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 Parkersburg, W. Va. 26101  
 (304) 426-1600

**CLASSIFIED INFORMATION**  
 Software Company, 100 Parkway Dr. N.  
 Piquette Farm, Shelby, OH

**TYPESETTING**  
 CPT, 74 South High Street, SE1

**DISTRIBUTION**  
 (UK) EMAP Fulfillment, Park House, 1 Park Road,  
 Parkersburg, W. Va. (204)

**PRINTING**  
 Brown Water Press, Cambridge

**ISSN 0951-0171**  
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## THE ACE TREATMENT

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## TRAINS, PLANES, AUTOMOBILES... AND TANKS



Heavy metal gets up steam with Railcoat 3000 (page 32), steams the skies in Microsoft's P15 war-up (page 18), battles rubber in JetB marks from OSS (page 64), and gets all tanked up in the definitive ACE feature on armoured warfare (page 65).

# WALK TALL,

# THE RACE IS ON

CD games technology took one step closer this month with Microsoft's announcement (see page 88) that they are to be developing CD titles for release in 1991. Some of these titles will be produced through a joint-venture agreement with Cinemasoft for the development of new technology. But what about other UK companies? The CD ROM games revolution is rapidly approaching and the launch of CD-I in this country is now exactly a year away. Commodore and (reportedly) Atari are working on CD systems. It's all go... Except, that is, for the software houses (Microsoft accepted). It's understandable that software should be reluctant to develop for a market that doesn't yet exist, but let's not forget that these titles will be development intensive and could take many months to produce. UK companies know this - they are already busy developing titles for existing CD platforms (MCD and FM Towns) to ease their transition to the new technology. British companies MUST follow suit as quickly as possible if they are not to be left behind in the race to dominate tomorrow's games market. Those who can't go it alone should look for partnerships either with the US or other UK companies - otherwise the world's most inventive software industry could be heading for a fall.



Screen shot from game designed and developed by page 88.

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There's a new CD Walkman on the streets. And Impressions have got three for lucky ACE readers to celebrate the launch of Millennium Plus 90 prizes for runners-up.

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Don't forget the ACE Stockmarket - the best charts around AND the chance to buy yourself some prizes.

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# ACE NEWS

ST-CO BEING DEVELOPED, NEW SOFTWARE LABELS, UNSUNG HEROES

## ATARI DEVELOPING CD-ST

Atari is currently developing a CD device for the ST at its hardware engineering facilities in Sunnyvale, California. No details are available at present, but a machine is likely to be launched in the autumn.

An Atari spokesperson confirmed, "We're developing a range of hi-tech gadgets in the States," but denied that Atari is currently working on a CD-ST. "Atari will have a CD device when the market is interested."

Atari showed its own "hi-tech gadget" to over 90 software developers at a special five-day conference held in Oxfordshire last month. These STX and Lynx software developers have all signed strict non-disclosure agreements, leading ACE to believe that has something special up its sleeve.

Atari's archival is also developing a CD-ROM based around an existing 16-bit micro. Although the Amiga Baby CD machine has yet to be publicly announced or seen, Commodore showed a working model to software developers at last year's Winter CES show in Las Vegas. Commodore is still denying its existence to the press.

Baby is a totally revised version of the Amiga 4800, going in the most basic look of a piece of Japanese hi-tech. It has a built-in CD-ROM drive with a storage capacity of over 500MB of data, allowing you to store in the region of 800-1000 games files on a single compact disc. All Baby games are enhanced versions of standard Amiga titles with CD-quality music and sound effects. Like similar CD-ROM systems, such as the Fujitsu P98 Series and NEC PC Engine, you can also use the Baby's CD device to play ordinary music CDs. Baby even retained connections for mouse, joystick and keyboard. The standard system won't be supplied with a keyboard, and some of the standard 4800 ports have also been stripped off. This is because Commodore is pitching the Baby as a new home entertainment system, not a micro - it's aiming to create a new market.

Baby is expected to be on sale in the autumn for approximately £499 for the basic model. The wireless keyboard will cost another £30. Commodore recently held an Amiga Baby software developers conference in London involving major UK games publishers, so hopefully the system will have a wealth of software titles available for it at launch.

## COIN-OP COMPANIES CREATE CONSOLES

Following the success of Sega with its games consoles and SNK's recent launch of the dual cartridge/ROM-MEGABO games system, other leading Japanese coin-op manufacturers are rumoured to be working on their own consoles for the home market. If these companies do produce their own machines it would revolutionise the home console sector - it could even shake up the mighty Nintendo.

Information is very scarce at present, nobody is willing to openly talk about their future development plans, but ACE has managed to uncover details on at least one new console prototype.

Data East - the arcade firm responsible for RoboCop, Dragon Ninja and Rangi-Fu Master - is said to be working on a conceptual 16-bit console with the best graphics display ever produced on a home-based system. Unfortunately no exact specifications, price or release date details are available at present.

ACE will keep you informed of further developments in future reports, so watch this space. In the meantime, exclusive details of the revolutionary MEGABO games system appear on page 35...

## NEC PLANS £99 PC ENGINE

After months of speculation, NEC is finally going to officially launch its own PC Engine console in the UK. The price is expected to be £99; the release date is set for late summer. At present, the PC Engine is sold in this country by unofficial grey importers - without

any endorsement from NEC itself.

The PC Engine was released in Japan about two years ago and went on sale in the States last year under the name TurboGrafx. It's an 8-bit machine with advanced audio-visual hardware. Some of the PC Engine games are incredible, for instance *Alfy* and *Castles* are probably the best shooters you've ever seen on any home system. It also has an optional CD-ROM device and software.

The £99 price, sexy graphics, striking sound and superlative games certainly make the Baby an attractive purchase in the short-term, but the quiet nature of the Japanese PC Engine market may be a damaging long-term factor in terms of future software and peripheral support for the console.

## ELECTRO-COIN LAUNCHES SOFTWARE DIVISION

Electrocoin, the largest European arcade manufacturer, has setup a software division to produce home software on home formats.

The first title to be released is *Time Soldiers* by SMI, the Japanese coin-op company responsible for *Star Wars*, *Dead Soldiers* and the new MEGABO games system. A scroll-shooter, *Time Soldiers* is being converted to ST, Amiga and C64 - with Spectrum and CPC versions currently under consideration. Electrocoin Software is trying to exploit each machine's particular strengths, for instance the Amiga version includes simultaneous two-player control and multi-directional scrolling. In addition, extra features not found in the coin-op original have been incorporated to enhance the gameplay such as score levels and bonus graphics.

Although initial releases will



Jumping from the back of the BT Time Soldiers...

be coin-op conversions, Electrocoin Software hopes to develop original titles in the future. This could eventually lead to original microcassette Electrocoin Software being converted over to coin-format - though this requirement has yet to enter any significant degree of serious.

Luther De Gale, director of Electrocoin Software explained why the firm is now looking to build an in-house software development department, "We pay a software development company to improve their skills".

## LOGOTRON GAINS MILLENNIUM



Logotrons' mascot gives you a glimpse of the new release!

Logotron Entertainment - the producer of *Archipelago*, *ROR* and *StarRay* - has launched a new entertainment label dealing with arcade, adventure, fantasy, sci-fi, simulation and strategy games.

MILLENNIUM will publish games on C64, ST, Amiga and PC while releases are possible in the evolving console and handheld markets. The first three releases due are *Cloud Kingdoms*, *Resurrection 3D* and *ThunderStrike*, inspired by *Bubble Bobble* and *New Zealand Story*. *Cloud Kingdoms* is an eight-way scrolling colony platform arcade adventure by Geni Games, the programmer of *Fractalus Droid* and *Empirement*. While *Resurrection 3D* is a futuristic vehicle simulation featuring the 3D vector and sprite graphics routines first used in *Archipelago*. Finally *ThunderStrike* is a polygon 3D arcade

game inspired by the classic Defender and programmed by the Brian Phillips who was previously responsible for Atari's most controversial.

## MINDSCAPE HOUSE PARTY

Are you a talented games programmer, graphic artist or musician? Do you want to work for a leading US software company with offices situated in a picturesque town in France? Well, if so, Mindscape is looking for skilful game developers to join its new in-house team.

Phil Harrison, Software Development Manager at Mindscape, told ACE, "We'll have four teams producing projects for the ST, Amiga, PC and Nintendo". Although 3-64 titles will initially be handled by freelance programmers, there are plans to bring some conversions in-house in the future. Harrison added, "We're looking for new people and are willing to train them up if necessary". If you're interested and think you're just what it takes, send examples of your work to Phil Harrison, Software Development Manager, Mindscape International Limited, PO Box 10725, Lewis, East Sussex TN39 4DN, Alkamately, telephone 0444 802445 and ask for Phil Harrison.

## SOFTWARE'S UNSUNG HEROES

Let's take time-out to go behind the scenes and talk to software's "unsung heroes", the guys that help the development of a game but are rarely thanked - in our

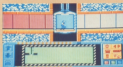


Brian Thompson (left), Steve Thomson (middle) and Jason Dalton (right) at their way to a launch event for the Omega.

issue - to their extensive efforts. They can be found in every software developer around the world. Let's talk to the graphics designer and games tester.

Brian Flanagan (18), Steve Thomson (18) and Jason Dalton (17) are three friends who just happen to work for Ocean.

## RUNNING THE SEGA GAUNTLET



Sega Master System's Impossible Mission: another classic, Sega's finest.

65 Gold is putting the finishing touches to its first games on the Sega Master console, Gauntlet and Impossible Mission. Both games are 128K cartridges and have taken about seven months to develop using a custom-made development system.

Gauntlet on the Sega is being written by Tony Porter, who also wrote the Spectrum and CPC conversions of this classic side-scroller. In fact he used his original source code to write the Sega version. Gauntlet is a simultaneous two-player arcade adventure set in a multi-dimensionally scrolling maze populated with ghosts, demons and an unpleasant character called Death who can only be killed with a magic spell. It's all memory fun with you playing a Wizard, Dr. Wanker or Vampire.

Jason Porter, a programming Sega Impossible Mission, he's using the C64 version as a guideline. He even hopes to imitate the C64 and speech board in the C64 original. Impossible Mission was originally developed by Epyx in the States, and it became something of a C64 classic after its release in 1985. The game is a mixture of puzzle and platform action.



Sega's Impossible Mission: the Sega Master conversion of Epyx.

1,500x400, 256x128 screen, three sound channels plus note generation, 64 colour palette, 64 sprites (either 8x8 or 8x16 size limited to 8 per line), sprites have 15 colours plus transparent, max. 32 colours on screen at once, 64K character blocks, two 16 colour character palettes, hardware assisted horizontal and vertical scrolling, you can horizontally and vertically fire a character, you can set an character above or below sprite priority, plus sprite to sprite collision detection.

Flanagan and Thomson are graphic designers and Dalton is a games tester, copy, technical adviser. When they're not playing games in the Ocean programming department, they're out in the local arcade testing bonus levels in the latest compo. And when they're not playing games, they're clubbing "round Manchester's capital nightclubs. Not a bad life, eh?"

Flanagan and Thomson are currently working on the C64 graphics for Operation Thunderbolt. Flanagan is influenced by Japanese art in comics and



Bob Gleadow (left) - who's writing Gauntlet on the Sega Master console, Tony Porter and Tony Porter (right).

animated cartoons, "I like the way the sticks are drawn", whereas Thomson, "just gets ideas from me".

Both artists are imp-motivated with them, the compo manufacturer responsible for it. "You've got the best graphics team in the business". Dalton was an adviser for a software technician at

the local Job Centre last year. "I'm a keen games player so I thought it might suit me". As a technical adviser Dalton plays a game at least once a week, but he can get, that's another legs, health, sporting, mistakes, play-ability and difficulty levels.

The programmer sorts out any problems before the game is sent off for duplication. Dalton typically spends between 40-50 hours testing a game. He also answers questions from the gameplayer, on any Ocean title.

All three agree that working for Ocean is brilliant. "It's a terrific atmosphere, you can even have a laugh with the boss".

## ATARI RELEASES £299 ST PACK

Atari has launched a new bundle package for its popular ST1M 16-bit workstation. The £299.99 Discovery Pack comes with four games - Career Command (Warren), Ocean 625 Gold, Space Harrier and Rampage (Epyx), Master's 3700 games writing language, ST BASIC, Newsroom art program, ST Tour and tutorial and Discovering Your ST book.

Bob Gleadow, Atari's UK boss told ACE, "We're aiming the Discovery Pack heads at the first time user, in fact we're looking to take some volume from the 544 market - £299 is a very affordable price-point".

The Discovery Pack should be in the stores as you read this, the existing £499 ST1M Power Pack will still continue to be sold. The ST is the enhanced version of the ST featuring improved graphics and sound hardware coupled with greater expansion possibilities.

A full and frank exclusive ACE interview with Bob Gleadow appears on page 15.

animated cartoons, "I like the way the sticks are drawn", whereas Thomson, "just gets

ideas from me". Both artists are imp-motivated with them, the compo manufacturer responsible for it. "You've got the best graphics team in the business". Dalton was an adviser for a software technician at

A new package of ST software from Atari.



# THE ACE DEBATE...

## SOFTWARE LICENSING - GOOD OR BAD?

**W**elcome to a new section in ACE, a section which you are actively encouraged to participate in. Every month we will choose a controversial subject connected with Advanced Computer Entertainment and ask leading industry figures for their opinions on the matter. You will then be offered the chance to contribute to the debate via a letterphone vote. The results of which will be printed in the following issue of the magazine. Welcome to the ACE DEBATE.

We've decided to kick off the ACE Debate with a subject that has roused quite a storm in recent months - the subject of software games licensing; when a software company will tie in a game with the latest film, TV show, book or cartoon.

### THE CASE FOR

Ocean Software has been one of the most prolific companies in the field of licensing games software. In fact it started off the whole idea in 1983, when it gained the official home computer conversion rights to the *Manchurian Candidate*. Since those early days Ocean has produced a variety of licensed games from the madcap *Flight Rider* and *Street Hawk* to the likes of *Pitof the Immovable*. More recently, the firm has enjoyed considerable success with *Batman - The Movie* and *The Untouchables*. Gary Bracey, Software Development Manager at Ocean, explained the benefits of licensed software:

**"I can't guarantee it will be the best software, but I can guarantee it will be enjoyable for those who buy it. And by putting it out we hope to grow the industry."**

*Paul Cole, Managing Director of this month, commenting on the fairly new range of licensed software*

"When you buy a license for a computer game you purchase a ready made logo profile for the game on the back of the marketing of the original product. When Johnnie's game goes into the shops, she asks for *Batman - The Movie* not *F25 Defender* because she's aware of the original *Batman* film



*Batman - The Motion East of the Sea* Ocean licensed game



*Street Hawk* game for Amiga, seen here for the first of Ocean's games

and its associated marketing. There's better impulse buying with licensed games. But you need a game title with quality and a profile. Licensing has been abused by many software companies in the past, although I don't think it has been so much lately. No one else has tried to market as safely a license market - they're the only types of games that seem to sell on 8-bit machines. It's difficult to sell an 8-bit product without a license profile. It's just a question of market trends.

"The disadvantages of software licensing are the huge costs involved, and sometimes you're offered a license which may not be suitable for conversion to a computer game. In the respect *Pitof* was a very hard game to produce. But the advantages of software licensing speak for themselves. *Robocop* was a computer game on celluloid.

"And there's one final point about licensing that many people forget - computer game licenses don't just borrow sales from the film business - they also borrow publicity, which helps to build our industry by establishing contacts with the entertainment giants, we're helping to give the games market a more assured future."

### THE CASE AGAINST

Mark Cole is the Managing Director of System 3, a software company that has produced a widely respected collection of original games including *The Last Ninja*,

*International Karate* and *It's*. But as far as Cole is concerned, with software licensing taking over the games market he "hates it as well give up today".

"A licensed game is a major impulse purchase for parents and other relations when buying their kids a game. They've heard of the film, and buy the game on the back of the huge overall marketing spend of the product. Although there's one or two companies producing decent licensed games, most just out and put out sets. *Batman - The Movie* was one of the few decent licensed games. It was far better than people were expecting. Gary Bracey at Ocean is one of the few people who knows what a good game is. The games market is now being dominated by licensing. It takes us three years to develop an original game like *Myth* - which is generally regarded as being the best original game on any 8-bit format. But *Myth* was one of our lowest selling

games ever because it was sold in a market dominated by licensed games.

"By filling the market, it stops innovation. The name is more important than the game. People are being coned. Even programmers are being exploited because of a lack of money, software companies pay so much for the license that there's no cash left to pay programmers royalties on the sales of the game. How many original software houses are left in the market now?"

"We will never do a licensed game. I believe in quality and innovation. Every original game must be fun, so try very hard to achieve this. Most people in this industry don't play games, they're just interested in making money. I'm one of the few Managing Directors that does actually enjoy playing games."

**"It's killing the market. It stops innovation. The name is more important than the game"**

*Mark Cole, Managing Director, System 3*

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

You've read the case for and against software licensing, so what is your opinion on the subject? All you have to do now is pick up the phone, dial a number, and register your vote.

**0898 400 788\* - "I think software licensing is a good thing and should continue."**

or

**0898 400 789\* - "I think software licensing is ruining the software games industry and should be stopped."**

The results of this survey will be announced in a future issue of ACE.

If you want to have a more detailed say on the subject of software licensing then please write to: ACE LICENCE DEBATE, Priority Court, 30-32 Farnington Lane, London E11 3AU. Alternatively fax us on 01-490 0281.

Also if you want to see a particular subject debated then write or fax the address and number above.

There are also other subjects which you can vote on, elsewhere in this issue of ACE.

\*Only one charge in My per minute peak, and 10p per minute off-peak. Lines are open 24 hours a day.

# ACE



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Screen shots from various versions.



It's a



**world!** The battle-scarred futuristic road warrior, dressed in leather and steel becomes a multi-format game from MINDSCAPE this Christmas. Mad Max © 1979, Warner Bros. Inc. All Rights Reserved. **The main rate**

**of CORPORATION TAX stayed**

**unchanged at**

**35% in last month's budget.**

**A** delicious programmer called Donk, a company best C64 games in the

on C64 and Amiga from Spectrum and ST

**On April 14th VIRGIN celebrates the 40th**

**anniversary of DAN DARE's debut in the Eagle Comic with the release of**

Lead on brave adventures: your



friends. Don Bluth's classic laser-disc adventure hits the Amiga

again courtesy of READYSOFT, INC./ENTERTAINMENT INTERNATIONAL in DRAGON'S LAIR ESCAPE FROM SINGES CASTLE priced at \$14.99/£8.



**on Spectrum, C64, CPC, ST, Amiga and PC.**

**“** In the depths of depravity, you must extinguish the roaring satanic flames of

Expect super sexy Steve Bak screen scrolling, pray for matching gameplay. FIRE AND BRIMSTONE from FIREBIRD



on ST/Amiga in May.

**D**o you feel lucky punk?

This is a



the most powerful hand-gun in the world, it can blow your head clean off. Harry Callahan, the toughest cop in the movie-history is out at Xmas from MINDSCAPE on Amiga, ST, PC and Nintendo.



# LETTER BOMBS

YOUR VIEWS ON ADVANCED COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

## ULTIMATE ULTIMA

I am writing to congratulate you upon your recent American issue. I was extremely pleased to see not only a review of *Knights of Legend* but also a preview of *Ultima VI*—on the cover no less. The *Ultima* series of games are clearly beloved in my area (*Ultima IV* and *V* are the best games in computing history, I hope that at least the two computer role playing game prize will become *prize*—the *Knights* series, *Forgotten Worlds* series and even *Dungeon Master* were all good games but lacked the essential ingredients of real RPG's: complex interaction with characters. The *Ultima*-style reward/construction are a fortunate attempt at the incorporation. CRPG fans so much more substance to them than the usual theme/racing, platform or arcade games—on the game designers in thought and games like *Ultima* and *Knights* will, undoubtedly, lead the way.

Anyway, I do hope that the 90's will popularize the strategy and turn-taking facets of computing—keep up the good work ACE and Brian. Not on *Ultima VI*!

Julian Rich, London

\*Plus, Ace.

## UNEMPLOYED? JOIN THE CLUB...

I would like to set up a user group to unemployed computer enthusiasts. My idea would be to set up a club to cater for all formats from the ST to the G4. Each of the formats would be divided into individual sections run by a small number of dedicated users. It possible there would then set up their own FO and education services. A newsletter would be produced bi-monthly including news, information from each individual section. I would also hope to include a *Champion Master/Class* (think *Rock* counts, users only, help column and a section for each of the computers.

To set up such a large User Group we would have to make a small charge to members to cover mailing, PG software, putting together and printing of the new letter. Although obviously intended for low income/unemployed users, any person who owns a computer is quite welcome to join (unemployed users will receive special benefits and concessions.

## ACE FEEDBACK



I have been reading your magazine, along with others, for several months now and while the others were not entirely a waste of money they are more than paid enough of the superiority of your magazine, particularly with regard to News. At the end of the Letters page of the 1996 American issue of ACE, you asked us for our views on the burning issues of the day like CD, CD-ROM, bandwidth, FM Towns, consoles, Digital Justice, PENDING, et al. Well, here's mine! I deeply apologize for the extreme length of this letter but remember you asked!

To begin with, I do not feel that CD will be with us, since Philips has flamed and flouted about with the launch for as long that companies are likely to skip "give it", not to mention that Philips have decided, rather foolishly, to position it at the business market—which is sure is not in the slightest bit interested in nonventilable media like CD, as Tim Mott of Electronic Arts correctly pointed out. I believe therefore that CD-ROM is the best format in this regard, though not in expensive machines like the *Towns*, which will be lucky to sell as many units as an *Amiga* if it ever makes it to our shores. The most we Brits can say is to the basic ST & *Amiga*, you must remember that Japan and America have more disposable income to spend on computers than we do, not to mention the fact that in America there are literally thousands of computer companies & dealers competing with each other. This means that the choice of product there is extensive and quite cheap. Who in this country would call the Macintosh a home machine? In America it is.

