is to ask Sanjiva Vignol, who is one of the proprietors for women computer users to whom I have making references to 'spotty 14-year-old boys', if happen to be, unfortunately, one of those boys and if can be very unpleasant to have an unpleasant fact of life like spots used almost as a term of abuse.

As spotty 14-year-old boys do not write letters complaining about the waste of space given to the modern, outspoken woman who wants to make her views on software buying known.

And the answer to Sanjiva Vignol's question: the reason that games are male orientated is that many more boys play games than women. And what do the software companies want to do? They want to make money, and they do this by targeting their games to the average or most common user - BOYS.

James Ball, Chester

Another strongly offended and now defended, forwarding the wage to non-fair spot prices, glossing over new complications that may have been put on the matter, there's just time to apologise to Mr Ball and any other similarly offended readers and attempt to make up for the insult with a voucher for £25 worth of software...



tacked away in a bedroom is quite over a damn good personal release for many a family father. Mind your business, and let people who really know mind theirs.

A. Parker-Pearson

WEALTHY HORMONES

The unfortunate thing with computing is that the voice of reason is always drowned out by the moral minority.

Girls get spent about sex pictures because they are being used as objects, and I get upset as I am being treated like a bag of hormones with money. I find girls attractive, but using the female form and my own thing for the same objectives not only wastes but me as well.

Which is why ownership can't be left to a profit-making company or to the consumer. It must be in the hands of an independent body to show the line in order to prevent the vice-masters of obscenity. The line is where the students, be it book, film, computer game or whatever, fails to entertain or add to the quality of life, but instead wastes and degrades.

At the moment the line is drawn and about five for society today. Freedom of choice must be allowed, but we need the right to say no!

Timothy Bell, Dundee

Maybe there is a case for being more advertisements, but who is to tell us as the independent censoring body?

OK

OVER THE TOP

Dave anybody not there can see an Archimedes Ha ha ha, that was a good one.

I am a truly embarrassed Spectrum fan way back in 1980, and every day I sit at Archimedes in school. I can safely say that the Spacy press all owe the Archimedes. People have flogged off the rubber keyboard

for years, but have they tried using an Archimedes keyboard? It is not slow and clanking, with all the keys in exactly the wrong places.

And then we come to games. You would think a 32-bit computer would supply better games than a 486 one but no. This is not surprising when you consider there are less games for the Archimedes than there are for the Spectrum 484 which went off the production line years ago.

The letter is to let the country know what a great computer the Spacy is and what a load of garbage the Archimedes is!

**Daniel Hattling,
Isle of Lewis**

Great computer though the Spectrum is, aren't you going just a little off too far in condemning the Archimedes? Without the Archie, there'd probably be no Vms for a start, and just you wait and see what programmers start doing on the games front once the Archimedes starts selling in serious quantities.

OK

TIMELY ADVICE

I recently bought a game for my Atari ST on the strength of two reviews, one in Popular Computing Weekly and the other in New Computer Express. Both were glowing in their reviews of the game.

I could not understand why your magazine waited until the May edition to publish a review of this game, but I now see that your reviewer has actually play tested the game and came to the same conclusions I did.

The game in question is Federation of Free Traders. It would appear that the other two mags were clearly into the hype surrounding this game and I doubt if they even took the time to load it into a computer before reviewing it.

Is there I will wait for your

reviews before parting with hard-earned cash and getting yet another ear-battering from my wife when buying a new game.

C Symons, Paisley

As it our rule, we mailed out the finished version of RPT was available before printing our review - which meant that we followed the two realities and went over six months behind a couple of other monthly magazines! Reviewing 'hard' or unclassified versions of games can easily lead to an apparent misjudgement on the part of the reviewer.

Here at ACE we'll continue to review finished versions of games as soon as we can and leave the other magazines to fall over one another and do their own 'chase for exclusives'. We aren't being sanctimonious or anything - it's just that we believe that the version of a game that ACE reviews should be, to all intents and purposes, the game that our readers will end up buying.

Disappointed? RPT owners can find some great news on the next pages (before then!) this month. Graham plan to offer you an upgrade Early-look...

OK

HOLE CLAIM

Do you remember all those ads in ACE Issue 5 and 7, there were some letters about Leaderboard hole is used? The only hole in one shown on Leaderboard World Class Leaderboard was by a Matthew Pedersen and Dad on their ST.

Well an ST64 owner has got a hole in one. Ha, I expect others have as well, but haven't written in. By the way, I saw a CD.

**Mark Fletcher,
Miles on Trent**

Everyone will be famous for 10' ten minutes, according to Andy

Warhol. You've just had your first five minutes' worth Mark...

OK

ALL JOIN THE FUM

I see multiple player games as the way forward in games design. And imagine too, or indeed more parties in the same session in the phenomenal Dargun (Warrior), or less (or even hundreds) of player controlled characters in Camelot Command or... or... the list just goes on.

While you at ACE see large networks (or through modems and telephone lines) games becoming possible, I must disagree and argue the case for local area networks - in through direct cable links. I believe that the cost of playing by modem could make the idea prohibitive to the vast majority of computer users. Add to this the fact that only a very small percentage of users own a modem, and this puts the cost up by the price of the modems and software to drive it to no-renters cheap.

A direct link could be the most viable alternative to the majority of computer users - indeed many games already tap into this option - Powerdrome, MIDI Maze, Valour to name but a few. The only problem with this form of link is the amount of equipment which must be gathered together in one place, thus limiting the number of players to the capacity of the room.

While in the topic of multiple player games, I would like to appeal to software companies to produce more games which utilize the Graftin II and Jasthenetics 4-player joystick adapter, so this brother like into shoot-em-ups.

Scott Ramsey, Glasgow

Would any ACE readers out there who are currently joining computers together and playing games normally against other humans like to drop us a line?

OK

NEXT MONTH...

ACE gets back on the road on 1st June, when Issue 22 arrives on the shelves. Check it out, check it out.

JOE BATES gets to grips with tone modules and continues his friendly guide to making music with your computer, while...

BRIAN LARKMAN gets ready to go on his balls and casts a professional eye over readers' artistic submissions to the ACE gallery, while...

STEVE COOK continues his foray into the world of Role Playing games on computer, while...

We tell you more about Compact Disc Interactive - Philips reveal a few of their secrets, while...

The full ACE reviewing service gets into overdrive. Don't part with your cash till you've read our full-colour evaluation for YOUR machine.

Some we last visited on the road to Microsoft just before Christmas and one or two of the ImagineFX titles have suffered from delay: Three 1944-only projects, *Patato*, *Parasite*, and *Grimestone Depths* won't be appearing until the latter part of the year, and although *Phobia* is complete on the Commodore 64, ImagineFX are holding on to it until *Key Weather* has got to grips with the Amiga and has finished the 1944 version planned. Meanwhile, new projects are well underway, and leading the field is *Xenos II - Megalith*, the latest offering from the Brothers Bitmap.

ALL BITMAPPED OUT

These people Xenos are waging war on Earth once again, only this time the warheads are mixing with the fabric of time. Bombs have been planted in the time zones that make up our planet's history and, if the Xenos manage to detonate them, the passage of history will be altered and Xenos domination of the world will be assured. So it's time to hop into your trusty space cruiser, young fellow-me-lad, and go off on a time-travel quest to save everything we hold dear. Plenty of extra weapons can be collected on the way, including a minigun that allows a trail of submunition bombs to be laid on the screen, and the usual array of megapowerful laser options.

The Bitmaps have been working with Bomb the Hero on the soundtrack that accompanies the game, and while the result is also a vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up, this time there are three levels of screen scrolling, and the player can dip in and out of all three. The action is fast and furious in the plausible sense that currently exists,

ACE ON THE ROAD TO AMSTERDAM

What better place to introduce the Bitmap Brothers and their new game, *Amiga II* to the world's press than Amsterdam? And while everyone was assembled in the Dutch capital, Microsoft took the opportunity to divulge a hefty chunk of information on their forthcoming releases. Games Kidd checks out what's going down...

and ST, Amiga and PC users can expect to be well impressed come Summer when *Amiga II* is scheduled to hit the shops.

HUNTING BUNS IN SHOGGLESINGLE

DOT is set to be one of the greatest arcade adventures ever produced on the Amiga: the King's food fed Blobby graphics made it to be used throughout the scrolling platform game, and from the early screens demonstrated, the effect is impressive. PC, ST and C64 games are also in line for a later test this year; while the graphics will obviously change from machine to machine, the gameplay and two-world play area will remain the same in all versions.

Playing the part of an eccentric Dynamic Debugger taking the



DOT - the continuing story of man's battle against insects...



Amiga II - Maximising it up to *DOT*, on the quest to become a qualified debugger.

final tests that will lead to qualification as a Licensed Debugger, and a lucrative career on the bug-riddled world of Shogglesingle, you aim to rid all ten gameworlds of junky resistors. Loads of the junk need to be collected and used appropriately in four-armed adventure style: look out for bug-sucking vacuum cleaners, a *DOT* gun and a champagne bottle that fires killer corks.

GOING TO WAR

Microsoft's P&G label is about to

command in accordance with their character traits, so whether you opt to play Napoleon or Wellington, the experience is close to the reality. Enhanced 16-bit versions of the P&G 544 classic *Warrior Gears* are also imminent.

GOING TO THE MOVIES

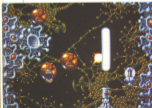
Despite releases in the cinema, *Guinness's Lords of the Ring* Sun is still not finished as these pages are being written, but we should be able to bring you a review of finished version next issue. The TV Sports series

is due to be finished up with a couple more releases in the coming year, but the next movie-inspired release is to be *It Came From The Desert*, a spoof on 1950s B-Movie horror films. Few details are available so yet, but the town of Lizard Breath in Arizona suddenly becomes plagued by giant ants that arrive after a meteor shower...

Specimen Hitstyle are about to release the first in a series of *Mason Glauk* is completed. Future details on price and avail-

ability are still sparse, but the first shot appears that this is the Falcon package and offers a new world to fly over and a dozen new enemies to attempt. And a brand new simulation is due for 1944 machines later this year: *Vette*. Set in the dying days of the ultimate American sports car, the Corvette, the player can take on a selection of classic sports cars in a multi-stage contest through the streets of San Francisco.

There's plenty more promised from both Specimen Hitstyle and P&G, but for the moment every one's looking just about the details. More news to and when we get it... ■



Equipped with a staff and poison weapons, heading through hordes of wailing mutants in *Xenos II - Megalith*.



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FLAMING JUNE PREVIEWS

Heavyweights in the lightweight C2 category are Agate Engineering who are not only opening up to five new cars into the BT category but take on the likes of Abgar and Porsche, but who have also been busy giving help and assistance to drivers in the design of a driving kit centered on some of the world's most famous circuits including Le Mans, Silver and BT circuits should be out the door before that great 10th year starts off.

RVF MicroProse

Kicking off the Prose MicroProse list on BT (and followed by Agate) will be the motor bike simulation based on the Honda RVF machine (Honda's top 1000) for Prose are keen on accuracy they've been studying videos of some of the world's most famous circuits along with a host of technical data from Honda themselves, to expect plenty of action mixed in with the trouble-shifting action.

That's you in the red and white, opening the engine and going for it.



INNER SPACE CRL

Guest Harry Chisner's been transported to the ninth dimension - a land of digital physics - where there are nine levels of ascending alien civilizations (based on descending IQ). Only you can save him (the poor fellow, it was only trying to escape the matter-splitter bomb, when it all happened, he started by to enter their minds.



CR: - Have you got what it takes to save Harry, and the day.

SPORTING TRIANGLES CDS

Pay attention, you'll be asking questions later. But seriously folks, get something and focus on your sporting knowledge because the latest addition to the new franchise of all sports and games is this CDS offering based on the popular TV series. Watch out for it, coming soon.



TV: have a P please that - sport among others.

HYPERFORCE Addictive

HOWTO do arcade challenge over 20 levels that first appeared on the C-16 several years ago and was written by our old friend (0089) EA0000000000. The 31 and strong version due for release (2000) promise to be just as HOT, FUN, and FUN as the original. JUST LOOK AT THE BOX ART! YOU'VE got to see a million times, don't miss it!

How to... well, couldn't be our team...



Range: - A high speed by your 2.4.1.1.1

BOMBER Activision

Want to fly into all different places on exciting missions, but can't afford all those flight simulators? Activision to the rescue with Bomber, a multi-screen flight sim with the emphasis on action. Once you've got the controls into the cockpit at your 2.4.1.1.1.1 (remember 1.4.4.1.1.1), or your 2.4.1.1.1, or even your 2.4.1.1.1 if that's your style.

SHINOBI Melbourne House

The Sega version is already out, but coming soon for both 3 and 16-bit machines will be Mel's conversion of the hugely popular series. You are a ninja hero, and you'll be making some children kidnapped for his evil going off that camp. The children have been scattered to different locations throughout the world and are constantly guarded by lethal thugs, so you'll have to put your shuriken, nunchaku and sword to good use.

BT: - That choppy on the few checks does not look too bloody. Best get ready for a nunchaku.



NIGHTBREED Ocean

Fans of Steve Barter (he of Hellraiser fame) will soon be able to play the game based on Night Breed, his latest film. Apparently Night Breed contains some of the most exotic and horrifying creatures ever to be seen on the screen, so the game promises to look quite spectacular...

TANGLED TALES Origin

This light-hearted, witty approach to traditional fairy tale-playing adventures has the player cast in the role of a wizard's apprentice with three increasingly difficult tasks to perform as great or greater wizardly wizardness. There are over 1000 (and always changing) to read in this one and many more 100 which has to figure the usually dark and gloomy mood of most games of this genre.

A wizard will be handy likely to give you much of a headstart in it!



Sebastian parades Pinner's new home to System 3, who are busy fighting a war against drugs on the streets of their new offices. Game development on the OS4 is regularly interrupted as yet another SDI chap takes the dust, topped by an electronic charge that has built up inside a member of the in-house programming team. Despite these setbacks, work is barreling along on a clutch of releases: the original games, across most formats, are out from the System 3 stable during the course of the year.

First game off the starting blocks will be *Demolitor*, a multi-level, horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up that takes place inside the bowman of a huge alien combat-ship. All versions should be complete and in the shops by the end of the month.

What has went in Pinner, the games were virtually complete: graphics were nearly finished, but gameplay was still being tweaked. *Demolitor* looks particularly impressive as a Specimen game, but all incarnations are packed with gaudy background graphics that seem almost real and



Specimen - Scrolling along past some trees that have expanded the gulfed off the alien in *Demolitor*. In this stage of the game, none of the alien weapons systems have been built into the ship.

strong to the touch. Rolling along inside the swaggy bits of a giant alien is a potentially yucky experience. The 8-bit versions, on all 8-bit Systems 3 games from now on, are multicolored. *Demolitor* Mark Cate says "It's the only way to give players what for money!"

WARRIOR BROCK

Following in the footsteps of *Last Ninja 2* - out on the PC, ST and Amiga early in June - is *Warrior*, a four-level arcade game which sets the player on a mission to catch up with a gang of hit-men. Taking the part of a vigilante character, the player must complete arcade adventure sections and then drive to the next location. Distance must be travelled on the quest to catch up with the hit-men, as well as useful items and weapons. From the point of view of the police, the hero is engaging in criminal activities, so unless he can prove his

ACE ON THE ROAD TO PINNER



OS4 - The end of the first arcade adventure section in *Veronica*. Collect the car keys and you can get on the road...

mother to the boys in blue they'll let the real badies go and arrest him instead.

Four stages each contain a mission section in the style of *Last Ninja 2*, but the 3D environment is that bit more realistic: you can pick up a videotape, for instance, and load it into a VCR to see an image displayed on the screen. Getting out armed only with fists, a camera to collect evidence for the police and a satchel to store weapons and other items collected on the way, the hero's first objective is inevitably to get locked up. Four weapons are available - an AK47, hand grenades, a bazooka and an Uzi sub-machine gun - and ammunition is stacked discreetly around the place. Fighting past badies, the vigilante must reach the end of the current section with all the evidence and useful items he has found along the way, then flee into a car to drive to the next location.

Veronica is played against the clock - one hour of gametime is available unless when the mission must be completed - and there's more than one route to reach destination. Knowing the shortest way saves time, so finding a map is a useful bonus. On the driving sec-

tion, helicopters and planes zoom in to attack and, although the car does have its own defences, collecting the appropriate keys in the adventure section allows you to access an automatic targeting computer that makes shooting the bad guys out of the class rather more straightforward. The car itself is indestructible, boasts two weapon systems and a turbocharger, and offers the driver the option to select gears manually or use the automatic gearbox.

Late June is the target release

time for 8-bit versions of *Veronica*, with ST and Amiga software to follow late in August.

ELEPHANTS GARRETYARD

Tucker, an arcade adventure in which an Indiana Jones style character embarks on a quest to find the "Elephants' Graveyard", is well under way, following one or two beta tests. The finished game should arrive on 8-bit machines during August, with 16-bit versions following a month later.

The hero wades in plenty of hand-to-hand fighting as a journey through four levels, each level consisting of three sections, is quite useful items and weapons have been hidden. Starting out in the desert, the hero makes his way through jungle and water to the next section where a native temple has to be explored before



OS4 - Tucker the hat-wearing, feather-hat hero about to join battle with a couple of interloping *Veronica* in a dusty desert encounter.

the action moves on to a native village contained in the third level. Finally, a magical garden is reached and the "Elephants' Graveyard" is found in a surreal tropical garden at the end of the last level.

AUTUMN GAMES

When the year closes to a close, System 3 plan to launch a bonus game - no details available at that one yet - along with a multi-load, multilevel arcade adventure that takes the player through all the legends of the world. Battle through Hades, take on Achilles and battle through Valhalla just about every mythical land is featured, complete with appropriate mythic inhabitants.

And, of course, System 3 are committed to the *King of the Hill* System. Development systems were shipped to Amiga to software developers at the end of March, and both *Last Ninja 2* and *Verona*



OS4 - Driving along the road to the next level in *Veronica* when that police car has an all too brief computer moment. *Veronica* will also land itself well in the *Worlds Multi System*, according to Mark Cate. In customary System 3 style writing it for the *Worlds* title...

to should be available on the Amiga console during the PC class in September.

"We're going for the awards," System 3 says. Mark Cate wants, possibly showing us around the new offices that will soon be packed with programmers and artists. With the strongest lineup of products it has ever had, System 3 just might have cracked it come the going out of gong after Christmas. ■



OS4 - *Veronica* comes monkey hunting rocks from the trees and charging wild bear can both cause problems on the journey through the jungle.

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ARCADE ACE

Andy Smith teams up with a mythical creature and a couple of not-so-mythical hard men in this month's up-to-the-minute round-up of all that's new and happening in the arcade scene.

SAINT DRAGON

Jaleco



The Japanese have some wacky ideas when it comes to game titles. *Just Dudes* versus *Dragon* or *Naga* was bad all right, but *Saint Dragon*! Well, they know how to make hit arcade games and, judging by the success it has gained in Japan, *St. Dragon* is destined for the top-over here.

After a quick look at the screenshots, it will come as no surprise to learn that this is a one player horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up over six stages. You control the saintly serpent itself and must maneuver through the stages shooting the flying and ground-based aliens that obstruct the path.

So far, so standard! But, as might be expected, there are a couple of twists in the tail. Being in the form of a dragon, you have not only a head, but also a trailing body which wags and loops as you move around the screen. This could be a major problem if you fail to dodge all the fire dished out by the aliens, but fortunately the body can absorb shots, so it's just your head that requires protection.

That said, you can't afford to get slack, because contact with any aliens on any part of your body causes you to lose a life, and loosing the next little trick. In a normal bog-standard arcade game you can pick up extra weapons which improve your firepower. The same is true here, but whereas normally all the extras disappear when you lose a life, this doesn't happen in *St. D.* Just as well, because the sheer number

The first and last level guardians, a huge mechanical bull. You're armed with ring lasers, so he shouldn't be too much trouble...



Level One: you're flanked (temporarily at the moment, but luckily there's not much around).



That's better: taking out some alien installations with your multi-way firing.

Level Three things are beginning to get just a little tricky now.



of aliens means you'll need every bit of help from the ring laser shots or bouncing bullets that you can get. Not merely because some of the enemy ships hide themselves in crevices, but also because there are a fair number of big, get-tha-average enemies in droves of, such as metallic punters that spring up from the base of the screen just when you are hacking through a particularly prolific wave of aliens.

So it's got a couple of extra features, but it's just another shoot-'em-up, isn't it? Well, yes; but it's certainly one of the classiest to appear since *R-Type* and the difficulty/learning falls just the right spot between frustration and addiction. If you're looking for a top-of-the-range shoot-'em-up, *Saint Dragon* is the business. ■

EXTENDED PLAY...

FIGHTING HAWK

◆ Taito

A vertically-scrolling shoot-em-up in the Flying Hawk mode, involving much shooting of enemy fighters and bombing of ground targets, with bullets and guided missiles, as you fly through five stages of enemy territory (going to ultimately destroy the new enemy bomber "Dragon King"). Intelligent, but very enjoyable.



NASTAR

◆ Taito

The transparent young thing you, living a life of evil ghosts and ghoules. To prevent a sacred shrine in the land of Yamato. One of two players can join in the horizontally-scrolling hack-n-slash that involves loads of extra weapons to join up and

loads of battles to kill, including several level bosses, and loads of jumps and moves. Fans of Yamato at all find it well worth playing.



RALLY BIKE

◆ Taito

The controller-controlled machines can be fun racing across the States through six stages avoiding all manner of obstacles including other real users and helicopters flying overhead. Pull into petrol stations to keep your fuel tank topped up or you'll never make the checkpoint in time.

Challenging stuff that's bound to appeal to those doing and racing fans.



IKARI III



Right, who's next?



The spirit of the Real warriors continues. These well and built-up guys have already proved they're tough stuff in two previous games of break-up action, and now they're back. This time they've been skulled in a rescue a presidential candidate's kidnapped child (they don't mention which candidate's kid, but you can make out for yourself where the inspiration came from) it would appear that the child has not in reality been kidnapped, but it's a good enough excuse for a scrap.

Either one or two players hack, chop and kick their way through the changing enemy territory, and fight against increasingly tough enemy soldiers, using all manner of punches and punch and kick buttons. The enemy appears from all

parts of the screen, and many of them carry weapons such as knives and machine guns. A well-timed laser can send the enemy flying with a bit of a headache and reduce him to his essence, when you can then pick up and use

against someone else. Fail to pick up the laser and it'll start fading before it either disappears or - in the case of grenades and all kinds of - explodes, hitting anything within blast range.

You get three lives for your money, with an energy meter at the top of the screen showing your state of health for each life. Apart from the 'one kick and it's dead' language, there are some master guards to destroy and individual guards to defeat, so you'll have your work cut out.

Just if the great graphics, great music and effects and great gameplay. Of course it's best played with a friend, but even solo it's got plenty of action and excitement to keep you pouring the money in. ■



[Above] Preparing to meet the final out-of-control guardian. That ball's not going to be much help.

[Right] That machine isn't about to give in for much more use.



Thanks, once again, go to Electropain for all their help and assistance in producing Arcade ACE.

CD ROM

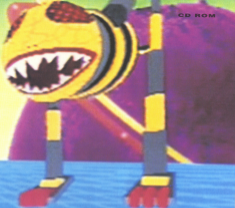
"In seven or eight years there will be a massive shakeout in the industry. Costs will rocket, games will become multi-million dollar productions..."

Phil Adams, Spectrum Holobyte President,
interviewed in ACE a year ago.



CD interactive games could well include full-motion video games, virtual computerised basketball, just like this TV advertisement for Double's chess produced by their television partners...

CD INTERA



With the advent of the Compact Disc as a data storage device, computer entertainment is about to enter a new era.

Tomorrow's game designer will work with full-motion video and high quality orchestrated sound. Games will become more like movies, and the successful publishers will be those who have invested in teams that can operate in a multi-media environment.

The bigger companies are already bringing together musicians, scriptwriters, artists and directors and providing them with the software tools and authoring systems they will need.

The first fruits of these labors are beginning to be seen, and the hardware is a reality. But much more is yet to come...

You may have seen it on television: an adult in a small boy and his dog are trapped in a computer game, using an invisible monitor armed only with a football. A clever ad, maybe, but could it really be a glimpse into the future direction of computer entertainment?

The answer is yes, it could. Steady experiments with new technology and new ways of thinking about the nature of audiovisual entertainment are leading to a new form of computer gaming, and the best word to 'interactive.'

The hardware is already there, or nearly. The key will be Compact Disc storage, providing 600 megabytes of information on one single silver disc. Already, the world-wide installed base of CD-ROM drives has been esti-

mated at more than 130,000 units, with 15,000 units in Europe, most of them attached to IBM PCs or compatible machines, but some 6,000 listed to Apple Macs around the world. The PC Engine CD-ROM is already licensed to sell 670,000 units in Japan alone.

But CD-ROM storage can't improve the graphics or sound quality of the best computer it is attached to. The PC Engine games so far have been superior versions of cartridge-based standards, and PC CD drives have been used to create a version of *Splinter of the Moon* that sounds marvelous (but a quick return to *Noble Adventure* but plays just the same).

The path of real progress lies in finding a way to mix genuine video pictures and music with computer control. Compact Disc video

and interactive television have shared a trail for many new forms of dedicated systems to be developed that will allow game designers to mix full motion video sequences with computer control action.

TALKING TO YOUR TELEVISION

Consumers have been making an interactive VCR games with Ideal in America. The View-Reader Interactive Vision system is due to be launched in the States this summer, and although it is aimed primarily at children between 4 and 8 years of age, it offers the opportunity for the viewer to participate in a TV programme, making choices by pressing a controller or pressing one of his buttons.

The interactive VCR technology is fairly simple - 'great for kids' according to Consumers - but there's more to come. 'We can't talk about it yet, but there are more capable systems in the VCR interactive world, into the other half we can do real interactive shows...'

MAKING MOVIES

Even the PC Engine could provide a user base large enough for software houses to start producing big-budget games that approach the complexity of movies, but the real contenders

ACTIVATED

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1994 NEW YORK... The police dare not patrol the streets. The army cannot control the city. Law and order no longer exist. ...When street gangs dominate a city, when danger defies themselves for unchallenged appetites for power, then the streets are powerless to help. Your last chance is...

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A CDI pilot system

Back in June last year, A&E brought you news of Electronic Arts' (EA) CDI pilot system - the same system, Veritas months later, the BA Interactive team had already produced a fully interactive CD-ROM demonstration. The demo is out in EA's CD-ROM format, but it's up to the player to explore the controls, look for clues and choose the language before they're forced into Veritas' interactive. The game is played rather like EA's *Indiana Jones*, except the images on screen are digitized from videos made in EA's offices. And it's things on screens, click, and you can examine or use them.



Entering EA's offices, you have a strange feeling that something is wrong. Suddenly a phone rings - answer to pick it up and you hear a voice explaining the strange event...