Over here I feel the biggest CD-ROM company will be NEC and its PC Engine—if they decide to sell it here—but generally I think it will be a great deal longer than you think before we are playing with CD machines & software that are reasonable in price and exploit the technology to the fullest. I believe it will be 10 years before we see (LJ&L?) for *Towns* games is NOT reasonable. In short, the price of CD hard & software has got to come right down. Sorry, but, it looks like you won't be asking your ST & *Amiga* just yet!

I am more optimistic about the future of consoles, although SRK are immediately in last place if they are going to sell their console at \$300 and cartridges at \$120, since you can buy your own computer for that, although 40-megabit carts are not to be sniffed at. The price point every console maker should reach for is \$150, any more than that and you are encroaching on computer territory—I find that this country is lagging in reviews of cheap VCS machines!

Also, another point to make is that, so far, the stuff for the *Megadrive* & the *Engine* have been mostly excellent, largely thanks to some masterly Japanese programming, and, especially more important, some extremely tough playtesting. Now that America and, very soon, Europe are entering the SuperConsole equation, can we expect their releases to be as good as the Japanese? Again, in my opinion, no largely because we do not playtest to the same matching degree as the Japanese, and when you think about it, we do not have their consistently high programming standards (sorry) the best. Think about it, you go around any European & American company and compare their standards of coding and playtesting with the Japanese and you'll see what I mean. Now, I am not saying that we and the *Towns* will not produce some mean bits of programming on the *Megadrive* & *Engine* that will be as good, if not better, than their longevity is our strongest suit, it's just that I believe that the Japanese will produce such marvels a little more often than us, thus ensuring that they remain the cutting edge of Super Consoles.

Pepe Moreno's Digital Justice game (sorry) sounds promising, although you did not elaborate on the play aspects of the product itself very much. To me, that sounds much more desirable than wasting time and money on the elusive computer movie. This is a path that requires further investigation—thus you are looking at one hefty bill for Digital Justice \$68, my congrats to Steve Moreno for such a wonderful concept. Lucantoni & Cosmic Osmo—set your heart out!

James McLean, Cambuslang, Glasgow

\*Bitter notes: First, Philips are releasing a home version of CD-i in 1991 (see *AIM* article in this issue) and they are currently putting top bucks behind home entertainment programs, it was DVI that was business-oriented. Second, remember how long it took for NCR's to achieve mass sales? Not as long as ten years, and the original entry level price was a lot higher in real terms than CD-i will be. ACE will be carrying its first proper CD-ROM review next month, and we expect to be printing them regularly within two years.

My main aim is wanting to set up this club first.

(2) To help generate contact between computer users regardless of the type of computer they use.

(3) To help dispel the "My computer is better than yours" syndrome.

(4) To promote home computing/computers as useful tools in every day life and not just for playing games on.

(5) To make life a little easier for unemployed/low income users, encourage involvement in their club, negotiate the best deals from software/PC houses and encourage the manufacturers to give better support to the users and their computers.

(6) Encourage members to put their computing skills to good use by holding competitions to solve problems. Providing information regarding courses. Providing any help required for learning new skills and extra development of existing ones. Providing users with the latest information regarding equipment and software.

(7) Help stamp out the destruction of data/files by viruses - informing users of the dangers of these nasty programs, prevention, that can be taken and setting up a virus checking/relief service.

(8) Make available PC software for as many of the formats catered for as possible. Distributing it as ready and as cheaply as possible. If any of your readers would like more information or would like to join this club please do not hesitate to write or phone.

**Paul Matthews,**  
2-4 West Pitco Crossway,  
Edinburgh, Scotland EH4 4EG.  
Telephone: 031 332 2206.

\* We wish you luck with your new venture, Paul, but please make sure your club doesn't get misused by software pirates. In the meantime we will be sending you some CD4 and ST games to help get you started.

## PRaise IN THE NEWSAGENTS

Last month whilst browsing through the magazines in my local newsagent, I picked up a copy of ACE. I was very impressed, especially with TNT. This and the general high standard of the reviews and other features persuaded me to buy your magazine. If ACE remains so good as issue 35, you'll have a permanent reader on your hands. Read on and keep it up.

**AJ Kirby, Malpas Wooding, Leics**

\* Thank you very much, welcome to the ACE club! Why don't you subscribe to the magazine?

## PLAY IT SOMETIME SAME

Is there any chance that you will be reviewing the MCT Sam Coupé? Is there going to be much software written for it, and when will they get into the shops?

**Michael Graham, Southdown, Beds**

\* See pages 27 and 28 in this issue for an in-depth look at the MCT Coupé. As far as software is concerned there are two sources. Firstly you can run about 75 to 80% of existing and new Spectrum releases. Second, there is a small amount of MCT specific software being written. At the moment, and there will be developed by MCT themselves and one of two other software houses. But don't expect to see a load of software for some time - the major software companies are not going to control themselves until sales of the machine take off.

## TNT FOR THE INTELLIGENT

I am pleased to see that recently TNT has been moving away from cheat modes to more thoughtful and intelligent game solutions. In particular, the in-depth article on *Battalion* last year, and more recently the piece on *Battacus - The Miner and Glass Striker*. Both have been worthy of special praise. ACE is catering for its reading material so far have been excellent, and for my part, I would like to step you to include more such pieces in what for me, is still the magazine of the year!

**TP Mearns, Ljapan, Plymouth**

\* Good, what can we say? Thanks!

## PAIRED PC PROBLEMS

I am very pleased to see that you are trying to promote the PC. But I have one small complaint. When a PC version is reviewed the computer used is a 386 with VGA and a sound card. This sort of computer is very good but also very expensive. Most people have a 286 PC with VGA and no sound card. If the machine used has better graphics, is faster, and excellent sound it is really a different machine. Therefore you are not reviewing a PC game, you are reviewing something else. I would prefer land so would many other people. If you would review games using an average PC computer.

**Matthew Bruce Sutton Goldfield West Midlands**

Dear magazine editor, why do you insist on carrying a great pain in my local news month? Although I admit your magazine is the best computer magazine in Britain, it does get constantly covered at the lack of detail when you review PC games. Unfortunately not all of the public own the 286 VGA level disk machine for which it seems you review all your PC games on.

**Ivan Stanfield, Olney, W. Yorkshire**

\* ACE promotes all aspects of Advanced Computer Entertainment. As far as PC games reviews are concerned, we play every game on several different models and system versions of PC including 286 at 6MHz, 286 at 10MHz, 286 at 20MHz, CD4, CD4/MULTIMEDIA graphics modes, no sound card, AHA and Astound sound card. We usually print only VGA or VGA screen shots because of a lack of space on the page.

## UNLEASHING PACKAGING

I would like to complain about something most software houses are guilty of - screen shots on the back of game packaging. When I buy a game for my CGA, I don't need to see the graphics of the Amiga or ST. I want to see them for my 64. Sometimes I see a game with Amiga screenshots that look great but when I load it up the graphics are nothing like it. *Rock Off* is a classic example. Great on the Amiga, not so good on the CGA.

**Alan Walsworth, Pigeon, Works**

\* Perhaps software companies would like to explain? We know our address and the number -

## GOLDEN HELP

In the April issue of your wonderful magazine, I noticed (ah, Edge wants a copy of Edge - indeed, I have a collection of *Magika* games, *Chastebird*, with five games on it, it is unused, and contains *Blagger*, *Light Empire*, *Killer War*, *Paris Planet* and *Magik Wizard*). If Mr Edge would like this, I would be prepared to sell it for ten £3.50 to cover postage and packing, and send it by return of post if I hear from him.

**Mr H Miller, 17 Sheridan Road, Manor Park, London E12 6DT.**

\* Ah, it's good to see our readers help each other.

## MEGA WEGA ISSUE

Please, please, let's have some more Mega Mega ACE issues like No.27.

**Clare Walker, Skellingthorpe, Lincoln**

\* We always try to make our mega, one month! Have it any other way.

## SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Associated with the facts in your April edition that the game *Omega* for the Amiga was CD Rom, I thought about it with your software store and asked for a copy. They told about laughing. I said it must be out. ACE magazine says so! They filled around the time I said *Omega*, right. I got the message, instead of *Have Conspiracy*, or *The Heart Hour*, or *Tower of Babel* - you should have them. ACE said they were all February releases. What the hells of decision had derided somewhat, they eyed their eyes, and made me promise to return soon, as they hadn't had so much fun for ages.

Oh I know! We can't blame you. You only put the info given to you to whoever. You're as pure as the driven snow in Midlands, and I don't intend to hold my breath for that release either. It seems to me that we punters (game buyers) have been letting go with this situation liberally for years, and it is time that the system was brought back into the reality of sanity and reality.

When all, I read a file or video review, I can almost guarantee that the goods are available, and the same applies for books and records. It makes little sense to print a review of a computer game that won't average well 2 to 4 months later. By that time, most buyers will have forgotten about it, and purchased an item that is out on time, and so the software houses lose customers. Serve them right.

The present system only exists because we the punters allow it to do so. Perhaps it is time that we all woke and realised that ours is the only arm of the entertainment industry that promises goodness in the form of adventure, interest, and stress, that in most instances, it is not yet ready to supply.

Finally, to show that I can contribute as well as complain, here is a useful cheat for *Fighter Bomber* (Amiga: Harwood). When the *Select Plot* screen appears, enter the following No. 440944895554. After pressing *BE/FRN*, you can access any mission.

**Tony Melling, Hyde, Cheshire**

\* We do just the release information in good faith. It's up to the software company to live up to your expectations, although it is easy for release dates to slip.



# ESCAPE

## FROM THE PLANET OF THE ROBOT MONSTERS

**ESCAPE - FROM THE WORLD OF BORING VIDED GAMES!**

Yes! This is the latest, wackiest, most playable shoot-em-up for a very, very long time.

"Lots of beautiful girls have been abducted to Planet X by the evil reptilians. And when I say abducted, I mean... well, yes - exactly! It's a disgrace! And those evil reptilians are downright... evil! And that's not all - there's more. Where? Inside of course! Good luck men!"

**Buzz, 'crackle', hizz, pop!** This is **Radio S.M.O.G.** bringing you the latest update.

"We selected locations on the surface of Planet X where a serious mission is in progress. The REPTILIONS have captured the famous scientist there. They are being forced to create the all-powerful Army. Destroy it! DESTROY THE EARTH'S enemies and for your thank-you!"



TAKE THE FIGHT TO THE EVIL AND PROTECT THE PLANET!

FACTORY



**JOHN**

THE HERO OF THE WORLD  
NEVER GIVES UP!



OH RAGS!

DESTROY THE EVIL REPTILIONS!



**BOB**



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Games

# DAN DARE III The Escape



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ATARI ST



AMIGA



CBM 64



SPECTRUM



AMSTRAD

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# LORD of the SKIES

Microprose have designed the ultimate flight simulator computer. Destined for the coin-op market today, it could be in your home tomorrow...

Microprose boss Neil Bill Stealey watched an million copies of his company's games fly off the shelves... and decided that wasn't enough.

The games were OK, he reckoned, but the machines they were playing on just weren't up to scratch. He wanted a machine powerful enough to take games like F15 Combat Pilot and GunAps into another dimension altogether, a machine that would rival commercial flight simulators in power and graphic capabilities, a machine that would really give gamers a taste of high-speed sky-boarding.

So Neil Bill called forth and recruited Gene Lipkin, cofounder (with Nolan Bushnell of Atari) together with a group of technobuffers. Lipkin promised the Flying Fortress that they would give him his machine - with limbs on, and a slot for nickels and dimes. Microprose were going to take off into the coin-op business, and tackle the likes of Konami and S&B. It was declared in 1988 and the company got down to some serious hardware designing...

Two years later, and the machine is ready for shipping. It's a neat, upright cabinet with a three-button joystick and a one-button thrust lever. It's powered by a 58000 lined up to other, more powerful beasts (which Microprose designed themselves and are currently keeping quiet about) and the firmware which some of the most efficient 3D vector graphics routines around. The result is a blistering combat flight sim with some very neat features. Here's the pitch...



Secondary Indicator Target 3D Thrust Display

Banking down the setting at high speed to start a bridge. Flying down causes it progressively subsiding. The small 'F' in the top right hand corner of the HUD indicates the direction of the Primary Target which you must destroy to complete the mission.



The F15 cabinet is precisely upright until a 30-degree arc can be achieved from 2000 games are loaded in place of the spin mechanism, with conversion of Microprose's home computer titles coming first and dedicated games titles following on later.

## MISSION 2 AND BEYOND

The current scenario implemented on the machine is a version of F15 Combat Pilot. It's been especially designed for cooperation with six selectable missions of varying difficulty. The first two of these you can choose between when you start play - the other four have to be earned.



Primary Target

These are exactly exploding on ground. The primary target is straight ahead.

You kick off with Frontline, which is essentially a training mode and involves destroying a bridge or two and spawning everything that moves. The display features approximately 256 colours on-screen details written by Microprose and looks very similar to a VGA display on the PC. The image beam, through a 25" monitor - considerably larger than most arcade cabinets. The real difference, however, is in the *feel*.

Fading down on the stick sends you into a mind-blowing dive towards the ground. Terrain details are better than anything currently on the market and you can feel yourself skimming the ground and - in the second mission - strapping between the pillars of the aging pylons in the Gulf.

In Mission Three you're on night patrol. The sound is almost as aggressive as the action and you can feel your craft into all the traditional dogfighting manoeuvres. The only difference is the skill required - at this speed and with no autopilot or computer assistance you are really up against it.

Mission Four (The Happy Gun) blasts you out over the ocean and Mission Five truly delivers the body blow with air-to-air combat. Mission Six is Top Secret



and cannot be pre-wired — you have to earn your wings before you can aspire to this specially constructed level that features increased flying difficulty and more aggressive opponents.

To give you some idea of the pace of this game, you should realize that a typical high-speed PC flight sim is going to handle around 1,000 polygons a second. F15 comes delivers 80,000! That's way ahead of any other (unconcocted) mechanism and the frame update rate is a staggering 30 frames a second — even faster than commercial TV and cinema. So the action isn't only fast, it's superbly smooth as well.

#### TACTICS

F15 isn't just a blast-em-up, however. First, unlike any other game, you have the freedom to choose your own flight path in any direction. You have to keep a constant eye on your fuel gauge, which can only be replenished by landing fuel trucks on land. You also have to check target locations and make continuous



Will still testing the new system. The effects of the airfield all round the building are slightly increased but of right. He intended to covering his eyes before taking off.



#### OHG! MESSIAH

See those jet fly into the sand below as you wing war towards the sea in the second scenario. The F15 is shown that your mission has just failed and damaged the Mission Progress. Missions are up and then to find the threat to see in the next scenario and upgrade your progress.

#### DIMES FOR DEATH

Just how much progress should you get for a dollar? That was the question Microprose was struggling with when we went from to Microsoft. George and his son wanted and want thousands come pretty cheap — but when price starts to drop? Let's hope the game doesn't end up being the most expensive to play on well as the most exciting.



#### OHG! MESSIAH

Lightening over the sky? It's just the sky! I've been told that I never mentioned light. The F15 is not just a game to be played but a game to be played. It's not just a game to be played but a game to be played. It's not just a game to be played but a game to be played.

#### "Yee Hoo!!"

Will still testing



One of the vintage software engineers working on the system for the game. This is the system is developed in a before being finally implemented on Microprose's custom chips that handle the graphics and sound.

use of the long-range target identification window, the map display, and the threat indicator.

F15 has another first up its sleeve. You can actually purchase power-ups by inserting more coins rather than having to earn them. Some features are essential — particularly decoys to get guided missiles off your track. You can repair damage, refuel, add decoys, and boost power — all by inserting more coins or earning extra points.

Once you've finished your mission you can carry on the conflict against anyone who dares to come up against you — or you can head for the spinning portal in the sky. This is a large transparent cuboid structure that, once entered, propels you to the next mission.

#### NEXT PLEASE

One of the best things about the Microprose engine is that it can be instantly converted to run other scenarios using a simple plug-in chip set. Microprose have three titles ready to implement on the system and although they're not telling what they are, we are prepared to bet that *Gladius* will be one of the first. And a version of *BT* (air) seems a possibility as well.

Take a closer look for  
yourself

# F-19

STEALTH FIGHTER

Available for Atari ST and  
Commodore Amiga

**MICRO PROSE**

The  
success  
over 5000  
New  
Management  
we can  
people's  
mentals  
can't fit  
friends  
directly  
offer us  
Only  
version  
being to  
we add  
in this  
Japan  
We're to

1984  
No  
1984



MicroProse's Stealth Fighter II™ was rated as PC™ and a candidate for editor's choice award by Electronic Games on the desktop and among and among for sale. Digital Arts' Successive Successor, among others, and several other systems. Several control on the left side feature a joystick. Among others, the system is an America, designed to control to any resolution. Also in our catalog: (414) 342-1111, (414) 342-1111

The implications of all this are pretty staggering. First, if MicroProse succeed in this venture — and recent reception at a US trade show indicates that this is very probable — then they can expect to sell around 5000 units. At just over \$7000 dollars apiece that's a lot of money.

"We can use that money to fund new projects," pointed out Marketing Manager Gary Blair. "The big thing is that we are no longer in the software business. We are now an entertainment business. And that means we can develop games using new technology and design them as other people would design movies. We're already in discussion about the implementation of CD-I and, if the coin-op succeeds, we may even have sufficient financial clout to become one of the licensed Nintendo licenses. Nintendo charge a heavy premium for companies wanting to develop directly for the console. And finally, we may soon be in a position to offer our own coin-op licenses."

Other possibilities under discussion are the development of a home version of the new system and a sit-down cabinet version, the latter not being so popular in the States because of the limited space at many arcade sites. "The US industry is looking for a US company to do well in the market," says Gary, "because otherwise it's been dominated by the Japanese. The whole of America is rooting for us to be successful." We're keeping our fingers crossed for...

*"People in the arcade industry used to look at home computer software and see it as their enemy; when we showed them F15 and Taxi they changed their minds..."*

Gary Blair, MicroProse

## Amazing 3 Dimensional Graphics



## STEALTH FIGHTER

Take a closer look for yourself



The Air Force can't talk about it, but MicroProse lets you fly it. It's lighter than air... doesn't lie.

So bad for radar. For human eyes, F15 is a visual feast. The graphics are so real you'll want to reach out and touch the sky. You might think other planes have just only melted away. Pull the joystick, smooch your hand you've seen them and gaze in admiration at the incredible detail of targets and terrain below.

And what about game play? We'll get that covered too. Fly a virtually limitless range of secret missions in four strategic regions of the world. Learn the tricks of keeping an electro-magnetic profile too low for radar to detect. And then watch what you can do with it.

F15 Stealth Fighter™ Available for your IBM PC/Compatible. Supports VGA/EGA, VGA, EGA and Hercules graphics. Hard disk installation. Available on 3-1/2 and 5-1/4 inch disk.



Available for Atari ST and Commodore Amiga.



MicroProse, Unit 1, Hampton Road Industrial Estate, Feltham, Great Britain. Tel: 0181 606 5043/5.

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have to enter the mainframe  
and direct your partner to the  
back itself - the minds of  
every future generation will  
be trusting to your skill  
and intellect.



Screenshots from ST version



Atari ST, Amiga, IBM PC and compatibles.

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have their fair slice of the game-playing pie, she mentioned the abundance of materials and listed ten top titles which offer true benefits. And, however she thinks that CD-i will produce some really different options. "Unlike simply watching animations," Simon told us, "interactive game-playing gives you an intimate relationship with the characters." Right now AMI is working on a dating game that will see teenage girls into the CD-i camp.

Simon also thinks that the easy-to-operate equipment will be a major plus for the CD-i. "If you're a kid with limited dollars you will want one machine that will work well. One big priority about a game is to get it up and running without reading a lot of instructions."

Simon is just one of the team of top notch people that AMI has assembled. The executives are all experts in their fields which include arts, entertainment and education. London Mullberg's impressive biography includes a term as President of Twentieth Century Fox.



Bernard Linkin is just some of his work, an expert in all things video publishing for the Swarthmore College-based Peter Media.

Bernard Linkin, AMI's President and Chief Operating Officer is a distinguished academic and expert in the field of education. Simon has had considerable experience in writing and publishing as well as having been an Executive Producer for Disney, Mark Fain, also on the development team, has an extensive background in A and R from the years that he has spent with music companies. Brian Petroso played a leading role in promoting the compact disc industry in the States. He

**"I thought about dealing with Steve McGuffeen was tough until I met my first software engineer!"**

(David Worthing, AMI Chairman)

**CD-i Response?**  
The choice of AMI attracted the two editors of *1994*, members of "Sunshine and Singsong", the music/culture/music features genre who've previously been seen in a new variety of publications in CD-i format. "We're looking at doing an enhanced 'Sunshine and Singsong' that will use the entire video," says James Simon, AMI's Vice President of Product Development.



David Worthing - with a selection of one of his business associates in the background.

Worthing has it that the first industrial CD-i may soon be released in France. Right now in London AMI's executive, Director Interactive Media is working on a CD-i program for Renault, the French car manufacturer. CD-i was commercially launched as a marketing aid for training mechanics.

formed the Compact Disc Group to search for new phenomena and is now involved with the Laser Disc Revival, to assure that CD-i has the same success.

"The other company is doing CD-i software in the U.S.," he told us, "We're the owners. But we're not planning on keeping it that way."