Not the usual type of activity - something must be seriously wrong. Using the camera, enter and click on items to explore...



Even when the camera is in orbit for you... the resolution of the team has been sufficient to bound to the chair...

an the CD and DVI standards.

Command One Interactive is the result of a joint development between Philips and Sony. A CD player will contain a CD audio player which will be able to handle existing audio CDs; but it will also contain the Multi-Media Controller, or MMC. This is the hardware that allows audio, video and text data read from the CD disc to be decoded, controls play and runs interactive programmes.

Digital Video Interactive is based on two tapes, supplied as add-on boards for an IBM PC or compatible: the Fast Processor and the Output Display Processor. Essentially by storing the differences between frames of video rather than complete data on each frame, DV allows massive data compression. A single frame of video is compressed from 50MB to 5K, and the audio accompaniment is reduced to 500 bytes per frame before it is stored. Unlike CD, DV is not tied to CD as the storage medium (but the massive data capacity of CD makes it a logical choice).

DV decompresses the video and audio data in real time, and allows full-screen, full-motion video to be used. CD, on the other hand, is likely to have a limited capacity for full-motion video at present a window occupying half the screen size is about the limit.

CD and DV systems are currently with software developers throughout the world, although much of the development work currently going on is directed at more serious, directly commercial applications like education, training and sales, not at mass entertainment.

A NEW ELECTRONIC LANGUAGE

Meanwhile, leading software houses are preparing for a new way of writing games. Electronic Arts for instance, is concentrating on providing tools for writing games, tools that can be used by musicians, artists and scriptwriters who have never seen thought about programming computers, let alone tried. 'CD games will require megabytes of code' being taken from Electronic Arts explains, 'and we need to develop tools that allow games to be written with a quick turnaround. For a consumer product to succeed we need a wide group of skilled people without programming knowledge, who can use tools to create products.'

Electronic Arts are hiring specialists to work on their games, looking up a design team which contains people from specialist disciplines. Bob Robinson, for instance, was transported from the UK to work on a code package for EA which allows musicians to compose music on MIDI and bring a dialogue to the programmers. 'Musicians don't need to know anything about programming, so we can use people who have experience in scoring movies - we can now work directly with composing musi-

cians who can convey the underlying emotions in their soundtrack', Greg explains.

'We're starting to work with sculptors, people whose trade is writing stories, teaching from what it means to write an interactive script and what always worked with graphic artists who do layout, rendering and animations. Now we have a retouching tools that allows us to filter real motion video, capture it in a machine and let the artist manipulate the images easily.'

The emphasis is on creativity, and with creative teams being run by directors and producers there could be obvious parallels in the film world. Are EA looking to make computer movies and could there be a crossover between the worlds of computer game programming and movie making? Not as Greg later sees it - the two media are different 'an interactive product has to be designed to last

much longer than a film - we want to create hits - let's create something without creating a flop.'

REAL CINEMA SOFTWARE

Cinemaware was set up in the first place as a research for new interactive technologies. President Bob Jacob explains: 'We're using home computers as a training ground, developing and refining the methodology for interactive games.' Microsoft technology was cut. Cinemaware will be ready and waiting. As David Roston, head of the Cinemaware Interactive Group puts it: 'In any way we have done our designs, particularly in the last year, they can all be expanded into CD without being awkward.'

'Currently we are doing work on authoring tools, seeing what else we can make of full-motion video windows on the screen. For

A PILOT'S DVI SYSTEM?

Apert from full-screen 3D motion video, one of the main advantages of DVI is its capability to map textures onto real-life objects. This facility is particularly useful when simulating real-world terrain - or indeed cityscapes. Note how the pilot's view of the city changes as the plane is flown across the terrain...



Tearing along, you catch sight of a small red truck on the ground...



...zooming in to investigate, the truck grows large...



...Ah yes, it's that dog from the *Big Brother's Voice* advert

instance, in TV Sports Festival we could receive the digital picture of the coach with an actual person, and we could use camera views looking down the sides of the game," he continues.

The full implementation of CD allows three planes of video to work independently on the screen, and the Cinemascope team is already working out how best to use the new medium. "With Defender, for instance, we could freeze about the digital picture of the castle and hold a model just as they would for a movie. The photo of the castle would be placed in the middle plane, and as a photograph of a 3D object it would have 2.5 cm depth. We could then have a digital sky in the background with thunder and lightning effects perhaps, and clouds moving along. In the front frame we could do a real knight and use frames of a real person as a kind of video clip."

"Video windows could be used to give close-ups, and with the opportunities for audio commentaries we reckon it will be possible to get real emotional responses from a game in the same way as you can from a film. Without human expressions and body language, you can't create real emotional responses, but CD could make it all possible." The team at Cinemascope is thoroughly excited by the prospects of the future: "we're all for the movie world and we're dying to have real dialogue, we're really itching to get going", David May.

INTERACTIVISION

Bruce Banks, President and Chief Executive Officer of Medagame - Activision UK's American parent company - was emphatic about his company's commitment to the CD future:



"When it happens, we'll be there" he said. On the CD front, Activision is one of the few software houses to have released an pilot programme - Flight Simulator, produced in conjunction with Engineering, William Volk, Director of Technology at Medagame is eagerly awaiting the arrival of CD: "We hope it comes out soon... the delays are really frustrating."

William is more enthusiastic than most about the potential for CD. The most interesting aspect of the system, he asserts, is the facility for mapping features into solid objects. "It's the most interesting thing about CD, it brings realism." As far as he's concerned, the big news is that Cinemascope later has bought the DV1 technology from General Electric. "We're in the best position to draw down the price of the chips to a level that allows the consumer to afford them", he says.

Apart from their development work with CD, Medagame have also produced a CD ROM entertainment product for the Macintosh. Initial



ly launched late last year as a set of five standard floppy disks, Medagame has been available as a Mac CD ROM product since January this year according to William Volk. Medagame uses the innovative Macintosh authoring system, Hypercard, in an innovative way (see panel).

"Medagame uses a portion of Hypercard but we can't do all we want to with it - Medagame CD ROM taught us a lot, and we're now looking into building systems of our own to move things around" Bill explains. "We've people here who've got the guts to get a CD ROM like out," he asserts, explaining that Medagame are investing in the future, developing authoring tools and game design methodologies ready for the arrival of the technology: "we're preparing to support mass-market CD ROM once the platform is there. We're looking at the PC Engine which is due for launch in the States very soon, and we're very interested in that and in the new Nintendo and Sega consoles. We intend to be flexible and go on to a variety of platforms -

PHOBIA

TO SLEEP, PERCHANCE TO DREAM... but don't sleep too deeply" (as all your nightmares are waiting for you in this unique arcade blast from Tony Crowther.

Phobia is set in the minds of men, feeding on every human fear: spiders, fire, death - and death!

Grab hold of your courage and prepare to face the frightening challenge of each of the 14 planets that Phobia have set against you. Can your body take the heat, can your brain take the pressure?

Available on: Amiga £24.99, Atari ST £24.99
Commodore 64 Tops £9.95 Disk £12.99



In the interactive world of the *Mantale*, click up the basement to see a tower built on the tower, and draw floors... touch again and enter at the door (and on the door and it opens... click again, and pass through... click on the doorway and enter towards another structure.

without computers can have CD-ROM drives, and CD-ROM drives are not just for games. The PC engine with CD-ROM offers a quality that is not that much lower than the CD-i standard, and with luck there will be a bridge between computers with CD drives and CD-i equipment - people should be able to use the same disk on several different systems."

THROUGH THE MANTALE

Described as "a fantasy exploration for children of all ages," *Mantale* takes the user into a charmingly convoluted world that borrows from the scenarios of classic children's literature such as Alice in Wonderland. The player is the white, first person explorer who wanders around interacting with the environment.

Foot, click, watch and listen: the only four things you need to do when exploring the world of *Mantale*. At the very start of the game, you can see a live hybrid and a mantale cave. Click on the cover and it reveals, slide as a

plant basement grows into the pier. Three routes are now available to the player: into the hydrant, up the basement or down into the underground world inside the mantale.

Mantale is both simple and childlike. You just wander around, touching things, finding out what happens. Sometimes one of the whimsical characters will speak to you, fourth doors or desk drawers and they open, revealing hidden items. Objects in the gameworld can be manipulated by simple touches: musical keyboards can be played, books can be read, TV sets and radios can be turned on, and all the while appropriate digitized sound effects make the experiences real. Overall, the effect is both pleasing and welcoming to the adult mind - in the hands of younger children *Mantale* will certainly captivate.

As a demonstration of the potential of interactive CD-based products, *Mantale* is an interesting pilot. While sampled sounds, monochromatic cartoon graphics with simple

3D animations and fantasy scenarios are not exactly unheard of in the world of entertainment software, the way in which they are linked together in *Mantale* opens new vistas, much wider than those opened by lower-station games such as *Dragon's Lair*.

In *Mantale*, all the player has to do is move a cursor over an image and click on an item of interest. The interactivity is total, the experience of exploring a new and strange environment convincing. Just imagine what the *Mantale* experience could be like with full-motion-video shot from live action...

INTERACTING WITH VERDIN

Of all the software houses exploring the possibilities of interactive CD, Virgin Electronic is perhaps best placed to produce multi-media programmes. Parent company Virgin is already involved in books, music, film and video as well as entertainment software - all creative disciplines that will feed CD-based interactive pro-

PHOBIA



deep
you its





Stop-frame skills can be linked together to produce sophisticated virtual programmes. Before writing a complete program, you need to make adjustments for the local magnetic field.

grammes of the future. No surprise, then, that Virgin has set up an Interactive Media unit.

About 18 months ago work started on an interactive programme based on Sir Rutherford Fensholt's 1982 expedition to the North Pole. Several hours of movie film together with 500 slides were made available to the Virgin team, who set down to design an interactive simulation of the real expedition that would be 'enjoyable and entertaining as well as instructive.'

The aim was to simulate the total experience of planning an expedition and carrying it out - participants should be able to interact with one another as well as with the programme. And this was intended to be more than a 'theoretical laboratory project'. The programme was expected to fail, and even make money... 'The main academic background to the project was to produce a programme that developed interpersonal skills, and we wanted to publish it, so it ran on the standard systems in schools - the BBC Conventry system' William Beckatt explains.

Naturally, the main aim of the North Pole project was to develop the methodology for writing interactive programmes that involved video footage and still pictures: 'we went into it with closed-defined criteria' Mr Beckatt says, 'but we looked to develop skills because for products on CD - we felt it was worth getting into early to learn about the techniques involved. The only way to learn is to actually produce something.'

'It is unclear what medium will come out when in the real year or so - people are grappling with relatively arcane products, and although video and computers are not the

best of things to marry together in a friendly system, it feels as if CD will be the delivery medium for this type of product. Our programme was designed to be transferred to CD-based systems, but as the laser vision system is born and new, we wait it.'

The Conventry System, which uses a laser vision player linked to a BBC computer, has been installed in around 2,000 schools. The hardware costs around £4,000 to buy if you already have access to the system, the Virgin North Pole Expedition software is available for £199 including manuals, a teacher's guide and a copy of Sir Rutherford Fensholt's book, *The Day Of The Earth*.

CDI ON CDIT

William Beckatt and the Virgin interactive media people have looked at both CD and CD-I and are keeping a weather eye open on all the new interactive technologies. 'We don't mind which technology wins' William explains, 'providing the right design decisions have been taken, you can move the product to any media. For instance, we're already aware that it's better to take images from live than from videotape.'

'The difficulty with CD-I is that it requires a powerful engine to decompress and run, not sure you actually need to do that in interactive programmes. Interaction is nonlinear, so there isn't the need for the full motion video capabilities offered by the CD-I system. It may be more effective to use the background and middle ground offered by CD, if only because of the variety you can introduce into the program.'

'CD-I definitely has a place - there are some great applications you can envision for it, but the PC is not necessarily the place you'd start if you were going from here - you need hardware and a PC to run CD-I programmes, and it's going to be difficult to get the hardware price below £2,000 and £3,000. From the programmer's point of view, working with CD-I means everything has to be pre-defined and compressed down first. CD, with its window of full motion animation on the screen, may be more flexible. The latest version of CD-I may allow full-screen full-motion video, but even if it doesn't I don't think it's much of a drawback - designers just need to think what they're doing with it.'

FORWARD WITH VIRGIN

The Virgin Group as a whole has a large range of entertainment interests - including a CD pressing plant in its Dulwich Street Magazine, which could just as easily produce CD-ROM discs as music pressings. Virgin Interactive is working on the plots for a couple more video-based products at the moment. 'I'm not looking at specific CD-ROM products, which are probably a year ahead or so, the hope is to be able to deliver games as CD-ROM eventually.'

While home entertainment products on CD-ROM might be a way into the future, CD-based arcade machines from Virgin's arcade subsidiary are a definite possibility, although no firm details are available at present. Today's technology, however, would allow the CD copy designer to produce a much more sophisticated game than the comparatively simplistic Draper's Lot. ■

Peeking across the fence...



Just one of the problems encountered on the trek to the North Pole. Multiple-choice questions are answered by clicking on the best options.






Calculations based on real-life data from the expedition are part of the simulation, which is used to answer questions that aren't best left to making a mistake.

Next Month ★ The full story of CDI...

POPULOUS[™]

by BULLFROG 



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As the people of the Bloodwych awake to a new dawn, they find a stranger in their midst - from one of many races for his game. His task is to kill the demon that has dormant within the Castle of the Bloodwych.

Utilisation of the Crystals of Rangelia will ensure the Behemoth in his lair for all eternity. Should they remain separate, then he shall rise to bring darkness into the world.

This unique role-playing fantasy game allows greater interaction with the environment than has ever been seen before. Argue, barter, negotiate - even lie through your teeth! The fully implemented personalities of all the characters in Bloodwych allows a rich style of role-playing that has only been dreamed of.

With one or two player simultaneous mode, this is the game that you've been waiting for. Bloodwych for those that dare!

**ARGUE!
BARTER!
LIE THROUGH
YOUR TEETH!!!**



Atari ST Screen Shots



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IN COLLABORATION WITH ACE, VIRGIN
MASTERTHONIC ARE GIVING AWAY THE TOP-
OF-THE-RANGE CONSOLE PACK, ALONG WITH A
STACK OF CONSOLE-BUYING PRODS FOR RUNNERS UP.

COMPETITION

For price in the great Virgin Mastertonic giveaway is the Sega Super System pack, which contains the basic console unit, two controllers, the light Phaser and a set of 3D glasses. As if that package, containing twelve games for the light gun and 3D glasses, wasn't enough Virgin Mastertonic are throwing in a couple of extra Sega games of your choice and a Sega T shirt.

Should you miss the top prize, next in line is a trendy Virgin sports bag and track suit; the necessary equipment for getting fit or having fun is, and ideal addition for attempting athletic crossing is not an indoor. Then fun times at parks are on offer, each containing a game from the Melbourne House label, a game from the Leisure Genus label, and two games from the massive Mastertonic budget collection. We get to choose the titles you want...

The challenge we're setting is simple enough - all you have to do is answer five straightforward questions, then complete the coupon with your name and address. Runners-up can choose the games of their choice, and as a gentle reminder of what's on offer, here's a round-up of the Melbourne House and Leisure Genus ranges that we prepared earlier...

LEISURE GENUS

Scrabble C64, Spectrum, Amstrad
Scrabble Deluxe C64, Spectrum, Amstrad, ST,
PC, Amiga

Remedy C64, Spectrum, Amstrad

Circle C64, Spectrum, Amstrad

Snappers C64, Spectrum, Amstrad, ST, PC

Book C64, Spectrum, ST, PC, Amiga only

MELBOURNE HOUSE

Double Dragger C64, Spectrum, ST, PC, Amiga

Amigo Amiga

Beastars ST, Amiga

War in Middle Earth C64, Spectrum, Amstrad,
ST, PC, Amiga

Metropolis PC

Rockford ST, PC

Submarines C64, Spectrum, Amstrad

Sampods C64, Spectrum

Raven C64, Spectrum, ST, Amiga

Over to the questions. The Virgin group was founded by Richard Branson in 1970, and in the last 10 years it has expanded into a variety of activities, building on its early recreational foundations. Today you can play computer games, followed by the Virgin wine, top it stands in America with the Virgin wine, top it Sega console distributed by Virgin and, of course, pop into a Virgin Magazine to buy books, records, CDs, just about anything you need to have fun, in fact.

WIN A SEGA SUPER SYSTEM



PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY AND ACCURATELY
YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS. ALL CORRESPONDENCE
SHOULD BE SENT TO: SEGA, 10000 DEER CREEK
DRIVE, SUITE 100, DALLAS, TEXAS 75243. DEADLINE
FOR ENTRIES IS 31st MARCH 1992.

1. We've mentioned winning the
prize in the SEGA Super System and Richard
Branson's wine. How many other Virgin
products can you name?

2. Melbourne House has published
three games based on Tolkien's Lord
of the Rings. Which is your favourite?

3. Please name three Leisure Genus

4. What is the name of the SEGA wine
series that includes the limited edition
availability of Chateau and Beaujolais,
which have been converted to the
Sega compatible by Leisure Genus?

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

COMPUTER OWNED _____

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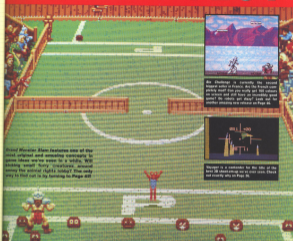
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SEE ORDER FORM ON PAGE 97 OR CALL 0458 74011

SCREEN TEST



Grand Wrestling Man features one of the most original and amusing concepts in game history we've seen in a while. Will hitting small fuzzy creatures around the arena's right lobby? The only way to find out is by learning it. Page 82



Air Challenge is certainly the second highest seller in France, and the French game market doesn't give you much, but still captures an interest and still from the increasingly general public? Do robots get dirty? Each one for another machine we're released on Page 82.



Nissan is a candidate for the title of the best CD-ROM among new video games. (That's not exactly why on Page 82.)

THE ACE REVIEWING SYSTEM

THE CONCEPT
The unique feature of the ACE reviewing system should be noted: Most of the games discussed here aren't reviewed first. It's like the little children at first, but as you read, you'll find a lot of great information that will be covered in a separate section to be discussed in a separate section.

REASONS
The rating system of ACE is designed to provide a quick, concise, and easy-to-understand way to see how well a game is doing. It's a quick and easy way to see how well a game is doing. It's a quick and easy way to see how well a game is doing.

NOTE
The ACE review system is designed to provide a quick, concise, and easy-to-understand way to see how well a game is doing. It's a quick and easy way to see how well a game is doing.

they are over the progress and presentation are an excellent introduction to the game.

THE FACTOR
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ACE REVIEWING
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FEATURED IN
Radio ACE

1991

1991

VOYAGER

OCEAN voyage to
the moons of Saturn

EARTH, 1817: Man's world enters the Queen of England celebrates for Silver Jubilee, the Sex Pistols join in the celebrations with a bit up the Thames on a boat starting out their latest chart topper 'God Save the Queen' and the satellite Voyager 1 is launched.

Somewhere in space, 2000. The Sex Pistols are long since forgotten, Queen Elizabeth II has died, and an alien life form scurries up Voyager 1 and takes the satellite back to its home world to decipher the information it holds.

Earth, 2138. Present day. Aliens appear in

ST VERSION

The smooth, fast, colorful graphics help to make a very elaborate game world. You'll be hooked on this after just a few plays, and it'll take you a while to beat, but it's not lacking that extra something to keep you playing for months.

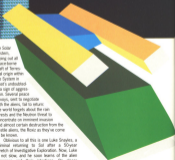
GRAPHICS **B** IN FACTOR **B**

SOUND **C** FUN FACTOR **B**

ACE RATING **802**

the Solar System, wiping out all spaceborne craft of terrestrial origin within the System in what's undoubtedly a sign of aggression. Several peace envoys, sent to negotiate with the aliens, fail to return; the world begins abating the rain forests and the Nuclear threat to concentrate on imminent invasion and almost certain destruction from the hostile aliens, the *Roids*, as they're come to be known.

Obsessed to all this is one Luke Snayles, a criminal returning to Gal after a 50-year stretch of Investigative Exploration. Now, Luke is not slow, and he uses teams of alien presence and their intentions. On closer inspection, he discovers that the *Roids* are using the 30 moons of Saturn as bases for

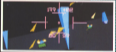




Stop in combat and you can view, and shoot at, any enemies from outside your craft. And if you're wondering what your craft looks like - here it is.



If you're in a tight spot, launch a nifty missile to confuse the enemy craft, then either make a run for it or blast the aliens as they come flocking to the missile.



Pick up the pod that enables your craft to travel wings and suddenly taking on flying aliens becomes a lot easier.

the forces. So there's only one option open to fail. He'll have to defend the basic army single handed.

You take the port of Luke and, starting at zero, endeavour to wipe out the alien craft from each moon before slipping through a way gate to the next. To do battle you've had to leave your mothership and send it on to float the tenth moon to seal while you scurry around in a shuttle. The shuttle is more top dog and not well equipped; in fact, it's only armed with a front-facing laser, a couple of atomic bombs and some power dynamite (small energy bombs). You can pick up pods from the surface of each moon which were dropped by the mothership when it passed over, and enhance your firepower. One pod even allows you to transform your spaceship shuttle into a flying craft and back again at the touch of a button. This proves to be very handy, especially when you need to destroy all-time alien craft.

Each moon is more heavily defended than the last, not mainly in the number of enemy craft, but in their intelligence. Most, too, for

example, is infested with hostile craft called Squanders that can only be destroyed by atomic bombs, and as there are always more Squanders than you've got bombs, life can be tricky. Or else try trapping the Squanders behind buildings, and polish off all the other craft before getting three or four to follow you, then let 'em have an atomic bomb and see how they like it!

Playoff is a bit like a 3D Starfighter, but better. Not only are the graphics better, but the gameplay is far superior. You can't simply rush around blasting everything, because it won't work - for a start, you have a limited amount of fuel - factors are needed if you hope to survive and progress. Because a certain amount of thought is involved, you'll find it much more entertaining than the average *Starfighter* clone and will consequently be playing it for long periods of time. The repetitive nature of the game just takes the edge off, though, so it just moves out on altering the covered 900+ rating, but it's still one of the best 3D shoot-'em-ups we've ever seen.

■ Andy Girth

| RELEASE BOX | | |
|-------------|----------------------------|----------|
| ATARI ST | £19.999 | OUT NOW |
| AMIGA | £24.999 | IMMINENT |
| IBM PC | Version planned, exact TBA | |



The graphics grab you immediately but it takes a while to learn how to deal with the aliens. Although you may complete it after a month, you'll still be heading in a year's time.

RAIDER

IMPRESSIONS are the sincerest form of flattery



On landing of the second system, the player has to enter the planetoid via the opening on the left, and destroy the gun emplacements while avoiding all the enemy's SAM.

AMIGA owners have been denied color versions of the Gouster/Lander clones *Flour* and *Sis*, but this debut product from Impressions goes some way to redressing the balance.

As with all the predecessors, the player's ship drops whenever all the laws of gravity are in evidence and is controlled from the keyboard using the now-standard *up* and *down* commands with the landscape scrolling around the central vessel.

The game is set in deep space (aren't they all?) where the player's mission is to visit four planets in each of eight star systems and retrieve a stolen fuel pod from each. Having captured all four pods, the craft must then be directed to an automated powerplant where the pods are repositioned in their correct locations.



Having blasted off the enemy guns on the first level, the ship displays its trailer beam to pick up the required fuel pod.

Success is rewarded with scores in the next system, and a password allowing the previous star system to be skipped on later runs.

Pods are only released once all the plan-

etary defences have been neutralised using the ship's cannon. A tractor beam device - which also doubles as a shield - is then used to collect the pod and any spare fuel containers that are lying around on the planet's surface.

Although *Raider* obviously borrows heavily from *Orb* and *Flour*, it doesn't quite manage to impress as much as its inspirations due to the unimaginative theme. Still, the control method isn't as precise as other games in the mould, since the ship's inertia is a touch over-sticky. However, the difference is only really noticeable to anyone brought up on the previous *Gouster/Lander* clones; anyone new to the genre will easily adapt to the gamestyle, and veterans will practice an old art of new canvas.

Steve Jarratt

RELEASE BOX

| | | |
|----------|---------|---------|
| ATARI ST | £15.99k | ISSUED |
| AMIGA | £15.99k | OUT NOW |

AMIGA VERSION

While the multidirectional scrolling is at its very smooth, the graphics do have a slightly amateur quality about them. Sound is limited to sampled engine effects for landing, firing and explosions, all of which are adequate, but no more.

| | | | |
|-----------------|---|------------|---|
| GRAPHICS | 5 | IS FACTOR | 4 |
| SOUND | 4 | FUN FACTOR | 7 |
| AGE RATING: 8/4 | | | |

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The trend and level of popularity shows extraordinary firmness in the market, and the level of repeat purchase figures indicate interest right into the year.

SILKWORM

Rebel, ST version reviewed, £19.95dk

Shoot whips, come and shoot-em-ups go, so what could possibly make this one stand out from the crowd?

Having got about everything you could wish for in a game of this type (help, a variable, a two-player option) it's got it. Want real and unobtrusive guidance to destroy? It's got 'em. Want to be able to pick up extra firepower so blasting the flying and ground-based targets becomes a little easier? No problem.

Beginning to get the idea? Good, now for the scenario: You're piloting a helicopter to hunt down a gang of bad guys across a continuous horizontally-scrolling landscape, blasting

all and sundry that comes your way, including the gratuitous amount of fire that the enemy throws at you. You've got three lives to lose before you get the first of three 'continue' options, so you've got nine lives in effect (all not enough, good).

All in all, *Silkworm* is a very good shoot-em-up; nothing more and nothing less. The attacking craft are varied, and there's plenty to blast, so it'll keep you busy for a good while and is guaranteed to take years off the life expectancy of your joystick (or button).

Andy Giffitt



A surprisingly quiet moment, having just disposed of a missile base and evaded a tank.

| | | | |
|-----------------|---|------------|---|
| GRAPHICS | 8 | IS FACTOR | 8 |
| SOUND | 7 | FUN FACTOR | 9 |
| AGE RATING: T/3 | | | |

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SSI



GERMAN
CONQUEST

WIZARD'S CROWN

WAR IN RUSSIA

WARSHIP

WIZARD'S CROWN

WAR IN RUSSIA





(Main Picture) On the second level (hence the darker sea) Ty waits in the center of the island village, ready to meet the five Sprites who are about to come to his aid.



Typhoon presents a wriggling bag of five Sprites to the lone Sprite in the armory.

TYPHOON THOMPSON

BRODERBUND/DOMARK raise a storm

FLIGHT 204 plummets down to the surface of Aguan, an ocean world in the Omega system, and all hands are lost at sea... except one. A tiny infant survives the crash, and is adopted by the Sea Sprites that inhabit the placid waters of Aguan. After several abortive attempts are made to rescue the child, the task falls upon the narrow-shouldered, reluctant hero Typhoon Thompson.