Bernie Simon is AMI's Vice President of Product Development. Simon is one of the usual team of executives that AMI has assembled, each an expert in his/her field. Simon's background includes courses on both video and author of children's books, as well as having been an Executive Producer for Disney.



Whenever you access a magazine in the "Sunshine &" program you have access to the story and audio playlist. However, there are further options available through the program so that Steve and Brian's homepage will give you information on your long exploring the world's other video outlets in regular use with this journal's readers. "What's did the feature say to the best?" "What's up?"

## FMV - WHEN THINGS REALLY START MOVING

Previously thought to be a dead-end of CD-i format was the big game next video source due to the data processing limitations of the disc itself. However, new advances in the area of data compression have set the scene to state that this is a thing of the past.

We have now technologically broken through the barrier so we can have full screen, full motion video, "be still us." The prospects look good for CD-i with full screen, full motion video-3 MB capability. The data rate recommended for full screen FMV is 1.2 megabits per second - approximately 150 Mbytes per second which is well within the limits of the CD-i system capacity for data delivery from optical disc.

The FMV decoding in a CD-i player is provided by a custom chip. According to AMI, FMV programs are currently developing are such as sport while (currently a producing system). The FMV decoding system is being developed by the Consumer Electronics Division, from active Media Systems of R.A. Philips in The Netherlands in close cooperation with Sony and Sanyo.

FMV is a non-linear FMV within the next few months, that could be used in the software DVD (see SCE issue 30), which had their as one of its main attractions. This is a novel licensing for gameplayers. On the one hand, CD-i is more closely associated with business systems than it was ever expected to. On the other hand, the FMV computer graphics features were better than the CD-i spec.



The view from the office of AMI's Chairman, Sir David Worthing, Sir David would see how hard every Bernie Worthing. The choice of using technology software throughout the world through the CD-i format. AMI's commitment to the "Sunshine &" magazine will be also largely in Sir David Worthing who, for the last 10 years, has managed an impressive range of video titles.

## BREAKING THE SOUND BARRIER



Visit one of the world's great museums and enjoy a hot-dash-guided tour and CD-ROM, maintain your sound status!

This will be possible when IBM releases their CD-i disc, *Treasures Of The Smithsonian*.

On your arrival at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., you can view a map to determine which of the buildings to visit first. (There is also a



positive alternative. If you don't want to interact, the disc will continue to take you a guided tour.) We chose the Aerospace

Museum, chose our route on the building and were instantly transported to the exterior of the museum. From there we entered the "main" of Treasures available mode and decided to have a look at the Bell X-1. We were then treated to a full video presentation, with CD-quality sound, of the history and development of the X-1. We learned that in this special format, American Test Pilot Chuck Yeager first broke the sound barrier.

While still in the Bell X-1 segment we obtained on a sub-menu which allowed us to switch to a number of topics related to the main story. We chose to watch an animated wind-tunnel simulation of the X-1 as it accelerated from sub-sonic speed to Mach 1.40. By manipulating the mouse or joystick the viewer had control of the aircraft's speed. As we stopped through the sound barrier we were shown a fascinating animation of the sound and shock waves emanating from our aircraft.

## Black, mouse, or ball?

"We're using mouse technology on CD-i," explains Edna Perera, IBM's Senior Vice President of Sales and Distribution, "and we're perfecting the remote control possibilities. CD-i will come with an IR CD controller that will allow you to use any kind of joy-stick controller on remote control. We're now developing a remote control for children which has got a large ball on it, similar to a track ball, and fits on the lip."



CD-i systems are already familiar with the Philips CD-i modules. However, the only most people know is to find the industrial version (also there in CD-i demonstration mode). The basic unit pictured below is a small, more compact form and is designed to be used in the kitchen for CD-i eating the internet is just going to be a heightened affair when there's nothing about a new technology based on a pair with the video transfer - and the original video system are using that as high.



How does it manage local video currently collaborating with...  
 (Source: IBM's CD-i system of the IBM and Ixpress from the IBM, see IBM, 401-4254 version of IBM World Wide Web information game site.)



In a 3D environment, these children are extended by familiar CD-i features. How does the dog with only one eye to operate the program so that they can enter the castle doors on the left. One inside a room, they get some surrealism every night they can be activated. Thus the young player can enter the organ which will then play every music. The walking character which shows him a number formation asking to be counted, or the clock which tells the time. The fun of making random decisions combined on of what we first started playing with (read: IBM's new CD-i) (Source: see website that children have over adults in their thinking regarding to enjoy "discovering" the same thing over and over again.

# CHRONOQUEST



## CHRONOQUEST II The adventure continues

- ★ 13 different stages - ensuring maximum gameplay and varying levels of difficulty.
- ★ Easy-Friendly User Controls - making it suitable for all ages.
- ★ Interaction and dialogue with characters through synthesized speech - adds to the realism and excitement of the game.
- ★ Brilliant graphics and scenery.
- ★ Rapidly paced and strategy make it a truly absorbing game.
- ★ 3rd Disk: Atari ST, 3 Disk: Amiga, 1 Disk: PC - will save game faulty.
- ★ Massive graphical enhancements to explore in your time machine - 13 levels over multiple epochs.

A frantic race through time and the ages in the fantastic Time Machine Epochs.

Yet again, valiantly help the world of the unknown, you are going to have to use every last bit of intelligence to survive the trials that await you.

Classical characters and situations from both Homer and Aesop. From the Ancient Greece of Legend, through time, to the Pharaoh of breathtaking splendours. Can you live up to the cunning and strength of Ulysses, or the daring of Odysseus and Charis of D'Armagant?

There's more than your life at stake as you cross the path of some of History's most seductive (and deadly) deities, fearsome beasts, semi-divine Gods and haughty heroes.

It will probably keep you pulling your hair out for months until you put the enormous temporal puzzle together.

Screen Shots from the Amiga version: **ARMS/ATARI ST 129.99 PC 139.99**

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CHRONOQUEST







## WE WANT YOUR OPINION!

We want to know your views on the SAM Coupé. Remember that it will be the reaction of the general public that ultimately decides whether it will be a roaring success or a reasonable failure.

The question we would like you to consider is this:

**Can a new 8-bit machine like the SAM Coupé really provide the Advanced Computer Entertainment that you, the end user, demands?**

You can give us your answer by phoning one of the numbers below:

**0898 400 787** No, the SAM Coupé is not my idea of Advanced Computer Entertainment.

**0898 400 786** Yes, the SAM Coupé sounds like my kind of machine.

The results of this survey will be announced in the industry in a future issue, or have your say, via today!

Customer service at SAM can provide you with further details about SAM. Call us now on 0898 400 787.



The basic machine comes with a generous 256 Kilobytes of local, expandable to 512K.

One fairly recent innovation that has become established for advanced machines is mice and RMP environments — MGT have thankfully made provision for SAM users to be at the leading edge of technology too. Although the SAM does not come with a mouse, it does have a Mouse port and driving software built in. They have also promised a complete RMP environment for use with the optional mouse, so power users can plug off the Spectrum style command system provided on the basic machine. There is a complementary port for a light pen or light gun.

There are found to be address gates for SAM from third parties as well, by virtue of the Spectrum style expansion connector at the rear of the machine. This gives hardware developers access to every signal that could possibly be of use, enabling the expansion port to be used for everything from RAM packs to video digitisers.

The basic machine comes with a cassette interface for loading and saving software. This is achieved via a single 9.5 mm jack, which is rather annoying because it means that if you are saving, as well as loading software you have to be constantly switching the lead between the SAM and MIO ports on your cassette recorder. A variety of tape transfer speeds are available, and on the whole the interface proved reliable.

The disk drives are very elegant slimline Cheetah 3 and a half inch drives which slot into two ports at the front of the machine — very neat. Disks operate at a capacity of 1 Megabyte or 780 Kilobytes when formatted. That is equivalent to the disk capacities of both ST and Amiga disks. What makes the MGT drives stand out is that they are very fast. The Coupé's average Seek and Read/write times are considerably better than those for both the ST and Amiga, or you won't



The flexibility of the machine also just fits nicely and expandability has been designed. The large white port below the white expansion connector is the RMP microprocessor, while the square chip at the centre of the PCB is the MIO — a gate array that connects all the other bits and pieces of the machine.

## THE ACE VERDICT

The SAM is a very brave departure for MGT, across previous products they've concentrated on offering multi-processor machines. Progressive buyers should not be put off by the 8-bit processor — the machine offers performance very well compared to the 16 bit machines. When you consider that the machine is only £250 when compared to a Spectrum £2.5 represents serious value to the first time buyer, or Spectrum owner looking to upgrade to a better machine. The Coupé is an excellent product when it comes to the deal. Let's hope that the general public and the software producers agree.

## UGLY DUCKLING

The Coupé is certainly not the most advanced machine around, a white moulded plastic body with dark blue feet and squared off edges are not particularly aesthetically pleasing, but then, for most users looks are the least important factor of the machine.

One of the first things that stands out about the coupé is the grey keyboard set towards the back of the machine. The 100 keys of this look rather odd, but actually makes a great sense. You can just place arms on the lower half of the machine and type away quite comfortably.

The keyboard itself is not of particularly high quality and tends to stick more. Good news for touch typists though is that the pitch and layout are close enough to standard to make life easy. Incidentally the keyboard is fully programmable, so there is no problem in key mapping foreign characters to certain keys. There is also a numeric keypad which (like that on the CPC) target doubles as a set of function keys — very handy and very clever.

The power supply, which is external to the machine is a bulky white affair, and rather unsightly, is also the point at which the optional video appears for connection to an ordinary television set.

Just to suffer brightly disk accessing in the middle of games.

The SAM Coupé is, without doubt, a very impressive machine. There is absolutely no reason why it should not be some very impressive software for it. The question is, whether this software is going to appear. At the moment it looks very much like Coupé owners will have to make do with the enormous amount of Spectrum software that is available. Meanwhile it is certain that end users can expect plenty of support from MGT themselves.

## FACT BOX

SAM Coupé cassette (basic)	£169.95
SAM Coupé 3 1/2 Disk Drive	£149.95
SAM Coupé 5 1/4 Disk Drive	£229.95
SAM Coupé Disk Drive	£99.95
256K Add On Memory	£29.95

Details available from:

Miles Gordon Technology plc, Lutonville, Phoenix Way,

## THE INDUSTRY REACTS

When we spoke to key industry figures about the SAM the reaction to the product was favourable, but not too high by any real comparison to previous software for the machine.

Geoff Boyens of MS believes that the low-end of the market is moving over to general purpose based systems and that the SAM is something of a marginal product. Though its Spectrum compatibility will help it. Although 50% of USBIT users are 8-bit product they have no plans to produce SAM software in the near future. Geoff Boyens's verdict is that whether or not the SAM succeeds will become a price sensitive issue in the end.

Details use the Coupé to an impressive gain some of America's huge stores of the cheap micro-market. Although they will be producing their spectrum software to run with the SAM they will not be turning their attention to specific software for the new future.

Andrew Hanson also believes that MGT have a difficult job ahead of them in reaching the mass market they hope for. On the use of 8-bit technology he commented, 'let all have a romantic attachment to the clean engine, but it is yesterday's news.' While he hopes to be able to support the machine in some way, Hanson will not be producing any SAM specific software without.

At a recent press conference, MGT came up with a list of just seventeen planned releases, and that was a mixture of games, business applications, and educational software.

It looks very much as if the Coupé is getting caught in a catch 22 situation. None of the major software houses are going to produce software specifically for the machine and sales rates of old sales are not going to take off until there is software available for the machine. It is just possible that the SAM's spectrum compatibility will help it pull through, but it definitely has a long uphill struggle ahead of it.

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# ENCORE

# Steam Dream

**T**ime was when rail and steam were the road to unfathomable riches. Once granted a charter by government, you incorporated your company, raised cash from greedy investors, and watched the pennies and pounds roll in.

Well, it wasn't quite that easy. Hundreds of companies went bust and while fortunes were made, others ended up on Sid Flow. Now's your chance to find out whether you could have outstripped the Vanderbilt in this detailed simulation from Microprose that takes you on a strategic ride through 100 years of steam.

The game is mouse-driven and very easy to play, allowing selected your area of operations from the USA, UK, and Europe, so choose a difficulty level (beginner, financial, biggie, or tycoon) and away you go, competing against a host of computer-generated railroad companies for a slice of the action.

You start by examining the map and checking out towns that need rail services. Newark, for example, might be in need of freight and passenger transport - and you might feel like in Thailand. Linking the two together could be profitable, depending on the current cost of finance and the investment needed in terms of land and rolling stock to construct and service the line.

## AUTHENTIC

Throughout the game, you're constantly up against contemporary limitations of technology. Newspaper reports keep you informed of developments that could bring new engines into the market - they also tell you approximately how your competitors are doing.

All action can be viewed on the map at different levels of magnification. As the years go by, you see the railroads branching out all over the country and - at closer magnification - the trains chugging along them. Following the game is almost as much pleasure as playing it.



Different routes mean more different loads. Each train gets chosen to live in the period. The map gets newspaper reports, financial reports, leading you to new markets being produced, in which case you may want to add them to your fleet. The rate manager lets financial returns from each region, allowing adjusting gas costs - better trains give more expansion to buy, but they will usually deliver a better return.

The railroad game allows making the money to determine the route on the map. Choosing you can control your train (though) by up and down the lines, making you lots of money...



## RAILGAMES Weekly

First Train Review In Eastern Frontier, California Celebration



Progressed strategies get reports with basic your action needs, and keep you updated on contemporary developments.

It takes building to transportation by a track, which is not needed anymore - the bridge design you follow from construction to completion.



## CO-CO, BO-BO, AND 2-2-2

Railroad Tycoon uses the White system to refer to steam engines, but it can be rather confusing for the uninitiated. Basically, it involves making a distinction between the driving and non-driving axles. The number of axles on each side is a CO-BO, with two or three axles. Here are a couple of examples:



Modern locomotives are referred to by letters, according to the number of driving axles. A is one, B is two, and so on. A locomotive on two four-wheeled bogies with a motor on each axle is a BO-BO, with two or three bogies it's a CO-BO.



At the end of the game you get a rating according to your financial performance. But in other words you could



end up President of the USA - not so fanciful as it may seem. Show many of today's most powerful locomotives from the railroad business.

The manual discusses when you're making money. It's about the maintenance through



Microprose are about to launch a superb simulation of the early days of steam.

If you fancy nostalgia, strategy, and gameplay all in one package, check out Railroad Tycoon.



When will we get a more general 3D graphics like those? The Consortium for Pacific Coast Research and Centers, from one of their recent technology computer publications.



A 1900-1910 U.S. Railroad Locomotive Collection and the illustration.



This was built your railroads in Europe, about 1850, in the 1860s.



Great! However the spread of railway technology in the 1850s railway network that differed territories were developed at different times. If you play the English scenario, you can start in 1825 in 1830 or the West Coast in 1840 and 1850 for Europe that which their railway technology was considerably more advanced giving you faster and more powerful trains.



Once you're released your territory, you have to build a new line and, if necessary, some more. The add different carriage for different types to water for different amounts.



## IN THE BEGINNING

Railroad Tycoon allows you to develop your railroad at the very beginning of the Train Age in 1825. But railways have been around a lot longer than that.

### 200000

Babylonians use parallel stone tracks to guide oxen (2000).

Ancient Greeks use similar principles to carry goods between Athens and Piraeus Harbor.

18th century

Primitive tracks used in mines in Germany.

18th century

First systems in use to mine all over Europe.

1824

Earliest commercial railway in Britain constructed west of Hingham at a cost of £100,000—used in wagons with large wheels.

1825

First recorded use of the word "railway" in England.

1827

First railway to carry fare-paying passengers opens in Swansea. Cargoes were pulled by horses. Rapid deaths were caused and rail power before steam was introduced.

1828

First iron train bridge constructed over the Plover Gully, near the Stockton and Darlington railway.

1837

First railroad in the US to offer a regular public service opens in Baltimore (horse or mule-powered).

1838

First public railway opens in France.

1838

First public railway tunnel opened at Tyler Hill for the Canterbury and Whitstable Railway.



Before you can get into the game, you need to know what you're getting into. The game's developer, including Brian Berman and Ed Jack Phillips (on the right), with publisher Steve Wozniak, who built on through the game and allowed money with an existing project.

During the game you get involved in many aspects of railroad management, from the financial side to engineering. You are constantly on the look out for other opportunities and there is considerable satisfaction from making a profitable rate war with one of your competitors and winning. You can examine your balance sheet at any time to check how you're doing and whether your investments are paying off with increased returns.

Railroad Tycoon is visually attractive, a rammed ball of contemporary detail, and—judging by the one production day we played—likely to prove highly addictive. Don't miss the full review as soon as we receive a printed copy.

### Steaming Ports

The North Bridge contains 24000 tons of steelwork supported by 600000 rivets and supported by 180000 cubic feet of granite. The granite stone weighed over 100 tons. The construction process took 18 months. Over 100 people died during the construction process.

### The Longest Tunnel

The world's longest tunnel between Hokkaido and Honshu in Japan. It's 23 miles long and was dug through extremely unstable terrain over a period of 23 years, ending in 1907. The Channel Tunnel, by contrast, took five months and dug through comparatively easy terrain. It will, however, almost certainly cost more. Why?

### Further Reading

Read more about the history of rail. Here are some books for the history of rail. Here are probably the best books to read about the history of rail. Here are some books to read about the history of rail. Here are some books to read about the history of rail. Here are some books to read about the history of rail.

# KICK OFF 2



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# BRAVE NEW WORLD



The Personal Arcade system, as far as it goes, is the PC in September.

The dream of every dedicated arcade gamer/player has just become a reality, writes Rick Hayes. The new 1994 NEO-GEO games machine comes in two versions: coin-op and home-based. At last you'll be able to play an identical version of your favorite coin-op game in the comfort of your own home.

NEO-GEO is produced by SNK, a successful Japanese coin-op manufacturer with a string of arcade hits under its belt including *Samurai Warriors*, *Time Soldiers* and *Ghost Buster*.

NEO-GEO's technical specifications are impressive for a home video games system. Its central processing power comes from a Motorola 68000 supported by a Sanyo 280A. Added to this are 300 hardware sprites which can be smoothly enlarged or reduced, three independent bitmapped video screens, 84k of character ROM storing 65536 14x14 pixel character blocks, 4096 on-screen colors from a palette of 89536, and compact disk quality stereo sound with an amazing 13 channels of sound. But the most unusual — and ultimately the best — feature of the NEO-GEO is its ROM storage capacity. It can handle games cartridges up to the staggering size of 130-megabit (8448k), that compares to the humble four-megabit (512k) carts found on the Sega Megadrive/Genesis console.

A novel aspect of the NEO-GEO is its IC card used to store player data. IC cards are credit-card sized memory storage devices with their own battery source, that they can keep data intact even when they're not plugged into a computer. The NEO-GEO IC card is a 2K ROM size of silicon which stores player data for up to 23 games titles. You could play a NEO-GEO game in the arcade, save your game position and progress in the IC card, go home and return to the game on your Personal NEO-GEO console (provided you've got the same games cartridge of course).



Top Player Golf, using 4096 on-screen colors at once.

Once you've stored data on the IC card you can plug it into any NEO-GEO system. The IC card could become the *Flotus* of the game world.

There are currently six games titles available for the NEO-GEO, including *Top Player Golf* (MSRP \$75), *Blazing* and *Magnus Chase*. SNK plans to release 12 NEO-GEO games this year, and there's a possibility of other arcade manufacturers licensing their games on to the NEO-GEO system.

The Personal NEO-GEO console plugs into any normal TV and costs 198000 yen (around £230) in Japan. A typical 40-megabit games cartridge costs 38000 yen (around £110), making them the most expensive console games ever sold. SNK has an ingenious solution to this problem: you can rent NEO-GEO carts for around 500 yen (\$2) per night — you can also rent a Personal NEO-GEO console outright for 700 yen (\$2). A similar scheme is likely to be introduced in this country when the UK Personal NEO-GEO is released in the autumn. Sega already has a console rental scheme over here with 12000 Sega/Commodore video rental stores, where you can rent a Sega Master console or games cartridges for a night.

SNK believes it will sell 200000 Personal NEO-GEO's and 1.2 million game cartridges in Japan before the end of the year.

The official UK launch date for the NEO-GEO is September, visitors to the Computer Entertainment Show will see both the Arcade and Personal versions of the NEO-GEO in The Living Room of the Future exhibit sponsored by ACE. The CES show will be held from 1.30-1.45 September at London's Earls Court exhibition centre.

## NEO GEO SPECS

Processor: 68000 (main), 280A (sprite)

ROM — max. size: 8448k

IC card stores player data for up to 23 games titles

System — max. on-screen: 240 with hardware-assisted scaling

Colors — max. on-screen: 4096 with a palette of 89536 colors

Screens: 3 independent bitmapped video screens

RAM character ROM stores storage of 65536 14x14 pixel blocks

Sound: Stereo digital audio of Compact Disk quality

Channels of Programmable Sound Generators (PSG)

Channels of Pulse Control Modulator (PCM)

Channels of Frequency Modulator (FM)

Channels of Noise Generator

Walker (sequencing) control

ACE exclusively reveals the secrets and specifications of Japan's stunning NEO-GEO (New World) games machine...

Special thanks to Shinya Mizuno and ACE's Corporation for their assistance.

Arcade this close to a video game world (Japan) setting.



# Save £5 on 16 bit software

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**PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE**

Harpoon is a very detailed and complicated product, so it will take you some time to get used to the way the simulation works. Even when you have done this, you can expect to enjoy several missions before you take on the strategic thinking necessary for the extended, flowing battle scenarios which repeat play the same way from over the possibility of further battleships should greatly increase the life of the simulation.