Forcefully persuaded to lead his personal army, Thompson heads for the nearest group of islands where he is met by the Spirit Guardians, remnants of a long-dead civilization, who help him on his quest. At the beginning of



After an unsuccessful attempt, the Spirit Guardians isolate Typhoon, prior to installing a new jet-thrust undersea life.

each level they ask for a particular artifact - dagger, hammer, balloon or protector - which is held by the Sprites' armory at the center of a 'village' of six islands. To retrieve the item, Thompson must capture all the Sprites from the surrounding islands and trade them for the required valuables from the lone Sprite in the central armory.

Sprites appear from their aerodynamic shellings either once the island is shot, or automatically after a short time. However, the little amphibians are enclosed in vital hovercraft called Flyers, which have in an Thompson's arsenal and attempt to remove the minor annoyance by a variety of means, including ball missiles and more direct methods.

One bit from the old's blaster casts the Flyer destroyer, and the Sprites is sent strutting through the air to land with a splash some distance away. While the creature is stunned,

Typhoon must reach the Sprite and sweep it up in a sack; otherwise, the Sprite regains its wits and swims, splashes, back to his island.

Having captured all the Sprites and swapped them for the required object, Thompson may request the Guardians in order to receive his orders for the next level, and also take receipt of an extra weapon.

The above scenario might sound a bit eccentric, but the gameplay is in fact very straightforward and very absorbing. The plot is unusual (though limited time becomes second nature, and the only drawback is that the limited gameplay might seem odd due to unfamiliarity or completion of the game although the latter is quite a task). Still, Typhoon Thompson simply drops quality, and is a suitable feature for the maintenance of Broderbund products.

■ Dave Knight

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST £19.95 (normal)
No other versions planned

ST VERSION

The video shows six little points in Ty's graphics. They need to be seen to be believed. The animation is nothing short of superb - even on such tiny monitors - and the water effect is enhanced with hourly splashes and ripples. Seriously, the CD is quite stunning: movement is dead smooth and the music of AGUAN is almost perfect. Sound is received but used to a premium, with decent spot effects (particularly fading with distance).

GRAPHICS ■ **IS FACTOR** ■
JANING ■ **FUN FACTOR** ■
ACE RATING 8.22

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Simply amazing for the first few goes, and the challenge shifts its focus for a week or two before repetition starts to kill interest.

FEATURED IN
Radio ACE

900
PER MONTH

GRAND MONSTER SLAM

GOLDEN GOBLINS make the fur fly



The main game: the barbarian has nearly cleared the Bebeles. Just one more, then the Soccer 100.



BARBARIAN: The Super Barbarian

GOBLIN: Assassin

GOBLIN: Assassin (Blue Version)

GOBLIN: Assassin (Red Version)

GOBLIN: Assassin (Blue Version) is used by the player's computer during the game.

and a 100-point bonus.

FOR MORE on Grand Monster Slam

The top shot shows all the right combinations from the first league game seen at top left. Bebeles in the background contribute to your opponent's damage (shown in red) again.

WHAT sort of a mode is it that would gleefully go around launching cute little furry animals into the air with its foot? The sort of monster that wants to win! There's only one way to win in this game, and that's by accumulating and fortuitously introducing cute, lovable "Beloms" to the unsuspecting toes of your fair foe.

The **QMS** takes place in the level of Shub! where goblins, dragons, ogres, humans and many other monster races are strewn each after in perfect hatred. To avoid the complete collapse of social order, the monsters confine five potential battles to the field of play.

You're a dwarf, but don't let it get you down, because dwarves are good at this game. In the first two sections of the game you are played with seven other competitors in a knockout competition. The players in the first section are not too good, but none of them are very fast.

Each match pits two creatures against each other on a pitch viewed from one end, and your dwarf is always at the rear end. In front of each player is a tunnel with six Beloms lined up on it. The players walk along the line and boot the poor, quivering Beloms over at the opponent, with the aim of completely clearing the line of Beloms and charging up to the other end of the field.

If you can hit an opposing player with a Belom it turns him for a while, preventing you with the best chance to whack a few more in his direction. Beloms automatically line up on the baseline to be kicked, which is very tactically interesting considering the hammering they take. A shot can be angled in either direction and batted in the air, although the danger of this is that it might fly into the crowd, resulting in a penalty.

Of course, it's a game like this, the penalties are anything but normal. They involve kicking a Belom (or kicking itself) into the opposing monster's midriff and when success throws three Beloms over to the receiver's side, a last laugh as one Belom is tossed to the kicker's side. The computer players can give away penalties too, but that depends on how skillful they are.

It may all sound simple, but the gameplay is utterly insane, with the dwarf scurrying along the baseline in a desperate attempt to kick Beloms and avoid incoming ones. Most of the skill lies in using shots to keep the other player pinned down, which is not at all easy when it has to be done at speed. This is a great header in the set and knockout sections, because a wooden fence with a gap in it is placed in the middle of the field. Shots can be sent to be bounced over the fence or guided through the gap.

After every game, the Beloms get their revenge for all the hoofing about by surrounding the player and launching a "poo-poo" aimed at you. They can be pushed off for a while, but defeat is inevitable. The longer you can survive, the more points you accrue.

After quarter, semi, and then the final five all been played, there is a qualifying game where Beloms have to be kicked into the mouths of "Faulcons" perched on pillars. These pillars are at different heights, and a certain number of successful shots are needed to qualify you for the next knockout series.

In the third section three champions await, who all have to be defeated in order to achieve final victory. Unfortunately for you, they also possess magical abilities to surprise you.

Despite being simple and repetitive (it's a very addictive game with the same sort of attraction as *Synthetic*), you will keep coming back to it repeatedly, because no two games are the same and it's always a challenge. It's cruel, nasty and despicable to treat Beloms like this, but so how is it.

SCREEN TEST



The two subgames, *Revenge of the Beloms* and *Faulcon Hunting*, place three Beloms positioned at the right end another is coming from the left. (Showing how Faulcon has been hit and the second Belom is being into an open man.

RELEASE BOX

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|
| ATARI ST | Price TBA | ANNOUNCED |
| AMIGA | Price TBA | OUT NOW |
| MSX/DOS | Price TBA | ANNOUNCED |
| IBM PC | Price TBA | ANNOUNCED |

for other versions planned

AMIGA VERSION

The graphics and animation are exceptionally good, the pace little Beloms being the highlight as they barrel, while through the air and split into the screen. The music and effects are slick and enjoyable. The ease of the control, the quality of engineered competitors.

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------|----------|
| GRAPHICS | 5 | 10 | EASIER TO USE | 9 |
| SOUND | 7 | FUN FACTOR | 7 | |
| ACE RATING 900 | | | | |

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Belom lunging really hinders you, and needs great concentration and persistence. With no two games alike, and a variety of opponents, it's one to come back to for months.

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IV

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THIRD of the SSI/TSR range of computer games based on the AD&D system to arrive is *Hillstar*, bringing with it a number of questions. Will it be an arcade adventure, like *Rescue of the Princess* or will it be more in keeping with the roleplaying system, like *Pool of Radiance*?

Hillstar takes its name from the town in which the game is based, and actually turns out to be a mix of game styles, rather than falling neatly into one category. Before setting out on your adventures you can import a character already created in *Pool of Radiance* or create yourself a new persona (Warrior, Fighter, Mage and so on) in the RPG style.

Then the adventure starts, placing you at a campsite a few miles from the town. To travel to *Hillstar*, you go via the first of the four arcade-style subgames: horse riding. Using the joystick, you have to gallop along a path jumping over obstacles such as puddles and holes

OS4 VERSION

The graphics are fine, with especially nice animation in the horse-riding sequences. The sound effects are few and far between, but there's nothing special about them. *Amiga* runs at 600k and 600FPS.

GRAPHICS: 8 SOUND FACTOR: 5
 SOUND: 2 PERFORMANCE: 4

AGE RATING: T12

branches and ducking bamboo limbs that flap along at head height.

The other arcade style games include fighting in the arena, where you try to bash your opponent into unconsciousness; target shooting, where you fire a total of ten darts, arrows, stones or daggars at a series of targets for a gold prize; and maze wandering/lock picking. These last two are linked because on entering almost any building you'll find yourself looking down at your character as he wanders around. Soon you'll come across some treasure chests and if you've got a set of picks, or a friend with a set of picks, you can attempt to spring the locks by matching the picks to the lock tumblers - the number of tumblers varies from five to six - within a time limit. Failure not only robs the loot, but will

HILLSFAR

More AD&D from SSI - OK?



The main map shows the town of *Hillstar* and your position. The inset display reveals that you are outside the *Fighter's Guild* arena, and you will be given a message.

probably also spring some sort of trap that will have an adverse effect as your hit points.

On to the adventuring side of things. The screen display breaks down into three main sections: a large map, viewed from above, shows your position in the town at all times. In the top left is a window showing a view 'through your eyes' and at the bottom of the screen is a window displaying text messages.

What you do in *Hillstar* is largely up to you, if you're into the adventuring side of things, you can try interacting with some characters and discover some quests. For example, if you're a free character, head for the Guild of Thieves, that's the main map and text send you on a mission. If you prefer the action side of things, wander to the arena and join a fight. Actually, whichever type you prefer, you'll almost

certainly end up taking part in both. Wandering around the city, for instance, you might come across a cutb and cop in to have a couple of beers. If your luck is bad, you could easily end up being carted off to the arena for a fight, or you could just as easily pick up a juicy bit of gossip that sends you off adventuring.

And that's about it. All games involve one arcade sequence and most involve more than one, making *Hillstar* much more of a mode ground game than true RPG. That's not to detract from a great advantage, and could well attract newcomers to this type of game, but don't expect it to be as involving, or the game world as believable, as a game like *Pool of Radiance*.

■ Andy Lamb

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST Death Toll Action

AMIGA Death Toll Action

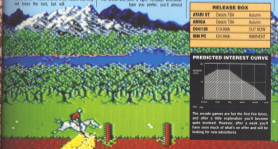
OS4/MSX Death Toll Action

IBM PC Death Toll Action

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The arcade games are fun for the first few times, and offer a little exploration you'll become quite involved in, however, after a week you'll have seen much of what's on offer and will be looking for new adventures.





To destroy the blue mechanical on the left, SLIPT must move west to the recharge slab.



and perform a vertical spinning jump. Stepping that way, a hole to the left, destroying the creature.

919
AGE RATES

BIO CHALLENGE

La premiere jeu de DELPHINE SOFTWARE avec PARAGIS



The first industrial garden in his career, a mechanical that hits the large robot attack in the shape!



RICHARD Claydeman makes Depline succeed lots of money in fact, he's one of the biggest-earning recording artists in the world. So what's that got to do with *Bo Challenge*? You might ask. Well, Depline has signed a corporate tie-in in the software world and come up with the second biggest seller in France after Captain Blood. And now it's being released in his country under the guidance of Palace Software.

Coded by the co-authors of Diller's ST Soccer game, *Bo Challenge* features a typical yet fresh set of strange scenarios, and some unusual and innovative gameplay.

The player takes on the mantle of a KLPT cyborg, bearing the body of a robot and controlled by a human brain. To test the effectiveness of the experiment, KLPT is expected to conquer all six levels of the *Bo Challenge*.

Each level is split up into planets, accessed by contact with color-coded teleporters which hover at the top of the screen. The level is completed by collecting four pieces of amulet from around the planets, and then defeating a large mechanical guardian.

Planet landscapes are filled with deep crevasses, invisible platforms called charge stabs and three varieties of bio-mechanical beings: small ones fly across the screen in formation, medium-sized creatures suspend themselves from the charge stabs, and larger mechanicals move and jump along the ground.

The airborne creatures drain KLPT's energy - indicated by a falling oil level - but otherwise pose little more than an annoyance. KLPT easily deals with these pests by going into a high-speed spin (loosely jumping at the same level which destroys them). Oil is replenished by collecting barrels along the way, but if KLPT's monitor is completely drained, he loses a life and restarts the level from scratch.

The other two alien species (aute andlar) drain, and can be destroyed in several ways. KLPT can collect red amulet from one of the creatures which regularly appear at the top of the screen. Thus killed, whenever the auteloid gives into a spin any flying creatures which follow are sent whirling off across the screen, and act as missiles to destroy both the charge stab hangers and ground-based beasts.

Other creatures also become visible as planets are destroyed and include such goodies as additional time, bonus points, an extra life, increased oil tank capacity and green armor, which allows KLPT to destroy any enemies that are on the screen simply by performing a back-walk maneuver.

Charge stabs carry one, two or three charges, and can be made to fall on unsuspecting beings by reducing the charge to zero. KLPT does this by performing his backflip while standing on the stab, or by tapping buttons on the edge of an overhead ramp. The latter maneuver launches them to either fall sideways, if they only carry one charge, or to move sideways, reducing the charge by one unit. In this way, stabs holding two or three charges can be positioned as required.

When suitably crushed on the head, shot or disemboweled, the defeated creatures yield other sections of amulet, or seeds of amulet (seeds which are then used against the guardian). Once the amulet is complete, KLPT can head back to the larger sphere at the start of the level where he is transported to his nexting, if the guardian's power.

During this sub-level, whenever KLPT attempts a jump, he is transferred into a float-

ing cannon which slowly falls back to the ground. The guardian constantly rises and falls, shooting as it does so, and KLPT's bullets must be timed to hit the guardian on the most vulnerable area, his head. Successfully defeating the large mechanical allows KLPT to continue his mission on the next level.

This strategic shoot-out-eva - but without the shooting - sounds a lot more complicated than it actually is. Once the inside of play becomes familiar the action proves extremely addictive, and the game is nicely balanced to provide a continual challenge.

Bo Challenge is beautifully presented and features a great tutorial demo, which is well worth watching. In fact, the only real omission is an inventory system allowing the early stages to be bypassed on later plays. Once learned, though, the levels are rapidly completed, and there is no strict deadline for completing each level. A great detail for the Depline/Palace team: Well, here this is the start of a beautiful relationship.

• Dave Janet

ST VERSION

Has control with dead mouse (four-way control). The programmers have also used some clever techniques to produce a playing field with more than its normal amount of colour (up to 255, apparently). As with other Palace games, the ST's soundings is also perfect here, with a clear, vibrant soundtrack and some very pleasant effects during play.

GRAPHICS 5 HD FACTOR 5
AUDIO 5 FM FACTOR 5

ACE RATING 919

AMIGA VERSION

Virtually identical to the ST, save for a subtle palette and even more colour. Although the speed effects are comparable, the Amiga boasts a predictable 'power' version of the title track which can be played throughout the game.

GRAPHICS 5 HD FACTOR 5
AUDIO 5 FM FACTOR 5

ACE RATING 919

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST £12.999 OUT NOW

AMIGA £14.999 BRANCO

No other versions planned.

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The unusual gameplay provides instant allure, while familiarity with the controls and easily-graded levels guarantee an enthralling and long-lasting challenge.



1 Positioned below the floating mechanical head controller, KLPT's bullets prevent him a high jump.

2 Keeping the top of his head above the head-hunters' fire maintains

3 the player's maximum energy in each level.

4 Falls to the ground, slowly followed by the cannon.

5 KLPT stops to pick up the amulet, and then resumes play, which is then over-screened.



Your character, the acrobat-like being with the large board and stick, is going to have problems cracking past the green thing on the ground that throws white objects.

STORMLORD

It's raining HEWSON

RAF Cocco is one of the biggest names in 8-bit games, with an impressive track record of releases like Cyberlord, Copalox and Exolon. Nearly all these games have blended shoot-'em-up action with arcade adventure to



The board, to the left, has been successfully avoided using the honeycomb.

produce a unique style. Stormlord's 3D side-on view is also typical of Cocco games, as are the detailed graphics that appear on all screens.

Your character walks and jumps around four levels, throwing fireballs and bombs to dispose of enemies, solving a series of puzzles, and finally completing each level by rescuing five imprisoned fairies.

Objects which pop up throughout the game, although only one of a kind can be carried, must be used to perform specific functions: keys to unlock doors, an umbrella to keep the rain off and honey to attract bees, which doesn't take too much working out. Among the more entertaining features are trampolines that act like teleports but do so by throwing you through the air.

As ever with Cocco games, there's a host of timing problems where mistakes have to be avoided rather than shot. All this avoiding and

shooting is fun but difficult, so even hard-core players will have trouble completing the whole thing. It's enormously frustrating, and far too frequently demands near-perfection from the player.

Despite the fact that it has been well programmed, looks good and is really quite action-packed, Stormlord is just too frustrating. If gamercy is to progress at all, it must get away from timing problems, unavoidable deaths and other things best left back in 1984. Stormlord is not really a bad game; it's just not as good as gameplayers these days have every right to expect.

■ Rob Wade

SPECTRUM VERSION

The backgrounds are detailed and attractive and are accompanied by some lovely melodies on the console. There are some good in-game effects and a nice title tune too.

GRAPHICS **B** IQ FACTOR **4**
 AUDIO **B** FUN FACTOR **A**
 AGE RATING **5/7+**

RELEASE DATES

| | | |
|----------|--------------------|----------|
| ATARI ST | £19.99 | July '90 |
| AMIGA | £19.99 | July '90 |
| SPEC 128 | £19.99 | OUT NOW |
| AMSTRAD | £19.99 • £14.99 | MMAY '91 |
| CGA/EGA | £19.99 • £14.99 | MMAY '91 |
| IBM PC | No version planned | |

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Predicting gamercy has a dampening effect early on out, although this can be overcome, the game only has four levels.



A surprisingly casual attacker feeds some garlic and milk, hands it proteins.

GRAPHICS **B** IQ FACTOR **1**
 AUDIO **B** FUN FACTOR **A**
 AGE RATING **3/7+**

FRIGHT NIGHT

Microdeal, Amiga version reviewed, £19.99

Gerry Cambridge is a member of the undead, and Gerry would like to remain undead. So Gerry has to leap, dash and crawl around his house, after dark, and suck the blood of anyone he happens to come across.

These people aren't sold on this idea, so will attempt to harm Gerry by lobbing various articles at him: garlic, holy water and so on. In the night, pain, the number of people stumbling into Gerry's house increases (including people he killed previously) but so does the number of lawsuits. But have a detrimental

effect on his health, including ghosts of past victims and hands that thrust up from the floor, contact with any of which will cause your "death bar" (water health) to you and need to take a break.

Fright Night has been a long time coming; the wait was not worth it. The game concept is flat, the play area is small, the animation is poor. Gerry looks and moves more like Ohio Friesey than Ohio ever did and the gameplay is frustrating. Not a game to add to your library.

■ Andy Smith

THIS IS THE COURSE THAT JACK BUILT.



The 18th at Pebble Beach



The 18th at St. Andrews



The 18th at Bandon



The 18th at Bandon



The 18th at Bandon



The 18th at Bandon



The 18th at Pebble Beach



The 18th at Pebble Beach



The 18th at Pebble Beach



The 18th at Pebble Beach



The 18th at Pebble Beach



The 18th at Pebble Beach



The 18th at Pebble Beach



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The 18th at Pebble Beach



The 18th at Pebble Beach



The 18th at Pebble Beach



The 18th at Pebble Beach



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publishers.

THE SEGA SELECTION

CALIFORNIA GAMES ★ £24.95 crt

Sega's much-revered and well-loved sports simulation has been beautifully converted to the Sega. All six events of the original have been squeezed in intact, and one major advantage is not having to wait while each event loads.

For anyone not conversant with the American beach sports simulator, California Games includes half-pipe skateboarding, foot bag for backyard football, surfing, water skiing, BMX bike racing and throwing the flying disc (Frisbee to you and me).

Gameplay revolves around strategic use of

the joystick and fire button to perform set maneuvers, and success is rewarded with points. Each event may be played or practiced individually, or as part of a multilevel challenge. Unfortunately, the multi-player feature of the original has disappeared along the line.

Sega California Games is smarter than all of the other computer versions with the possible exception of the Amiga. The gameplay is looking a lot better, but since it's the first of its type on the Sega, it should receive an appreciative audience. And deservedly so.

● Steve Janet



Our California Dreamer here creates a wave, responded to his beach gear.

| | | | |
|----------------|---|------------|---|
| GRAPHICS | 4 | IQ FACTOR | 4 |
| AUDIO | 5 | FUN FACTOR | 5 |
| AGE RATING 713 | | | |

VIGILANTE ★ £24.95 crt



The Vigilante does a graceful kick to the face of an unpleasant character who is threatening him with a knife fist.

Once more into the streets dear friends and let's kick some ass while we're there. Of course, it's all in a good cause: removing some poor girl called Maria. That's right, the usual sexist threat. Oh well, it's a good excuse for a punch up.

Your rather puny character has to progress along the horizontally-scrolling levels, fighting off thugs, hoods, gang members and assorted street scum that attack from both sides. The cause is much aided by gaining a weapon which dispatches them faster and of longer range.

The bad guys come in many varieties as well, taking many blows to defeat. Some of them also have the nasty habit of grabbing onto you if they get close enough, draining energy rapidly.

Once again it's unimpaired gameplay, but as a sporting combat game, go if a fun staff that will not easily be beaten.

● Bob Pele

| | | | |
|----------------|---|------------|---|
| GRAPHICS | 5 | IQ FACTOR | 4 |
| AUDIO | 5 | FUN FACTOR | 5 |
| AGE RATING 651 | | | |

TIME SOLDIER ★ £24.95 crt

Cast in the role of a time soldier hero, surprised the player — or players, for there is a simultaneous two-player option — has to breach the barriers of time itself in order to rescue his troopers who are lost across the years, and ultimately defeat the evil being, Quidem, who sent them there in the first place.

Basically, the soldiers have to negotiate a series of vertically and horizontally-scrolling landscapes representing the different time zones, and battle any indigenous enemies that appear.

On destroying specific enemies, additional weapons become available and it simply

picked up to add temporary impetus to the assault. No surprises at the end of the level either: a guardian being slain leads itself according to the period, and must be evaded before attempting the next one.

The SNK coding wasn't brilliant and, unsurprisingly, this version doesn't improve upon the matter. The visuals are sparse, the action is a little slow, and unfortunately after a few goes it all becomes a bit tedious.

● Steve Janet



With his bazooka, the time-traveler shows away some mean whizz-bang weaponry taking down foes.

| | | | |
|----------------|---|------------|---|
| GRAPHICS | 4 | IQ FACTOR | 5 |
| AUDIO | 5 | FUN FACTOR | 5 |
| AGE RATING 505 | | | |

ALTERED BEAST ★ £24.95 crt

Easy name for a game with some eye-catching graphics. The beast in question is a hero even from the grave who can power up, first via a Charles Atlas body and then into a demon, by eating willow.

Power-ups are gained by destroying certain foes, encountered on the gently scrolling levels. They come from both sides, above and



Against a background of the now-released cut architecture, the muscular fighting man leaps to the attack, causing the deaths of the Wonders of Purple Treasures.

even up from the ground, to be punched, kicked and copped out of existence. End-of-level guardians are of course essential and take a bit of a lot of beating.

Not very imaginative is gameplay, but notable for its chunky graphics. The woman, however, adds to the fun considerably, because as well as shooting, he can launch himself across screens and lay waste to all who stand before him.

● Bob Pele

| | | | |
|----------------|---|------------|---|
| GRAPHICS | 7 | IQ FACTOR | 4 |
| AUDIO | 5 | FUN FACTOR | 5 |
| AGE RATING 651 | | | |

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Blood Money



BLOOD MONEY

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But it's going to be tough. From the instant you hear that driving soundtrack you'll be plunged into a mission of sheer destruction, as you plunder the four Outer Planets in a rampage quest for gold and glory. The story in **BLOOD MONEY** set some vicious traps, and it will take all your skills just to survive.

Use your sensitive joystick wisely and you'll smash some aliens into bloodmoney that can earn you real rewards and enjoyment! And you're going to need them. Because their life-holding systems in **BLOOD MONEY** is a life and death struggle that demands all your tactical genius and great aim-up-know-how before you can't through to confront the four planetary Guardians.

With its vast hi-res graphics, superb animation, blasting sound, devilish obstacles, awesome firepower and 1 to 2 player action, **BLOOD MONEY** is the greatest challenge yet faced by any games player ever. A passport to outer space.

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*Two joysticks required for two player game
Version 5.00B 9/91 From The Arcade Machine

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STRANGE how some games come about. Take this one: a conversion of a concept that was derived from orbital tables. Need I say more, but the coin-op was a big success and produced a far more complex game than any normal portable ever could or ever has.

There are four whole tables to play, each with its own task to be completed. Each table is split into two halves, with flippers on both halves, so if the ball slips off the top section, which it's banded into, the bottom half sprays into view. If you lose it off the bottom screen it's one of five balls gone.

AMIGA VERSION

Exciting tones, varying for each of the levels and accompanied by good effects. Graphics are close to the arcade version, ball movement is not perfect, but it's close enough to offer plenty of fun for a good while.

GRAPHICS: 8 TD FACTOR: 8
AUDIO: 8 FUN FACTOR: 8

AGE RATING: 700



On the left is the first level, the volcano, and on the right the second stage, the ruins. If you can hit the ball up one of the tubes that start above the volcano, it lights up one of the letters. Light all seven and multi-ball mayhem results.

TIME SCANNER

ACTIVISION's time and motion study

The first level is the volcano, followed by the ruins and the pyramid. If these three can successfully be mastered, the fourth and most difficult table awaits. To get between levels the ball must be hit into a "time tunnel" which will warp it there. The task on "volcano" is to hit the ball up a chute to light up the letters in the word volcano. Once this is done, you get three balls at once: a great chance to stress a score.

A similar situation is found on the other

two levels, where completing a task gets you a multiball play. You don't really want to know what to do, do you? I thought not. Have fun feeling out.

Once all three levels are completed, the final table can be reached via a time tunnel. Here again there's a task to be completed, but this time it means in the old classic Checkout and is by far the hardest of all the levels.

Like the arcade version there's a tilt option for rattling the screen around. This can save the ball from impending doom and the machine never objects to the bouncing about. Tilt is vital for victory, so it's necessary with the flippers.

Basically, Time Scanner is pinball with extras thrown in to good effect. It may not be



This is the top half of the pyramidal stage, where a task has to be completed. However, we don't want to spoil it out for you.

original, and it may not take long to see everything, but pinball has always been very addictive and this game is no exception.

By Bob

ARCADE ACCURACY
Both the graphics and the gameplay emulate the coin-op closely to excellent effect.

COIN-OP SCORE: 8

| RELEASE BOX | | |
|-------------|-------------------|---------|
| ATARI ST | 131.999 | AMIGOV |
| AMIGA | 124.999 | OUT NOW |
| SPEED 128 | 122.999 | AMIGOV |
| AMSTRAD | 121.999 - 121.999 | AMIGOV |
| COM 128 | 121.999 - 121.999 | AMIGOV |
| IBM PC | No option planned | |



ST VERSION

The graphics are good, but the gameplay can be very frustrating. Once you know the courses it isn't like playing to win every game.