**RELEASE DATE**

ESTABLISH	USA	1984
AMIGA	USA	TBA
PC	USA/UK	OUT NOW

*For more details contact:*

**PC**

There is nothing gradually accessible in the game, but there will really pay itself to it. The great thing about this is that you can play the game on a low level, and you can play the game on a high level. Because of the graphics and the game, the PC version is the best version you can play. It is also the most fun to play, and it is the most fun to play.

MANUFACTURER	RELEASE DATE	<b>940</b>
PRICE	ESTABLISHMENT	

# HARPOON

MIRRORSOFT/PSS

launch a realistic  
new simulation  
which demonstrates  
that naval warfare  
is no game

conflict in the North Sea, but other battleships will be made available for use with Harpoon. There are twelve scenarios you can play within the battleship from a simple point-and-click mission right up to a full campaign.

The whole game is controlled via a series of drop-down menus and dialogue boxes, so it is highly recommended that you play with a mouse. If you don't happen to have one, however, the game can be played (and as ably with the keyboard alone. There are three maps provided on-screen with which you can plan and monitor your actions.

There are the strategic map, which shows the whole area in which the campaign is fought, the Group Map which shows the location of your groups of craft, and the Unit Map, which is a close scale map showing one or more of your units in detail. These maps aside there is one corner of the screen remaining which shows information on your currently selected group or target, and it also can be used to show animations, during attack and other game sequences.

As is the case in real warfare, there are no



During an attack, a close-up view of the ship is shown and you can view various details, including the possibility for a direct hit to the enemy, or a near miss if the ship is under way.

clear-cut winners and losers in the mission in Harpoon, but your objective should be to carry out your orders with the minimum losses, while inflicting damage to the enemy whenever a viable situation occurs.

Fortunately there is a staff assistant who takes care of all the mental little tasks for you. He will go so far as to automatically engage enemy missiles and planes with SAMs (Surface to Air Guided Missiles) when you are under attack. He also lets you know if you have done something silly like ordered an attack on an enemy craft when it is out of range, and will usually suggest a suitable course of action.

This is probably one of the best things about Harpoon—the machine looks after the boring mechanics while you take care of the overall strategy. For instance, if you order a helicopter to patrol a particular quadrant in front of your fleet it will do so, then automatically land, refuel, and take off again until you give the order to land.



The game is quite beautiful in its graphics and features. It is also very easy to play, and it is the most fun to play.

SEA warfare is a 3D line-of-sight fighting other machines, with men directing them and serving as part of the machine to do things it cannot.

That is the lightning reality of modern naval warfare, as summed up by Harpoon's creator Larry Reed. Whereas the outcome of conventional (non-nuclear) warfare is still heavily reliant on the number and deployment of ordinary combat troops, increasingly sophisticated technology has turned naval battles into a few tense hours of hide and seek in which a single missile can mean the difference between victory and defeat.

The modern naval commander is continually fed information gleaned from the complex equipment he has at his disposal, and he must use this information as a basis for the many broad tactical decisions he makes every hour that his ships are in the water.

It is this process of command that Harpoon seeks to simulate in as realistic a way as possible. The game comes with a single battleship (based around possible battleships



The staff assistant will automatically report back with information or suggestions. In this case the crew is lost — it suggests a formation that forces one ship to withdraw.



The straight map shows the whole campaign area.

The group map shows each group of craft as a single icon.



The cut map details one or more craft at close range. This is most useful during combat.

By default the game runs in real-time, but this can be compressed to speed up gameplay.

The status panel gives details on the currently selected group (or on the enemy's).

The message box is used to keep you up-to-date with events during play. Here you are informed that a helicopter patrol has been launched.



The perspective option allows you to readily adjust the grouping of your craft.

Whether or not you are already familiar with the strategies involved in contemporary naval warfare, *Hazeon* is a superb learning tool, as well as being a thoroughly absorbing simulation. The manual is very comprehensive and also comes with two excellent pamphlets - one detailing Ron Clancy's experiences aboard his Soviet ship, and the other a random set of tactics for the game's author (Larry Bond). Additionally there are fact sheets on all the craft which can be called up and examined during play. There is so much in this game that, providing you are interested in the subject matter, you will find that it provides months of absorbing and educational entertainment. If only all sims were made this way.

— Lawrence Gardner

Bringing the formation of your ships, aircraft, and submarines is done easily using the formation editor. This shows the arrangement of your craft within a series of concentric range circles. It is now simply a matter of moving the craft icons to the quadrants you wish them to occupy. Courses are also easily set by placing destination on the group map. It then remains just to set the speeds for individual groups. Having done this you can use the fire compression feature to speed up play until something happens which requires your attention. You are automatically notified by your ship's position at the points and given the option of returning to real-time.

It does not take a long time playing *Hazeon* to realize just how fun *Naval Warfare* is progressed since like *World II*, I made the mistake of leaving straight for targets of opportunity as soon as they had been identified, and then slipping away with all available

weapons in a desperate attempt to sink the slower ships before they sank me. This, as I discovered to my cost, is entirely the wrong way to fight a mission sea battle.

The emphasis today is not on firepower but stealth. A good commander should attempt to pinpoint the enemy without giving away his own location. His objective is then to strike first and effectively disable or destroy the opposing forces before they have any chance to retaliate, and then withdraw quickly to continue his mission. For this reason, the way that you use your radar and sonar is just as important as getting your ordinance right for the mission you are undertaking.

The manner in which detection systems are handled in *Hazeon* is absolutely superb. Enemy craft appear on the map at the central point of their possible location, with the error margin being indicated by a quadrilateral surrounding the icon. As soon as a definite fix on the craft is determined then you are informed by the staff assistant who also gives you a detailed rundown on the type of craft identified.



Data shown on both allied and enemy craft can be called up at any time during play.

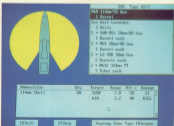
## THE NAME IS BOND... ...LARRY BOND

Larry Bond is not a name that is going to be familiar to many British games players, but it is a name that may well gain some renown with the release of this product.

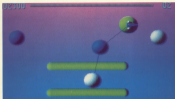
Bond conceived the idea for a realistic strategy simulation of contemporary naval warfare back in 1980, and it was at this time that *Hazeon*, the board game name used as a working title, first came into existence. Since Bond was a naval officer with a great deal of experience already in the craft, it was hardly surprising that the game was a great success. But Bond had also taken the trouble to integrate as much real life as was available at the time, and this continued to do so as more information became available.

Both into the detail and realism of the original game, the Ron Clancy novel it is an important contributing feature to his fictional novel about modern submarines, *The Hunt for Red October*.

Now that *Hazeon* has been produced as a computer simulation it is, of course, more accessible, because the computer takes care of all the tedious mechanics. It is Ron Clancy who brings up the importance of *Hazeon* as a simulation in his foreword to the game. *Hazeon* is almost certainly the best naval simulation available to the public. The only game more detailed you could find...



It is best to review the weapon options available to you before plotting an attack.



Billiards on the Amiga. Long after you've read, graphics and lots of "billiards" would be fun with this.

# E-MOTION

**SHOOKER** games have proved how much fun there is to be had out of exploiting the laws of physics in a game—even with something as apparently mundane as the motion of a few balls. Now US Gold has managed to top itself in an original piece of software based around Newtonian physics, although for reasons known only to themselves the title and loading picture suggest that the game has more to do with Casino than with its predecessor.

The idea behind the game is simply to knock spheres around a two-dimensional playing area, using a ball that can be placed, so that spheres of a similar colour collide and send each other off. It is most important that spheres of differing colours do not meet, so they will then form another smaller, contentious ball. Run over this with your own sphere and you will gain extra energy. If you leave energetic balls for too long, however, they will form fabrica spheres that must be eliminated in the normal way.



The game runs on 2Mbiters on the Spectrum too and sports an enhanced on-line 2-player multiplayer, but there is still a good game to be had.

US GOLD's latest masterpiece is an arcade style puzzler that makes Newtonian physics look fun

In the early screens you only have to contend with bars that obstruct the motion of the spheres and cause them to bounce around dangerously. In later stages, some of the spheres (possibly including the one you control) are attracted by static lines which severely affect the motion of all the joined spheres. It is not uncommon for one sphere which is joined to another to disappear off one side of the screen and reappear on the other, still attached, but with a collection of bars surrounding the two.

The nice thing about E-motion is that it requires a fairly balanced combination of arcade skills and brainwork. Movement of your own sphere is controlled by rotating a pointer within the ball until it indicates the direction that you wish to move in, and then holding the fire button to apply "brake" in that direction. You have to keep moving fairly niftily too. As time goes on, the remaining spheres larger in volume—if they are left for too long then they explode during your energy. If your energy should be exhausted then your own sphere will be atomised (or should that be powdered).

The brainwork gets involved every time you reach a new screen. It is certainly not advisable to plough straight in there knocking balls left right and centre. It is far better to sacrifice a bit of time in working out the best way to solve each stage before actually trying anything. Otherwise you will find that one false move could set up a chain of particularly nasty events. Sometimes too, you will find that it is badly paid to create additional spheres in a controlled way of course, but this will require some careful thought first.

E-motion is very much an unclassifiable

## ATARI ST

A little less colourful than the Amiga version, and with slightly slower speeds but just as addictive multiplayer. The two players in mode cannot play against pattern, leaving the game less any one-sided.

DISKSPACE 7 40 MEGS 7  
RAM 2 10M KBYTES 8

880

## SPECTRUM

This is a little more difficult to play than the other versions because the spheres sit at the same motion and are controlled in common. This allows things when the screen fills up. The spheres are smaller too. Apart from these factors generally to make it less addictive—worth playing.

DISKSPACE 4 40 MEGS 7  
RAM 2 10M KBYTES 8

825

## RELEASES

ATARI ST	OUTLINE	OUTLINE
AMIGA	OUTLINE	OUTLINE
SPEC	OUTLINE	OUTLINE
IBM PC	OUTLINE	OUTLINE
ASTRO	OUTLINE	OUTLINE

to the nearest planet

## PC

Generally better on this version of the other versions because the spheres sit at the same motion and are controlled in common. This allows things when the screen fills up. The spheres are smaller too. Apart from these factors generally to make it less addictive—worth playing.

DISKSPACE 4 40 MEGS 7  
RAM 2 10M KBYTES 8

850

## AMIGA

This is the most colourful and attractive of the versions on played—30 colour resolution. The graphics are good in a more vibrant background. The speed is totally different and for some actually able something to the graphics.

DISKSPACE 4 40 MEGS 7  
RAM 2 10M KBYTES 8

890

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



initially this is an intriguing product—rather involving you in their more before. It appears to have some to get into, but it will take you several games to master the excitement required to clear someone's table.

For an environment that this product has long been playing games. There is not really enough variety in the game play to keep you playing when you have solved most of the puzzles.

product. It is quite easy to get to grips with, but very difficult to master, so there is quite a challenge there. It is the sort of product that is unique to computer gaming, and therefore really the sort of thing that a computer game should be. If you like games like Tetris you will almost certainly have a ball with this one.

—Gavin South

## THE TIC-TAC TILE GAME

It's simple in concept and easy to play. Catch-like coloured tiles with the paddle and flip them into the bins to make some coloured stacks, legends and rows of three. Sounds easy? It isn't! The hard part is getting yourself away from the game.

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## DOMARK





# ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE ROBOT MONSTERS

Classic Sci-Fi is revived on your screen in DOMARK/TENGEN's latest coin-op conversion

**YOUR** look, as either of the muscled-bound heroes Dale and Duke, is to fight your way through factory levels full of mechanical men, rescuing human prisoners, killing off the evil Replines you encounter, and finally coming face to face with... well, you'll have to stay through the game to find out what.

The latter takes place on a series of colorful isometric three-dimensional levels. Each is populated by a variety of robots ranging from the sluggish, but deadly, tentacle men to tiny little robot luggers which can only be shot by shooting.

It is very important to rescue as many slaves as possible by running into them because for each character you collect you get another set of the Grid (a set you feel you, you need it). Transport between levels is achieved by elevators, but before you can use it if you must



Shooting for the escalator control gets you already transported by robots, the gear left in a close working for the ascent.

find the power switch and throw it on. There are also points to be had for destroying as much of the factory equipment as possible.

Escape from the Planet of the Robot Monsters is a superb conversion, colourful, fast, and great fun (especially with two players).

— Lawrence Boothby

# KLAX

DOMARK/TENGEN put up a rival to the Tetris arcade puzzle crown

**TETRIS** is a remarkable product in a couple of respects. It is about as simple as an arcade game can hope to get, and it doesn't rely on fancy graphics and sound for its appeal, just highly addictive gameplay. Klax is a superficially similar product which shares these qualities, and is just as enjoyable to play.

It must be said that Klax is not simply a Tetris clone. The skills and planning you have to use are of an altogether different order. You control a paddle which moves back and forth along the bottom of a rectangular playing area divided into five lanes. Along these lanes tiles of different colours spin slowly towards you. You must catch them on the paddle and then flip them onto one of five stacks at the bottom of the screen. Your aim is to make a Klax—three colours in a vertical, horizontal, or diagonal line.

Obviously vertical lines are the easiest to make, as they only score a meagre 50 points, whereas horizontal lines score 1000 and diagonal lines score a massive 10000 points. To win each round you are given a specific task which could be anything from surviving a set number of tiles to creating several diagonal Klaxes. It found it fast when you drop too many tiles, or

ATARI ST

RELEASED BY: DOMARK  
 PRICE: £ 29.95

ATARI ST: £ 29.95

880



This is not the sort of game that's going to knock your socks off the minute you put it out of the box. But it will give you an quality. Once you've got this little game you are unlikely to get it done for a while, and even after you do you'll find it's not over until it's over. Klax is a game that's not over until it's over. Having almost made it complete each round adds to the game's long term interest.

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you can't just let the ones you don't want fall off the edge of the playing area.

Each stack will only hold five tiles, so you must be very careful about where you place them. Fortunately your paddle can hold up to five tiles at once, although the tile you catch first will be the last one to be released and vice versa. If things get too hectic you can also flip tiles back up the screen to give you some breathing space.

Although Klax is undoubtedly inspired by Tetris it is original enough to carve a niche of its own. If anything it requires more thought and forward planning than the former game, so it should appeal to ardent fans who like to consider the game matter a little bit. Well worth a look if you like this sort of thing.

— Lawrence Boothby



One Klax: a fast diagonal line of three is worth a huge 10000 points!

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ATARI ST

There is nothing particularly spectacular about this game in its graphics, but there does seem to be a certain charm to its highly addictive and straightforward gameplay. Klax is a game that's not over until it's over. Having almost made it complete each round adds to the game's long term interest.

RELEASED BY: DOMARK  
 PRICE: £ 29.95

ATARI ST: £ 29.95

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This is not the sort of game that's going to knock your socks off the minute you put it out of the box. But it will give you an quality. Once you've got this little game you are unlikely to get it done for a while, and even after you do you'll find it's not over until it's over. Klax is a game that's not over until it's over. Having almost made it complete each round adds to the game's long term interest.

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AMIGA COVER OUT SCORE

Includes screenshots of soundtrack

No other versions planned

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



After credits being viewed by the graphics and soundtrack, you will suffer a brief wait, then as you adjust to the way the game elements of being together it will not take long. However, before you begin to really get into the story of Gretna and learn exactly what the program Gretna is like, the study is forced to wear off and you are likely to move into other things.

## AMIGA

On the order that rate about this game is truly brilliant. You have the option that you can compare higher you have that you are in a line. The soundtrack is the most distinctive piece of computer music. The overall score is great! Good for the Year Best. On the game that there are no disadvantages other.

AMIGA 500 935  
 AMIGA 505 935  
 AMIGA 505 935

**CULTURE** has to be the most complex system that has anyone has ever claimed to simulate, so what is this model of good? The game compares several subgames which are all based around the Gretna culture, a people who have settled in a city carved from the bones of an ancient creature known as the Gretna.

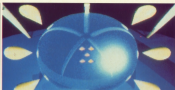
Gretna culture is based mainly around trading - with large families being impossible for different trades. The Gretna society is largely self-supporting to most trading is done between families, but there are occasional visitors to trade with other peoples, known collectively by the Gretna as 'Mudmen'.



This scene outside the Gretna shows how beautiful the graphics program can be.

As a head of one of these families it is your responsibility to manage your family's affairs. This part of the game involves establishing prices for your own goods and buying goods from other leaders. You must also decide whether to invest in attempts to establish new markets amongst the Mudmen and how much to contribute towards aiding families who have suffered losses of one kind or another.

The subgame works very much like a normal strategy/management type game, as that decisions are made on a session by session



# KNIGHTS OF THE CRYSTALLION

US GOLD

bring you the world's first

culture simulator

born with the effects of those decisions only really becoming apparent over a long period of time.

Your ultimate aim is not just to keep your family living as luxuriously as possible - there are other aspects to Gretna culture which require your attention. Within the walls of the Gretna is the Taint, a sacred place which houses the Gretna priests. They guard the fabled crystal which are all that remain of the Gretna's brain cells. Some of these crystals, when correctly nurtured, will hatch into a Crystallion - an intelligent crystal form. Your goal is to form a bond with one such creature and become a Knight of the Crystallion and a leader of the city.

An essential part of your quest for a Crystallion is the trial of the Taint. The Keepers of the Taint will provide you with a Crystallion suit which carries three charges, each of which will protect you from death once. You must now enter the twisting passages of the maze at the bottom of the Taint and collect as many crystals as you can, but there are also other creatures roaming the maze whose contact is deadly, and which also have the annoying habit of carrying off the crystal you are after.

Fortunately you are armed with a powerful pulse weapon. This can be fired quickly to destroy the hostile creatures or slowly to



harass your way through dark chambers. It is essential to collect as many crystals as you can and then escape from the Taint before you are killed by the creatures that roam there. There are seven sets of the Taint that must be successfully passed through before you can hatch your Crystallion. This will most probably result, and the only way to ensure entry is by contributing some of your savings to the Taint.

You can use crystals you have collected to generate items (releasing charges for your suit by taking them to the Priests and using them to generate charges in strange objects known as Priests).

There are two games specific to Gretna Culture which must be mastered to assure your success. These are Delta, a card game based on Marx which is used to build up your ESP, and Snow a board game bearing a faint resemblance to New Men's Men, which requires a similar sort of strategic thinking to Snow.

Knight of the Crystallion certainly gets full marks for originality. The distinctive (and at times beautiful) graphics and the haunting soundtrack give the game plenty of atmosphere. I wasn't too sure how I felt about this product at first, but having spent some time getting used to the individual elements it turned out to be a highly entertaining and absorbing piece of software, and I was quite happy to have to leave it to write the review. A startling game which will appeal to anybody who is looking for an original product with plenty of depth.

— James Scoble

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Manchester United - superb simulated soccer action.

# MANCHESTER UNITED

**WHERE** is the scramble for football licenses going to end? With all the top teams now snapped up, will we start to see a league basement division emerging with teams like Bristol Rovers appearing on the Mastertronc label? Whatever happens, there's no doubt that Krisalis are going to take an early lead through Brian Kilobest and his boys. Competent in every department, Manchester United features lots of graphical bells and whistles to make for a pretty, as well as challenging soccer game. The scenario follows the recent trend of combining a heavy degree of management responsibilities with a full league program of arcade matches and cup ties.

The arcade section compares favourably with other soccer games on the market, boasting most but not quite outshining the definitive Kick Off. The graphics certainly help - the players are realistically animated and large enough for you to make out their physical shape and all of the colours of the strips, which are also surprisingly accurate both home and away.

The control method is novel - using the fire button as a strength determinant for shots and passes. Keep it down for more power or cut it



Manchester United go nose up against Liverpool with extra time to go - good job the only 0-0 game.

quick, sharp press for a snap shot or a chip. The "chip" mode is particularly good. Its other soccer game allows you to clip the goalie and pick out precision free-kick-like long passes. On the negative side, the shooting system does not facilitate volleys or controlled, measured crosses at goal from outside the box.

When goals are scored you are treated to a replay on the giant screen at Old Trafford. This looks impressive at first - like watching old



Stately replay screens - there's no resemblance to the goal just scored.

footage of a celebrated Stanley Matthews netting, scored in some classic campaign before the Boer War. But it seems to bear no resemblance to the goal just scored and becomes simply annoying after a while.

This is the only criticism of the countless Greenware-style graphical treats that are crammed into the game. Most of them are good fun and serve a useful purpose. The progress screen for example is excellent - giving a report in the Daily Sport of Manchester United's league progress. You are also treated to a live broadcast of the show for the FA Cup if you get through to the next round, and can dabble in the transfer market. In addition you can organize

The official licensed football title from KRISALIS looks set to uphold a great tradition...

training and experiment with different formations.

Football management fans who like a challenge will also enjoy studying the form of players, scheduling appropriate training, dealing with injuries, buying and selling (You would expect to do plenty of that at Old Trafford and the game doesn't disappoint), and picking the team.

The manual is obviously written by a fan - and why not. The historical facts makes much of the glory days - George Best, Bobby Charlton, and the Busby Babes but strangely doesn't mention the Michael Knighton affair. This is a must for Man United fans everywhere and is also recommended to anyone who just wants a good footy game to play on their computer.

By Eugene Levy

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A lot of data regarding compatibility with all these graphical delights in the presentation screen. This doesn't stretch too much from the equipment though. Good long-term entertainment is guaranteed. You can make a full house and not experience a serious case of burn out on you as Steam is loaded on a pro for hours every time you finishing a full amount.

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The graphics are great, most of the games characters will only let up. So's but they compensate by being completely animated and constant to watch.

Eye-catchingly coloured, fast-moving action, home made difficulty - this is all there and addictive to boot."

ERG MAGAZINE - 87%

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# INFESTATION

**INFESTATION** survives as a 7.5 from a lot of the past from Alpha. In fact the score for its solid 3D vector graphics encounter with terrible alien on the Space Station Alpha II.

So don't expect Spookyway Waves, you are Kai Solar and your mission is to land on the planet Xebos where the crew of the station Alpha II have been massacred by some mysterious alien force.

The aliens are multiplying like genetic rabbits, stealthily spreading their eggs and spores around the base - in its ventilation ducts and air conditioning corridors. The only way stop them is to seal them inside their incubation areas and make a deadly dose of cyanide gas, but to make sure some of the eggs survive you must first seek out the base's Power Generator that is tapping power from the moon's core. Set it to activate critical mass and then escape before it blows.

What Kai's mission briefing doesn't tell him is that the planet Xebos where Alpha II is situated has been overrun with toxic life forms. And if that wasn't enough, Protector Oroids that are completely out of control and will kill anything that moves are swarming all over the place. Just getting into the base is going to be a battle before you even set eyes on the real alien enemy.

There are two methods of exploring Xebos - walk around it in the space suit or fly over it in the Marsoid Marsocopter (and MMRs). There are a number of items to be found and objects to identify before you can hope to sort out the alien infestation. It is as much a game of adventure and exploration as a simple shoot out with the aliens. Like Mercury and Starwreck the player has to find items and learn how to use them to succeed. A useful alien interrogation screen lets you flick through a series of annotated pictures of these so that you know what to look out for when you land on Xebos.

First, however, you have to Log on to a network Terminal and use it to activate the transporter system. Now you can go below ground and start exploring the base itself. This is where the real fun begins.

Kai needs to use all of his equipment to the full to safely explore the alien lair. The suit's

**PSYGNOSIS**

**hatch a virulent alien**

**SWARM!**

The latter is particularly important. The rate at which oxygen is used up is vital. All the time you are exploring you can hear the sound of breathing through the canisters connected to the helmet. Sometimes, however, you can take your nose up and breathe the air on the planet (or in the base) if your indicators tell you it is safe to do so, thereby generating valuable oxygen. If you are lucky you may also be able to locate your oxygen supplies - and therefore the time left for you - by stumbling upon Oxygen Canisters at the beginning of the game.

Great bounds about the quality of the 3D graphics are made in the manual. They were, it appears, 'specifically developed for 16 bit machines'. Is there a bull in here somewhere? OK they may be, but they're certainly not exceptional. They do, however, bear some comparison with Mercury in that the play area can be explored in real time with consistent views in all directions. Remembering where you are going and what you have seen is pretty crucial too as there is very little time to complete the mission.

The best bit is the opening sequence - where Kai is seen soaring across the surface of Xebos in his space suit. The moonlight on the surface of the planet as he tumbles down makes for a breathtaking space-odyssey.

helmet has four functions - Oxygen showing how much you have left, Temperature, Radiation, and Compass. The Head up Display features a further seven functions to keep Kai posted on his inventory items, carrying with him, Status Number of eggs destroyed, Additional navigational equipment, Life Support, Speech Pad Lights, Axioms, and Atmospheric Analysis.



RELEASE BOX		
AMIGA II	CD-ROM	IMMEDIATE
AMIGA	CD-ROM	OUT NOW
for other versions contact		

**AMIGA**

Infestation is one of the best 3D graphics ever seen. It's not just the graphics that are so good, it's the way the game is played. It's a real challenge. It's a real test of your skills. It's a real test of your patience. It's a real test of your endurance. It's a real test of your strength. It's a real test of your courage. It's a real test of your determination. It's a real test of your will. It's a real test of your spirit. It's a real test of your soul. It's a real test of your destiny. It's a real test of your fate. It's a real test of your destiny. It's a real test of your fate.

AMIGA II	CD-ROM	IMMEDIATE
AMIGA	CD-ROM	OUT NOW

**720**

infestation may be a little impenetrable at first - a fact not helped by the manual which leaves too much unexplained. It is worth a bit of perseverance though. Once you get into the station you soon start to take your self in it. Though and well fed it's extremely rewarding.

■ Eugene Lacey



Kai Solar logs onto the Marsoid Computer.



Searching for the entrance to the alien Alpha II station.

# GOLDEN OLDIES

Everyone enjoys listening to the latest Simply Red album, but don't you feel that there are times when when want to listen to a nice bit of classic Fleetwood Mac (especially if it's available on CD, turn up the volume, and back, and remember the good old days?)

So why shouldn't it be the same with software? ACE readers will always be interested in the latest up-to-the-minute state-of-the-art releases, but they are also discerning enough to be able to recognise a classic game when they see one and to want to play it again... when they've upgraded to the latest piece of technology.

Now publishers seem to be sitting up and taking notice of the games playing public and reproducing classic games on the latest machines. Witness this month's releases of Renaissance (a compilation of classic arcade games) and the first 16-bit version of Merio: More one of the best 8-bit games ever written.



But we think it is time that ACE readers were allowed to voice their collective opinion on the future of Golden Oldies. The question that we would like you to consider is this:

**Should software companies be investing time and money in developing new versions of classic games on the latest machines?**

You can let us know your opinion by dialing one of the following numbers depending on whether you wish to register a yes or no vote.

**0898 400 784** - Yes, let's see more releases of classic arcade and 8-bit games on 16-bit machines and the machines yet to come.

**0898 400 785** - No thanks, I'd much rather have time and money invested in brand new state-of-the-art software.

Remember that your votes could influence the future of the entertainment software industry. This is your opportunity to have your say and make sure that tomorrow you can buy the software that you want. Next month we will announce the definitive ACE opinion to the industry. So don't delay - vote today!

\*Phone charges 18 pence a day. Calls are charged at the rate of 10p per minute plus vat (7% per minute+0.04p).

# RENAISSANCE

IMPRESSIONS try invoking a little nostalgia and discover that fings ain't wot they used to be

**REMEMBER** the old days? When you could play whizzers for 10p? When Asteroids and Space Invaders were the hottest releases, and machines like Defender were still only a twinkle in a designer's eye? If you've got all steamy-eyed at the thought of monochrome vector graphics and simple one-channel sound then the idea behind Renaissance should appeal to you.



The classic versions of Defender, and Asteroids...

Impressions have taken four classic coin-ops: Space Invaders, Centipede, Galaxians, and Asteroids, and produced five games for each. One approximates to the original, the other is a

contemporary version with updated graphics and sound, and added features.

Since those classic coin-ops began revolutionising innumerable bar penny pieces there have been more clones on more machines than I care to think of, ranging from laughably pathetic attempts to capture the playability of the originals to versions that actually manage to surpass the qualities of the games that inspired them.

By providing two versions of both games, Impressions have tried to please everybody, but while this is a brave attempt at invoking nostalgia, it doesn't really cut the mustard.

Playing the copies of the original game one feels that all those little tricks and tactics you used to use are no longer applicable. Obviously, because of copyright reasons, Impressions can't make other the gameplay, graphics, or sound exactly the same as the original, but this does rather mar the attempt. The Centipede clone, Maggipede, suffers the most since you can't use the instant to manoeuvre, and we all know how limited the joystick is as a tactical substitute.

The contemporary versions are more at least the same game with pretty backgrounds, nice sprites, and a bit more animation thrown in for good measure. There are also extra routines to feature it, but these don't really change the games substantially.

Renaissance is a good idea, which has been attractively presented and does what it sets out to do fairly competently, but have Impressions forgotten that there are absolutely superb

RELEASE BOX	
AMIGA 50	11/995
AMIGA 50	11/995
No other systems coming	



You will initially be quite excited by the prospect of playing these classic coin-ops, but will eventually discover by the impressions. The contemporary versions are not likely to make your interest waver, as they don't really offer much over and above prettier graphics and more sound.

Now at the start of product that you are going to get them here possibly less money back for the old games over a period of time.

**AMIGA**

Impressions' dual classic versions are the most remarkable clone to the graphics and sound available on the original machines (though not really matched, like it says to be) and the contemporary versions start with a 16-bit 1.2 megabyte in an eye. Given as the presentation is quite neat and there is a nice little soundtrack Non-Used Hardware. Not a bad combination, but not outstanding either.

REMARKS:	16 BIT	1.2 MB	11/995
PRICE:	7	11/995	6.50



versions of all these games available on Public Domain software? You could pick up equivalent clones to around \$8 for the lot. Having said that, if you expect the original games and haven't already acquired versions for your machine then you should be able to squeeze some entertainment out of this collection.



—Atari Impression's contemporary versions: Megapops and Driveline

**ONE** of the more frequent subjects of discourse between 32-bit owners these days seems to be a longing for good conversions of classic 8-bit games. Only last month we printed a letter from a reader who inquired "the golden rules" such as Jet Set Willy, and went on to ask "is there such a thing as a simple shoot 'em up anymore?"

# MANIC MINER

It is a sad fact that as games have become more sophisticated in terms of graphics, sound, and size they have often lost the playability and addictiveness which were common features of the best 8-bit games. Companies like Ultimate Play the Game and Software Projects became renowned for producing software which made the best possible use of the limited graphics and sound potential of these basic machines, but not at the expense of the immediate and lasting appeal of the games.

Now Software Projects have answered the prayers of 16-bit owners, who are fed up with sipping through the nose for games which are visually and aurally stunning, but offer nothing more than vaguely interactive graphics and sound effects; and now, the classic game, Manic Miner, rises again.

Manic Miner was the professional debut of programmer Matthew Smith. It is a two-dimensional platform game with lovely stages, which must be completed successively. Looking at it today, it doesn't seem to be anything to ring

home about, but, when you begin to play, it does not take long to discover the addictive qualities that made the game such a huge success when it was first released.

You control Miner Willy, a sprightly little chap who is trying to find his way out of an abandoned mine, which is now populated by various malign creatures including the likes of snoring

as a result, the author has gone for large, well animated sprites, so you only ever see a small section of each stage, the rest being scrolled smoothly on in and when you come to it.

Close to the familiar about resolution of Peer Gynt — it has been replaced by one of 30-bit sprites which you feel yourself tunnelling in the last three days afterwards. Spud effects have also been souped up and there is some digitized speech thrown in there for good measure.

It is nice to note that Software Projects have taken the plunge and given 32-bit gamers what they have asked for: advanced graphics and sound with a bit of good old fashioned 8-bit playability. Other companies take note — this is the way 32-bit games should be!

— Lawrence Staffell

## SOFTWARE PROJECTS

answer 16-bit gamers' prayers and re-release a classic 8-bit title in both old and new clothing.

toilet and mutant telephones. You achieve the escape by jumping from platform to platform, dodging the monsters and collecting all of the keys on the screen. Once you have obtained them all, it just remains to head for the exit before your air runs out.

With this new release, Software Projects are bound to please a lot of Manic Miner fans — not only have they included an updated version of the game which makes full use of the advanced features of 32-bit machines, but there is also an exact replica of the original which is so accurate that you can use the same joystick perfect, being you developed when playing the game on your humble home.

The new version, while looking like a state-of-the-art Amiga game, is still faithful to the spirit of the original. That is to say, it has superb playability. Rather than trying to fit each stage onto a single screen and having smaller sprites

Look out for a conversion of Jet Set Willy coming soon.



### RELEASEE 800

ATARI ST 128K 128K 128K

AMIGA 128K 128K 128K

Further versions planned

### AMIGA

The spirit of the original is never more fully demonstrated than in this superb, money in the bank. The updated version is superb — the graphics are huge and well animated and although you only see a small portion of the changing levels it also looks, it sounds, very convincing. More please, please.

DEVELOPER: S. DEBATOR  
 AMIGA: S. DEBATOR

870



Here they show the Atari ST version and the Amiga version in both new and old versions

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# LEAVIN' TERAMIS

ATARI ST

Control, feel, see yourself, who else can that last single mouse movement. It's not only a single mouse movement - but the screen scrolls so you can see the beauty of the scene. It's a real mouse control. You mean you get the mouse control that you need?

GRAPHICS: 7    SOUND: 8  
 VALUE: 7    RELEASED: 8    **810**

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A mostly appealing game, it probably frustrates you to play and that is exactly what you need. It's not only a single mouse movement - but the screen scrolls so you can see the beauty of the scene. It's a real mouse control. You mean you get the mouse control that you need?

## RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST    CD-ROM    OUT NOW

AMIGA    CD-ROM    BRANCH

For more games, please visit

**LET** me tell you, Teramis is a pretty huge ship. The wire sequence will show you just how long. Trouble is, you've got to shoot your way from one end of it to the other. You see, just last night there was one fell of a party in the Xenobiological lab to celebrate the collection of some new mutant alien. Having drunk quite a bit you decided to bunk down in the laboratory section at the far end of the ship and sleep it off.

When you wake up you discover to your horror that the alien life forms have escaped and overrun the ship. You follow astronaut's trail of disappeared landing you behind. Fortunately there is one escape shuttle left at the front of the ship, but the ship's self-destruct sequence has been activated so you will have to deactivate each section's generator to give you enough time to reach the shuttle.

What you basically have here is a good old-fashioned scrolling shoot 'em up which is very fast and frantic. The ship is divided into sections

**GRANDSLAM/THALION** go in for a bit of quick-fire mutic bashing on the longest spaceship in the universe



Fast-paced Teramis has its own alien life forms

in which you must fight your way through various alien, and collecting useful alien and bonuses until you reach the end-of-level enemy who must be destroyed before you go into the next level.

The most important factor in the game is time which is constantly taking away and must be continually refilled. The way to do this is by leaving the main body of the ship and moving along one of the external arms to deactivate the generator at the end. In the early part of the game these arms are unguarded, but on later stages there are enemy creatures to dispatch before you can get to the generator.

Lower Teramis doesn't attempt to be original in any way, what it does do very well is provide a shoot 'em up addict with a very humorous, colorful, and fast way to while away a good few hours. Recommended to people who like the shooting everything that moves.

— Lawrence Bentley

# SUPER CARS

**SET** in a pseudo-fantasy world Super Cars has you racing against computer controlled cars for Diamond's supremacy.

The actual game starts you off with a very impressive picture of three beefy cars. It box indicates which stage, or class you are on and which of the tracks you have raced on.

Click on any of the three cars and you are presented with a very well drawn side view of the car and loads of facts and figures. If you have enough cash you can buy one or build your own.

You can pop into the garage where you will be greeted by a smiling young girl. The garage can be visited at anytime, before or after a race and is essential for staying in the game. This is where you make the repairs to your car and can top it up with gold - including Power Steering, Spin Assist and a Front Missile.

After coming at of these fantastic graphical scenes, you would expect the actual racing section to be something really impressive, but in fact it's quite disappointing. It's in your head view with trees and other



Smooth, but unexciting alien tracks justify the fact that you can't steal on these tracks though.

objects, which scrolls jerkily as you bump along. The sprites also are quite small.

Racing round is great fun. It's a shame that a two player game is not available. On reaching the yellow enemy class they become permanent - unquarantined - and can slow down your car and those of other competitors.

New tracks have to be driven before you can proceed to the second stage of the three. These can be done in any order. The Drive mode comes first, second or third in EVERY race or be well be disqualified.

Racing round and ploughing into walls, quite naturally, damage the cars and this is shown on four graphs: Bodywork, Engine, Tires and Fuel. The damage can be repaired in the garage, but if any graph hits zero it's game over time.

As you progress so do the opposition, they get more experienced, faster and even buy better models of car.

The Supergrip style racing game is good fun and really addictive - it is a shame though that you cannot race against friends.

— Chris Moly

**GREMLIN'S** entertaining race game has us all in a spin

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The attractive presentation is instantly appealing and the graphics are quite from the real world. There is not really enough here to hold your interest for long, a two-player system might have helped.

## RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST    CD-ROM    OUT NOW

AMIGA    CD-ROM    BRANCH

INTENDO    C-24    SUMMER '88

ATARI ST

The car selection and garage screens look like a quality, but the overhead view with your car in a yellow tank. There are a couple of different levels to add to the fun, but on the whole this product does not really break any new ground.

GRAPHICS: 7    SOUND: 8  
 VALUE: 7    FUN FACTOR: 8    **790**



# F-29 RETIALIATOR

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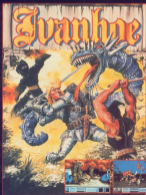
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# The Fantasy

# THE *on your 16bit* FANTASY

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# MIDWINTER

**A**t last we've got our hands on a full production copy of *Midwinter* (previously previewed in earlier issues of ACE). You may have read reviews of it elsewhere in recent months, but these came before their reproduction version that was demonstrated to magazines. This is the final game you're ever likely to see... much more important, it's new.

The game comes with bags of support material: a very lengthy manual (with a few misprints), a short "quickstart" instruction sheet, a map, and a pair of minimegs that you can use for planning campaigns. Much as I like quickstart instructions, this is definitely one game you cannot play effectively without reading at least half the manual.

What's good about it, however, is that you can start playing straightaway. Your objective is prevent Madrin's invasion force (comprising the Midwinter island by recruiting Peace Force members and combining occasional direct attack using rifles, missiles, grenades etc) with strategic management of people and resources.

The first thing to do is check the map (you start in a different position each game, but other features and people remain in the same location), where is the nearest garage to get a snow buggy (cheaper than going)? Where is the nearest potential recruit? And where is a kitchener who can recruit four other people



Using the map as a strategic resource while planning your campaign. Moving your own unit in a direction brings up information on the point in the night. When you attempt and have located the third potential recruit.

immediately by radio, if he can find one? (Very players will get lost and wander until they find themselves in an initial location either right by a garage or close to one, preferably centrally located.)

From then on, it's a matter of moving your characters around as efficiently as possible (they get tired and injured very easily), balancing the need to destroy resources (stealing) them to the money you can need to use them. Gameplay is made much easier through the fact

**MICROPROSE's**

**Mike Singleton**

**megagame hits the streets at last...**

you to act with all possible speed. Unlike some complex games, this made easier by the fact that although you need a lot of background info from the manual to play effectively, the actual



Staying in strategically easy-to-defend locations (Madrin is using guns) is of vital importance; you are more likely to enter a battle, wearing suitable clothes in the process.

commands are very simple to learn. You can use mouse, joystick, or keyboard - the manual recommends a mouse but I found the joystick easier for sliding and toggling.

Like Singleton's previous megagame, *Lords of Midnight*, surprised because of its playability - some of the other Midnight games came anywhere close. It's a great relief to report that *Midwinter* is undoubtedly as playable as *LDM* and a good deal more challenging. The only drawback is that the landscape isn't quite detailed enough. IOK, it's all covered in snow but you spend much more time thinking and planning

that captured characters can easily be freed by blowing up their prison and speed ones are automatically recruited and clamped in the nearest village.

Combine these advantages with the fact that, when you start, the enemy has already overrun much of the South-East, and you have a situation that forces

## RELEASE DATE

ATARI ST    OCT 1988    OUT NOW

AMIGA    OCT 88    TBA

PC    OCT 88    TBA

For other releases contact...

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The initial test of the game is very favourable - and prolonged and increasing enthusiasm.

There's a long learning curve - at least a day for the committed player - but the joy of *Midwinter* that you can get through something and make something happen immediately, rather than wait for the game, there is a great deal of satisfaction when everything comes out as planned.

There are three ways of playing that determine the strategy available. It's an all-out effort to create a game plan, but the only real test is that if you do it in the second hour you can be likely to win the game in a later hour about the actual strategy involved remains the same (it's really more difficult to achieve, however the idea about the system interest graph, that may persuade the 20 casuals' you're unlikely not going to finish this one in a hurry, you can't have a look at you can't see it or that).

**ATARI ST**

It's easy, but often to the surprise of all the players, it's not so easy to get an idea of what the game is about. The manual is a good start, but it's not so easy to get an idea of what the game is about. The manual is a good start, but it's not so easy to get an idea of what the game is about. The manual is a good start, but it's not so easy to get an idea of what the game is about.

GRAPHICS 4    SOUND 5  
 ACTION 4    VALUE FOR MONEY 7    **948**

than you did in the previous game. It's also a pity that the map screen requires a lot of access, since you need it frequently. These niggles apart, this is a superb success. Stand by for a full player's guide in next month's ACE.

■ Steve Bode



The only way to start again is to surrender. Four essential side screens, and the manual offers a lot of things you can do to win.



# Castle Master



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Atari ST, C64, Spectrum & Amiga Screenshots

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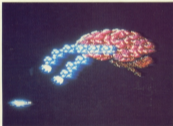
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**DOMARK**

# CONSOLE Crazy

ACE looks at some of the latest releases for the  
Nintendo Entertainment System



Salamander's Death-Blade grabs on you as you try to shoot out the alien eggs.

## LIFE FORCE - SALAMANDER

Life Force is better known to US gamers as Salamander - a tall, smiling, blood 'em up that set the arcade alight with its eye-catching flaming planet timer.

The effect was widely copied in stacks of games (but due to contractual anomalies, the official conversions were limited to a couple of systems only and were of indifferent quality. For this reason the old classic is doubly welcome on the NES. Nintendo gamers will spot a similarity with Gadius - Salamander's cousin. The opening flurry of laser action is practically identical to the first few screens of Gadius.

But once you have hooked up with a couple of lasers or a Rocket Cannon - depending on your title - the similarity ends and you are in for six completely new levels of shoot 'em up.

NINTENDO	DISC	OUT NOW
GRADES: 4	40 SCREENS: 7	740
AGES: 7	FOR ACTION: 6	

Life Force introduces a particularly nasty planet eating alien called Zelus who is about to snack on your planet unless you do something about it. Conquering Zelus first requires the successful negotiation of six levels of action - three horizontal and three vertical.