GRAPHICS **B** HD FACTOR **B**
 AUDIO **B** FUN FACTOR **T**
 ACE RATING **647**

DRIFT ST - A water race, and you're piloting a fizzy ferry. These craft tend to generate lots of inertia, so you'll have to beware of oversteers.

SUPERCATS - Quads and Helicopters are all modes of transport, sooooooingly enough, and they all feature in this game based on the popular TV series *Run the Gauntlet*.

On the telly, international teams compete against each other in several races on land and water, driving various kind of weird and wonderful vehicles. In the computer game you and a couple of mates can compete against each other in nine races (three groups of three legs) again, for the most part, in assorted vehicles.

The driving races consist of three laps of a set course that varies depending on the type of



craft you're in. The action's viewed from above, though it's more 'above and a bit' to the side for the buggy driving races. Just like in most Commodore games, the controls are simply left, right, accelerate and brake.

Competing, whether playing solo or with friends, involves racing round the course against two computer-driven times for each leg are tacked up at the end of the race and points awarded to whoever finishes next quickly. Failure to achieve the standards required, in other words not finishing in the top five, means you won't progress to the next round, so you will have to take risks and really go for it sometimes.

As might be expected, there are other factors as well as the computer-driven that can prove a hindrance. Explosions on both land and sea can send your craft spinning out of control for a few vital seconds, and colliding with the computer-driven delays only your progress, and not theirs.

Run the Gauntlet is not one of Ocean's better games. It's well put together and is fun to play (although the collision detection is a bit shy), but it's far too easy to defeat to keep you playing for months.

Andy Smith

RUN THE GAUNTLET

Multi-eventing around with OCEAN



Spectrum - Supercats are the slowest of all the land craft, although that's not necessarily a bad thing!

SPECTRUM VERSION

Everything's very fast and the graphics are fine. It's a struggle to see on the floppy, so there's some falling chocolate, but you'll notice it eventually. An enjoyable short-term game in the Super-Squad and 68000 lineable range.

GRAPHICS **B** HD FACTOR **B**
 AUDIO **B** FUN FACTOR **B**
 ACE RATING **677**



Amstrad - Piloting a ferry, use the small map in the top corner to guide yourself round the courses.

AMSTRAD VERSION

The graphics do seem to be better than the ST version, so you can expect to get a fair amount of play from it. The graphics are good, being both smooth and colorful. Probably the most enjoyable version overall.

GRAPHICS **B** HD FACTOR **B**
 AUDIO **B** FUN FACTOR **B**
 ACE RATING **683**

RELEASE BOX

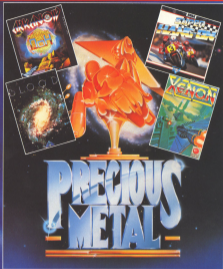
| | | |
|----------|-----------------|----------|
| ATARI ST | £19.95 | CUT MORN |
| AMIGA | £24.95 | BRANDYT |
| SPEC 128 | £24.95 + £12.95 | CUT MORN |
| AMSTRAD | £19.95 + £14.95 | CUT MORN |
| CRAYON | £24.95 + £14.95 | BRANDYT |

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



After the initial frustration caused by control problems in *Amstrad*, you'll find it extremely entertaining - until you beat it, which will be sooner rather than later.

THE COMPILATION OF EXCELLENCE



AMAZON FANTASY
 An epic quest through a vast, mythical world. You are a young hero who must defeat a powerful evil wizard and his army of monsters. The game features a rich storyline, a variety of weapons and spells, and a challenging combat system. It is a true masterpiece of fantasy gaming.

LOOK
 A space exploration game where you discover new planets, collect resources, and uncover the secrets of the universe. The game features a detailed space environment and a variety of alien life forms.

MOTOR
 A fast-paced motorcycle racing game with realistic physics and stunning graphics. You can choose from several different bikes and compete against AI opponents or other players in a multiplayer mode.

VISION
 A strategy game where you build a civilization, manage resources, and wage war against your enemies. The game features a deep strategic gameplay and a variety of units and buildings.



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Developed for Microsoft's 3D FreeSpace, it's a new adventure and action game. The game is set in a 3D and 4D world with good software under. Microsoft's 3D FreeSpace. Price: \$24.99 each.

NIKO
STATUS



The white team try to stop the blue team from scoring another goal. That summarizes the whole pitch on the left side for about 15 seconds if you wish.



Decide where you're going to strike the ball (control the power) or wait unless the rest of your team have positioned themselves) and hopefully score 8 goals.

WHILE the world waits for Microsoft Soccer to appear on the IBM machine, ANCO have cracked it with their admirable footy gem. Is it worth considering, or should you save your dough?

Well, we can now tell you that it's definitely worth considering, because it's one of the best footy games to have appeared on the larger machines to date. As seems to be the rule nowadays, the game is viewed from above with you controlling whichever player is

KICK OFF

ANCO put their boots on

in the best position to get the ball. It's a one or two player game, in which you can either play against a friend, or take on the computer single-handed.

The matches last from ten minutes (five mins per half) to a full-on 90 minutes, and if you don't fancy precision first penalties, corners or just peevish control you can pick your formation and dive into the game.

We the fans and you can decide whether to play upfield (play it vertically up and down the screen) or down (for the first half, the teams switch for the second half). Though you can't take the whole pitch on the screen at once, there's a scanner in the top left, showing your position on the pitch.

But what about the gameplay. Your players automatically dribble the ball once they get hold of it, and turning with the ball can take a while to master (hold the joystick for a button-down before touching the ball and you'll trap it, making it much easier to control but

once you do, you'll feel the pace of the game makes it thoroughly enjoyable. Add to the great gameplay a host of skill levels, a league to play in and a save option and you're onto a winner.

—Andy Smith

RELEASE BOX

| SYSTEM | TITLE | OUT NOW |
|--------|-------------------|----------|
| AMIGA | T18.05b | IMMINENT |
| ATARI | T18.05a - T14.05b | IMMINENT |
| MS DO | T14.05b | IMMINENT |

ST VERSION

The graphics and animation are good, the sound is nothing special, but the gameplay is a great football game that will have you looking at for a month or so.

GRAPHICS: **B** IQ FACTOR: **B**
 AUDIO: **B** FUN FACTOR: **B**

ACE RATING: **B21**

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The normally takes a while to grasp, but as soon as you've got the hang of them you'll find the full-time.

DANGER FREAK

Rainbow Arts, C64 version reviewed, price TBA.

The Germans have at last started to produce some original software instead of just clone-up clones. This particular example puts you in the role of a stuntman trying to film several sequences for the cameras.

The first sequence is a notoriously-sloping road filled with hazards like ramps, potholes, puddles, palm-trees and iron bars. These must be steered under, dived under or avoided over as fast as possible. Every minute causes cash in the film, affects your health and puts up the budget. Too many errors and something has to be started again.

At the end of the sequence you have to

jump onto the back of a car and from there onto a rope ladder dangling from a helicopter. None of that is very easy and takes a frustrating amount of time to master.

After an interlude screen based on Super Space it's back to start action on the water. Same sort of obstacle-dodging as in the first stage, but easier. The third section takes you into the air where all sorts of birds and poney attacks and have to be avoided.

There's basically not enough of the game to bore you for long, but it is quite jolly.

—Bob Rock



Starting off on the highway to hell where maintaining speed and avoiding the obstacles are extremely difficult tasks.

GRAPHICS: **T** IQ FACTOR: **B**
 AUDIO: **T** FUN FACTOR: **B**

ACE RATING: **SB7**

SKWEEK

LORICIELS make like a mouse

CUTE makes a comeback with the lovable, spiky little orange chip called Skweek. His manovely inspired purpose in life is to turn blue squares pink. What more worthwhile reason for existence could there possibly be?

There are 99 levels that have to be completed, each one viewed from above and scrolling vertically when Skweek nears the edge of the screen. The floor is made up of tiles that all have to be turned pink by turning over them. That's the game in a nutshell, but there are a host of features to complicate the action.

Dotted all over the levels are tiles that throw out nasty little monsters; most can be

taken out with the forward firing ball. Skweek starts with, but other weapons can be collected that are more effective.

As well as extra weapons there are other objects that appear randomly on each level like

ST VERSION

The graphics could be described as very colourful or even garish. There are several items that bounce along with, all adding to the cartoon feel.

GRAPHICS **F** IQ FACTOR **B**
 AUDIO **F** FUN FACTOR **B**
 ACE RATING **7.00**



Skweek, the cute little orange creature with the pink hairballs and loose grin, is threatened by a not-so-cute green monster. There's games for a night...

fields, extra lives, extra speed and exits to the next level. You're guided to these by a direction pointer, but they will disappear after a while. Some tiles are also marked with a bomb symbol: green ones act as smart bombs and blue ones destroy surrounding tiles.

Getting through the early levels is easy but things get more complicated the further you go. There are shortcuts that act as teleports, disappearing blocks, materialising blocks and ice blocks that make Skweek slide. Using these basic building blocks the programmers have created some tricky levels which require pause for thought as well as racing for the time limit.

Not all the bonuses are good for Skweek. Reversed controls make it all too easy to run off the edge of a layout. Another problem is turning tiles blue instead of pink; it doesn't look long, but it still wastes precious time.

It's economically well and guarantees lots of short-term fun. 99 levels will keep most players busy, particularly with the random level option that plays them in random order.

■ Sid Vab

RELEASE BOX

| | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|---------|
| STAR ST | £19.995 | CLF M20 |
| AMIGA | £19.995 | AMIBNDT |
| ATARI ST | £19.995 + £14.995 | AMIBNDT |
| IBM PC | £19.995 | AMIBNDT |
| No other versions planned | | |

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The main Skweek and levels keep interest high at first. However, even the random levels option doesn't stop the popularity waning after a few weeks.

STEVE DAVIS WORLD SNOOKER

CDS, ST version reviewed, £19.99cd

Six game styles are supported (including 15 balls, snooker 10 balls, UK pool, US pool, English billiards and Carom billiards) all of which are played on the same table, except that US pool uses blue 'chips'.

Play follows the standard pattern of selecting the direction of shot, signified by a mouse line attached to the white, and then setting strength and spin prior to releasing the cue. Plus, any really slappy shots can be taken back, like a chess move, and the more manoeuvrable attempts may be replayed in slow motion. Each game can be played versus a human opponent, or the computer which is set to one of six experience levels, up to Steve Davis standard.

As with any game that purports to simulate the green baize sport, authenticity is highly

important, and SDC's fails on several counts. Maximum shot strength is ridiculously overexposed, and the lighting system isn't accurate enough, given the resolution of the screen and the size of the balls. A cue rack is incorporated, but covers cuefers for the longer shots.

The display is neat and tidy, but not outstanding. Spot effects are weak, although a sampled commentator punctuates the action and a smart version of the BBC's snooker theme introduces the game.

It's fun to play as a game in its own right, and does have fading interest, as long as you appreciate its idiosyncrasies, but genuine snooker and pool enthusiasts won't be greatly impressed.

■ Dave Lamb



In position mode, the direction line can be extended from the white to predict the movement of the object ball.

GRAPHICS **B** IQ FACTOR **B**
 AUDIO **B** FUN FACTOR **B**
 ACE RATING **5.40**

Be part of the action

at the **ATARI** COMPUTER SHOW

MIDI

At the latest hardware and software is the rapidly expanding area of music music, will be on display, including keyboards, samplers, sequencers and professional studio software.

With an Atari MIDI setup you can produce top-quality music, quickly and simply - editing and mixing in a way that's impossible with live recordings. So if you're in any way interested in making music with your micro - this is the place to come to find out all about it.

CAD

Computer Aided Design has grown to become one of the most important uses for modern computers. With a CAD system you can design houses, cars and electronic circuits - in a fraction of the time it would take you with pen and paper.

With the high speed and powerful graphics of Atari micro it's hardly surprising that bigger and better CAD programs are pushing back the frontiers all the time.

And only at the Atari Computer Show can you see all the latest systems under one roof.

BUSINESS

Many companies will be demonstrating their latest software and hardware, specially designed to release the full business potential of Atari computers.

It will be possible for the 4-bit and 512, you'll be able to try out applications for the powerful Macintosh compatible series.

And you'll also be able to get expert advice from professionals.

DTP

The art of combining text and pictures is big business nowadays because, with a low-cost DTP program, you can create anything from a club newsletter to a monthly magazine or book.

At the show you'll be able to try out the latest software, algorithms and special programs, and get a first-hand glimpse of the way DTP is set to develop in the future.

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Friday to Sunday,
June 23 to 25, 1989

Fri & Sat: 10am - 6pm,

Sun: 10am - 4pm

The Atari Computer Show is back - with many new products and developments. Atari has grown to be one of the major players in the computer world, supported by an incredible wealth of top quality applications, games and utilities - all on view at this show.



Business



GAMES

GAMES

Atari computers are renowned for their ability to run fast-action, arcade-quality games.

The range of new software on show will demonstrate how the power of these machines is currently being stretched, producing faster and even more addictive games with superb graphics.

The winning entry to the 1989 Computer of the Year Award will be awarded, and several new exciting 1989 accessories will be shown for the first time.

If you're a keen game player, you'll find there's so much on offer at the show - you're guaranteed a real treat!

DON'T MISS IT

So for a great day out - whether you want to see what the latest trends for Atari Computer users, take advantage of the bargains on offer or get advice on special applications - the Atari Computer Show is the place to go.

And if you end in the sunken seat, you'll save £1.00 off the price of a single ticket!

SPECIAL OFFER

For the first time we are now offering a family ticket for just £10, allowing entry for two adults and two children. So you can save up to £8 off the usual entry price!

How To Get There

Alexandra Palace is so easy to get to by car, rail, underground or bus. It has its own British Rail station, just nine minutes away from King's Cross, and there's a free bus service shuttling between station and show every 10 minutes.

If you're travelling by road, the show is only 15 minutes away from Junction 25 on the M25. Car parking is free.

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WHO with the other great Importers? The answer for interested enough will need no explanation, but for the rest, the story goes something like this. *Ghostbusters* the film became an Activision computer game (full price, then budget). Then it became a TV cartoon and comic, appeared, featuring the GDB team and called *The Real Ghostbusters*, which arcade game Data East decided would make a jolly service machine, (see ACE issue four). Now, Activision has decided it would make a jolly computer game.

SPECTRUM VERSION

The game is excellent, much as expected. The graphics are OK, though the animation seems a bit to be slowed for a game that stands out in its department.

GRAPHICS 4 IB FACTOR 3
 SOUND 5 FUN FACTOR 5
ACE RATING 574



Spectrum - All ready for action, except you'll need a Blower for protection.

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ST VERSION

The idea must and the effects are OK. The graphics are impressive, and the perspective and/or confusing many this to the poor animation and yours not left with the game of the year and certainly not a game that'll keep you excited for long.

GRAPHICS 7 IB FACTOR 3
 SOUND 7 FUN FACTOR 7
ACE RATING 586

too, so there we have it: the computer game of the decade of the computer game film age-off!

Yes, and probably a friend too (because it supports simultaneous two player action), have to fight your way through some ten levels of ghost-infested mazes, collecting the nasty things with your Proton beam (saves). Before collecting the ghosts you have to shoot them first with your normal gun (a quick tap on the fire button) to fan them into nice, cuddly, fluffy white ghosts, before holding your finger on the fire button to trap them in the beam and slide them into your backpack.

There are benefits to be collected - from other ghosts or shooting parts of the scenery, such as oil drums - including a sinister Slimer who acts a shield. If things weren't tough enough already, then remember you've got to complete each level within a time limit.

The collision detector is poor and the gameplay is bad. It's nothing more than an average shoot'em-up and is certainly not as much fun as the original *Ghostbusters* game.

● *Andy Bell*

ARCADE ACCURACY
 Just about every feature of the classic has been included.

COIN OP SCORE 3

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Prequel deaths in your initial frustration, but 100% the levels are more progress becomes altogether easy.

RENEGADE III

Imagine, Spectrum version reviewed, £8.95

The whole game's control set is really set out in depth this time. Forget clearing up the main streets of the city; he's battling through the zones against the nastiest things history can throw at us.

The battle starts in primitive times where dinosaurs and cavemen, being the Rock and Groul who share the *Renegade* in *Black* faces, try to beat his skull to a pulp. He must battle along the scorching landscape, jumping gaps and climbing walls, to get to a couple of major confrontations. These are against multiple opponents who all attack at once.

Battle to the end of the level and a time machine will whisk him off to the next time zone. All the energy and lives are replaced and battle is resumed against a new group of sprites. The second zone is ancient Egypt, full of mummies, the third zone is a medieval encounter with knights and the fourth a trip into the future.

The action is very similar to the previous game, enjoyable but unimpressive. It has been a good series of games but hopefully this is the final chapter.

● *Andy Bell*



There's the real deal in the shells being attacked by birds dropping eggs and West their supporters throwing rocks.

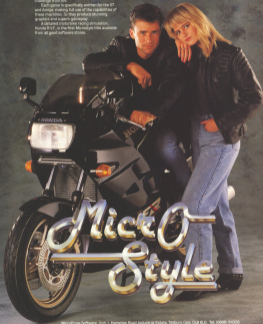
GRAPHICS 4 IB FACTOR 3
 SOUND 5 FUN FACTOR 5
ACE RATING 574

GAMES FOR ADULTS

Microplay is the new software label. The new option for those who demand fun, excitement and challenge from life.

Each game is specifically written for the ST and Amiga, making full use of the capabilities of these machines. So they produce stunning graphics and superb gameplay.

Adapted motorbike racing simulation, *Roads R U.P.* is the first Microplay title available from all good software stores.



MicroPlay Software, Unit 1, Hampton Road Industrial Estate, Tisbury, Wilt. G8 5LD. Tel. (0698) 54000.

Welcome to this month's TNT, where the usual batch of hints and cheats is accompanied by the first instalment of a two-part 8-bit player's guide to War in Middle Earth, written by some other than the man himself, Mike Singleton. There's also some useful coaching for TV Sports Football players, clues for the spy game The Prodigal in Missing, and a helping hand on FOFT. Plus a new OS4 Robocop listing - you lucky people!

R-TYPE

Hands up all those Space owners having a hard time against the evil Zyle Empire? Thought so. Since Zyle's lives would make things a bit easier, here they are in listing form. It's a bit long, but it certainly is worth all the effort.

Simply type it in and RMB it to load it up with Zyle's lives and Zyle's credits. Good, huh?

NOTE: When the border flashes, stop the tape. Start the tape again when the border turns black.

- 32 FOR-A=23296 TO 65535
- 33 ROAD-I: IF I=999 THEN
- LOADMEMO 25001296
- 34 FOR A: IF NEXT A
- 358 DATA 243, 62, 255, 55, 221
- 359 DATA 33, 203, 92, 37, 195
- 360 DATA 11, 205, 86, 5, 48
- 361 DATA 241, 173, 50, 30, 50
- 362 DATA 205, 52, 83, 30, 119
- 363 DATA 33, 147, 243, 1, 85
- 364 DATA 11, 52, 13, 31, 120
- 365 DATA 177, 32, 246, 29, 123
- 366 DATA 33, 254, 32, 202, 42
- 367 DATA 202, 92, 173, 252, 220
- 368 DATA 204, 254, 33, 48, 94
- 369 DATA 175, 92, 42, 252, 34
- 370 DATA 23, 254, 45, 8, 0
- 371 DATA 195, 322, 254, 42, 321
- 372 DATA 50, 48, 254, 205, 64
- 373 DATA 254, 33, 80, 81, 17
- 374 DATA 23, 184, 1, 14, 0
- 375 DATA 237, 176, 195, 0, 308
- 376 DATA 175, 50, 254, 145, 58
- 377 DATA 149, 144, 195, 253, 152
- 378 DATA 889

■ David Russell, West



FOFT

For all those people who narked out and taught Gremlin's little playmate on the ZX without reading the review first, here are some desperate useful tips...

At the beginning, take the initial 150 credits and go straight into the Trading room. Watch the price of food in the Agricultural Products section, and it falls to 18 or below: Buy as much as possible, then keep watching until the price rises to 20-21 credits. Now sell the lot.

Continue to do this, using up all the available credits each time. Eventually, all the food can be bought and sold, making the market to fluctuate between 7 and 22 credits.

After playing the market for some time (patience, patience!) profits should be high enough to afford all the useful goodies: class three shields, tertiary weapons system, and a Star Drive Mk 5 (which speeds up travel in local space).

After hyperspacing to a system and reaching the planet by using the short range jump, space stations are located by accessing the long range radar and looking for the white stalk. It's then just a matter of flying within rubble fields, and initiating the automatic docking computer.

If under violent attack from landies, contact the raft in question using their identification code. This tends to end their assault.

■ Drew Dobbin, Lincoln; Steve Miller, Lancaster & R. Carr, 3 Hambleville

HEROES OF THE LANCE

Further to the tips printed in issue 18, here are some additional tips for the ZX81 arcade adventure from someone who should know...

Only three of the seventeen spots are needed: Cure Light Wounds, Web to paralyze dangerous-looking opponents for duration of breath, and Dragon Breath (to use against the wolf).

Name of the treasure, potion, scrolls etc. that are found are actually needed.

Fight everything but Hatchlings, run at them and dodge into a door.

Reindeer jumps farthest.

Save your position before an color door.



Goldmoon throws her staff at the dragon (she can't throw it at any other times), then get a fighter to run past the dying dragon to win.

■ Peter Austin, Level 9 Computing

FUSION

Bullseye's ZX version of Fusion has a nice little cheat: load the game, get a high score and then box "SMART THINK" (including the space) on the high score table. On starting a new game, pressing "I" cycles through the extra weapons, "W" initiates the ball into, "D" provides shields, and "E" brings up the cheat mode, where levels may now be selected at will by pressing the "4" and "7" keys on the numeric keypad.

■ Thanks to Glenn Cooper, Bullseye



MONEY!

TNT gives away up to £200 worth of vouchers each month. If you have any hints, cheats or ideas for the LATEST games (Sega and Nintendo included), send them in. You could win a £20 voucher - or even the top prize of £150!

THE PRESIDENT IS MISSING

THIS TRICKY INVESTIGATIVE GAME HAS PROMPTED SOME USEFUL HINTS. HOPEFULLY, THESE WILL MAKE SENSE TO ANYONE PLAYING THE GAME...

TERESA BECKWORTH'S MURDER

Teresa worked for Colonel Sebastian Moran, whose activities are unaccounted for the four days June 5-8 her boyfriend was Jerry Geiger. On the back of her identification in written form, you can locate where a note which means "left in room next to her."

Make the discovery between the President and the President's wife when referring to late President Woodrow Wilson. Also, the common link between many participants of the Special Forces Unit. Visit runs 1968-70.

Further info: Wilson, Schindler and Maloney have been transferring leads to Terry Reynolds, Todd Vogel, Stan Ritchie and Jan Schiff as all help-cooperate with you through Autumn's outcome prior to the abduction.

All Agent/State depart more entries must be in contact and have a space between the names, eg: 880449, 523245/491

The President arranged his own activities, probably in connection with the date in the photo.

CODED MESSAGES

The five Morse Code transmissions are deciphered to the following messages:

- 1 CHRON TO EM HIRE SET BUREAU IN MALE
- 2 DO CO CO BAZORE DO CO CO
- 3 CHRON TO EM ORNL RECEIVED 1980
- 4 GEORGIUS TO DEVELOPHERBIVUS 1812 NOS 202
- 5 CHRON TO EM GARNET DELIVERED TUMOR LINDOSU SUPT ALLIAN

Use words to that effect; EM may be Edwin Maloney.

The sixth hidden message is FOSCHE, tapped out by the French President against the microphone. Fouché can be seen on the photograph "President As Hostage".

PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

'President As Hostage'



Fouché is one of the captors. The President's watch may indicate that he's in the Continental United States.

FBI Photo'



The man in the picture is Brian Medved, he's standing outside Lido Hotel video store, 4109 Bedford Street.

'Slugging Area'



The helicopter was taken from the NATO exercise. The 44 stands for Amalgamation Industrial.

'Turkish Police Worker'



Last recorded owner of the gun was Sogher Bogdan.

SEGA STUFF

GOLVELLIUS

The Sega game is getting on a bit hot, but since it hasn't been covered before, here are a few tips to give the quest an added boost.

After entering a code, put the number three as the third digit/letter. This is rewarded by a number of items, money and life potions. The exact result is dependent on the code, so try out different ones.

To find the second demon, visit the central blue stone (about five o'clock). When the demon appears, kill him by waiting for him to stop, then hitting him. Simply keep dodging when he follows.

To find the third demon, hit the gateposts in the top right graveyard above the river (the one in the corner).

To defeat Poobus, equatebits are needed. These are found by hitting a large palm tree north-west of the beach. Poobus is then found on the Swamp Island. Wario can be beaten by waiting for him to attack, sidestepping and then hitting him.

Jasha may be defeated in the same way, but it's more difficult because of the need to avoid missiles.

Heid can be beaten by sidestepping, and rapidly striking, ignoring damage being taken.

Golvellus is killed by slugging at him, then allowing him to smother while still hitting him.

The following code allows you to reach the end of the game. All that is needed is the location of Golvellus, which a fortune-teller will divulge.

0-14 JGR 2HM 1364
BURE 1220 4058 5240

WONDERBOY IN MONSTERLAND

Later on in the game, there are large empty walls. These should be looked on regularly, because there are hidden doors which can be opened.

To get the Goddess Bell, head for the cavern on the second round and knock on the invisible door which lies on the third step above some lars. The woman inside provides a scroll for Cathana.

Go to Bandons and enter the invisible door located next to an ordinary door on a platform above a doorway leading a mine. The woman provides a life.

Go to Power Islands and head right and a tower appears. Climb the tower and blow the flutes. Head right and enter the mansion. Collect the Star Charm from the old pastor.

Next, head for the Undersea Kingdom of Carlin. Head left and enter a shop. Buy something there and then re-enter. The catfish should now have the Hidden Emblem. Knock on all the doors until someone offers the Ruby or the Bell (use the Bell to help negotiate the robbery).

■ Paul Toole, Editor

WHAT MAY HAVE HAPPENED

ARCHIPELAGOS



Atari ST screen shots

*Imagine a game without violence,
yet as chilling as abandoned
places where people have died and
never returned.*

*Imagine a 3D world, yet the only
forces are those that come from
the ground.*

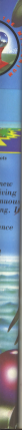
*Imagine the danger of a tormented
soul, carried aloft by nothing
greater than the wind.*

*Archipelagos is a completely new
sort of game. It offers 9,999 living
landscapes, in 3D, with continuous
smooth movement and scanning.
It is so extraordinary it defies
classification. It is the experience
of the metaphysical.*

*Archipelagos is conceived and
coded by Astral Software.*



Logotron Ltd, Dallas Business, Geyser Point, Cambridge, CB1 2LJ



TV SPORTS FOOTBALL

OK, AMIGA OWNERS: INTO A HUDDLE FOR SOME ON-THE-SPOT COACHING FOR MIRRORSOFT'S GRIDIRON GAME:

At the start of the start of the season, get the Left Half Back the Rambo One (1), and the following statistics speed: 1 (though 4, isn't it, apply 5). This should guarantee a one-game leading average of around 4 yards per run.

Both receivers should have good stats, although the Right Wide Receiver has the opportunity to run more than the Left, so it's worth giving him a decent speed rating.

The Quarterback should be ranked at least fifth on the team, with a fast time and decent running abilities. Centerbacks need to be fast and agile to cover the opposition's receivers and to block and apply ratings of 6 are advised. Both fullbacks using the Outside Linebacker good ratings using the 24 formation is the best option; they don't appear in the 0-0 formation, and there's no one on (10-0).

Offensive and defensive Linebackers need only be strong with better average ratings for the other three factors.

Line one of the Inside Linebackers high stats high speed and strength: 1 or 10, and the other three average stats. Goodest the replacement (2) during the game.

★ DEFENSIVE TACTICS

Against Linebackers

If the three offensive receivers pick into the probability that it's a pass formation, the computer runs more than the formation than from the other line. The 0-0 formation is safe against a run through the center, but position the Linebackers on either side of the offensive line with 4's or 1-4, move the LBs down to the line. When receiving the pass, take the Quarterback but keep the Outside Backer close to the Wide Receiver.

Against The Quarterback

Never always a pass, so put the LBs away from the line-of scrimmage. However, beware of a risk to the right, especially when the opposition are close to the endzone. Your Defense is the intention to control the play.

Against Kicks

Having lost goals is impossible until there is no way they would miss anyway to the feature is pointless because the computer never attempts this action.

Against Pre-Kick Penetration

Impossible to tell what they're going to do on the line. When using 4-4 or 3-4, select a Wide and hope that they are making a 2-4-1 formation, rather than Defense but it's risky for a kick.

Against Points

The QB will use a single at the quarter after the snap. It's particularly important to block the punt and if it's a fake punt, the team can get blocked in the attacker's half, and the computer's most defenders will probably fail to stop a pass.

Use the 4-3 in normal and most situations, the 3-4 when more than 10 yards are needed or when the opposition are desperate. Keep one of the 3-4 inside your own 25 yard line as the wide one can be wasted at the small space needed to be covered. Only use 0-0 in extreme short-yardage situations.

On the second playing screen, some last actions to use the defenses clearly you can easily tell a Receiver and run outside for either end. QB and Run Inside are only and pointless. When entering Press Defense, select one Inside Linebacker and move to the right end of the line. After the snap you can quickly reach the QB and sack him. If he does hand off, the center will take into you and you can get into his hands. In the Run Defense, select either Linebacker and stand directly opposite the QB facing the defense line. If they play in a run mode, run right or left and a strong tackle stops any gain.

The outside run can also be stopped quickly for the other two Linebackers and yourself when the QB penetrates to either side, you follow the Wide Receiver, and he is offensively (the computer rarely allows off-offenses and most players further back can cover him and then move down to cover any Running Backs who have run out to prevent follow this line formation, you either LBs will have reached the QB.

The computer often throws to a Wide Receiver on the run down. Using the Outside Linebacker back the yard's team to discourage this.

LBs with better Linebackers on a computer (Rating) they are always the QB into making a pass play.

Occasionally, the computer QB has a short pass to the Halfback. To

cover this, mark and follow a receiver with an Inside Linebacker. Once the computer makes what is happening, they run as the sideline. If the star, look for the pass using the Wide Receiver. It is difficult to pass, the same Linebacker should be able to cover the pass.

★ OFFENSIVE TACTICS

Running

Use Strong and the bottom right action for any distance of those Against a Run, these receivers are immediately open to catch the pass, while against a Pass. Before the Left Half Back running can behind the Left Wide Receiver is left free to catch the pass after the QB has taken all the cover pass.

Passing

Use if formation and the top left pattern when running, then, the Left Half Back gets the ball and can go left as planned, cut back to the middle as two or three yards open up, or cut across up the right when blocked outside of the middle, then an inner full defense is used, go up the outside, and use area.

Short Yardage

Use Press and the top left pattern, where the Quarterback hands off to the Left Half Back who goes through the gap in the middle to pick up the yards. If the QB is blocked or blocked, then go inside after the QB.

Long Yardage

Use the Strong offense outside above and then wait for the receivers to go ahead of screen. The top left Left Wide Receiver and Left Half Back can get the ahead of the defensive back and a perfectly-timed throw leaves the opposition's coverage.

During the first half, passing in short yardage situations coming with four yards on 3rd and 50 yards will, after the third half, anything can happen. On punts, an ability to one side to give the opposition receiver a hard time. There are pass from the 10-0 or 1-formation only the 0-0-0; the remaining plays about two yards extra time to pass. Always press for when backed to avoid a fumble.

■ Steven Cox, Barry & Jenks Club, High Wycombe

RAMBO III

If there are any butch hard-men (or women) who can't rescue the Colonel and get back to the good of US in one piece on the ST, they should play the game and get 5,000 or more to get on the high score table, then type in RENEGADE and press return. Now, when the film artwork is up on screen, press 1, 2 or 3 to start on a chosen level.



Concerning the Ways of Orcs, Feats of Arms and the Schemes of Sauron in the realms of 8-bit Middle Earth.

The Dark Lord, Sauron, wields great power in Middle Earth and holds under his sway many remnants of evil and innumerable Ors, yet even Sauron is not invulnerable, so those who have read the account of the War of the Ring in Professor Tolkien's book will not be lost. Those who so choose can make the same decisions as were made in the book and recreate faithfully the footings of Frodo Baggins and the Fellowship of the Ring, but you will find that success is by no means certain and that this path, like any other, is fraught with danger. Sauron's plan of war is flexible and changes subtly each time you play the game. Likewise, to succeed, your plan of war must be flexible too.

IN THE THICK OF BATTLE

In battle, your men will fight where they stand, without further instructions from you, but this is not the best way to kill men or to subjugate your warriors. Even in a hopeless situation, your battle tactics will determine just how many orcs are slain in the struggle.

As in most battles, the greatest advantage lies in concentrating your forces. Where one orc is fighting one man, neither has any special advantage apart from their own innate strength and skill. Where one orc is fighting five men, the chances of the orc killing a man remain the same but the chances of the man killing the orc increase substantially. For example, if each of the men had a 10% chance of killing the orc individually, fighting together they would have a 50% chance of killing the orc and if three were close of them, it would become a 75% chance. Likewise, two of these orcs fighting just one man gain a considerable advantage.

In battle, then, the main priority is to engage each one from as many sides as possible and to do this you must try to bring as many of your troops as you can into the front line. Even this task requires some thought. During the early stages of a battle, the orcs will be moving fast across undefended areas to get at your men and there is hardly any time to speak of. If you mobilize men too close to the orcs, you'll

WAR IN MID

and it's a waste of time because the army will probably attack from anyway. If you mobilize that too far away from the sea, it will tend to sit a while to journey across the battlefield, and meanwhile the sea may have moved on, so it may even have been killed! The best policy is to mobilize nearby men that are not likely to be attacked immediately by the norwegians.

The next problem is how to mobilize them: do you use direct control or indirect control? In the early stages of battle, while the sea is churning across the battlefield, direct control is the best option. Although you have to enter the water to set the destination (which sometimes means making errors), you can alter the course according to the flow of battle and don't end up chasing bits with the current! In the late stages of battle, when you generally have land, you'll find armies of units mobbed in land-based combat. Since there are relatively static points to aim to use indirect control can be effective.

In the longer battles, you'll have time enough to manoeuvre your troops into battle formations. Sea is the odd and flow of battle and the movements of the sea, your battle formations will be rough and ready rather than the precise old formations of period ground armies, but some formations can be extremely effective and against such deadly creatures as the Naagid, fighting a formation is almost essential.

The simplest formation is the straight line of troops. Single line supporting your line will drive and formations supporting from two to six. However, as soon as a border of sea forms, there's not ground your line, the main advantage is lost. Waves will, the sea will enter into the line too and cannot easily be pushed back, a much more effective tactic is to form a V-shaped funnel into which the attacking units are channelled. The deeper into the funnel they march, the easier it gets for you to close the ends of the funnel and surround them. Using the battle against a lone Naagid, it's possible to have four waves fighting against him simultaneously.

To use formations effectively does come positive, but only will

you need absolutely with the (y)shale, but you will also need some quick thinking if you are to succeed in time to the rapid flow of battle, constantly adjusting your formation as sections of your lines get knocked out. But, if you want to stay as many areas as possible, formation fighting is the way to do it.

THE SCHEMES OF SAURON

As your armies and forces march through Middle Earth, they will countless encounter rising bands of sea and be forced to battle for their lives. Although the movements of the Enemy's armies always remain hidden, they are not random: there is a pattern to the schemes of Sauron and even a passing knowledge of this system is of great value.

Sauron, in his evil wisdom, has divided his armies into five

The campaign plan of Sauron is intricate in its detail and spare only permits the broad outlines of the plan to be given here. The Dark Lord has marked out over sixty different objectives for his armies to take and secure. To allow his commanders some flexibility in the field, each objective is followed by two other alternatives, either of which the commander can choose to attack as he sees fit. Even the Dark Lord himself cannot say which particular route his armies will take when the choice arises and how long the victory of his plan, for he knows that the Lady Galadriel has the power to look into his mind and know his thoughts. His plan is flexible enough to be unpredictable but he carefully lays out the options' web of objectives, he can be sure that his strength is eventually brought to bear against whichever of the

map, though much of the detail has, of necessity, been left out.

There are a number of useful hints given by this plan. Notice, for instance, the last way route through the Mines of Moria. The gate at each end of the Mines of Moria is a further objective than the other gates. Often, this means that a band of units will march through the Mines of Moria to the far gate and then, as soon as they reach that objective, select one of the two further objectives which just happens to be the gate they have come from. So, a band of units may spend some time just marching back and forth through the Mines. In this way, the Dark Lord keeps the passage through the mountains well patrolled.

Water also lies dead through Moria. This is a route for one's armies, but only for armies passing northwards. Armies bound on this road make their way eventually either to Lonthoran or to Rivendell and hence to the Shire, since Sauron has specified no return routes but there.

It is also vital to understand the way the Dark Lord's battled most works. Any defeat by soldiers leads him to look longer, also making him train his weaker plan. For each army of his that is destroyed, Sauron will send a fresh army to hunt down the victor. Only when vengeance is satisfied will that army then turn back to Mordor and begin to follow Sauron's campaign plan. The more successful one of your armies is, the more it will be followed by Sauron. One tactic, keeping this tendency of Sauron's, is to draw off Sauron's strength by reaching a necessary area into the wilderness, with a trail of emerging bands of sea suggestively following it.



groups: the assault armies and the hunting armies. The hunting armies roam Middle Earth tracking down particular individuals. The Dark Lord, for instance, has assigned to three Naagid the task of hunting down Gandalf. The assault armies follow Sauron's complex campaign plan which assigns them each a series of objectives to take before the final assault on Minas Tirith itself.

Even Saruman and the sea he controls have a part to play in the Dark Lord's plans, but Saruman's assault armies follow a separate campaign plan with more limited objectives. The bands of their movements long imply white Mordor and Gondor,

strengthened for disaster most.

The last destination in Sauron's web of objectives is Minas Tirith, but before reaching this goal his armies can range far and wide, from the Arwen in the south to Dale in the far north, from the far glades of Lethboron to the Grey Havens in the west. Where the sea is broken, the armies of Sauron are more likely to be found. There are three main areas the Sauron concentrates on: the village of the Shire in the north, the village of Water's Edge, for Arwen and Minas Tirith to the east of Moria, and the towers and fortresses of Moria itself. The broad sweep of Sauron's plan is shown on the

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BUDGET

The bargain basement section of this month's Screen Test has a distinct gambling flavor about it, with a package of gambling games, a one-armed bandit simulator and some pinballing action. The Titanic had a casino, too. Probably.

MEET THE SCREENS

LAS VEGAS CASINO

ZEPPELIN • C64 • £2.99

This one isn't quite as polished as a fruit machine sim because card and dice games can be enjoyed for their own sake. Its features (four games: blackjack, roulette, roulette and craps—stop gawping at the back, it's a dice game and you know it).

Each game is played with the computer as the house. The simplest is blackjack (person) but the other three take quite a bit of knowledge of the rules in order to bet intelligently.



These are not very well explained, though, so players who DON'T know how to play roulette or craps will have problems.

The only aim is to make money so there's no motivation except the enjoyment of the games themselves. The graphics are very pretty except for a nice and screen when all the money has been lost.

■ ACE RATING 476

TITANIC

KIXX • Spectrum, Amstrad • £1.99

The pride of the Blue Star line now lies in its bones, sea mine below the surface of the Arctic



ocean. Minefield checks have pinpointed the great ship, but its survivors have remained a mystery until now.

A new pressure-resistant diving suit has been developed which allows some (one's person) to actually swim down to the wreck; and this is where the player controls it. Armed with a harpoon gun and a limited number of harpoons, a satellite-attached diver must be guided through a labyrinthine cave system which is infested by all manner of dangerous aquatic creatures. Any contact with fish, squid,

anemones etc causes the diver to lose oxygen from his tank, which can be replenished by putting up extra tanks. However, meeting a shark at close quarters is instantly fatal, death ends the mission instant from the cave entrance.

Having reached the cave a password is provided to allow access to the second level, which begins inside the wreck of the Titanic. The diver's aim is to locate switches to open doors, feel some explosives and blow a safe full of valuables, while avoiding a similar group of hostiles from the previous level.

Control of the diver is a little fiddly, and the game is of the simple 'stealth' or 'steering' type. Once mapped out, it shouldn't take too long to finish, but having said this, Titanic does provide a reasonable challenge along the way.

■ ACE RATING 587

ADVANCED PINBALL SIMULATOR

CODEMASTERS • C64 • £2.99

As pinball games go — and there hasn't been many on the C64 of late — CodeMasters' entry to the genre is pretty good. The over-impotent



ball movement is realistic, and it plays in a semi-realistic to Time Scanner, is that specific features must be fit up to suit the screen.

In its manner, a magic book appears and is opened by crossing letters in rollover letters; a prison is made to bubble and a Roman's castle is slowly removed by filling switches; and a forest leaving the rail is generally demolished on contact with the ball. Recovery to the next stage is finally achieved by clearing the screen and hitting the exit volcano.

Unfortunately, there is only one screen to complete, which doesn't really offer much of an attraction to extended play. A 'hit' function is really lacking, and there are a couple of bugs which make the ball fall through flippers and barriers, or even go sailing out of the play area.

Although the game is certainly enjoyable for the first few games, the urge to play should disappear once the 'table' has been played through a couple of times.

■ ACE RATING 595

SUPERNUDGE 2000

MASTERTRONIC • Spectrum, Amstrad • £2.99

Of all the ridiculous things to do a simulation of, fruit machines are by far the dumbest. The whole point of fruit machines is to win money like the cash ones, and they are almost entirely redundant.

However, experience has shown that there are people prepared to shell out hard cash for them. On the Amstrad, this one is very colourful but the reels are awfully slow. It also does

not have as many features as the Spectrum. The Spectrum looks much better but at least it has had reels and bits going on all the time.

Basically this is computer entertainment for vegetarians. Sit and watch the pretty reels spin round and jump for joy as they come in a ball on their lemons... or could it possibly just be one big lemon?

■ ACE RATING 312

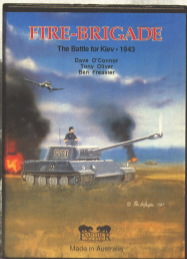


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UPDATES



AMIGA

AFTERSBURNER

ACTION/SHOOTER

Atari ST version reviewed Issue 18 — ACE rating 8/11

Undoubtedly the best of all the versions, but that still isn't saying much. Some two



sampled speech accompanies the action, which is fast and colourful. Sadly the game play lets everything down again: lots of general flying around that involves little else.

ACE RATING 8/11

CRAZY CARS II

TITUS/DRIVER

ST version reviewed Issue 18 — ACE rating 7/10



Apart from a subtle palette, police sirens and a beautifully smooth handling phase, Amiga Crazy Cars II compares exactly to the ST release. Road and car movement is slightly less smooth than its predecessor, but this does little to impair the game's on offer.

ACE RATING 7/10

PRISON

GREYHOUND/CLIMBER

ST version reviewed Issue 20 — ACE rating 7/14

Identical in look, feel and play to the Atari version, with the added advantage of only one game disk. Although round is adequate, the Amiga still gives the player a chance to show off his musical prowess, save for a pleasant leading tune.

ACE RATING 7/14

VICTORY ROAD

BARRAGE/STRIKER

Amstrad version reviewed Issue 18 — ACE rating 7/11

Not as impressive as either of the Amiga or the graphics don't make the most of it.

Revised Computer Entertainment 77



BATTLEHAWKS 1942

LUCASFILM/US GOLD £34.99cdk • PC version reviewed Issue 17 • ACE rating 9/10

Flying a Grumman F4U (30,000 £) above your aircraft carrier in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, you suddenly spot them: two Japanese torpedo planes, protected by two Zero fighters, closing rapidly in on the carrier.

That's a typical mission in this action-packed combat flight sim, where the emphasis is heavily on the vertical side of things. As a pilot with either the Americans or Japanese, you can fly three types of plane — fighter, dive-bomber and torpedo — and participate in some thirty-two missions, divided amongst four of the major battles of the Pacific war.

Before attempting any of the missions (which range in difficulty from easy, through moderate and hard, to — impossible!) it's always a good idea to practice flying the various planes first. Staying in the air is easy, but hitting a carrier deck with a bomb from 2,000 ft is not so easy.

Once you start playing for real, and without using the options for unlimited fuel and ammunition and invulnerable armour (after your plane is any way and your service

record is not updated, so you don't stand any chance of winning medals) you may find the enemy planes a little tough, so you can alter the experience level of the enemy pilots, making them slower to react, and less accurate when firing back, to give yourself a fighting chance.

There are a host of views — both from within the cockpit and from outside, if you select to record some of your missions using the on-board camera, and then watch the playback — and on the whole, if you enjoy flying around loading enemy planes out of the

sky, you'll find Battlehawks very satisfying.

AMIGA VERSION

Terrific text and colourful graphics (but some impressive and atmospheric sound effects) all combine to ensure you'll keep coming back to this again and again.

ACE RATING 9/10

AMSTRAD ST VERSION

Graphics are just as good, so is the gameplay. Highly recommended for flying, shooting, bombing and torpeding fans.

ACE RATING 9/10

ULTIMA V

MICROPROSE £24.95 dsk • PC version reviewed Issue 13 • ACE rating 9/10

This monster game kept RPGers countryside waiting with total breath for a long time, but once it arrived almost everyone agreed it was well worth the wait.

You control a party of adventurers roaming the countryside of

the land of Britannia in search of... um... adventures. The main quest in the game is to wander into the recently discovered Underworld and find out what happened to the party of adventurers led by Lord British (who has been absent



abilities and the graphics is straightforward, in Commodore style. The additional weapons are good, but basically it's no better than it was in the 500 versions.

AGE RATING 942

ATARI ST

ROAD BLASTERS

US GOLD £19.95

CD-ROM version reviewed issue 12 — **AGE RATING 954**

The 500 versions never quite managed to emulate the feel of the console, but on the ST a much better game has emerged. The feeling of movement on the road is convincing and the control of the car is much sharper, making driving a pleasure—remember, it's a race between an auto race, driving at a nice acceleration. By level 12 things feel fotted up, and it becomes a real test of survival, so it will please to see you into things and then provide a long-term challenge.

The graphics are colourful and detailed, nicely refreshing and to things look. The engine noises are certainly revised up too. The loading is the same carefully slow system as on Out Run but at least there are no delays during the action. A high quality version that will please fans of the console, and many more besides.

AGE RATING 776

SPECTRUM

CAPTAIN BLOOD

EDROS £6.95 or £14.95

ST version reviewed issue 7 — **AGE RATING 887**

It's been a long while coming, but the Spectrum information at longways (now known) Captain Blood has finally landed. Apart from the inevitable cosmetic differences, the game retains the same, thankfully, the arcade player loading sequence is well represented and the adventure aspect remains intact. In fact, the only real drawback of this last effort is the occasional, in the lack of mouse control for which the game was primarily designed.

AGE RATING 865

ELIMINATOR

REDFOX £3.95 or £16.95

ST version reviewed issue 12 — **AGE RATING 964**

Although the Spectrum version quite well with the 3D nature of the game, the lack of colour often makes it difficult to differentiate between items, solid objects and collectibles. The camera option also removes the coordination which made the ST version so entertaining.

AGE RATING 755

PAQLAND

GRANDSLAM £6.95 or £12.95

The Spectrum version of the original Pac-Man follows the arcade game pretty

well as well, so things in Britain aren't as wonderful as they might be since the new government's in power. Like all good adventure RPGs, though, there are numerous sub-plots for you to take at hand, and plenty of fights with evil trolls and the like to get involved in. There are loads of people to interact with — some of whom you can recruit — and once you start to play you'll find life becomes less black-and-white and simple and far more grey and complicated. There are loads and tons to the game that keep you on your toes constantly and you can never trust anyone completely.

The graphics are simple — an overhead view of a character representing your party — but the whole game world is so strongly believable. The whole Ultima series is good, but 7 is the best yet. There's plenty to keep you playing



for months and if we've never played an RPG before, you'd be doing yourself a favour by getting a copy of this game that could bring something out of its ghetto.

ST VERSION

The graphics are sparser than a PC can do better. The tactics game play and holds you.

AGE RATING 925

DOUBLE DRAGON

MELBOURNE HOUSE £18.95

The monster arcade hit used comparisons to all formats, and the two recent 16-bit releases just read from the operation.

Faced with the standard full-screen grid-based scenarios, two players are charged with fighting their way through five levels of ninjas in order to reach the leader's HQ and rescue his girl.

A variety of weapons crawl out of the arsenal in order to inflict heavy damage upon the dog-eating foe, but the brothers avoid themselves well by using a series of kicks, punches and combined throws. Should an accident drop a



ST VERSION

Unbelievably easy, the ST version was completed at the first sitting in one player mode. Irrespective of any aesthetic factors, this makes Double Dragon a total waste of time and money.

AGE RATING 925

AMIGA VERSION

Smooth scrolling and faster graphics make this more comfortable than the Atari. However, it's only made slightly harder to get of hazards on the first level and should similarly be avoided.

AGE RATING 926



weapon, one of the Lees may pick it up and continue the battle more favourably equipped.

EMLYN HUGHES INTERVIEW

AUDIOGENIC £8.95, £14.95

Crazy Horse is better known these days for game shows than football, but, for a game, being associated with somebody who has boundless enthusiasm is no bad thing.

What most football games fail to achieve is the balance between strategy and arcade action. Here there is not only plenty of on-field action to keep the player occupied, but important off-the-field decisions have to be taken too. This is mainly a matter of picking the team, which becomes most relevant

when playing a long season, because players tire and affect the team's performance.

The 3D sideview of the pitch is a familiar one for football games, as are the horizontal scrolling and the player selection method. The range of features during a game is impressive: sidestepping, kicking, back-pass, heading, sliding tackles, free kicks, corners, throw-ins, penalties and the ability to control kicking height and direction. The best part about this being that you can actually see at

them early, and are not forced to perform half-dozen joystick movements.

There are also interesting options for altering the game, such as having two players against the computer, an automatic goals, cup or league competitions, substitutes, 10 skill levels and so on.

All in all, this is an extremely thorough game that provides stiff competition to Microprose Soccer for the title of best football game around.

■ **Rob Walk**



COAP, lacking only in colour and somewhat collision detection. The coinop was not really that hot in the first instance, but Granovian have produced a faithful and playable conversion, which might have more of an appeal to younger gamers.

■ **AGE RATING** 8/10

PC

**BILLIARDS
SIMULATOR**

EMUL INTERNATIONAL £19.99/99

Amiga version reviewed Issue 15 ■ **AGE rating** 4/10

Every bit as good as the Amiga version both graphically and in gameplay, the same wide range of spoons for changing quality and the table stays hot. It's not as interesting as 101 Pin, but it's a bit of fun.

■ **AGE RATING** 8/10

**DALEY
THOMPSON'S
OLYMPIC
CHALLENGE**

OCEAN £19.99/99

Amiga version reviewed Issue 15 ■ **AGE rating** 8/10

Ocean's aptly Daley (since was resurrected with the appearance of DTTC late last year) is all the more fun, because, like the release of the PC version, the set is complete. The tedious, boyish waggling gameplay is still in evidence, compounded by reliance upon an analogue system or tape. PC DTTC also suffers from periodically poorer graphics and, more importantly, a ridiculous game structure which is obscured by vast amounts of slow-waggling.

■ **AGE RATING** 4/10

STAR GOOSE

LEOFTON £24.99/99, £29.99/99

Amiga £27 version reviewed Issue 15 ■ **AGE rating** 8/10

An excellent conversion with some superb graphics, lots of detail and smooth vertical scrolling too. The gameplay is virtually identical to the ST, probably user-rated in the original review. It can't have got enough variety, but it's a good example of what is possible on a PC, even if the CGA price is a little bit steep.

■ **AGE RATING** 8/10

TECHNOCOP

EMUL £19.99/99

Spectrum version reviewed Issue 15 ■ **AGE rating** 8/10

Looks good but unfortunately is very slow, particularly in CGA. The keyboard response is sluggish, particularly noticeable when exploring the buildings. The gameplay remains good despite the slowness, but it's not as enjoyable as previous versions.

■ **AGE RATING** 10/10



FUSION

UPDATE SPECIAL

ELECTRONIC ARTS £24.95/99 ■ Amiga version reviewed Issue 15 ■ **AGE rating** 8/10

Gravely claiming to be nothing more than a computer game, the cinematic, scenario-driven first level Fusion sets the player off on the task of visiting a series of landscapes, collecting keys to unlock sections of these, and attempting to gather the separate sections of a large bomb. To facilitate the negotiation of some maze, the player's craft splits into a hovering mothership and a land-based crawler, which are used individually but in conjunc-

tion with each other.

Each level is littered with enemy gun emplacements, missile sites and hostile vehicles, which sustain a constant barrage of fire. However, both of the player's craft are fitted with blasters and all enemy craft and installations can be destroyed.

Thankfully, Bullfrog have redesigned Fusion, taking it to the ST's capabilities rather than trying to emulate the game as it appeared on the Amiga. The less

worked to the game's benefit, and so it is now more playable than its Commodore counterpart, but certainly no easier.