The powers ups are well up to the job in hand which often involves beating a flight path through walls as well as downing marbles. The method of hooking up is the same as in Gadius. Shoot down a whole squadron of satellites and then pick up the glowing jewel. This will illuminate a weapon selection in your control panel.

Take this one on well until you get another jewel which will light up another weapon window in the control panel. Amateurs won't settle for anything less than Twin Palace Lasers, its Death pool without the lights unless you have them.

Call Stage 1 takes you through the Phoenix Galaxy where grasping Death Horfs - like giant worms wriggling out of the walls try to grab you. The action turns on its head for Terror Zone II where volcanoes and LG Space Ships are your main concerns. Just when you are getting used to life in a vertical world the game flops back on its side for Terror Zone III. If you get this far you will encounter the legendary flaming fire creature - and most afraid like they are too. The final three stages continue the quick change routine between horizontal and vertical action at the end of level.

But don't get the impression that Salamander is a mere lightening fear of six pretty fireworks. There is a mean end of level snail at the end of each level who is determined to stop you sampling the delights of the next level. Particularly tough are the Teleninorobotack and the Invader. The battle is finally won when you destroy Zelus' heart and soul at the end of the sixth level.



Knocking satellites in the Life-Force. The world of this shoot 'em up also tilted with laser beams.

Kanami's Life Force pushes the NES to its limits. Its sound, graphics and animation the latest cartridges are more powerful than ever - adding weight to Nintendo's argument that there is a lot more to be had out of the NES by upgrading the cartridges rather than the hardware they run on. It is certainly tough enough and pretty enough to keep the most discerning of shoot 'em fans busy for a considerable amount of time.

Graphically superb - Life Force now takes up the mantle of best Nintendo shoot 'em up. If you enjoyed Gadius you'll love Life Force. I did.

By Eugene Lacey

## DOUBLE DRIBBLE

NINTENDO	DISC	OUT NOW
GRADES: 7	40 SCREENS: 7	719
AGES: 6	FOR ACTION: 7	

Kanami's Double Dribble sets new standards for basketball on the Nintendo with some delightful graphics, touches and good, solid game play for two players - or just one against the computer.

The game is a conversion of the popular Kanami coin-op Basketballer and has an exciting American 'big league' feel to it. Admit fans cheer the goals, cheer leaders wave their pom





Amused at home... Konami's Konami Olympics



New York rules in a game by Nintendo's own sport.

ports about, and an official timer blinks out at the end of five periods.

Like most sports sims, basketball games stand or fall on how easily the player can control the movement of the ball from player to player. Double Dribble has a well-tuned system to deliver smoothness of ball control. Using a combination of 'A' and 'B' buttons on the control pad the player can jump, steal, pass the ball to trailing players, and shoot.

The Slam Screen is completely unique to Double Dribble. When your offensive player shoots the basket for an uncontested lay in the corner switches is automatic to show the score in large animated sprites. You see baskets being slam dunked in one of three dramatic poses.

The computer keeps track of the tie scores and the time. Victories of various kinds are also determined by the computerized referee.

The battles are fought out between four of Nintendo's main basketballing teams - New York, Boston, Chicago and Los Angeles, and you can choose which one you want to represent. All the attributes are represented in the NES by locking a ball into the appropriate basket - again handled superbly by the computer.

Like all sports sims the game is at its best as a free player challenge - but the solo game against the computer is also good fun - the NES doing a great impression of a team made up of the Lump Bird clones.

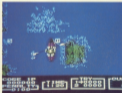
Once you master the controls Double Dribble provides lasting entertainment value. You have fun at a good sports sim and Double Dribble is a most welcome addition to the best edge-of-Nintendo sports sims.

Double Dribble pushes the NES to its limits in two important categories. The guard sprays in

the automatic 'slam dunk' screens are most impressive. They are like watching a series of photographic stills. The game also includes an impressive - if limited - amount of speech synthesis. It is unusual to come across speech in a game - even on computers much more powerful than the NES. All the more credit is due to Konami for this. It adds to the enjoyment.

Both offensive and Defensive plays have an authentic feel. Double Dribble makes for an exciting and to end challenge with lots of baskets. A quality sports simulation.

■ Eugene Levy



The 'B' team moves past through narrow waters.

## TRACK & FIELD II



You better be fit for Track and Field II as Konami have squeezed fifteen different game challenges into this one-ported cartridge.

Take a deep breath and prepare for - Track and Field II features a variety of sports - Track, Soccer, Football, Basketball, Tennis, Golf, Baseball, Hockey, Ice Hockey, Figure Skating, Skiing, Snowboarding, and more.

Competitors come from all over the world to compete in the Konami Olympics and the



prize for success. Choose a nation to represent and then start the fun.

The original Track and Field II was a coin-op hit in the Summer of '85. It was particularly popular in pubs and clubs and generated a great deal of noise as the favoured technique was to hammer on the buttons with your fists to propel your athlete along.

Many of the events in this Nintendo version require lots of button pushing as well but it is not just a question of flapping the buttons as quickly as you can. There is plenty of skill needed as well.

All of the events have a qualifying round. If you succeed in one of these you are given a password which enables you to enter the main event every time you play after this.

Most of the events employ a best 'ten style control method - whereby you manipulate your athlete using a variety of 'A' and 'B' buttons and joystick motions. In the fencing for example you press 'B' and push up on the joystick for a high feint, or in the High Jump event you press 'B' down on the joystick for a clean dive. Each event requires a good deal of skill and judgment as well as practice if you are to score maximum points.

All of the events reach a high standard and preferences will vary. Probably the best of them are Tennis, Soccer, and Canoeing. The 'Versus' mode enables you to play some of these two player sports as a one-off - without taking part in the Championships and without the tediousness of having to qualify in the practice mode.

All of the traditional trials of the sporting fan - memory and price presentations are featured in Track & Field II. You are even shown the athletes arriving at the airport.

Track & Field II's fifteen events will keep you busy for ages. It takes a good deal of skill and practice to take top honours in most events ensuring a regular 'plug in' for the cartridge.

Fifteen events on one cartridge takes a bit of doing - particularly as no content have been cut or any of the games either graphically or tonically.

Living proof that you can get just as much game into a cartridge as you can into a couple of three and half inch disks.

Track & Field II features a game type to suit everyone. A must for sports sim fans.

■ Eugene Levy

# LOCK & LOAD

# MAGNUM

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**BATMAN**



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# ULTIMATE GOLF

**GOLF** hasn't been top of the list in recent years, when racing and fight sims seem to have taken the honors. True and, however, when golf games were one of the most popular genres around. Gremlin's Ultimate Golf hopes to put the clubs back on the green for keeps with a state-of-the-art interpretation of the sport.



Stick to the green and checking the corner side on before putting. After you actually make the shot, the player adjusts and makes his swing.

The presentation version we've seen is certainly impressive. Grid-based 3D perspective terrain combined with highly detailed playing options that will leave anyone used to the old Strategy and BGC golf games speechless. First, you can play against a computer opponent in big improvement. Second, you can vary teak, hand, and club position to achieve precise ball control through hooks, slices, and spins. Finally, you can view the pitch in detail by using a zoom in, zoom-out map display as well as the standard 3D playing screen.

Once you're set up your shot, you get a neat bit of animation as your player figure takes a swing at the ball. The graphics on the Amiga version (the only one we've seen) are clear and easy to interpret so that you can make meaningful decisions about how and where to place the ball ball (swing, if you will).

Finally, programmer Paul Elyth (who previously gave us PORT on SF and Amiga) is

A quick preview of  
GREMLIN'S bid to  
resurrect the ancient art  
of micro golf...

planning to release different course disks for use with the game - you get two with the basic program. Looks like computer golf could be on the verge of a comeback...

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RELINE's new shoot-  
em-up has echoes of  
*Defender* and *Chopper*.  
But is that enough?

**DYER 7** takes its inspiration from two of the classic shoot 'em ups - *Chopper* and *Defender*. From *Chopper* come the key figures that have to be plucked from danger by your chopper, and from *Defender* comes the sophisticated radar which shows the position of the enemy attack vehicles that have to be destroyed before progressing to the next level.

These dual elements of strategy do something to elevate *Dyer 7* above the plethora of scroll and shoot, grab the power up, smack the on-off-and-easy games that seem to be about the extent of most publishers' imagination these days. On the other hand, adapting two conventional game ideas to form the stuff of design awards - but at least the games were well chosen and the whole package is put together with playful good humor in the programmers' minds.

It's in order attack again - but this time the battle is fought here rather than in deep space. The invaders are taking over the planet country by country and island by island. From your fortress below the sea you launch the counter attack. *Dyer 7* is an attack chopper that can be made pretty handy by hitting on the lethal assortment of power ups that are earned by reaching the scientists.

There are eight levels of play - four above ground and four below. You first engage the

# DYER 7

**PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE**

A graph about 'em up that will be the most demanding of graphic jobs. Its system of cut-throat bonuses adds to the exciting interest, once you have sailed through all the levels, you can start clearing off how many the number of minutes required for better scores. Challenging and interesting enough to keep you coming back for more.

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**AMIGA**

One of the best (we promise) on the Amiga on the market. It's funny how many people look at this game for a while by looking at it and then they don't. It's a real, real up of this classic genre. Speed and graphics in the game that is really impressive. It's really excellent.

ATARI ST	CD ROM	7
AMIGA	CD ROM	7
		<b>780</b>

enemy on a series of tropical islands, dealing with land attack vehicles, frigates, subs and gun boats lying offshore. Once all opposition has been eliminated you can progress to the next level. You have to be quick about it as well because the enemy submarines will deposit a fresh supply of deaths if you don't manage it in time.

Entering the next level involves flying down to the beach - through a volcano. The vertically scrolling shoot 'em up that follows is quite novel - even if it is a bit too easy by comparison with the level that precedes it. It must be a first, flying down-screen, rather than up. Power ups are essential here - you need at least a multi-directional beam to survive the beach.



Showing your wings to save the islands.

Best of all are the big scientists that you can pick up and ferry back to the safety of your base. When you land they run out of the chopper like little insects. You have to rescue them as well. If you ignore them and just start blasting it out with the enemy you won't be able to get your hands on those vital power ups.

It's refreshing to come across a shoot 'em up where there is a bit more to think about than the next power up. *Dyer 7* has action aplenty but also forces you to think about the fight other than monotonically pumping away on your fire button. Let's hope it starts a trend.

By Eugene Levy

If I say Distinctive Software Inc., it probably doesn't mean that much to you. But what if I mention *Tear Drive*, *Tear Drive II*, *Hardball*, *Hardball II*, *Grand Prix Circuit* and *Cyclone*? These games were all developed by DSI and now they've come up with another hotrod racer, influenced to a fair degree by *Tengen's Hard Drive* series.

"Influenced," spokesman Don Matlock interjects, "Yes and no. Of course we took a look at *Hard Drive* and adapted the things we liked, but we were the first company to produce a racing game with first-person perspective, so it's that respect *Hard Drive* was influenced by us," he adds. "We wanted to take it to the next step, to change the technology from bitmap graphics to advanced 3D generated routines."

Going under the working title of *Star Marks*, there's no denying the game's pedigree or performance. The most striking aspect of the game is its resemblance to *Hard Drive*, this is mainly due to the two games offering similar 3D polygon-filled vector visual displays. But *Star Marks* takes pole position over its rival by



Star Marks takes a classic perspective to other games on the scene, driver's eye!

# SKID MARKS



Just one of the excellent multiple view options.

offering more features, including car model selection, track editor and extensive race replay facilities.

You start by choosing your car -- is true *Tear Drive* fanfare -- with a rotating 3D model of the current car supplemented by a graph and list of its vital stats. The game will eventually have eight different car types to choose from, including the latest sports cars, classic models and one of two "weirdies" like a dune-buggy or a pickup van with giant wheels. Matlock explains, "We've tried to get cars with different attributes and abilities to really make a difference to the gameplay."

Your fleet ready to race around a track populated with bridges, raised roads, tunnels, light-rise buildings, loop-the-loops, slippery surfaces, etc. There's no need to worry if you don't like the track layouts because you've got a built-in track editor which allows you to create, edit, save and load your own track designs.

The overall feeling you get from playing *Star Marks* is that of immense fun, but it really comes into its own when you use the instant replay options at the end of your race. The numerous options available include automatic

DISTINCTIVE SOFTWARE INC./MINDSCAPE

slip into top gear and prepare to overtake *Hard Drive*\*

where the camera follows your car in a helicopter, manual camera control which allows you to change the outside viewing angle and zoom in/out, and a full-screen God-eye view of the proceedings. All this is controlled through WCS-like buttons for play, car, user modes and frame advance. Another view option is provided by camera's located around the track, the view switches from one camera to another during the action. You can also adjust these camera's height. I had just as much fun watching a race as I did driving it.



Fig. gets even more design power over tracks. The feature also lets you save your own tracks.

I played an early version of *Star Marks* on a 68010 and 16MHz PC with EGA graphics and was well impressed. It looks out a fair price even on slower machines. The PC version also supports CGA, EGA, VGA, MCGA and Tandy graphics modes plus AHB and Roland sound boards.

DSI is producing another seven games for Mindscape over the next 12 months, including a couple of sports simulations and a game influenced by *Popsicle* and *Sm-City*. Let's hope these titles match the expected quality of *Star Marks*.

— Bill Meyer

## RELEASE BOX

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## DSI WHO??

DSI has developed over 40 games in the last eight years. The Canadian company was set up in 1983 by Don Matlock, an 18-year-old programmer out to build a strong team of software engineers, graphic artists and musicians. Matlock kept AHB. As the time went by was trying to replace one step. I started to write games that showed the capabilities of the computer." Today DSI has over 70 people working for it, producing games on the Amiga, PC, C64, ST, Macintosh, Acorn RISC and Nintendo NES and Gameboy consoles.

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Now you see it... now you don't! An experimental path on the floor in the left has drained the gold to reveal a stationary beam of...?

**FREESCAPE** which is the system created by incentive to generate solid vector landscapes and objects, is a good couple of years old now, and has already been the basis for three superb games: *Driller*, *Darkside*, and *Total Eclipse*. Now Incentive have teamed up with Domark for the release of the fourth Freescape game, *Castle Master*, and very welcome it is too.

It seems that on a certain hill all the lines of power in the world converge, and it is there that the powerful Lord of the Old Time, Magister, set up camp. Satisfied that man is so ineffectual he is of no importance, old Magister decides to have a nap for a couple of centuries. He wakes to discover that not only has all his power disappeared but man has got a lot smarter than he was when Magister began his sleep. The sneering locals chuck Magister out of the castle that now sits on the hill, and generally give him a bad time. That is, until Magister gets his power back and turns the lot of them into evil spirits.

good deal of brain work involved as well. In *Castle Master* there is a certain amount of fun to be had in just wandering about playing with your switches and levers you find. If you are to make a serious attempt to solve the game however, you will need to explore in a methodical manner and make a map at the same time.

You can now select between running and walking, so favouring long corridors is less of a chore. There is even a crawl option which allows you to examine the underside of tables and such like. There is also a status screen which shows your progress and details keys you have collected.

The keys are needed to access various parts of the castle, which is one reason why you should explore each area thoroughly. As well as keys there are also switches to be found. These must be collected to allow access to the passage visit within one of the castle's towers.

A lot of problems in *Castle Master* require fairly intense lateral thinking to solve, but

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## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



*Castle Master* is a great fun to explore, but you will get the most out of it when you start mapping and playing in a more systematic way. You may be disappointed only you get a really steady problem. One thing you could become a little frustrated with the solution like you - then you can begin exploring again. If you are if you're looking to solve the game you can always try playing the other Freescape titles for the pleasure you haven't been able to find at that it shows that this will probably be returned to the shelf for good!

## ATARI ST

*Freescape* seems to get better and smoother with each game, and this one is no exception. The game can be controlled with a combination of mouse buttons and joystick. It's worth a try to fully appreciate just what the graphics are of course, especially.

RECOMMENDATION: **8.5**

GRADE: **B** FOR BUYERS 'T'

# CASTLE MASTER



The courtyard shows that here are hidden the Freescape system core files.

It now transpires that your mind has been captured and is chained up somewhere within the castle. It is up to you to restore the captive ability by breaking into the castle and destroying all the spirits that reside there.

Unlike *Driller* and *Darkside* which were smaller, puzzle orientated games, *Total Eclipse* and *Castle Master* are both games which involve a lot of exploring, although there is a

sorted around the place are drawers containing crystals, clues which should help you along. As with *Total Eclipse* there are other needs to consider as well as the puzzles. You must also keep your strength up by occasionally munching on pieces of cheese that have been left lying around. Obviously there are no mice in this place. There are one or two liquid substances that can be imbued so well with varying effects.

What is immediately obvious about *Castle Master* is attention to detail. Try sticking your hand into one of the torches on the wall if you want an example. There are also many things you can do which are not essential to the object of the game, but add to the atmosphere and fun of exploring.

Another nice touch is the non-linear approach. You can choose whether to play the prince or princess (the remaining character is the one who is rescued), and the choice does actually affect the gameplay.

## INCENTIVE/DOMARK

create yet another three-dimensional world to explore

Like all of the other Freescape games, *Castle Master* does have something of a dead feel about it. The rooms and objects generated by the system lack a little too much the computer creations - it is the lack of curves that do it. Despite this, *Castle Master* is a very enjoyable game which will appeal to all those who seek the satisfaction of suddenly realising the solution to a puzzle that has been pondered over for days. All in all this is a very nice addition to the Freescape range of games.

■ Lawrence Bullford



# OLD BUT GOLD

CHRIS MORLEY UPDATES THE LATEST VERSIONS OF NEW SOFTWARE



## PC DRAGON'S LAIR

Origin/Hasbro - £44.95.45.  
Amiga version reviewed here 15.  
ACE rating 4.5

A case of its age, many people were amazed to hear that the vintage laser disc spectacle, *Dragon's Lair*, was to be converted to the popular 16-bit machines, starting with the Amiga. The Amiga version took digital sound and (as anticipated) the original game and converted some 150 megabytes of data on its disc. The game itself runs via an heroic (and boring, who else here is going through a series of the frustrating scenarios in order to reach your bit of treasure) Prince, in order to get through the scenarios and on way closer to the Princess you must use the assembly manual as, down, left and right (you'll find you truly need with skill several arrows).

This is when the conversions fall down. Playability was extremely poor and although the game level control (rotating graphics) remains good and sound, but not more graphics and controls risk tripping (that's the game's disclaimer) to say the least. So, all the PC version is far better!

Instead of an idea that was brilliant, the playability is and the same as just an interesting, variation is good and quite fast but if you don't have a few more you will have to get up with frequent lengthy disc accessing.

The graphics is fairly impressive but remains near the quality of the Amiga version (which was a video game anyway). Sound effects are non-existent (apart from the few different sounds when you're something right or wrong). In a nutshell, *Dragon's Lair* is a very disappointing game which is considerably better than the other 16-bit versions. *Dragon's Lair* still would be advised to stay the slightly better Amiga or 3.1 version, but better still purchase the near-up-market *Prince of Persia* and full installation are suggested by the best looking, the poor graphics, interface, disc swapping and soft sound effects.

ACE 05/95/447



## DAY OF THE VIPER

Activision - £24.99.45.  
Amiga 3.1 version reviewed here 26.  
ACE rating 5/5  
Amiga

Day of the Viper is rather a strange game. It is a 3D shooter that can't be (and game with it isn't) that the original, and movement controls, are a bit odd.

The third of the 4 in a guide Viper is a more complete, almost, second hand, it has better level, sound, including the various missions, and eventually remaining the default con-

text which should teach off the rail, but, leader of all the various missions you'll find to destroy manually.

This version is almost identical to the Amiga version and hardly proves of the Amiga's advanced graphics systems. Sound effects are slightly better and opening doors (that's a really satisfying "oooooooooooooooooooo") noise. Perhaps (that's the same noise as the one in the *Enterprise*).

Although this game is an exciting idea it was actually got quite boring after a while, playing through identical opening lights (which with robot and enemy often does not keep your interest) to die.

ACE RATING: 6/10

## TYPHOON THOMPSON

Stratford/Thornax - £14.99.45.  
Amiga 3.1 version reviewed here 11.  
ACE rating 8/10  
Amiga

*Typhoon Thompson* was one of the more original games that came out last year.



now it is also available on the Amiga.

The unit is quite cheap - it is 2024, a few months ago (the 1984) existed on the PC. It would appear that this is only the first - a case of great importance. These cards (which have already been sold from Earth to space) appear - but of how now has the ship? You're in the fourth team and have been finally volunteered by your co-captain to do the deed.

The control you do not and finally you have to leave all about the ocean to a cluster of his islands. Moving about the islands are not growing into which, when it, release various different types of spacecraft, most one of those that are designed to add it (those into the 1984 and, with a city of it being and thing, you added into the sea, the creature should be in the bag). Once several "battles" as they are known have been (played) you can cut off the normal flow and return it to the normal (good) parts of the planet. After several items have been returned you can begin to research the "Big Gun".

This version is really the same as the game on the 3.1 but looks a better. There are some sort automatic, some for sequences in the game which are quite amusing and entertaining.

This is a thoroughly enjoyable game and should keep you busy for quite some time.

ACE RATING: 8/10

## RISK

Lawrence Coleco/Parker - £14.99.45.  
CGA version reviewed here 10.  
ACE rating 6/10  
Amiga 3.1

*Risk*, is a challenging strategy game in which you as six players have to fight each other to take over countries of the world and complete their six missions. Missions range from "Colonise twenty countries of your choice" to "Defeat your 8000000 and conquer the world", (bragging still).

The review for the Commodore 64 version stated that 3.1 and Amiga versions were not planned, so much as (that's the same line as) "The original world's only front-loading, stock, and the first table-top strategy would have benefited from being more rapid". It (been a while coming in the 3.1, but and this advice appears to have been taken into account).