BT VERSION

The alien levels now scroll vertically only, but they retain the terrific parallax effect and are just as colourful as the Amiga's. Sound is limited to a cacophony of gunshots and explosions, which grows lessens after a while.

■ **AGE RATING** 7/10

INTERNATIONAL SOCCER



SPECTRUM VERSION

The graphics obviously are not so good, but despite being small they do the job nicely. Sound effects are in a similar vein to the CGA, in gameplay they are very close; both versions are very easy to get to grips with.

■ **AGE RATING** 8/10

CGA VERSION

The graphics are the basic variety expected of the CGA but they are functional. The sound effects are limited but all you need are a moving crowd and a few ball and whistle effects.

■ **AGE RATING** 8/10

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INSIDE THE ATOMIC SUBMARINE, performing tasks to make contact against the crew. Your three-dimensional skills will be a great help, but you will also need to hit the sea support structures, interrupting the submarine's supplies.



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DYNAMIC
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ELECTRONIC ARTS

Professional Draw has been designed as a partner to Professional Page, one of the main DTP programs for the Amiga, also from Gold Disk. The layout of the screen reflects this: menus, status bar and ruler across the top, ruler on the left, and tool palette on the right, using the chunky icons required by the Amiga's multiple resolutions. In the efficient way of most good DTP programs, the frequently-used tools - freehand draw, text, polygon, ellipse, scale, rotate, stretch, mirror, magnify, marquee, pointer, etc. - are all icons on show; the modifying operations are accessed by double clicks on the icons and filling, printing, colour or line weight changes, preferences, and other less immediate tasks are all menu-driven.

Since Pro Draw is an object-oriented drawing system employing both bitmap and structured drawing techniques, it gives us a good opportunity to define our terms. The drawing method we all know and love from our familiar paint programs is **bitmapped** - the drawing area is a map or grid of thousands of pixels of the same size, each of which can be any one of the available colours. Every mark that is made changes the colour of a group of pixels and hence the map. If the image is saved to disk, or transferred in any way, ALL of the pixels in the map need be stored or acted upon, even if only three pixels on an otherwise blank screen are changed.

In **object-oriented** programs, by contrast, ignores the background. It is only concerned with the changed parts of the screen, the objects. Each of these is classed separately in memory and can be affected independently on screen - moved, sized, overlaid or brought to the front - just like individual pieces of paper. Most games use similar bitmap sections, as related to become sprites.

In many DTP programs, the objects are either blocks of text or sections of bitmapped images. Unfortunately, when bitmapped images are printed they retain the resolution or dot size used to produce them. Even on the best computers, this 'grain size' is quite coarse. Similarly, if a bitmapped object is transferred, the original graininess is retained unless any sophisticated (and very slow) smoothing techniques are used. One look at the output from

Over the last few months, references to 'structured' and 'object-oriented' drawing systems have begun to crop up with increasing frequency. By now, you may well be asking yourself "What objects - which orientates?" Many people have little or no idea what the concepts behind these words have to offer or how important they may become in the future. The arrival of PROFESSIONAL DRAW, the ultimate example of object-oriented drawing on the Amiga, gives Brian Larkman a chance to explain...

ORIENTAL OBJECTS

any normal drawing program (as almost any printer - dot matrix, inkjet, laser or otherwise - is evidence that there must be a better way). Areas that have been scaled up or down lose detail and gain chunkiness, even when anti-aliasing or smoothing have been applied. Even simple transformations, like rotation or perspective distortion, result in a disappointing, very poor, loss of clarity.

What is required is a method that utilizes the maximum resolution of the display or printing method available, independent of resolution. With a structured system, one that uses vectors, these deficits just do not happen.

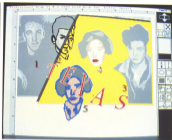
A vector is a line that is described in terms of its length AND its direction. In most vector-graphic drawing systems, this is achieved by defining both ends of the line as a set of coordinates, either x and y for a 2D system or x, y and z for 3D. The advantages of this approach are fivefold. First of all, it is economical of memory; only the data defining the two points in a line have to be described or saved to disk, the others are created each time the line is drawn. Second, the data relating to a particular object can be easily transformed, as either, rotated, scaled, distorted. Third, nothing is committed to the screen permanently; any object or point can be selected independently and its attributes changed.

To sum up: graphic images can be of two types: bitmapped or structured. Bitmapped images are easy to produce, but difficult to change without losing detail. Vector structured images are difficult to produce, but easy to change, regardless of resolution. Object oriented systems can use both types of image and can therefore always take advantage of the most appropriate method.

TEXAS

One of the main claims of Pro Draw's object-oriented system is its ability to trace over a bitmap image, or perhaps a full illustration using its technique might show up the program's strengths and weaknesses. The picture chosen was of the four heads of Glasgow, Texas. Each head was treated in a different way. Some of the problems encountered are described below.

This was originally a high-resolution, interface, 36-pixel-wide digital picture of the band Texas. Pro Draw reduced the format to four and scaled it to fit the page. For this reason, it takes a long time to appear on screen initially, or to redraw. Head 1 has been left exactly as the original. Head 2 was traced using the free-hand tool with a four-pixel-wide line. Head 3



shows the range of greys available, layered one above another. Zooming in on the bitmap shows a very high degree of control of the line, but additional work had to be done to scale. Editing was made more difficult by the problems of layering each of the tones correct to head 2 is not a member of the band, just Head 4 cloned and its colour and line thickness attributes changed.

PROFESSIONAL DRAW

Doing straight in-and loading a bitmap, layered one above another. Zooming in on the bitmap shows a very high degree of control of the line, but additional work had to be done to scale. Editing was made more difficult by the problems of layering each of the tones correct to head 2 is not a member of the band, just Head 4 cloned and its colour and line thickness attributes changed.

TOOLS

Most of the editing tools are quite ordinary in operation, except for distort, which is rather unusual and interesting. Selecting the distort tool places a rectangular box around any

selected objects. The box is itself a lesser object. Dragging any one of its points covers the edges connected to that point. The manual makes the effect of this action perfectly:

"Think of the rectangle as a rubber sheet on which the object is printed. As a side or corner of the sheet is pulled, the shape of the object is distorted."

TEXT

Pro Draw is not intended to be primarily a text handling system; Professional Page is for that. Nevertheless, it has two fonts available that are structured and therefore easy to manipulate. The fonts provided - with and without serifs - both look good on screen, but they suffer from one fundamental flaw. The apparent holes within letters such as a, b, e, or n are not transparent: they are, in fact, objects drawn in the background (given colour and layered above the main letter). This limitation is especially annoying if the text sits above a fairly detailed object, as in the case in the "Texas" illustration.

TEXT BY SEPARATION

Although colour has always been difficult, expensive or just impossible to output from a drawing program (as opposed to a painting program) the current generation of packages provides full colour facilities so that high-quality



Professional Draw is smart enough, which allows quicker re-draw of the image when changes are made.



The same illustration in PRODRAW format, but without bitmaps. Note the considerably lower quality lines.



...in full bitmapped mode, which provides much clearer lines without aliasing, although the flicker rate is high.

GRAPHIC ACCOUNTS

image that are destined to be professionally printed can be colour separated. The cyan, magenta, yellow and black components of each shade are printed out separately. Professional Draw can produce these separations, but problems are created by the limited - and limiting - range of colours available for on-screen display.

Using the Amiga's highest resolution to give the most accurate representation on-screen means that only 16 colours from 4096 can be used at once. Nine of these - black through seven greys - are set and interchangeable, leaving just seven for the user. This is not quite so limiting as it seems, because for colour separation and colour printing each object can be assigned almost any one of the Amiga's 4096 colours, regardless of what colour appears on screen. Nevertheless, using just seven colours is equivalent to the lines required can present a real headache to efficient drawing, if a range of realistic matching tones are required. The problem is not helped by the manual which provides only very terse instructions and only one limited tutorial example.

Read 4 in 'Text' was an attempt at introducing fresh tones, it failed because too many colour colours had been introduced. The program seems to offer no method of removing colours from the palette, though once there they can be changed (and the names though - hence a white face labelled as gold).

LAYERING

Advancements to the object-oriented system of drawing is the idea of layering. Each object is in effect a 2D slice of image, and like paper cutouts, the slices can sit on top of each other. The ability to move these slices up and down through the pile can make this drawing method very neat because it eliminates any worries about which part of the image is in front of other parts. New objects can be pushed back as far as necessary. Pro Draw provides the ability to change the stack by setting or piling any object to the back or front. At times this can be a little confusing and lots of shuffling is needed. A numbering system for layers, or more simply the ability to push and pull by just one layer would be perfect.

CONCLUSIONS

The arrival of Professional Draw is an important development for the Amiga and for other semi-professional micros like the Atari ST and other Acorn machines, because it points the way forward to the future. Similar software has been available for more expensive systems - especially the Macintosh - for some time, but the Amiga already has a high enough profile now for developers to provide this level of support. It is only a matter of time before the ST is similar provided for.

Professional Draw still has a long way to go before it can rival or even approach like products like Freelance 2, Illustrator III or Superpaint, but then so has Professional Page. Nevertheless, it has some worthwhile and unique attributes, especially the colour tool. If colour were easier to use and included patterned and shaded fills, if layering were more controllable, if text objects were transparent, and if it could subtract around bitmaps, it would most likely be a winner.

That's an awful lot of 'ifs', though. ■

A sharp step on the wrist from our Illustration editor - or the telephone equivalent - reminds me that Graphic Accounts has been neglected of late, so here's a round-up of graphics products that have hit our desk recently.

■ **Colour Painter II** (Electronic Arts, Langley Business Centre, 71-79 Tottenham Road, Langley Hk, Slough, Berks SL5 8YX) tel 0295 88430) is in fact one of the most recent new products, but it is so good that it has to go straight to top of the heap. Would you believe, in quite a "paint



and animation to use invisible tool." For once, the hype is mostly true. The latest version of the best-selling paint program for the Amiga is greatly improved and includes what must be the easiest to use animation tools yet. Almost any transformation of a 2D brush can be animated, including moving in the z dimension. Best of all, an animated object can be picked up exactly like a normal brush and then painted anywhere on screen. A full review is under way. DPA's multi-tasking even as I write.

■ **Amiga IMB Marketing**, 22 The Green, West Drayton, Middlesex, UB7 9PD tel 0295 88430) have been working away hard for the Amiga too over the last six months, developing animation and presentation software that extends the Midascape range. Midascape 3D Viewer 2 has been around for quite a few months but only

recently has there been time to have a good look. A great improvement on the original, it now supports PAL, HiAM mode, anti-alias smoothing, chrome surfaces, extra colours in the palette menu, extra fill/line support, hierarchical motion and easier operation with new menu options. It is still not easy to use though, especially when modelling objects, so Amiga have thoughtfully provided the following:

■ **Modeler 3D IMB Marketing** is a 3D object modelling and generation system that is designed to support VideoSpace 3D though it produces objects that can be used with most other rendering systems on the Amiga. Erased many inseparable conventional modelling tool has been provided, plus the ability to create cameras and object motion files.

■ **Lights! Camera! Action! (LCA) Marketing** is the easy-to-use Amiga tool not to be left out of the Desktop Presentation arena and it contains a number of features that put it on a par with the rest of the competition. It allows RT pictures, video animations, and 'Dots' instruments and music to be combined to produce animated desktop video presentations. It includes over 40 special effects such as wipes, fades, dissolves etc and is designed to work with the SuperCase feedback for smooth dissolve effects.

■ **Moviecenter** from Cold Ink IMB Marketing is in some ways similar to Lights! Camera! Action! (LCA) but it is designed, as its title suggests, to let you see what you animate as you produce the animation. Using an on-screen storyboard, Moviecenter makes it easy to move through the animation, editing sections and playing them back to see the results immediately. Included with the program is a supply of 'movie clip-art' and stereo sound samples that let you start editing straight away. A full review will follow soon!

■ The Cyber Series for the ST from Arctic and Electric Distribution (Medway Lane, St. Leon, Canby PE17 4LJ) has also been gaining an alarming rate. So much so that we will have to be doing a feature on the whole range in the near future. Just to be getting on with are Cyber Studio and Cyber Texture, both designed to work with Cyber Studio (reviewed as ACE 4). Studio allows objects to be treated as if they were malleable, like lumps of clay.

"I pushed, pulled, and pummelled into endless shapes." It seems to be very easy to use, the only limitation being the number of colours that a standard ST can display. Texture transforms Segas, Hyperpaint or MacDraw pictures, or CyberPaint animations into Cyber Studio 3DSD objects. Any painting or animation can thus be wrapped around any extruded, open, or sculpted object. Texture mapping has arrived on the ST in a big way!

■ **Flowers! Garden for the Acornians** from Glens (Claremont Supplies, 88 Middlewell Road, Middlewell, Wiltshire, Wiltshire CV6 7DA) enables the user to landscaped scenes using 3D objects and ray tracing. These can then be animated to produce smooth animated landscapes. A final release copy has not been seen yet, so how well it works is still to be reviewed, but with the speed of the Acorn and ST6 colours, ray tracing should be fast.

■ **Flowers! Garden** is another feature that has been neglected for many months, but don't despair artists, you are not forgotten. Very soon we intend to start a new feature, reviewing just this sort. Selected pictures will be published in ACE, each with a few tips and words of advice on how to improve your work. And those of you who have sent us one for the return of disks or tapes should be seeing these long-overlooked relations again before very long.

RENEGADE

THE FINAL CHAPTER

THE FINAL CHAPTER



When a guy loses his girl — he loses his soul! Now, in the final chapter, Renegade must muster all his strength and fighting wits to save the princess's captors, though time is not. Fight against mummy-like foes, break down a cyborg boss, and

rescue a knight, and the son needed saved from within the hands of Ancient Egypt. You just really take you RENEGADE the present — to a face you'll never forget! ... but remember ... your girl wants to see you alive!

RENEGADE: THE FINAL CHAPTER • RENEGADE: THE FINAL CHAPTER • RENEGADE: THE FINAL CHAPTER

★ The last series of Splitting Images, and the cover of our last issue, featured a send-up of Stock, Aitken and Waterman: a machine with a lever on the side that could be set to Kylie, Rick or Basma&Sana. Ironically, this was not very far from the truth. The machine in question is, in reality, a sequencer, and it is this piece of kit that gets this month's in-depth treatment.

MUSIC



A SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Last month's ACE cover featured a music cassette, with a tone which was put together on a sequencer. (What do you mean, you've recorded over it already?) The subtle tones of Our Common Leader explained how the parts had been "glued" together from separate sections, mistakes had been corrected, and even the key changed to suit, all on a sequencer. So how is this achieved? Simple. It is all made possible because you are recording digital MIDI data, and not the electrical impulses that make an ordinary cassette player work.

Any MIDI-equipped instrument outputs information that relates to the notes played: how long they are, how many of the same time, and whether any controls, such as volume or pitch-bend, were used. More expensive instruments will also output information about the

speed and pressure with which each note was played. If you are using a drum machine, there is even a regular clock pulse put out that bears an exact relationship to the speed at which it is playing. Now, as well as outputting this information, the MIDI instrument will also respond to the same

information, MIDI being as much a common standard as ACE is to printers. By putting a computer in the chain you are given a tool that is capable of remembering and manipulating that digital data, and outputting it. This is the first general principle of a sequencer: it stores data, manipulates it and,

when requested, outputs it. The degree to which it is capable of doing this depends very much on the software.

In the simplest of sequencers this is what happens. Set the machine to "record", play away to your heart's content, and then "play back". What you then hear is the instrument being told to play exactly the same notes that you played, at precisely the same speed. The chances are that you will have dotted the odd note or two. Tough. What you need to put them right is a better sequencer, one that will allow you to somehow see the notes you have played and then detect and chuck out those others ones.

But I can't read music, I hear you cry. No problem. Sequencers have developed three ways of representing the notes for you to read. The most tedious of these is a

0000

Complete numerical list of the "inverts" (as to the notes are called) as they happened, usually checked against the bar and beat number so that you can find them.

Scroll your way through the notes until you come to the offending one, and simply highlight and delete them. Effective, but time-consuming. The next most sophisticated display is usually to couple this data to a graphic depiction of the notes, in terms of length and sometimes pitch. This can take various forms of screen, depending on the design of the program. The third method is to use traditional music notation, a very fast method at conception, but only any good if you can read music.

To you as the end user, the important thing is that it should make sense. It should be fairly obvious whether the note is high or low, long or short, and you should be able to jump to the synched notes, hear it sound, and then decide whether or not to keep it. OK, I have straggled out of the last notes, but how about those notes that you haven't quite played at the right time? As well as correcting or deleting notes, you can also change the position of the notes in the bar to suit your needs, more often than not by dragging them around with the mouse, or by entering the correct position numerically. Again, this is a job that has a few "threshold" at times, what you need to make life easier is a "quantize" function.

TRACK 24

★ ST, price £75, Soundbits Software 021 733 2063

Listeners: Lee (reworked) send out an appeal. For the remarkably low price of £75 you can acquire a pretty competent sequencer that as the name implies, runs on 24 tracks. Within these tracks you can do all the things that sequencers are supposed to do, and the nice thing about this of the functions is that they are all pretty logical and there seems to have been a conscious effort to be user-friendly.

The main screen is presented with the tracks listed across the top, when highlighted they are in colour and the values of other play, record or solo is also similarly highlighted. So, by the way, is a nice way of hearing one track without having the bother of turning off all the other tracks, useful for listening to your builders. As usual, the controls for recording, playback, fast forward and reverse have the form of cassette recorder icons. You can either hit them with the mouse or use the alphanumeric keys. The latter



The main display for Track 24 sequencer on the Atari ST. Note the cassette recorder icons for record and playback.

is very useful, particularly when you have your hands full up with synths etc. All other features are on single-down menus.

Track 24 has one feature which is quite unique. Tracks 23 and 24 are set aside for recording melody and chords respectively. Melody is a

little well round as any notes that are outside a preset note value and shuffle them into line. The better programs will let you 'respond' to the values you feel intuitively, so that you can feel just what is going to work in a non-destructive way. The ultra-smart programs will

not out quantizing for you without having to go to the edit page; they test it out for you in the data stream, and only when you hear that it sounds right do you fix the data permanently.

Quantize used to be just this, rounding up note values, and to

more. However, it has now become a growth area of most sequencers, extending to rounding up velocity values and hence the 'feel' of the sound, putting in fixed notes usually for drum machines, putting in the same time value for every note and also putting in a small degree of error: 'humanizing' a track.

By now, you should be getting the impression that a sequencer is to a musician what a word processor is to a writer. Sequencers also have the ability to copy and repeat any part of the music put into them. The game on last month's tape was written in these cassette systems, which were then copied and repeated until they cleaned together to form the song. The initial work was done very quickly using just one synthesizer and a drum machine. The latter was hooked up to the sequencer and told to work in time with the sequencer and not its own internal clock. Having sorted the settings out, it was then simply a matter of copying sections forward to the appropriate bar numbers and repeating them the correct number of times, and to eliminate the 50/50:50 I put in a couple of key changes for some of the repeats.

There were obviously more instruments than just one synthesizer and a drum machine on the tape. To be fair I've just talked about using one instrument. The sequencer of MIDI allows up to 16

THE WADDINGTON SEQUENCER

★ ST, Public Domain

Meanwhile, over on the cheaper end of the market, we have an excellent value for money sequencer written by one Geoff Waddington who hails from Dreams, Canada. It will record up to 32

tracks and is very professionally set out, with the tracks down the left-hand of the screen and the right side split into control functions at the top and user-defined song sections below. It has good quantize and copying features.

Although I could only get it to copy forward on the same track, it supports DUPIN in and out, velocity setting, solo, track, and internal and external synchronization, and the controls follow the customary

cassette recorder icons. My only question was the track editing - there isn't any - and there was no count-in, so the first few bars are really always blank, on top of which if you quantify anything you can't get back on it. Since you can't copy from track to track this could mean the loss of several good ideas. But as an introduction to sequencing it doubtfully has and it is going to be hard to beat. Good, by when your disk arrives you will also have a 'read me' document that takes you through the sequencer step by step. All this for about \$5 Super-disk!

CONTACT

Goodman P.O. Box 50202
Melville 0763 28000
Hollywood ST 0206 88162



The Waddington Sequencer on the ST features a useful Paste-In/Paste-Out facility.

monitored only track. To ensure a program's integrity, most sequencers permit, and chords allow you to print the chords by printing them as a rhythm pattern. You can also use this the other way round: by playing just a single note — say C — for a couple of bars on a rhythmic pattern you like, it will recognize this as a chord of C. If you can't trouble your real-world



The display for editing keyboard traditional music notation.

chords, this is your golden opportunity. If you are familiar with analogue keyboards that have feedback onto the monitor, sequenced track boxes imitate this effect.

the actual note data from your synth, known as MIDI Dump. It has a handy Interactive Mix feature which is very unusual for something of this price. You play back your recordings, having selected the aforementioned feature, and as they change you make tempo changes, including banks of well on, you are recorded as a new track. When played back it really gives life to a

piece, pauses and the sequencing are made very easy.

My only major quibble was the editing which uses traditional music notation and was not that simple to get to grips with. You get the dis-

play of your notes, but only if it's a piano, one note at a time, so editing chords is quite a problem, but my favourite feature. But it's logical. Sort of. The program also has both chain builders and song functions, plus very easy copying features, all of which makes it quite a bargain.

SEQUENCING FOR OTHER COMPUTERS

There are, of course, sequencing systems available for most computers. The ST offers the best deal so far, because it has on-board MIDI ports. This means that the software has to be compatible, hence so much PQ software that costs very little. All other machines require a MIDI interface. What you are running it on will dictate the price and compatibility, for such is the lunacy of music software houses that many of the interfaces will not run software belonging to another interface — a factor that has contributed to the demise of several.

| | ST | AMIGA | CPC | SPECTRUM | 84 | PC |
|----------------------------------|------|-------|-------------|----------|----------|-------|
| Cost of interface | 15 | £40+ | £25+ | £30+ | £30+ | £100+ |
| Compatibility | Y | Y | N | N | N | N |
| Lowest commercial software price | £30 | £30 | £35 | £10 | £15 | £30 |
| Availability | good | good | very little | none new | none new | good |

* No longer produced commercially

A SHOPPING LIST FOR THESE WOULD POSSIBLY BE:

- ST ● EZTrack ● £69 from Systemic Music 01 444 8130
 AMIGA ● Dr T Eight Track ● £45 from MCM 01 734 4104
 CPC ● EMR Performer ● £49.95 from EMR 0732 336747
 SPECTRUM ● Contact the Music Machine Club on 05242 62258
 84 ● EMR Performer ● £49.95 from EMR 0702 335747
 PC ● 16 track sequencer ● £79.95 from 0493P 3440 61227

I should point out that with all the machines except the ST, you will need to add the cost of a compatible interface to the cost of your software. With the 84 and the Spectrum it is possible to pick up a complete package if you take the second-hand column.

play the track back and, at the specified area, reversed over your first chord effort: the machine automatically drops it and set of record mode. To practice this, you can also 'loop' this section first and have the pleasure of hearing it ad infinitum until you feel you have got your sounds correct. A good sequencer will also remember any sound changes you make. Say you want the sound to change on one instrument from a piano to a trumpet for eight bars, and then back again. It's actually changing the sound as you record, the sequencer will remember this because it is transmitted as part of the MIDI data, known as a program change.

I give without saying that you need to be able to save your efforts. Many sequencers will offer you the choice of saving the whole song or just individual patterns within the song; maybe you would want to use the drum pattern for another piece, just for a certain well-known and successful production team.

To sum up, a sequencer is so much a part of the modern musician's kit as a quill pen and parchment were of Bach's. The advantage to the non-musician is that you can immediately adjust what you have played and order it into a piece. They give you enough power; you supply the imagination. ■

channels of separate information to flow at the same time, and all sequencers can distinguish between these channels. At first, this can be rather confusing, and the software is presented at times as recording on 'tracks' and the MIDI instruments on 'channels'. The reason for this is that the term 'tracks' is borrowed from the world of multi-track recording. So you have a track for the bass, a track for the chords, a track for the melody, and so on. The sequencer should allow you to name these on screen so that you don't get lost in the whole process. Each track can then be assigned a MIDI channel to output its data on, and this will be picked up by the instrument that is set to listen on that channel. As you will find out, many sequencers have more tracks to record on than there are MIDI channels. This is so that you have room to save for adding extra sections of the piece in, or building up various parts and then playing them all back together to be performed on the one instrument. If you are using short of track space, you can mix or bounce these tracks together: unless conventional tape recording, there will be no loss of quality, because you're mixing it all being played 'live' by the sequencer.

Often there is a 'punch in/out' feature which lets you pick a few bars that are beyond redemption,

NEXT MONTH
 It'll be taking a look at some programming software for synthesizers, both cheap and expensive, and looking at a MIDI microsequencer.

ADVENT

SHOGUN

Full of Eastern Promise?

WHILE Ken Berk was struggling with Journey, Infocom's Dave Loring (the of Loring Horror fame) was trying to reestablish Infocom's lead in straight storytelling. It's debatable whether that lead has ever really been lost, but it's also true that (D&D-to-4&E) text-and-graphics adventures have not been doing too well on the market



Shogun on the Apple Macintosh. Working before stands to find this Shogun user enjoying some well-earned rest.

recently, whenever they come from.

Loring's adaptation of Shogun, according to Rob Sear, one of Infocom's top brass, "had less priorities: authenticity and an updated parser. Along with all our products it's a battle to combine storyline with technical excellence."

With one or two exceptions, the pre-production copy of Shogun we've seen certainly impresses in all these departments. There are excellent graphics, a very strong parser, and — thanks in part to James Davell — a superb

storyline. Whacked on the coast of Japan in the days of power instant noodle, you steadily acquire fame and fortune in a new society, soaring to the elevated rank of Shogun.

The game has superb graphics on the Apple Mac version (the only one we've seen so far) and the text, of course, is faultless. The screen layout is more flexible than in Infocom's earlier games, allowing brief indicators of relevant game data. For example, during the storm at the beginning of the game, you can tell which way the wind is blowing and which way the boat is headed — vital information for solving at least one important puzzle.

The writing in the program certainly seems to have impressed. You can address collective groups of people and communicate easily in a variety of ways. Despite the silliness, however, it still managed to fall over twice during the opening sequences, once allowing something to move about when it was, in fact, locked to the deck, and another time steadfastly refusing to acknowledge the presence of the safe, only, because a few moments later they got their heads cut and had to be fixed.

Doing a full verdict on a game like Shogun on the basis of a pre-production copy is not a good idea, so we won't be committing ourselves until we receive the finished product. However, it seems that this release has a powerful enough storyline to attract the committed adventureist, but whether, after the traumas of RPGs and strategy, there are still enough committed traditional text-and-graphics adventureists out there remains to be seen.

GETTING my hands on the first (and only) copy of Journey was one of the more exciting experiences I've had in the last year. This, it seemed, had to be one of Infocom's main thrusts into the new world of 1990s adventuring. To succeed it needs brilliant graphics (target: Megawit [Doriel]), facilities for building a party (target: Ultima II), good



character control (target: Level II) and a truly, darningly good story (target: everyone).

It's typical Infocom fashion, however: the company have brought out a product that succeeded in sidestepping all these issues and giving us something completely different and unexpected. Journey is not really an RPG at all, nor is it a traditional text-and-graphics adventure. In fact — and please don't reach for the corking GUTS yet — the game it bears the closest resemblance to is probably Level II's old title — wait for it... Aster-Mob.

The scenario is a simple one, though supported throughout by copious text that's well up to Infocom's usual impeccable standards. The crisis we're facing and a small party consisting of yourself (an apprentice food merchant) beyond the carpenter, Fraia the Wizard, and Einar the Magician sets out to seek the help of a long-lost friend called Asta.

Control is highly unusual and very easy to grasp. There's a small window showing the names of the characters and alongside, in three columns, up to three commands that



Before embarking on our RPG-oids, we've just got room to bring you two EXCLUSIVE previews of the game you

VENTURES

JOURNEY

Not quite RPG, not quite Adventure...

time to each character. At any time you can click in one of these commands to execute it.

For example, Phaxi may be dipped with the command **DABBE**. Clicking on this brings up two object names in the second column for you to apply the command to. You click on **POACH**, for example, and as comes for the story window a description of Phaxi's pouch

floats and the program, once it's off on a new track, won't return the opportunity. This feature's crucial later on when you try to snipe a mouse; you can only look at the snapper, for example, and you can't simply go back every time you make a wrong move. Numerous screens are impressive.

The unique feature of the game, however,



Journey on the Apple IIsharebook. Casual conversation with characters in a tavern is what information.



This slightly obtuse-looking character status is often the answer. Should the party accept him?

where he keeps his magic ingredients.

The commands available are a tantalizing mixture of the mundane and the unusual. One of the most useful ones is the **TELL STORY** option that results in a character launching into a frequently lengthy discussion about some feature of the game world you've recently encountered. Then there's **SCOUT**, which sends a party member off on his own - sometimes never to return - and a whole host of others.

This command method enables the game to change the commands available at any point, giving the adventure a flexibility not normally enjoyed by RPG's, which tend to have a static selection of hard-command options. On the other hand, it's not so flexible as a normal text adventure, which means that you can't spend excessive time wondering what you should be doing. The possibilities are always listed there in front of you.

On the other hand, the system doesn't give you many second chances. Confronted by angry dwarves, clicking an **NO** when they ask you to accompany them could cause a lot of

trouble and the program, once it's off on a new track, won't return the opportunity. This feature's crucial later on when you try to snipe a mouse; you can only look at the snapper, for example, and you can't simply go back every time you make a wrong move. Numerous screens are impressive.

The unique feature of the game, however, is that you can click in one of these commands to execute it. For example, Phaxi may be dipped with the command **DABBE**. Clicking on this brings up two object names in the second column for you to apply the command to. You click on **POACH**, for example, and as comes for the story window a description of Phaxi's pouch floats and the program, once it's off on a new track, won't return the opportunity. This feature's crucial later on when you try to snipe a mouse; you can only look at the snapper, for example, and you can't simply go back every time you make a wrong move. Numerous screens are impressive.

Combat in the game is fairly straightforward, but with good text descriptions. There are very few options, but you're occasionally offered the choice of splitting your party to attack the occasion from behind. Maps in based on the elements of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water which have to be collected whenever possible, otherwise Phaxi runs out of power. Some puzzles involve a fairly complex use of several spells in sequence to achieve a desired effect.

The atmosphere of the game owes an extraordinary (and possibly intentional) resemblance to *The Hobbit*, even down to being interrupted by acts in the mountains. Despite the limitations of the command system, however, the featureless, witless ability to tell a story still shines through. However I don't think that *Journey* is itself going to be the game that puts Infocore back on top of the pile. The system they've developed - providing they can work to more flexibility and better character development - might, on the other hand, do just that. For these reasons, I hope so. Stand by for the final setup and format details as soon as we receive production tapes.





At last! The complete low-down, in-depth, three-part guide to RPG software. ACE checks out what's on the shelves and discovers that all that glitters is not necessarily gold...

OLD AND FAMOUS? OR JUST OLD?

THE ACE RPG-GUIDE PART 1

Ever since the dawn of the game, the love that we share, the imagination that comes from Outer Space, flows into our lives. When the computer after magazine of game graphics came and enough gamers to keep us waiting for the end of your life. Question is, does it or will it ever pass?

It will probably last a name for 10 years ago, but nowadays there are many people (some might not be members, but we'll get that point) who claim that this legendary imagination is going on the shelves of your local software importer right now. In fact, there's more than one of them, they say... and they're all looking for it.

In the next few issues of ACE we'll be taking a hard look at RPG. Is it really better than you? Does it still offer games that will help you succeed in your computer for weeks on end? Can it provide the ultimate challenge a gamer will ever face? Or is it just a rather pathetic form of software for people who haven't the better to wonder at it? Or is it just an old attack now?

RPGs IN HISTORY

The first RPGs (most consumers get when they look at RPG) is the greatest history of the situation. The video graphics have, since it's mostly made character-based displays and some involving perspective view that look like they've been copied from 3D Master Mode. Like all things, RPG has a few exceptions, which we'll look at next month's has a long way to go on the entertainment side.

This is all the more depressing when you look at other efforts in the IBM machine that claimed — what indeed — to be RPG-oriented. Like Carol's The Star Cycle, for example, released in 1982 and billed as the Ultimate Role Playing Adventure! The game was split into six modules and although it only offers two personality attributes and a single player character, it still fares disturbingly well in comparison with some much more recent releases.



The year is 1982, and The Star Cycle system has it all: character-based attributes, randomized gameplay for six modules, spells, and combat.



Starcraft's Ring of Darkness, seen here on the Amstrad. This display first appeared on the Spectrum and resulted got many more recent RPGs to attempt.

Using another early release, Starcraft's Ring of Darkness, a just as warning, you can't just wander off, after taking in the maps and doing battle on the landscape display, what the game hasn't got that, say, the more recent Legend of Blackbeard has. The cost of PDP's 1989 product, Swords and Sor-

cery featuring magic, character training, and a cast

of 200 characters and you'll never see more.

But, the more recent RPGs are bigger than their predecessors' cousins, but the can immediately be



PDP's Swords and Sorcery — magic, potions, a lot of interactive commands, and a reasonable display, but bad for IBM, eh?

explained away in two words — and those words aren't "programming hell" but "task aware". And if you don't believe that, just ask yourself how many recent RPGs have been completed and/or forgotten.

The irony is that of others becomes even more obvious when you compare another game! Over the same time period, remember Wizardry Wizards by Imagine? It should have got, what people would want to forget it within minutes of buying it. How compare that title given to Starcraft's it? I remember a lot of a difference, and as Mark Spencer, videogame programmer now working on Research's Island, said recently "Well, I think of what we got away with in those days, and can't believe it. It was rubbish!" How many RPG programmers could have of a similar development in outlook and ability?

Oh, so there are a few, and we'll be checking out their names later in this series. But meanwhile, let's look at four of the more recent RPGs released over the last couple of years. Some of these are still set up just for the IBM machines. Should you be disappointed by the following?

On the bottom left pages, we start an assessment of what's currently available on the RPG scene...

WHAT TO EXPECT...

What actually happens when you play a computer RPG? Different programs follow different conventions in defining characters and developing their attributes, but usually they have the following game structure...

- 1 CHARACTER DEFINITION**
You create your character and give it starting attributes (e.g. race, sex, profession or class) to do. Characters fall into three basic groups: fighters (used to develop strength), magic users (only men—used to develop intelligence and knowledge of spells), and thieves (used to develop agility/stealth and picking skills).
- 2 EXPLORATION OF LANDSCAPE**
You move your party around a map, discovering different locations and searching for clues about your quest. You can purchase weapons, trade items, and sharpen your combat and magical skills with any monsters that you encounter.
- 3 EXPLORATION OF DUNGEONS**
Dungeons are multi-level mazes crisscrossed full of hostile parties, treasure, and clues. In almost every RPG you will have to descend into at least one of these and battle it out to the lowest level in search of your objective.
- 4 FINALE**
You've explored the landscape, penetrated the dungeons, built up your character's attributes to make them capable of leaving the head off a dragon or casting a World-obliterator spell, and learned whatever facts or knowledge you set out to find. The characters you've developed can often be loaded into other games of the same genre for further play.

WHAT YOU SEE IS...

Computer RPGs tend to fall into two distinct display categories, although many mix the two in different parts of the game. To save space during our RPGs, we'll be referring to them as Type One and Type Two; here are the basic characteristics of the two formats:

TYPE ONE



This display (taken from Ultima II) shows (on the left) a scrolling window with a character-based map. Your party's position is shown by a single icon. Items, villages, and other features may be entered by positioning the character on top of the feature and giving it "Enter" command. Most Type One displays then change to a large-scale display of the feature you've entered, showing objects, non-player characters, and buildings, as shown on the right, above.

TYPE TWO

This display type has been developed from the old 3D maze games and shows a scrolling perspective map, taken from your party's viewpoint, of the landscape straight ahead. You move either ahead, Left, or Right and the display switches viewpoint accordingly. Some games also Type Two also used exclusively use the scroll-wheel on the page of Right and Magic, others use Type One for outside locations and Type Two for dungeons. The most important point to bear in mind is that Type Two is much more difficult to map

RPG IN A (LARGE) NUTSHELL...

A role-playing game (RPG) as implemented on a computer takes its name from fantasy role-playing games, the best known of which is Dungeons and Dragons. These games are played by consenting adults in dark rooms and involve the creation by the players of personae (i.e. game characters) who together form a party of adventurers.

The party explores a fantasy environment created by the Dungeon Master (DM) who is usually an elected player. RPGs are dominated by complex rules of engagement and exploration as laid down in the documentation for whichever system (e.g. Advanced Dungeons and Dragons) is being used. Creative DMs use these rules to construct

unique and individual environments, but you can use ready-packaged scenarios if you prefer.

Each party member starts off with certain "attributes" that determine his/her role in the game. During gameplay, these attributes (e.g. Strength, Experience, Agility) are developed, making the character more powerful.

The back-bone of any RPG is the "measurer" with health levels, hit dice, dragons, balls, or Muzak Super Balls. All monsters (a generic term not necessarily implying monstrous size or evil hostility) have their own attributes and the course of each encounter is determined by complex rules governing armor, weapons, skills, movement,

and so on.

So what's a computer RPG? In essence, it's simply an RPG set down to size in which the computer programmer has played the role of DM and the rules of the system are applied by your machine. It lacks the real-life interaction you get with other human players but attempts to make up for this through the use of computer-controlled characters (the equivalent of NPCs, non-player characters) and allowing you to control and define a whole party yourself. Traditional RPGs tend to steer all at this, but for us computer fans, a good adaptation for computer can sometimes offer a gameplay experience very different from your average arcade scenario.

WIZARDS CROWN

SSI/US Gold



SEARCH AREA: CHARGE (C) CHECK & CHARACTER
 THE RESIDENTIAL SECTION IS A DUNGEON

Wizards Crown — the combat option. You can select items for each character at the beginning of the game. Characters can come and fight in a single turn.

The game looks very pretty on the screen, things move and sounds are other machines, but it contains a number of serious weaknesses.

First, there is only one player character and no party option. Second, the attributes for your character are fixed from the beginning. That, combined with a limited, often frustrating, inventory, deals with only the most basic features and few sets.



Pretty graphics on the Amiga for Questron II, but a SSI/US simple game system...

The display is a colorful Type One with towns, cottages, castles, dungeons and levels (mazes), essential to explore in search of wealth and information as you attempt to destroy the Evil Sorcerer and the source of their power, the Evil Book of Magic.

Entering villages and interior locations gives you the usual tapestries, parchment view of your surroundings. The command options are extremely

QUESTRON II

SSI/US Gold

limited but you can SPDM to explore your own character and develop them together as a team. Perhaps Questron II will address this sad deficiency...

Questron II is a very limited game in terms of interaction, but there is a fair amount of exploring to do. Game play is rapid but in blocky and less, combined with the fact that death brings immediate resurrection, makes it very suitable for impatient players or for those wanting a very simple introduction to this type of game.

What you won't get, however, is

This is a collection of rules and values, make no mistake, Wizards Crown is nine or ten years old and shows its age with spotty graphics and the CGM use of the lowest resolution, dithered graphics. You are guaranteed to get hangups, however, to other more attractive features.

Both screen comparisons you set off to measure a legendary system (powering in you do so of the total originality of the command, fight party numbers), however, is more than most other games and, when combined with as many as thirty skills, ten attributes, and five character classes, adds up to

a complex aggregate of game options. The skills range from swimming to logging and, unless you're often a player, the skills a character has make a very distinct impression on game play. This also applies to the character attributes, which do not include such as "charisma" — often included in

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| | |
|---|---|
| CHARACTERS 15 | COMBAT 10 |
| Complex skills system and wide range in play style. | Crude presentation and no tactical options. |
| SET-UP 45 | SCENE 45 |
| Basic but basic up, requiring few steps. SSI's "Resurrection" option. | Lowest quality, but some interesting effects. |
| LANDSCAPE 45 | ENCOUNTERS 35 |
| Complex system, but graphics and sound. | Easy impression, but often no options, often from random. |

RPG-GUIDE RATING 5/10

Be mentioned that comes from creating your own character and developing them together as a team. Perhaps Questron II will address this sad deficiency...

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Block them too on the boundaries of the RPG game. It only shows you one character to develop and your attributes are fixed from the beginning without player intervention. Your main objective is to rescue Princess Ayla's father from the evil Baron Torgue and give the Baron a good spanking for his bad deeds.

The game is a fairly simple, but contains a fair amount of simple exploration — interrupted by tedious random encounters — and taking tough parties. Most exploration is done over a Type One display showing the various geographical features of the lands of Frolin and Malsburg. Castles, temples, towns, and dungeons may be found by the persistent player and, interestingly, there are clues in the traditional Type One tape-scale format.

There is a reasonable degree of interaction with NPCs in the various locations, some of whom will set up small tasks in return for money. Buying and selling is done via menus in the appropriate shops.

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| | |
|--|---|
| CHARACTERS 15 | COMBAT 10 |
| Only one character with attributes fixed by the program. | Old and basic with most other. |
| SET-UP 45 | SCENE 45 |
| Easy to set up, requiring no steps, and, blocky and unattractive presentation. | Very low quality, but they do the job. |
| LANDSCAPE 45 | ENCOUNTERS 35 |
| Simple type world with good graphics and a good command. | Easy impression, but often no options, often from random. |

RPG-GUIDE RATING 5/10

A NOTE ABOUT RATINGS...

★ We've devised a special rating system for our RPG-Guide. It works like this:

CHARACTERS: How complex a character can you create within the program? How easy is it to create and save characters? How many can you have?

SET-UP: How good is the character presentation? How long will it take you to start playing? Does the program require a lot of steps each time you play?

LANDSCAPE: How good are the graphics? Is the terrain varied, extensive, and interesting? What are the mapping facilities of any? How good is the screen display?

COMBAT: Is it just a case of "hit 'em, they hit you back," or is it a full-blown tactical and strategic challenge? Do you get

senses of weapon types, or just a plain bludge?

SCENE: How many scenes are there? Are they interesting and original, or do they just not move mountains?

ENCOUNTERS: Is there anyone to talk to? Do you get both weapons on sight, or can you

engage in more meaningful interaction? Is there enough variety in encounters, or are they all the same?

RPG-GUIDE RATINGS: Should you buy it?

All ratings are out of 100, except the RPG-Guide Rating, which is out of 1000.

NIGHT AND MAGIC 1

New World Computing/Activision



Night and Magic 1 looks to be almost the same as...



...MAGGIE.

N&M2 is now about two years old and really shows its age (despite being good and easy to play, it's not down to earth by a long way).

The objective is a standard search-and-retrieval in the company of five characters. There are no character abilities for each party member, so classes ranging from Paladin to Wizard and the like. In addition, characters can be given an "alignment" (usually good, evil, or neutral) direction.

Together with the usual armor class and hit point allocations, the game's moderate degree of character complexity fails to introduce any startling new or interesting character possibilities. The character creation module is quick and powerful (especially, considering "classes" that "blend" with the options menu). This means you can generate some very powerful characters if you're prepared to keep looking at the beginning.

The display is a crude type two with few additions. Although there are both interior and exterior locations, the

trees, leaves, mountains, dungeons etc) the display looks somewhat flat. Moving around becomes rather dull after an hour or so and the only relief from this is a mapping.

There are a large number of spells, but few of real interest. The majority are simple offensive or defensive manœuvres of varying strength. For example, Hypnotic Sounds interesting and useful, but fewer than it might make you to control a monster (under the Wizard's "Summon"), but all it does is stop the opposition from attacking for a short period.

Night and Magic is a competent game, but it fails to offer any real innovation and does not excel enough in any single department to make it worth buying. Night and Magic 2, in the other hand, could be very different. We'll be looking at it in the very near future.

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CHARACTERS 65

Easy to select, but not necessarily worth using.

SETUP 65

Requires a detailed and changing set of menu options, but a few others offer this. Recommended documentation.

LANGUAGE 70

Translates characters from the graphics and very easy.

COMBAT 65

Not much to say, with few options.

MAGIC 50

Wide variety, but not enough variety in their effects.

ENCOUNTERS 70

Some more interesting, with some others that, but nothing special.

RPG-GUIDE RATING 441

NEXT MONTH

Next month we show right up to date with a look at the big game in RPG today: Wizardry, Interplay, and Origin Systems. We'll also be giving you an eyeful of Night and Magic 2. Don't miss it!



Wizard's Crown - The city layout takes more complex than it really is. Your party is represented by two icons - one for the main group and one for a leader.

options which look better as if the whole thing were.

When Wizard's Crown really comes, however, is in combat. It has the most complex and confusing combat system of any computer-based RPG I've played, with the possible exception of Star Wars (see next month's issue). Luckily you can choose between two combat modes - Quick and Tactical - because Tactical, the most challenging option, can take you a while to get used to.

Quick combat simply gets the light

over 200-300 with and then creates the damage you've suffered and the battle you've found. Tactical combat, on the other hand, gives you a detailed display of the battlespace (with the status and the positions of the different characters, including the enemy).

Each character can be moved with one of twenty control commands, ranging from Fast Move to Dodge, Zap, and Sleep. As a result, battles can become extremely complex and make special use of each character's skills, although slow in operation. The amount of the program is very satisfying, you can play 1000 years early during play if you desire.

Ultimately the game is pretty long, standard stuff. The graphics are a crude type two with few additions and the sound is almost non-existent. What makes it unique with occasional chat and various circumstances which usually involve your wizard character.

Wizard's Crown sums up all the pitfalls of computer-based RPG's. It looks awful and takes a long time to get used to. It also manages, however, to earn a spot on those included enough to give it a chance.

LEGEND OF BLACKSILVER

Epyx/US Gold



BlackSilver from the overhead view isn't terribly inspiring.

CHARACTERS 65

Easy to select, with a fairly simple setup.

SETUP 65

Easy to change, although you have to use a lot of documentation.

LANGUAGE 70

More than enough, but some others that, but nothing special.

COMBAT 65

Not much to say, with few options.

MAGIC 50

Wide variety, but not enough variety in their effects.

ENCOUNTERS 70

Some more interesting, with some others that, but nothing special.

RPG RATING 541

What gets you in combat, a detailed after thinking an exchange of blows and a last report of the war. The only thing is its factor is that you can't see anything, making the encounter.

On the plot side, the game plays very simply and smoothly with few plot twists. No cut make a lot of progress around the countryside (including you avoid encounters), entering features into the map provided with the game. In addition, some form of BlackSilver are missing - particularly those involving the Wizard, where you can often trade or trade your money.

Apart from the weak combat and some very limited spells, BlackSilver does really well. There are numerous challenges, ranging from crossing the ocean to dungeons made them. If only it had the facilities for forming a party together with better magic and combat, it would be a winner.

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ACE IN THE PINK

THE ACE PINK PAGES... IT'S ALL HERE FROM THE CONTINUING STORY OF NGAR THROMBORG, TO THE COMICAL COLLOTS OF NIGEL FROM NIGEL, FROM THE QUIZ TO THE COMPETITORS TO THE CROSSWORD... IT'S ALL HERE, PLUS YOUR OWN INPUT TO THE MAGAZINE, INCLUDING THE READERS' PAGES AND THE OCCASIONAL LETTER TO THE PINK PAGES EDITOR. IF YOU WANT TO JOIN THE FUN, GET WRITING. REMEMBER, TO GET READ, GET IN THE PINK...

The Ace Serial THE GIT IN THE MACHINE: 9

That the temperature of the environment was rising at an average rate of about one thousand degrees a second might well have been the last thought that went through Ngar Thromborg's little grey concrete mind, but for one highly singular event. The one-shape lump of concrete that his lot of floppy disk was reeled up against spontaneously generated an anti-dimensional gravitational anomaly. It was less than a second later it was impossible, the lump of concrete and fragments of floppy disk were plucked unceremoniously from normal space, subjected to non-dimensional antigravity the approximate length of the 184 between Ocean and the Greenwood underground, and sucked into a non-dimensional spatial hole.

"Here... where am I?" said Ngar Thromborg.

"... where?" said the talking bit of concrete.
"And who are you?" Thromborg asked.

"No, wouldn't you like to see me?" "ing mmm
"..."

After Thromborg lowered himself, noting the absolute weightlessness of this anomaly, and wishing he had brought his library box of all those old words in the ancient times he was about to meet someone.

"That's not too bad what happened?" he said.

"I generated an arbitrary anti-gravitational explosion. Well, basically, that was it." "ing thromb, you

you're outside of existing spacetime."

"No, I see?" said Thromborg, who really didn't see at all. "But you're there's no need to be able to... well, anyway."

"Well be..." "ing about if you'd been rolled through a grinder, loaded into a job and had half your..." "ing water-bolled off of a..." "ing container, yes?" "I... didn't understand..."

"The year..." "ing stop-egg, continued climbing.

"I say... you're not?"

Inside Thromborg's concrete, all of the 700,000 words in the lump of concrete's temporary ball shape it could have used, there were now none whatsoever.

expressed to feelings it that moment.

"But where are we?" asked the floppy disk.

"Who cares?" said the lump of concrete, remembering, in retrospect, whether a lump of light conductive roller ball had really been the ideal door to verify memory data to. But after fully-realized that on the underside of a casual worker's hand, it had committed a good idea at the time.

"That's not too bad to get out into the world and avoid gravitational happiness," said the bit of floppy Thromborg on the floppy-disk fragment.

Attractive Thromborg decided that that for all they could do, then he had to

wait out how to achieve the maximum in which neither of them, technically, existed.

"Do you remember yourself, your environment plus it gets?"

Floppy Thromborg was quiet for a moment, but it could have been minutes. (Of course he'd in existence where the average time could weigh a billion years and eons.) "Yes, then you got... 0000000000?"

"That?" said attractive Thromborg.

"I can't even type?" without 0000000000. I must be on your list?"

"Well?" you with you can detect it handling itself?"

Floppy Thromborg was quiet, kindly again. Then, "Yes you got ThrombORG?"

Attractive Thromborg was just about to say something. (Slightlying unpleasant when floppy Thromborg vanished. He was just about to elaborate when he was sucked into the grand spatial

whereby middle-dimensional anti-dimension of space in the right bit.

"Do Ngar ThrombORG?" said attractive Thromborg.

"No, I can identify self?" said Floppy Thromborg. (though, I can detect the various subdimension various entity associated with it.) "I would like to see what you've got on your list?"

Attractive Thromborg was excited. "No other gets to see probably the most effective and dimensionally expressive of all the universe would ever know. In fact I'm curious at whether gravitational work, but failed. He first programming lot of code with the ThrombORG algorithm, and then had to which been either could be or had way in the clouds of water that would eventually form figures in the ground. Finally he wanted to reconfigure someone randomly existing there at

"That was?" said Attractive ThrombORG, who noticed it he was fairly interested.

"To it could not be a ThrombORG..."

"Well, because it needs on its own outside of what we..." "ing mmm?" said Attractive ThrombORG, curious sometimes at the appearance of a large pair of complex tracks over the edge of his eye.

"Language... it's going to be off?" asked Floppy ThrombORG.

"No, that's not," muttered attractive ThrombORG, wondering exactly what aspects of spacetime had a rough shape like an emblem's border.

"So it could be a language..." observed Floppy ThrombORG as the digital bucket descended to the ground and scooped up three thousandweight of white crystalline white.

"No, I think it's..." Floppy ThrombORG was now well off so he was occupied as together with a few striking beams from the hospital recreation building, and that lighted to the sky.

Attractive ThrombORG scooped with delight. He filled with happiness, pulled out a pipe, and then stopped. The container was emptying just according to instructions. Its standard track was being crushed to debris in... oh, he'd just found this information. ■

"Ah, now I think I detect the approach of a Stegocephalus-type creature..."

actor that had translated as his alter ego.

"This is either the Cambrian or Lower Jurassic."

Floppy ThrombORG so far the lump of concrete to appear alongside him. They were in a dark, smoking pit, with walls

the floppy disk fragment by means of magnetic particle reconfiguration techniques had developed while he was in suspension.

"No, now I think I detect the approach of a Stegocephalus-type creature," said Floppy ThrombORG.

SpringBoard being, the option of using, learning, and using — will likely be large graphics and smooth animation throughout. Control of your athletes can be complex or precise as recommended.

• **ACE CLASSIC**

SUPER SPIN

Electronic Dreams • CD
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Amstrad £9.95 • Spectrum £9.95 • Atari £7.49 • 9500

One of the better console conversions currently available, 1985 got to three players all competing at once. The action is fast and furious and it will take a fortified team to complete some of the more tedious strategy that appear later in the game.

• **ACE RATED 900**

THRUST

Electronic Spectrum
£2.95 • CD £2.95 • Amstrad £2.95

Temporarily sensitive controls and a large helping of realistic physics make this the best 1984 or almost any other

shoot through the course of an enemy-held planet, you have to pick up fuel and destroy hostile gas torpedoes without crashing into the tunnel walls. Tough enough to do, but the action gets to make the planet journey with a heavy load along under your craft. Very nice, very addictive.

• **ACE CLASSIC**

THUNDERCATS

Electronic Spectrum
£2.95 • CD £2.95 • Amstrad £2.95 • Spectrum £2.95 • Atari £2.95 • 9500 £2.95

The game based on the hit TV cartoon series/television. It's a video game wonder that just seems complete. Each of the game's 14 levels is a straight line dash from start to finish with a multitude of obstacles to avoid along the way. Graphically impressive and competitively superior too.