The one look around the map of the world by using the mouse, although looking the map takes a little bit of practice if it is actually quite speedy -

much better than "Frustratingly slow" the disc (which was a bit far too slow, to enter manual or automatic and a much faster than that on the CGA game).

Surprisingly these versions are so big that, the 1.54 version made good use of that machine's graphics (which advanced the Amiga version does not). As with the other versions the game doesn't have any music or sound effects, but neither did the board game. It's nice to see that a software house



has improved the poorer parts of the game as it was converted from machine to machine.

A pleasant change.

ACE RATING: 6/10

## NEVER MIND

Psychology - £19.99.45.  
3.1 and Amiga versions reviewed here 20.  
ACE RATING 8/10 and 8/10 respectively.  
Amiga 3.1

*Never Mind* is one of the more unusual puzzle games to have been released over recent months. The idea is to guide a man through several scenarios 30 "rooms" in an attempt to reassemble one or more pictures. While doing this you must contend with a number of hazards including maze-like doors and disappearing pathways.

The 3.1 version of *Never Mind* is excellent. The graphics and sound (that's the Amiga) and the puzzles are dramatically well. The music to accompany your lonely puzzle solving is fun and adds to the atmosphere of the game.

ACE RATING: 8/10

## SPACE HARRIER II

Gunstar - £24.99.45.  
Amiga 3.1 version reviewed here 10.  
ACE rating 4.5  
Amiga

The second "boom boom" shoot 'em up is now available on the Amiga and fully good to go.

Although it is a laugh and so is shooting rapping shots as you're downed to combine the fun and intense (and beyond) which is in mind all it one afternoon. You can sit at all around the screen and to the ground below you (that's using various weapons) you up and try to reassemble you.

Surprisingly it is stunning and the sheer speed of the game is also very impressive. Sound effects are much better than the Amiga version and there is full music and soundtracks to match.

ACE RATING: 4/10

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IBM 4870  
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OS/2 1.0

THE GAME THAT DOES FOR COMPUTERS  
WHAT EINSTEIN DID FOR PARTICLE PHYSICS!

U.S. GOLD



The masters of the battlefield can now invade your micro. Bill Hayes discovers how you can get in on the fun...

# HEAVY METAL

Ever since their first military action tank in World War One, tanks have dominated the 20th Century battlefield. Their mere presence creates a psychological fear reaction caused by any other piece of military equipment. Tanks can bring both a reprieve and liberating force to any armed conflict. Who can forget the episode in China's Tiananmen Square last year, when a solitary student tried to thwart the progress of a 20-ton tank after his fellow campaigners had been slaughtered? Yet Russia's counter-revolution at Christmas was headed by soldiers going three tanks over to the civilians in a sign of unity - the people then triumphantly rolling the tanks through the streets of Saratov. Both equally compelling scenes, both showing the overwhelming strength of the tank. But this was not always the case.

#### LITTLE WILLIE AND THE LANDSHIPS

Despite the forward thinking and dreams of futurists like Leonardo De Vinci and HG Wells, tanks were originally invented to fulfil a specific purpose: to stop the stalemate of World War One trench warfare. In February 1915, the Landship Committee - headed by Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty - was created to develop the concept of armoured and armoured vehicles. As most members of the committee came from a naval background, these machines were dubbed Landships.

In August 1915, the Landship Committee commissioned William Foster & Co to build a prototype tank. Little Willie was the first successful armoured tracked vehicle, originally fitted with a turret, form of armour and a top road speed of 3.5mph. Other prototypes followed - including Mother (Big Willie) - culminating in the Mark I, the first tank to enter service with the British Army.

The British Army formed a new unit in May 1916 - known as the Heavy Section for security reasons - equipped with 150 Mark I tanks. The Mark II had the classic rhomboidal shape in order to negotiate trenches and other obstacles found on the WWI battlefield. It came in two versions: Male and Female. The Male model was armed with two Vickers 07

guns and two 8mm Hotchkiss machine-guns, while female had four 7.7mm Vickers machine-guns and one Hotchkiss machine-gun. Both versions were crewed by eight, had armour of 6-12mm, a top road speed of 5.9Mph, had suspension, heavily cramped and unpleasant conditions, and were very unreliable.

The tank first saw action at Fleurbaeyville on 15th September 1918. Despite heavy losses, they performed well - easily quelling enemy resistance, resulting and overrunning their assigned objectives. The failure of the tank was assured.

#### PANZER BLITZKRIEG

After the First World War, Britain filtered away its lead in tank technology by producing relatively complex light tank designs. Elsewhere, tank-itch was developing at a phenomenal rate. Military strategists such as Britain's General Fuller and Captain Hart and the French General Estienne suggested the formation of a new armoured mobile force. In 1927 the British Army set up such a unit, the Experimental Mechanised Force. This formed the basis for Germany's Panzer Divisions and their successful blitzkrieg campaigns at the beginning of World War Two.

Ignoring the armaments restrictions of the Versailles Treaty, Germany secretly carried on tank development in conjunction with Russia until armament started in 1935. Mobility was foremost in German military strategy, with the tank taking a central role. The first Panzer Division was formed in 1935, these were effectively separate armies with their own logistical and air support. At the height of WW2, Germany had 38 such divisions. Heinz Guderian, leading German tank theorist and adviser to Hitler was the main driving force behind the Panzer concept and its ultimate application. Blitzkrieg, a mobile war fought with mechanised forces in conjunction with air support.

During WW2, Germany produced the most famous and feared tank in the history of armoured warfare: the Tiger. In 1937, the German general staff decided they needed a heavy 'breakthrough' tank to lead up armoured assaults. The result was the Tiger, a tank personally endorsed by Hitler. This monster was armed with the excellent 88mm KwK36 L/56 gun (which was originally an Anti-Aircraft gun) with 92 rounds of ammunition, had 26-110mm of armour, a top road speed of 38km/h, and a crew of five. Tiger was the most feared tank on the WW2 battlefield. In 1944, a single Tiger led up an entire Allied division in France, destroying 25 tanks before being destroyed. German tank crews used Tigers aggressively, they were a favourite of Hitler's crack Waffen-SS units. Unfortunately, Tigers were crushed to the Russian campaign - the poor ground and cold weather caused high casualties, especially at the battle of Kursk in 1943. Despite their notoriety, only 1,300 Tiger II's were ever produced.

#### SOVIET SUPREMACY

The Soviets are, to this day, the biggest exponent of armoured warfare. Their revolutionary tank designs have kept them at the forefront of mobile combat since the introduction of the T-34 during WW2. However, until recently they have been better known for quantity rather than quality. The so-called 'indefeatable' armour of the T-34 - designed by M Kostin in 1937 - changed the course of tank development. Soviet tanks have been involved in every armoured conflict since WW2, including the 1967/1973 Arab-Israeli conflicts, and the Iranian, Korean and Vietnam wars. In 1962 the Russians further developed the concept of mechanised warfare with the introduction of the BMP-1 (Infantry Fighting Vehicle) which allowed infantry to keep up with the tanks in a protected and armed vehicle. Every mechanised force in the world now has an IFV in service. Overall, Soviet armoured warfare strategy works on a simple principle: sheer weight of numbers.



If you want to find out more about tanks and armoured warfare then check out the Royal Armoured Corps Museum at Bovington in Dorset. The following books may also prove useful: *Modern Land Combat* by Christopher F Foss and David Miller (Chalmeur Books), *Tank Warfare* by Major HR Coyle (Pseudo Press) or *Weapons and Tactics of the Soviet Army - New Edition* by David Iley (Lion's Publishing Company). Alternatively, why not play a tank simulation or game on your PC?

*"The enemy have employed new engines of war, as cruel as they are effective."*

Quote of Adolf in the German Third Army commencing on the first use of tanks during World War One

## NOW IT'S YOUR CHANCE

Tanks are a favourite subject for computer games, at least that is, ever since the introduction of a cult coin-op called *Battlezone* back in 1982. This 3D rectangular shooter-up from Atari was based around futuristic tank warfare, and contained gamely to absorbing and addictive that nobody has ever managed to better it... but that hasn't stopped anybody from trying.

The range of tank simulations and games is impressive, though I've never seen a WW2 tank game - yet! Every computer system from the Atari 1050 compatible to the PlayStation has at least one tank game available for it, whether they're commercially on sale or in the Public Domain. In fact, the RCS has one of the best tank games around - and it came bundled free with the machine. *Combat* has a variety of graphically primitive and very simple tank and plane games.



Illustration: Graham Sutherland for *Warrior* magazine and the *Warzone* tank



Simulator with all the effects of realistic command

### TANK FORCE

- ▶ When originally called the 'Strain Tank' by software developer Steve Hill, this is the new British armoured fighting vehicle now under construction for the Army.
- ▶ The tank (Challenger), a French tank of 1970, has a laser-sighting that allowed the tank to become undetectable to the other side of the terrain.
- ▶ Hill personally modeled the tank's name in the 'signature' tank setting at an 800-ton tonne - 'tank'.
- ▶ 800-ton tonne tank has been built by the end of 1992.
- ▶ Using the late stages of 3D, the tank will be used with 2D and 3D graphics, using both.

All have the same basic objective - to hit your opponent as many times as possible before your time limit of ten minutes 30 seconds expires. Gameplay variations include straight, guided or billiard ball missiles, open field, easy or complex maps, tank-only or invisible tank games. Combat gameplay may date back to 1977, but you can still pick into your VCS and have a go at tanking or invisible tank. Today's software houses could learn a lot from playing *War's Combat Carriage*.

### COMMAND AND CONQUER

For those up to date (computered tank wars), you could do a lot worse than *War's Army's Command and Conquer* set on the Archer from Superior Software. Originally set on the Archer from Superior Software, this tank strategy arcade game uses the same graphic routines developed by David 'Cler' Braden in his *Wish* shoot-'em-up. It simulates a 3D perspective landscape using patchwork cubes and filled vector graphics.



War's Army  
made up after  
to a full game  
with

In Command,  
could Battle in  
better than  
Command



*Command* is available on ST, Amiga, PC and Archimedes. Unfortunately no 6800 versions are planned, "because of the size of the game".

If your gaming tastes are more strategic, look out for *Fire Brigade* from Australian Panther Games, distributed in the UK by Mindscape. Set around the Battle of Flin in 1943, you control German or Russian forces in "the most mobile and decisive battle of World War Two". Here you get what it takes to command the 4th Panzer Korps' *Fire Brigade* is played in the timeless wargame map-fashion, and is available on Amiga (winning later only), ST, PC and Macintosh. And via Mindscape is *Omega* from Origin, a futuristic strategy game where you take the role of a cyber-engineer set to create the ultimate cyborg tank. Available on ST, Amiga, PC and C64 (look only), *Omega* is set for the testing tank too, it's the sort of game that would appeal to programmers and those with a logical mind.

Incidentally the *Harper* tank in the simulation software stores in the M141 ABRAMS - Main Battle Tank of the US Army. There are currently no fewer than four tank simulators featuring the particular piece of multimillion dollar hardware: *MC Tank Platform* by Microzone (PC with ST and Amiga versions due in summer), *Tank* from Spectrum Hobbyists/Mercury (PC C64 only, ST and Amiga due in late summer along with the possibility of a PC C64 version), *Electronic Art's ABRAMS* (Battle Tank PC) and *Steel Thunder* courtesy of Accolade (PC and C64). If that wasn't enough, Empire is currently writing a computer game version of the *Tank* series under the name *War's Army's*. Again, the M1 ABRAMS will feature quite prominently in this release as it's based on a tank commander's experiences during *World War II*. There will be two versions of *Tank* Tanker: a 3D/8 simulation on ST, Amiga and PC due in July, and an 800-ton tonne for Spectrum, C64 and CPC set for autumn release.

Perhaps the most eagerly awaited tank game is *War's Battle Command*, the successor to *War's Battle Carrier Command*. Here's the scenario: the US's efforts are in a parallel universe where both sides are getting tougher, and both sides are getting tougher. Then the North develops an attack vehicle that can penetrate enemy lines and attack tanks before whole battalions have failed in the past. "You control each a vehicle in a series of missions of ever increasing difficulty. Battling against mind-boggling odds and ferociously fighting through are all part of a day's work in this 3D (action) tour de force," according to a *Realtime Games* spokesperson. *Battle Command* will initially be released on ST, Amiga and PC during the summer - Spectrum 128K, Commodore 64 and limited CPC versions will follow soon after.

### BATTLE ON THE DESERT

If the *USA's* Corporation is to be believed, tanks will be replaced by giant humanoid robots by the 21st Century. *USA's* BattleTech concept is based on the popular *Robotech* TV cartoon series and comics - illustrated by Japanese animators, story by America's *Harmony Gold*, beamed out on satellite channels around the world. If the idea of controlling a 75-ton Mech armed with lasers, autocannons and missiles appeals to you then you can play the *USA's* BattleTech role-playing boardgames or two Activision BattleTech computer games on ST, Amiga, PC and C64. That's not all, soon you'll be able to play "the world's first complete computer simulation experience for play", when *USA's* ESP comes up its first multi-player *BattleTech* Centre game simulator. You'll experience the thrill of Mech combat from inside your own enclosed cockpit fed by 3D set for colour ray-traced images and spatial sound, while pitting your wits against another human being, not a computer controlled opponent. I can't wait.

# Taking an Abrams out

Driving round the countryside in a 52-tonne armed & armoured monster blasting everything in sight does have a certain appeal, even if it is a little sadistic. And what better way to do it, than in the best micro simulation (thus far) of the US Army's M1A1 ABRAMS Main Battle Tank, courtesy of Microprose...

## TECH SPEC

### M1A1 "ABRAMS" Main Battle Tank

Main Gun: One M256 120mm smooth-bore cannon with muzzle velocity of 1480 feet/second

Machine-Guns: One M249 42.7mm rooftop heavy machine-gun  
One M249 7.62mm coaxial medium machine-gun  
One M249 7.62mm rooftop medium machine-gun

Armourment: 400 20mm shots (APFSDS and HEAT only)  
10000 12.7mm rounds  
124000 7.62mm rounds

Weight: 57.54kg

Max length: 6.20m

Max width: 3.66m

Engine: 1500kg gas turbine

Horsepower/Weight: 28:1 (avg)

## SIMNET

If video-based simulations of armoured warriors are a little too low-tech for you, perhaps you should try the US Defense Forces SIMNET, a multi-player, satellite-networked, ground-vehicle (GNDV) simulation war in a simulated 3D space simulation of anywhere in the world - whether it's downtown Beirut or downtown Los Angeles. Its global appeal doesn't stop there either. One person could control an Apache helicopter gunship in Los Angeles USA, while another could be in charge of an Abrams tank in a suburb of Tokyo Japan. Sim would be simultaneously taking in the same computer-generated (CG) scene to the real-time simulation (RTS) game play by terminal text, even at the 100 program locations (from any world capital city), and 10000 sound files and objects of 50k files to make a really realistic experience. In fact, it's the ultimate tank-war game. The only snag, SIMNET never went to Simnet.



## TAKING COMMAND

- Development of the M1A1 "Abrams" main battle tank began in 1972. Chrysler Corporation's design was chosen in 1976, and the first production model rolled off the line in 1982. General Dynamics took over Chrysler's tank manufacturing business in 1982, and now the M1A1 is produced by the Christy/Daimler-Benz Division of General Dynamics in Detroit, Michigan and Lima, Ohio.
- The M1A1 has the heaviest heavy and top-level Chobham armour - a laminate with steel and ceramic layers - equipped with a layer of depleted uranium, making HEAT warheads almost totally ineffective and giving it better protection against Sabot rounds. Unfortunately, it's only protected in the important frontal areas of the hull and turret - the rest of the tank has only normal steel-based armour susceptible to both HEAT and Sabot rounds.
- The automatic fire suppression system in the turret, turret and engine compartments has heat sensors which trigger fire-fights, "snuffing" the fire of rigger without injuring the crew or the equipment.

## FROM FALCON TO TANK

The latest tank simulation on the market is Tank, from Spectrum Hobby/Hobbyline, written by the author of Falcon. Tank is another simulation of the M1A1A1 tank in battle mode form. An interesting aspect of the game is that it's based on the SIMNET definition (see SIMNET) of 1000 to 10000 shots. Features include three modes of action (Full/Free, Control/Escort) and the M1A1A1 tank, all tanks (with your command) at a company, platoon or individual level, and three SIMNET game simulation modes. Tank is available now on PC for £24.999 (RCA/USA only). CD and floppy translations will follow later in the year, along with the possibility of a VGA PC version.



# ARCADE · ACTION · ADVENTURE

## TRIAD



## VOLUME · 3



**Savage Reign** - Intel and/or Intel compatible - The ultimate quest from the Ultimate Warriors.

**Computer Requirements** - 486, 256K RAM, Windows and graphics card required.

**The One** - 486, 256K RAM. In the face of increasing fan mail, our position game team appear to be ready for an early A-1000 test!

**Game Play** - "Savage Reign is going to be a monster hit!"

**Strange Forest** - Intel and/or Intel compatible - 486. This game is an action-adventure and contains some intense, addictive puzzles that challenge the mind as much as your reflexes. You just need to be a bit more "skinny"!

**Game Play** - "It pulls the reader, reader and explorer in tight, shiny situations. Blood Rain is a game you cannot play without it!"

**Range** - 486. This new game will get you hands-on and secure "Rocket Range".

**Game Play** - 486. This new game will get you hands-on and secure "Rocket Range".

**Game Play** - 486. This new game will get you hands-on and secure "Rocket Range".

**New Computer Games** - Check out a selection of books and more on the way!





# TRICKS 'N' TACTICS

THE ART OF GAMES PLAYING FOR CONNOISSEURS

Well, Dungeon Master fans, here it is to the final part of Lyle Rigden's guide, which details levels 9 to 14 of the game. Now you've no excuses for not completing the whole thing.

## LEVEL 9

Items to be found: Storm Ring, Frosted Feud, Green Magic Box, Blue Magic Box, Planet, 2 Clanks, Corbanite, Plank, 2 Spheres, Skeleton Key, Green Gem.

When it's rock not rock - Take one step left and walk through the wall. It is a good idea to mark this place in case you need to return in a hurry. Turning left will bring you into a gated room. Search for a button to open a secret room.

A short distance after you pass the wall you can walk through, on your right, is an invisible field which turns you through 180°. This can be confusing, so don't rush.

After passing through a gate, keep to the left while searching for a button to open a secret room.

The next gate you come to will lead to some downward stairs, upon these, there is nothing in the room below.

You will find an unoperable gate with a chest beyond and a lever to the right. The lever opens a pit dropping the chest into a room below (mentioned earlier). With the pit closed, explore the passage to your right to find an opened staircase. Go up and you will find a pit to your right which will drop you behind the gate. Search for a button before dropping down the pit.

What is under foot is soon



# THE ULTIMATE DUNGEON MASTER GUIDE

(FINAL PART)

overlook - the passage ahead has 3 floor buttons on each side. As you step on each, a festival is held at you. You must place an item on each floor button moving away quickly to avoid being hit (this only need be done on one side).

Two walls are found on the other side of the floor buttons. The left hand one takes you through a series of passages and rooms at the end of which you will find a button to open a secret room.

Lighter than a feather - Corbanite weighs nothing, use it to open the gate by placing it in the door.

The last gated room on this level contains an important item.

## Level 10

Items to be found: 2 keys of B, Hand Cannon, Shield of Lyta, Arrow, 2 Fish, Bomb, Speed Slow, Water Flask, Moonstone, Boots of Speed, Tonic Plate, Leg Plate, Foot Plate, Magnetite.

'Beware my handied heroism, the deceives, the snide' - you must make your way through the pillars, going first to the extreme left, the right, left, and right again, to find an opening on your left. Which ever passage you use the key of B to open, this both up and up of the same point. Check the items dropped by anything you kill, to find a second key of B to get you out.

'Voooor' - as you step on the first pad you will be moved around the room and you successfully step off into the passage

on the other side. Precise timing is required to get off the moving pads - Halfway round the room you will find a blue lever with a space beside it. If you decide to enter this space, be careful, as the lever will transport you to the very beginning of the level.

The next gate you come to opens into a large irregularly shaped room. If you press the button just after the gate you will release monsters that are held in fields around the room. If you walk straight ahead of you, you will come to monsters guarding a button to open a short secret pas-

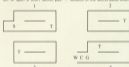


Fig. 1

sage to the right.

As you leave this room, the fields containing the monsters will be turned off releasing them. As you travel along the corridor you will find a gated room on the left, enter and search for a button to open a secret panel. This room may be transported back into at a later stage.

A monster will drop a skeleton key when killed in the passages to come, so look out for it.

Two secret rooms are to be found in the following corridors so check the walls and back track to find the rooms after pressing buttons which have no obvious immediate effect.

You will soon come to two gates almost side by side, these should be closed to allow you time to plan ahead, and, when threatened, to run back and fight them.

Further along the passages

you will find another two gates a little further apart than the previous two, they should be closed as before.

A room will be found with a brown button on the wall, this button transports you back to the room mentioned earlier. This could be useful if trapped by pursuing monsters.

## Level 11

Items to be found: Fury, Diamond Edge, 2 Poison Darts, Staff, Scales, Mowing Star, Boots of Speed, Foot Plate, Plate of Lyta, Gem of Lyta, Potion of Lyta, MCH Potion, 2 Fish, Bomb, 2 Green Magic Boxes, Skeleton Key, 2 Cross keys, Ruby Key, Chest.