• **ACE RATED 101**

URANIUM

Electronic Spectrum
£2.95 • CD £2.95 • Amstrad £2.95 • Spectrum £2.95 • Atari £2.95 • 9500 £2.95

The price de resistance

of swirling robot energy that the flashlight and attacking ship while dodging primary ray traps structures. Great metallic-looking backgrounds and the smoothest scrolling you'll ever see get the level and situations above the opposition. A game not to be missed, especially now that CD versions come packaged with the excellent Paradox.

• **ACE CLASSIC**

ZARCH / VIRUS

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• Atari £2.95 • CD £2.95 • Amstrad £2.95
• Some CD versions under development

Well, ACE's highest rated game to date. A solid five dimensional shooter with each graphic, animation and frenetic addictive gameplay that it became an instant classic. Now the 1.50 version has arrived and they're just as good as the 32-bit versions. All that remains to do is see how to whether it'll be ACE rating the 5-bit version.

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The tale of insider dealing, infidelity and corruption/finance deals in collars to appeal to investors who prefer to wander through stock exchange networks looking for the stock who are fed up with traditional advertising. It's like a breath of fresh air. Super graphics, great atmosphere and a real-time action that's a terrific game that goes from the start.

• **ACE RATED 100**

FISH

Magneta Spectrum PC
£24.95 • Amiga £24.95

More gameplay than Corruption better game design than Asterix and 100 to go for the Fun. This is definitely 80's best-value value Best of Times. Great stuff indeed.

• **ACE RATED**

GUILD OF THIEVES

Electronic CD £2.95 • Spectrum £2.95 • Amstrad £2.95 • Atari £2.95 • Spectrum £2.95 • 9500 £2.95 • CD £2.95

One of Britain's most advanced software houses — Magneta Software — managed to produce a traditional treasure hunt with superb graphics and some very tricky puzzles. Powerful game help to create a convincing game world with humor and imagination.

• **ACE CLASSIC**

INGRID'S BACK

Level 9 Atari £2.95

A great follow-up to Game Design. Level 9 have really got to grips with the use of characters in their games and how to

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• **ACE RATED 100**

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Level 9, Britain's oldest adventure programming family, have put together three of their classic releases, Cultural Adventure, Dungeon Adventure and Adventure Quest in one bundle. The games have been updated with graphics and better vocabularies and are as close to the original spirit of adventuring as you're likely to find.

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Electronic's debut in H.P. Lovecraft and the horror-fiction genre sends you into a CD world as you discover something very scary lurking beneath your college laboratory. Superb first-only game with location descriptions that help you to play it after dark.

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POOL OF RADIANCE

Electronic Spectrum
£2.95 • CD £2.95

50, the strategy specialists were very brave to attempt to capture the complex concept of the ACME system on a computer, but they managed superbly. An RPG influenced game that will appeal to not only ACME fans but to anyone looking for an enthralling game that will keep them playing for months.

• **ACE RATED 101**

TIME AND MAGIC

Magneta Spectrum

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This compilation of the Level 9 games, Lord of Time, Star Wars and The Price of Magic have all been recompiled with better parsing, bigger backdrops and better sound. Superb value as a start should suit all the games.

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Ascending level of play in this role playing advanced epic. Travel round Britain tracing the opposition and learn the magical, historical, and geographical secrets that will enable you to defeat the forces of evil in the underground. Superb release, great looking artwork, and tough challenges galore.

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WASTELAND

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Charge around wasteland USA shooting mutant hordes and beat your way to the role playing epic. To adventure may we be as good as the best's tale series of games, but the extra dimension of strategy knows the rat, man and god scenario of the 87 was way better.

• **ACE RATED 100**

ZORK ZERO

Electronic Spectrum
£24.95 • Amiga £24.95 • CD £24.95

Highly enjoyable with variety of challenges to make for endless addition. A bit more character interaction would have made this real funnier, but only as it remains one of the best games of the year so far.

• **ACE RATED**

ADVENTURES

Adventures have come a long way since The Hobbit. State-of-the-art graphics and powerful parsers enable you to communicate with other characters, and fully explore the world of your choosing. Add role-playing elements and you can see why this section of the software biz is the fastest growing area of computer entertainment.

THE BARD'S TALE III

Electronic Arts • CD
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The latest Bard's Tale game offers a number of refinements over its predecessors all of which are still well worth taking a good look at. First, the graphics are better animated. Second, there are ranged combat battles

which take careful account of the distance between you and your opponents. Finally, the game's legs and movements excellent value for money.

• **ACE RATED 100**

BEYOND ZORK

Electronic Spectrum
£24.95 • Amiga £24.95 • CD £24.95 • Atari £24.95 • Spectrum £24.95 • 9500 £24.95

Blizzard's attempt to recapture on the role-playing market is a great success. Like all the fabulous Wizard of Zork in a game that combined the wit and ingenuity of one of the world's most original software companies with state-of-the-art parsing and gameplay. Definitely not with an over-map mapping facility.

• **ACE RATED 100**

EDITOR'S LETTER

Letter from the Pink Pages Ed, who seems to have recovered his childhood after enjoying a holiday in London...

Dear Readers,

First as I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all those of you who've written in, and particularly Stephen Rogers, who had a few queries about my new Atari CPC 2088 2 Year floppy VCR machine. Stephen writes 'Could you please tell me more about the machine as it sounds very good. Well, Steve I know you don't mind me calling you Steve I feel as if we've good buddies already! It's a pleasure making the VCR floppy to good as my Amiga, and thought it's not so fast, it's almost as good as running games. When it ready with through, though, it's in the web department (ouch!) (Sausage!) Because I'm a considerably not-exactly perky without hardly ever having a floppy. Anyway, that's not being too forward - it's also worth to this machine anything like my Amiga or 684 or my Commodore 64? Well, Steve my answer is, if you like your CPC 2088 it's a sort of creamy colour (probably called Mellow) but in April it's a well-known catalogue somewhere with you mean it, it costs you CPC 2088, it is an Amiga, which you Commodore use it, so that means the 64 is out. Then again, my Great Aunt Ethel has an Amiga (most recent system) and it's NOT like that! She didn't stand a chance of my Amiga as I had my spots read too, OKed!

I'm sorry to your last question, the very lady who models the ACE T shoe is called Roger-Singer to her friends and I've seen what her neighbours, but she says she doesn't have a candidate.

Now these letters coming, apparently I've got to start my legs from now on!

P.S. My VCR machine is FAR better than any ST, Amiga, Macintosh or Copic, so if you've bought one of those 'redundant' machines, you must be completely thick and stupid (not to mention quite a bit overly too probably).



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ACE/CRL COMPO WINNERS

Time to announce the results of the fabled ACE/CRL compo! We set you five Ladies-questions (What's a Roman and What's Greater 2000 for? Who Built Hadrian's Wall? Where is Caesar's Palace? And what sort of Centurion carries a staff of Justice. If you wanted to be really boring you'd have answered something like a wren, a pig, then, Hadrian, Luc Regus and a tank, John Milton, North-North-west, a cat, Caesar, he answered, What? I don't know a wren, helping us to elect US Presidents, Hadrian's builders, next to Caesar's garden and a smart one. The five winners who made a copy of the superb Comp On Film Carry-On Cdn plus a copy of the game help awarded with a mix of seriousness and humour are: Michael Worby, Newton Lytch; David Simpson, London; Matthew Woodard, Charlotte, N.C.; Stevenmark, I. Dixie, Sutton. The 10 second runners up who each receive a copy of the 7 Ladies game are: Ian Greening, Malvern; G. Reeves, South, West London; Steve De Quares, Bournemouth; G. Mace, Bournemouth; Simon Matthews, Gillingham Kent; G. Caldwell, Remsey; M Roberts, Devon; J. Lewis, Devon.

ACE RED HOT TIPS SECTION

Here it is folks! Red Hot computer tips to make your life much easier, more bearable, lively, interesting and pleasant.

Giving the disks into the drive means they never get out unscrutinized, thus protecting you and saving a frighteningly high score. **R. Kaminan, Oxford.**

To avoid embarrassing yourself after you've bragged about how good you are at a game, only do go and do some something less than stellar job, most that anyone who watches you must wear a lightbulb headset. **S.P.O. Creep.**

Send those poor broken computer away - remove the coding and install the words to the side of your TV, then tell your neighbour to come and see your new Televisive Recording Publishing Demofacilitating Computer. They are forced to be so impressed they'll probably want to buy it off you for about £400. **D. R. Kaminan, Oxford.**

When you've bought a few games, remove all the covers, labels and so on and tape them out on pieces of blank paper out to the same size - if you include message tape then you are Barry, you

covered the lot for us please! From Mr. Tally, Japan's bright highlighter pens before putting them back in the case all your friends will think you've been sent personal copies of games to evaluate for very large corporations. You'll certainly win that prize and money and they would probably be too too scared to challenge you to a high score contest. **S.P.O. Creep.**

If Barry, you're a parent who thinks your son spends too much time playing computer games and not enough time cleaning his room, by writing a simple room cleaning game for him to play on his computer - this may well get the message across, that cleaning can be as much fun as playing games. **T.Y. Spies, Chester, Woddy, (Mr.).**

When challenging to a high score contest by a friend, avoid that you get lost and that you can only play without someone looking over your shoulder. Use a score sheet, tape into the game and give yourself

helping at two magazines (ACE) words will into two separate cylindrical shapes (see diagram) and securing them fast with heavy duty tape (first individuals, then together) before making holes in one end and attaching string to them and tang them over your head, will provide you with a very cheap pair of "Broomage". These are a slightly modest offer for any serious gamer/player. **S.P.O. Creeping.**



200 lines, then when you finally die, you'll have a very large score sheet for your friend what you've done though! **S.P.O. Creep.**

Remember always a good letter and essential an accessory for the serious gamer/player a set of "Broomage" maybe, you must remember to include them before going down to the corner shop as it's difficult to see occurring traffic without theft and

knagged lead investments. **S.P.O. Brooming Library.**

After looking into a game to give yourself 200 lines a high score contest with a friend, DON'T pick a game that normally gets you 200 lines. **S.P.O. Creep.**

Thanks to everyone who sent in tips - we if Barry receive any more games with the game on

NIGEL FROM RIGEL

By Dave Bowden



ACE PRIZE PUZZLE 15

Set by Archie Medes

TRANSFERWORDS

Transferwords is a new game in which four letter sequences are transferred into three letter sequences by the following method:

First, write down any four letter sequence, for example W H I P, and under each letter write its alphabetical position. Below this add together each pair of numbers and if the sum is greater than 26 then subtract 26. This will leave you with three numbers or, usually write down the letter found at that position of the alphabet. These four letters then are shown below:

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| Write down a four letter sequence | W | H | I | P |
| Place its alphabetical position | 23 | 14 | 18 | 16 |
| Add each pair of numbers | | 37 | 36 | 34 |
| Subtract 26 where necessary | | 11 | 10 | 8 |
| Convert numbers back to letters | | A | C | H |

This produces the word ACE from the initial sequence of letters. Using the game one stage further, suppose that we transfer AC to the four and three letter sequences to be acceptable English words or names. For example, we will find that ACE will become ACE and CACH becomes CACH. In some personal note we find that WHEAT forms WHE on ACE, and that WHE is just from ACE. Some results are quite surprising as we find an ACE with LUCK, as well as ALP from LARD and even HEE from WHE on ACE.

The question is, how many can you find in all? Out of all the words that you are able to discover on a sheet of paper, attach the entry form with the number of words that you are finding, clearly marked. The number of the longest list of what are acceptable to be acceptable words, will win the monthly prize.

ACE PRIZE PUZZLE ENTRY FORM

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SOLUTION TO ACE PUZZLE 13

The treasure was beneath the 17th stair on the 20th floor. The last total of the digits on this and the surrounding squares is 63, the maximum that can be obtained on a 99 x 99 grid.

SOLUTION

The programming takes only two sections. Lines 100 to 100 create the numbers 99 x 99 grid, while lines 200 to 200 evaluate the total of each 1 x 1 grid of squares. The information about each element of the grid, e.g. 008 009 010 however, this requires enough memory to store information on each of the 99 by 99 squares, and so most likely this will be 1-1 bytes to store each of these values, instead of 256 of memory available required. To conserve memory a string array is therefore used. The only 256 byte being required per element under 1000.

In the program, line 110 defines the initial values of the variables. It is the counting sequence, while 1 and 1 represent positions in the grid. Each value of it is converted to a string variable to enable each digit to be taken in turn. These are then fed, in order, into the end of the appropriate string in the array (line 140). Once the length of this string has exceeded 99, line 100 is then executed to the next cell in the array and moves 1 to 1. At this point, the string is printed out so that the user can check. A flag is set to zero if the current value could be smaller than 11 when the value of 1 exceeds 99, i.e. the grid is filled. The counting of the flag terminates this section of the program immediately (lines 200 and 200). Even 110 is hidden through the loop 99.

The final part of the program computes the values of each 1 x 1 arrangement within the larger grid. It variable 100 is used to keep a track of each new maximum score. These being printed out as they are found, together with their 1, 1 locations. The last set of digits to appear will be the required total.

THE LISTING

```
100 DIM C(99)(99) AS STRING: S=NUMBER 200
110 S=1: X=1: Y=1
120 W=STR$(99): F=0: G=0
130 FOR I=1 TO LBOUND(W)
140 W=AMOUNT$(W)+STR$(99)+Y+1: G=1
150 G=1: I IF G=99 THEN PRINT G: G=1: Y=Y+1: G=1
160 IF Y=99 THEN F=F+1: Y=99: G=0
170 NEXT Y
180 IF F=0 THEN PRINT 200
190 F=F+1: G=1: Y=1
200 FOR C=0 TO 99: S=0: X=0: Y=0: T=0
210 W=AMOUNT$(W)+1: T=99: F=0: Y=0
220 I=AMOUNT$(99)+X+1: S=AMOUNT$(S)+I: I=1: Y=AMOUNT$(99)
230 I=1: S=AMOUNT$(99)+I: I=1: Y=AMOUNT$(99)+I: I=1: Y=AMOUNT$(99)+I: I=1: Y=1
240 IF T=99 THEN PRINT T: T=0
250 NEXT C: NEXT F
```

The formatted entry set of this puzzle came from Geoffrey Taylor of Bath, 10/10/82.

NIGEL FROM RIGEL

By Dave Stouden



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GAME DESIGNING

● Game designing – what does it involve? How do you do it? What are the pitfalls? Can just anyone do it? These questions and loads more are about to be answered as Jon Rigger brings us a mini series that unravels the mysteries.

Game designers: a rare bunch of creatives whose programming ability is often limited to "16 BIT" "TRU-BIT MUSIC," "GOTO 'N'," people who spend all day scribbling away inventing new space opera worlds with story arcs galas that inevitably end up being called Cyber-mattings; people who sit on beaches writing on the backs of cigarette packets and listening to Philip Glass for "inspiration"; people who manage to name themselves a nice little niche in the obscure software industry by using their imagination. No, could you do it? Let's leave the nuts-of-gal design and try to get a software house interested...

Starting out as a total unknown can be a daunting prospect, so don't start it. There are several recognized methods to go about the process of creating your own game, and of course one of them just isn't a strategy of last...

The first method involves sitting down and letting through your imagination to come up with an idea. This is where the first mag starts through the door, what happens if the busy old guy makes time a bit and only responds to all requests with HELLO? Is a few too many lines the right letters? Well, that's hard but let's leave that to software houses aren't going to be making money to start with, so if you just have to come up with an idea, no matter how long it takes, this can be used to a certain extent if you have been exposed to large amounts of software and frequent usage of users. If this is the case, then you should know what this of game has already been successfully programmed and this will give you some pointers as to which direction to lead your thoughts.

Hard though it may be, you will have to start an original idea commercially viable game before a company will even take a call. At the end you should be prepared to document your design fully, including full colour maps and descriptions although there's no need to provide a programmed demo.

Documenting software houses is boring, disappointing and annoying. Lots of you will read philosophies in a publishing house which tend with the style of game. Do not send your designs to Hit Joe's Software Company who operate 500-0's a garden shed, as you might well be using. How far you protect your design? It's your first attempt it's probably not worth paying to take out a copyright on the (writing yourself) or even utilizing the methods used or prior to no longer a valid method, so don't.

Another developer and much more satisfactory way of putting your thoughts is to send a confidentiality agreement to the software company. In this document, which should be typed,

photocopied and signed by both parties with you keeping the original, make it clear that you want the company to keep all correspondence strictly confidential and that all work written returned to its rightful owner upon completion of correspondence. State that you don't want the design distributed, duplicated by hand, altered, deleted in any way without the prior knowledge and consent of the author and so on. Make the document legally binding upon signature.

Such an agreement is legally binding and although it may seem to be a waste of time, it could turn out to be a golden rule software house refused to be using (and try to rip you off. Once you get the signed agreement back in your hands, send a SIMPLE of the design, by the first couple of weeks, to the company. This way, if the company are interested they will contact you to see the real. At the same time they may well start taking CONTACTS which is when you start taking MEETINGS and SOLUTIONS.

The power of software is all very well so long as the software house has actually responded to your original enquiry. It's a real test of the Number One that some of the major software houses won't. Others will, but it may take some time, so be patient. The whole process can be speeded up dramatically if you have

contacts. Contacts is word that may well send dozens of design along the ways of normal custom. How are I going to establish contacts? you may wonder. Well, another fact of the Number Two – hope you're taking notes is that for the most part, successful designers are often contacts supplementing their design houses, programmers also do their own designs or people with contacts in the '90'. People with contacts can often pick up on the phone and cut out all the correspondence by hand, both is the.

Designers who have no contacts and get no response from the software houses to post and find themselves presented with the "I'm sorry but I'm a meeting" messages on the phone may well want to check it all in at the point, if they think like you then perhaps the only solution left to go (apart from hard perseverance) is to behind a programmer and you could even form a team, but remember that most of the Number Three the majority of programmers today create their own designs, which is hardly surprising when you consider that around 10% of all payments for a game go directly to the designer with programmer's often getting as little as 10%.

New month find out the best way to go up and present the design in a file for evaluation.



■ The MonProse team caught off-guard, trying to run off with the ball.

FUTURE GOALS SINK THE 'PROSE

MonProse make theirs a pretty mean bunch of footballers, so this challenge some of our tasks is a game of five a side. The venue: Stroud. The date: April 13th. The time: in the evening. What you can see now is our on the spot penalty spot reporter the PenProse.

The match got off to an interesting start with MonProse being in field seven players against Future's five – it was decided that even 'Prose couldn't try this tactic, so one of their players had to join the Future team. Once the match was underway the 'Prose soon realised that trying to get a half past seven goals (one failure) meant of Action 400 (three) was going to be their only chance of winning the game. Computer Operator's New Editor and Striding under Cain Campbell to shoot the wrong way and score an own goal. From Graham (ACE) Editor Steve Camp Director's Editor (Editor and Richard Maxwell (IT/Avigo) Editor's Editor) all supported themselves in their roles of players, defenders, wingers and strikers. Even when the set

back the first white pen a stop to MonProse's hammer with the ball score reaching 11 goals to Future and a disaster 2 for MonProse. The following day at MonProse's PR Manager and the player could say yes. "We're not as good as you. We were completely outplayed by a team that shouldn't be – mind you, we only practised by playing MonProse earlier so we could only make it eight directions and make some shots." A little more from MonProse, and we'll have it, anyway, why not challenge our best team team? So our take home, sports, formation drawing, shots or individual teams...

■ The Future team celebrates a fine victory.





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For tech help with **Dungeons Master, Space Quest II and Ultima III** Lamp in the
Land of the Magic Library, Write to Games, Maple Lodge, Blythwood,
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Help required in **Man of Steel (Archie)** - Is there another commander out there
who has created the defector? I cannot seem to do anything but get some
Copper use manual override to not attack angles in order to skip facilities - in
short, am not much of a commander, despite my eagerness to go over to the
good 'ol US of A.

Send me off from the very beginning and be gentle with me! All letters
answered but remember - I am an absolute beginner so no complications,
please! IFC 0128 (this number - J. J. Collins, 9 West 3rd Street, Halifax,
Surrey, GU9 5PZ).

Help offered with: **Zork 1, Zork 2, Zork 3, Beyond Zork, Endgame,
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or phone 0895 7104 (between 7.30pm and 9.00pm Mon - Sat).**

Help given with - **The Pawn, Justice, Guide of Wizard, Leather Goddesses of
Phobos, Sorcerer, Cathedral Caves, Zork 1**. I will send hints to specific problems,
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I can give help on all of the following Commodore 64 software: **Lords of
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Footies, (Hogan, Special Operations. All the hint sheets are at least a double A5
page and many are colour inserts. Where maps in colour are written, a large
collection of hints are also included. £ 5 Hardy, 22 Pri Tree Drive, Wals,
Sussex, BN1 8LZ.**

I have a game called **Forest of Doom**, with its own book. This is an adventure
game for the C64 and I am having great trouble solving it. If any one can help
then please write to me. I have a game called **Mission** on tape with no
instructions or anything. Can any one help? Stephen Morgan, 48 Railway walk,
Bucks, Kent SA9 5LL.

Need help on solving **The Hobbit, The Wizard's Adventure, Heroes of Karn,
Centa Coins, Never Ending Story, Bravely or After Shock?** Just send an S4E to
Tim J. Braxton, 478 Malvern Road, Newton-CB 96WZ, UK.

Help! Desperately seeking the way to open Steve's Safe at the end of **The Trap
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much they are and how I may purchase them. Tony Newton, PO Box 277
Guldford, W94 Australia.

Help wanted with **Dungeons Master**. Any hints, maps, spells, solutions to puzzles
appreciated level four onwards please. Write to Andy 24 Moorbank Drive, Hagger-
ston, Woking, Surrey, GU24 0PZ.

Help! Can anyone help me with **ADVENTS** - the best adventure writer by David
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PBM CORNER

Lated release from the McGraw-Hill is a game called *Archie*. If you just said "what", then you probably don't know that the AD has been going for over a year now with a couple of games including the famous WPC *Archie* Of The Many-Flagged Blue-riding Museum Tiger Hoards. From Outer Space (or 8075888 88 88) for the US, *Archie*, MGA's a hard-voiced, computer-made card game based on an exciting television series. Because of their success, the AD are looking to take on some more GMs. If you fancy moving to Oxford and receiving a competitive but not high wage job, please contact us for more details (0800 000 000) or a free of cost more info about *Archie* sent on the following address:

McGraw-Hill, PO Box 114,
Kingston, Surrey, GU1 2YU

And by the way, Project Boston, PO Box 31, Gloucestershire, Kent will have just launched a new game by the time you read this, called *Battle Grid*. Each game has 100 players, each controlling two vehicles, with 1000 independent units with two in each game. Start up costs cost £1.00, with a low price of £1.20. Contact Project Boston for further info.

EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT HAMSTERS, BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK...

★ Part two in our series of probably quite a few about animals.

Hamsters have been around for millions of years, but did you know that about 1000 hamsters are obtained from one family which was discovered in Naples, Italy in 1807? Amazing but true. Although hamsters come in various colours it's still the Golden Hamster.

Microsatellites (mutated) - first introduced in the UK in 1981 - made the most popular. An average adult is 10cm (4 inches) long and its all round, its hamster that constantly grow despite its small size. It's usually kept in a cage with plenty of bedding and becoming a habit for its health. Hamsters like wooden housing but rather than straight and flat

animals these in a side start, usually between 1000 months though many factors make it through the first year. The Golden Hamster is by far the most common and all round four tooth eyes but there are three shades of fur: Normal, Dark and Light. Cross-breeders often have Golden eyes in that the coat colour is constant but the eyes vary and you can get Red-eyed Cream, Red-eyed Cream and Black-eyed Cream. They like to see variety in the diet, but Dark and Light Grey. There are also two varieties of Albino and one White Hamster.

The word Hamster comes from the German

word hamster, meaning to hoard. Best feeding time is the evening when hamsters are becoming active. They have nocturnal tendencies and an adult requires about 15g of food every 24 hours as well as a plentiful supply of fresh water. Hamsters eat powdered grains and live powdered seeds though don't give them too many because of the high oil content. To ensure a hamster's continuing good health, it must get regular exercise in a cage as part of its life. Cabbage, lettuce, water, corn, slices of apple, carrot, bread and tinned peas are all allowed with variety. The hamster likes, and certain species of wild

plants are greeted with enthusiasm: Dandelion, clover, chickweed and rose petals.

Hamsters have a very short pregnancy term - between 15-18 days - the size of a normal rat being between 2.5 through three of yours. It has been recorded, like all living things, hamsters are born in relation to food and so always remember to wash your hands before and after handling, keep to being sanitary clean and ensure it always has enough fresh food and water. You must handle a hamster if you're suffering from a cold but be because you can pass the infection only the parent.

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As reviewed in *ST Action* (December 1988)

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The BLITTER END

MOVE OVER SIGUE SIGUE SPUTNIK



Aging industry figures — or should that be industry wannabes? — recently lapped off on a jaunt to sunny SoCal mulling darkly about holding a conference to set the software industry to rights. Our sources reveal that it was little more than an ego-massaging expedition, an opinion backed up by this jolly snapshot of a group of conference attendees slipping off to pose as sisters spectators...

One of the quartet is our very own industrious Editor, the two guys in front of the jeep are from Queen while the guy in the striped shirt was some peasant chauffeur hired for the day. Now here's a little Blitter competition, an ACE T-shirt is on offer together with a copy of Queen's Run The Gauntlet for your machine — all you have to do is decide what you would call a band made up of their four characters if you had the misfortune to be their manager. Write to us here at Blitter End, ACE, 4 Queen Street, Bath, BBA1 1EJ and the wristed entry to arrive before 5th June collects the prize.

OOPS CORNER

Biggest oops of last month (how business and occurred on this very page). With a host full of sailors, Blitter board file magazine's new game aboard as Navy, losses instead of Navy Sea. And of course Squaresoft software house Demarc have been working on Navy Moves for years, and is about to release it any day now. It's a magical spell of good time...

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Employed ACE readers of many issues' standing will no doubt recognise the man in this suit as our erstwhile Advertising Manager John Deales. Why is he posing behind a TV screen in a specially-made suit? To announce his latest business venture, that's why, we hear.

Blitter End can now exclusively reveal that our John is in fact about to market sets of giant dominos targeted at the hard-of-hearing. So far initial prototypes of the double one dominos have been manufactured — hence the arrival of this stunning PR snapshot. Within weeks double orders should follow, with the rest of the set due by the end of the year...

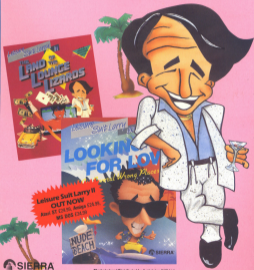


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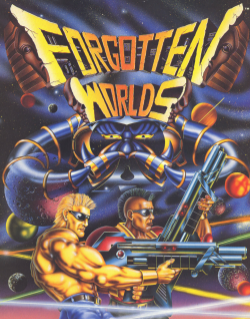
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