As you enter this level you will be confronted with a rectangular passaged room. There are four of these rooms and an invisible transporter moves you between them. Figure 1 shows transporters (T), a staircase (S), a gate (G), and a chest (C). W marks the location of the secret panel which

is your way out. As you move around the rooms you must find a key to open the gate in room upper 4. This gate will not open immediately, stop back and wait for a moment. Open the chest and take out the key. This must be timed in the keyhole on the wall of size of the rooms to open the panel and allow you out.

When you finally escape the rooms, go down the corridor to the right and through the gate. You are in a passage with many holes in the wall. Six to the end of the passage, you will find a useful item. When you pick up this item the corridor will fill with poison gas. Have plenty of W potions handy and wait until the gas has gone while drinking the potions to stay alive. Once you have survived the gas, regain your strength because the next step forwards will release gas further along and five 2 poison darts at you. Two

more, more gas. Be patient, as all the gas clear and you will survive this poison.

Search the next gated room to find a handy weapon.

As you search further you will come to a short passage just around a right turn with another short passage behind you on your left. Step back around the corner and wait a moment for the panel to open. You will find a button on the right wall where the panel was. Press to reveal skeleton key.

You will come to a gate behind which are three gates. On the floor is a Cross Key to open any one of them, they all lead to the same place. You need to find

two enough coins for all the slots, open 5, take the cross key and walk all the way back to the start of the three gates where you first used a cross key, and explore another passage for more copper coins.

#### Level 12

Items to be found: Grave of Dem, Shield of Dem, Plate of Dem, Poleys of Dem, Helm of Dem, Helm of Lyle, Morning Star, Bow, Snake Staff, 2 Full Bombs, VEN potion, Boots of Speed, Torch, Master Key, Emerald Key, Topaz Key, Skeleton Key.

At the end of the first corridor is a large room. Two doors right



copper coins in the passage to see later on. The centre door is probably the easiest to get through. Search carefully for those copper coins. When you have emerged from your chosen passage, find the real gate (a right). Search carefully in the corridors to come, for a buff to open a second room.

Later you will come to double gates, beyond these is a left turn leading to a gate after which you can use your skeleton key.

Change my view - Use the magnifier to open a second panel, step on just to find the ruby key.



Fig. 8

At the end of the passage with the double gates is a room with 3 coin slots in the wall. Copper coins will open alcoves containing useful items listed later.

See Figure 2:  
1 VEN potion  
2 Full bombs  
3 Green magic bow, Full bombs  
4 2 Copper coins  
5 Cross key  
6 4 Chests of Food  
7 Green magic bow

Open number 4 first to reveal more copper coins. If you don't

into rooms are a series of pits opened and closed by the pressure pad you just stepped on. You can see a broken black line when the pit is open.

Taking the right hand exit from the pit room you pass a gate requiring a key to open. Step to the left and enter a small room, across the large button found here on the left is an alcove and return to the pit room. Now take the other exit, ignore the gate on the right and enter another larger room, in the middle of this room is a small room with a key in it. Take the key and return to the room you passed which required a key (mentioned earlier). After the door has been opened, the monster within must be killed to make it drop a key. Dropping 4 items a pit in the other room is advised. You must then climb down to replace the key. Use the rope to get down, if you pointed it up on an earlier level, if not, you will have to drop down.

#### Level 14

Items to be found: Square Key Eye of Time, Calista, numerous Coins, Blue Gems, Green gem.

Use the redged key to gain access to the Dragon level. This is aptly named as it is guarded by only one dragon, which is the most troublesome you will have encountered.

Travel along the corridor until you find a level up the wall - this



This monthly Console Corner is a complete guide to P's on the Sega Master System from five names that should be familiar to ACE readers, Jop-Cicero and Mark Cook of Cardiff and Caspally respectively.

- Buy sapphire ring, from market trader.
- Take it to Dem in Omen's bar, he'll give you 1500 G.
- Buy short sword and small shield, see yourself.
- Go out of Mines, cross the bridge and in the field you are in, to the east, there lies a spring.
- On the east side of this spring there is a small shelf where you can stand in the water. Here is found the pedestal.
- Go back to Mines and set pedestal to market trader. He'll give you 2000 G.
- Buy chainmail armour, Ring G.
- Go to Dem. He'll give you a crystal, you'll go up a level.
- In a palace, open the first chest, take the ruby.
- Go back to Mines and sell it to market trader for 1200 G.
- Buy a long sword and go outside Mines. Kill vikings until you reach level 9.
- Go back to Mines and buy middle shield and pastoral armour.
- Fight first palace boss.
- Go to level 3 and pick up the key to all chests.
- Exploit and open every chest.
- Go to the mine. Open every chest.
- Fight level 5 boss in the palace. You find his key by wearing the mask.
- Take book back to open's house, her friend will give you another book.
- Wander around, killing vikings and accumulating enough experience points to make you fit to reach level 11.
- If you haven't already done so, rescue FIDRA from prison 2 on level 2 of palace.
- Go to boss in mine. Kill him and you will receive the third book of Ys.
- Get back out to Mines. One barman is 800G.
- Buy all remaining weapons from shops, set weapons to market trader: he gives you 500 G.
- Go to fields in the second field and walk down into her trunk. Follow instructions, and her brother's eye is situated in the southwest of her. You should now have the silver sword.
- Take silver bars back to the mayor in Jopick. He will give you a power ring.
- Go to the Jetts. Friends will be there. Let Jette read all the books.
- Make your way to the throne, but, when outside, check you have the following:
  - 60 60 4 swords;
  - 60 60 4 shields;
  - 60 60 4 armour;
  - 60 60 4 potions;
  - 60 Power ring, ring, red, silver ring, healing ring;
  - 60 3 Y's books;
  - 60 1 Crystal.
- Other items include wings, mirror and magic sword.
26. In throne, do you will be taken to the tower.
28. Once in tower, journey to level 3. From these empty chests, take only the red ring and the mirror, NOT THE POTIOM.
30. Go to pit after level 6. To get out, do this: To the right of the pit door there are 2 alcoves which are exactly the same as the others in the bottom row. Go down to the middle of the screen and then walk up into the two alcoves. A hole will open.
31. Speak to Luther. Speak to Diego. Collect the stones.



32. Go back to floor two and wear your mask in the statue corridor. Go through the secret door and speak to Kuzko. He'll give you the blue necklace.
33. Go back to jail but wear the blue necklace on entering.
34. Go to floor 8 and get your silver sword from the chest. Use the key.
35. Go to floor 9, kill Doss. Take back the hammer.
36. Go to floor 10, open chest, collect arrows.
37. Go to floor 11, see Luther. Go to floor 14, see Kuzko.
38. Kuzko is in a death room. Run through this room and go through the door. Beat him. He'll take your weapons back up. Get your silver ready and run up through the corridor to the right. As soon as your energy is almost zero, use your potion. Carry on and go through the door.
39. Go to floor 15, defeat boss and collect the fifth book of Y's. His chest also has the rod. Follow mirror solution shown on map, starting on floor 15.

40. Go to floor 13. Collect shield and rescue Leah. You must be wearing the evil ring and the blue necklace to enter her room. She gives you the monocle, with this it is possible to read all the books.
41. Go to floor 20 and get the potion. Please use it until instructed.
42. Go to floor 22 and walk up corridor. A hole will appear in the wall. Enter hole, collect flame sword.
43. Go to floor 24 and defeat boss. Go through the mirror.
44. Go to floor 14 and prepare to walk through death room again. Prepare your potion and follow the aforementioned routine, only in reverse.
45. When out, go to floor 13 and see Luther again. He will give you a medalion enabling you to enter Dark Dett's domain.
46. Go to floor 3 and open the chest containing the potion.
47. Go to floor 14, go through deathrooms facing eastward.
48. Go to floor 28, use several mirror solutions and go to Dark Dett's door.
49. Use all silver weapons, power ring and hammer to defeat Dark Dett.

#### General Hints

1. Enter tower with a potion, use potions only on floor 24.
2. You can reenergize on tower battlements.
3. Wear blue necklace when entering jail and opening chests.
4. Make sure you've bought all weapons, as silver weapons are stolen from you when it's full.
5. The ransomy creatures at the beginning of the old mine give 200 experience points and 200 gold. They can be killed on level 7.

#### MIPSA

##### Master leader

will sell you:

1. A mirror for 1,000g
2. A pair of wings for 2,000g
3. Sapphire ring for 1,000g
4. Silver armor has been sold

##### Your own sell list:

1. A gold pendant for 2,000g
2. A ruby ring for 1,000g
3. A necklace for 500g

##### Seer's house

1. After arming yourself up, she will give you a crystal.  
2. When you have the first book of Y's, go to see her and she will give you the second book.

##### Kozer's hospital

1. Can buy a potion for 1,000g
2. Can delete coins
3. Can heal some energy for 50g

##### Orman's bar

1. If you give the sapphire ring he will reward you with 1,500g
2. Orman talks about thieves
3. The muscular man will tell you he hunts thieves.

##### Secret Smith

Can sell you:

1. Short sword for 500g
2. Long sword for 2,000g
3. Tallest sword for 5,000g

##### Armor and shieldsmith

Can sell you:

1. Small shield for 800g
2. Medium shield for 2,000g
3. Large shield for 5,000g
4. Small armor for 700g
5. Medium armor for 2,000g
6. Large armor for 5,000g

# CONSOLE

# CORNER

opens a panel to the main room where you will find the dagger, to be careful!

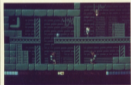
Just as you enter the room, you will find a pile of robes under which is the square key. Carefully return to the square key. Carefully return to the left of the room where you will find a door to open with the key. Near the door are scattered a number of items, one of which (the eye of trial) could prove extremely useful. Pass through the door. In front of you is a field which must be broken. Use a **20 WASH** spell to get the gems. When the gems are free, load the firestaff up and click the mouse to get the two. You now have the most powerful weapon to be found within the dungeon.

The door on your left is opened by placing a silver coin in the slot provided - there is a coin on the floor to the left of the door. This room only contains an altar of rebirth but is very useful for saving the dragon.

You will find that the staircase you entered down is now closed. You must go to the staircase at the opposite end of the dragon room. This will take you up to level 13.

**Level 13** items to be found: The Helms, Flaming.

You are now reaching the end of your quest. You must get rid of



the dragons first. The passage you walk along cannot be entered by any creatures, including Lord Choro. You can use magic of range. The fire elemental can be done away with by repeated firing with the Firestaff.

The best place to take on Lord Choro is in the room on the far left.

If you succeed you will be rewarded with an impressive show.

#### GOOD LOCKS

Well, that just about wraps it up. I'm sure that many people interested in the game will have been

imvised by Lex's excellent guide, if you are among them, have fun!

Lex has also promised us a complete guide to Chaco Strike block, which he is currently working on. Look out for the ultimate in Chaco's help in these pages soon.

#### CARTOON CAPERS

Fancy seeing all of the animation in Space Ace in one go? No problem with this little number from **Queen Bank of Westminster, London.**

Start playing the game and pause it, then type **DOORMOUSE-TOP**. Now continue the game and at back and watch.

#### THE EVEN MORE ULTIMATE DUNGEON MASTER (AND CHASE) GUIDE

Why does everybody go "EESH", says **Luigi of Ulandales**, "when they find an item of leashed armor? Kill out your characters in the staff and the knights give you little or no damage, the worms are a nuisance, and the rock monsters lose their teeth! Why do you think the knights have such a good amount class?"

#### SMITHBLADE SWIPE

Once the word **SMITHBLADE** has assembled on the title screen do the following:

There are four levels. Select the level you want to start on, hold

game onto the following all of the same time - **DE290** - and hold!

**And Farmer, Monitors, Möbbesen**

#### BATTLE BARRACON

While playing, type in **CASIO** and you won't get touched. Now press **F1** to **F10** to get your weapons together.

**Matthew Lee, Bristol.**

#### NEWS FOR NOLLA

##### BATTERS

These nice people at the Sales Curve have sent us a few choice phrases to give **Wings Warriors** players some light-hearted moments.



**AMMO** - Put **CAPS LOCK** on then type the cheat phrase you require, then turn off **CAPS LOCK**.

The **TECHNICAL** - Ninja body parts explode when you die.

**MONY PYTHON** - Demons come on backwards.

**SOFFY** - Excess bounce.

A **SMALL STEP FOR A MAN** - Moon grants. Jumping battles will jump right off the top of the screen.

**STEM AUSEW** - Pressing it during play will toggle slow motion on and off.

**BT** - Hold down the **ALT/CTRL** key while you type the following:

**CASABLANCA** - Check and White screen.

**GENESIS OF THE DOLPH** - Negative screen mode.

The **PERMANATOR**, **MONY PYTHON**, **SOFFY**, and **A SMALL STEP FOR A MAN** (with no space

between **SMALL** and **STEP**) - All as above.

**OUT TO THE DEAT** - Pressing **Q** during play will toggle slow motion on and off.

#### NEVER MIND THE

##### PAWPODS

Stick on a level in **Never Mind** and don't worry. **Dad S. Mathew of Loughborough, Leicestershire** can sort you out.



The passwords are six letter long, but the middle two are the ones that vary the most. The passwords take one of the forms:

**QZ XY Z 1A PG BC MD MN QZ PX HQ PL VQ WZ PL WZ**, depending on the level number.

Divide the level number by 8 and take the remainder (0 to 7). Then the password is **QZ XY** in **PZ WZ**, where the missing two letters are filled in as below. I don't think it actually matters which group of four letters you use as a password, it still starts the game at the right level as long as the password has one of the above forms.

The middle letters are based on the level number divided by 26 and the remainder. The numbers you get are included as follows:

**0M 1A 2H 3V 4P 5G 6I 7R 8W 9H 0G 1J 2L 3O 4A 5F 6J**

The fourth letter of the password is the letter corresponding to the level number divided by 30 and the third letter is the remainder.

So, for level 18, remainder divided by 8 is 2, so password is **QZ BC**, and dividing by 30 gives a remainder 2 so the middle letters are **HA**, and the password is **QZAHAC**.

There are 255 levels in total.

down the level number as well as the fire button until you appear on the level you selected. If it fails, press escape and try again.

**Brett Davis, Cambridge.**

#### BATMAN THE MOVIE -

##### AMSTRAD CPC

If you want to skip level, all you have to do is this: During the



# Ultima VI

The False Prophet



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# Rings of Medusa



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4CS, April 1990 issue

"Rings of Medusa is a captivating strategy game. Overcome the Golden Medusa and her evil powers and save your Father's Kingdom with your skill, cunning and adventuring. A unique voyage in time and discovery as you hunt down the five hidden rings - find them and prepare to encounter Medusa!"



# ACE NEW WORLDS

PAT WINSTANLEY CHECKS OUT THE LATEST FANTASY RELEASES

## FREE ADVENTURERS APPLY HERE!

The computer game industry is a funny thing. At one end of the spectrum are basic games imitating games like *Champions of Krynn*, *Ultima*, *Wizard Wars* and so on together with their requisite glossy-colour boxes brim-full of goodies. At the other are enthusiastic programmers cooking their soups hours away simply for the love of it.

The latest imports from the U.S. can cost £50 each while a PD library will charge that for 20 disks, crammed with programs, some of them of a better standard than the offerings from the 'big boys'. If two games are equally playable, how should 'value for money' affect the overall score of the game?

Many of the games I receive for review from the giants are pre-release copies, essentially complete but without the fancy packaging - perhaps just a few roughly photocopied sheets of instructions if any. Thus assessment is made regardless of the accessories which give the games their appeal.

Similarly, most of the games I buy are purchased by mail order (yes, even reviews I actually don't end hard earned cash for their own personal spend). In effect the fancy boxes are wasted, the many adventures/fantasy games are stocked by YOUR local software outlet!

Today I played a classical text adventure which had no instantly focused, guessing and gapping, exploring for hours and hearing my fair of the puzzle. I also played another which frustrated me instantly and continued to do so for hours with little light relief or feelings of accomplishment.

Neither had much in the way of physical documentation yet one cost around ten times as much as the other (the cheaper one being the better offering). Perhaps for none, but I don't understand why there is such a difference in price/pleasant!

# CHAMPIONS OF KRYNN

**T**he Dragonance AD&C game world has already been computerized with *Heroes of the Lance* and more recently *Dragons of Flame* so what's new about this game? The main difference is that role playing elements are at the heart of *Champions of Krynn* with amply considerations pushed out to the sidelines - good news for people like me who prefer to think and plan rather than let by reflex alone.

*Champions of Krynn* is set just after the War of the Lance. Although the forces of evil have been shattered and dispersed and the forces of good have returned to their homes, outpost still need to be manned to guard against the pockets of evil which remain. Your goal is to assemble a party of adventurers to serve in the border outposts.

Your first task is to create characters for the party. There can be any of seven races, each of which has special characteristics. These all classes are especially resistant to magic and adept at dodging spells and giants while the leader has the ability to turn intelligent opponents sending them into a mindless rage.

Ability scores such as strength, dexterity and charisma are then randomly generated for the character. These scores can be modified if required to allow you to match your

## A Dragonance 'role playing epic' from SSI/US GOLD

computerized character to one more to your liking - a great opportunity to cheat!

Character class and alignment are real. Class can be anything from fighter to mage, priest or thief. Some races such as half elves can mix classes such as cleric-fighter/mage allowing greater flexibility with the disadvantage of slower advancement of levels.

Once your party is assembled you are sent on a mission, to rid the town of Thral of evil forces and they soon start becoming heroic as the town is crawling with monsters and enemy soldiers. Combat takes place on a pseudo 3D screen with each member of your party and the enemy characters shown in position.

If you feel lazy you can simply switch combat to auto so that the computer takes care of the fight for you. This is very useful initially to see what different commands do and which tactics give the best chance of survival. As spell casting becomes more important the auto facility loses some of its charm and

RELEASE DATE		
IBM	Q3 1985	Q3 1985
AMIGA	Q3 1985	TBA
PC	Q3 1984	Q3 1985



*Champions of Krynn* - the latest in the AD&C series from SSI/Gold

manual control becomes the order of the day.

If a lot is made the recipient of the blow or spell loses hit points. A character whose hit points reach zero is unconscious and out of the fight. He might also be dying in which case another party member must use one of his combat turns to bandage the victim and save his life.

After winning a fight there is usually loot to be shared out. Sometimes this consists of large quantities of weapons and armour which, if you can be bothered to collect it, can be taken back to the nearest outpost and sold. Many items such as broadswords and shields are worthless on the second hand market but mail generally fetches good prices so careful selection is needed.

Comping after a battle gives the party a chance to rest up and heal wounds, restore magic spells and generally nuzzle in the waters of your party marching order, game speed etc. It's also a good time to save.

When you have accumulated sufficient experience points it is time to head for the training hall where characters can rise in

LANGUAGE	80
Incomprehensible graphic symbols with a large playing area enhance the atmosphere of the game.	
ENCOUNTERS	75
Encounter timing better than most, combined with a time to think for the player to try out.	
CHALLENGE	80
The game world is complex, has great depth and is well thought out if you want a game to see your intellect, tactics and memory simultaneously.	
THIS IS	
SYSTEM	85
The mouse control could have been better than the one used and standard on this range, however more intuitive.	

## ACE RATING 850

An excellent game which has you living in the world rather than simply playing in it.



Adventure Master can get fairly intense at times in this mode.

#### RELEASE BOX

AGES 17	ON BOX	OUT NOW
MS-DOS	CD-ROM	OUT NOW
PC	ON BOX	OUT NOW

levels, improving hit point limits and acquiring the capacity to memorize more and better spells.

Spell casting seems tremendously complex at first but simplifies greatly after a little practice. Spells can be cast by mages, clerics and high-level fighters and can exist in one of four forms, the character's memory, in a gemstone, on a scroll or in a wand. Almost any

spells are available to high-level characters although less spells can be memorized at a low-to-competent selection is required.

Clerics generally cast healing and protective spells while mages have access to a wide variety including lightning cloud, ice cloud and shocking grasp. Red and white robed mages can both cast many of the spells but each also has their own exclusive range reflecting their alignment. Red spells tend to be more aggressive while white spells are more passive.

All this merely scratches the surface of the game. For newcomers to the world of Ryzik and the AD&D scene generally the game can be played on a fairly simple level similar to many other RPGs, but for the player who demands plenty of depth and accurate



Character options are readily accessible at each stage of the game, using either keyboard or joystick.

attention to detail *Champions of Ryzik* will prove irresistible and totally addictive. The difficulty level allows steady progression through the game with new powers and monsters to be discovered at every turn.

#### LANDSCAPE

The graphics are very bland with little variation in scenery and minimal animation, but the playing area is large with lots of exploration to do.

#### ENCOUNTERS

Plenty of items to find and attack in this game. Encounters in the woods of Ryzik take advantage of the adventure system.

#### CHALLENGE

A well balanced RPG with plenty of challenge. A hint to keep the interest going.

#### SYSTEM

Requires a good mouse and the whole party is dead but otherwise well designed and easy to use.

### ACE RATING 5.20

Definitely a must for any adventurer into RPGs and especially for Dragonbane fans.

# THE GOLDEN FLEECE

“ Worlds are to their very nature worthless, serving merely as playthings for our amusement.” So says Zeus to Hermes over a game of chess. Hermes begs to differ as Zeus makes a bargain, if Hermes can find a human to recover the Golden Fleece, Zeus will extract his worth... game who the human is!

Now I must admit that even after hours of play I haven't a clue where or what the golden fleece is. However I've just been taken on a trip of nostalgia brought right up to date.

The start location produces a map, the

## Traditional fare in grand style from JIM MACBRAYNE

map a second and a few moves further sees you furnished with a rope. I haven't yet found any use for these items but fit not about to let them go as fit's case they'll come in handy sometime!

If you've ever played *Catacombs* / *Adventures* you'll be right at home with this game. So far the location found includes around 120 rooms, several (100) locked doors, one random puzzle solved for which it was necessary to resort to a short programming routine for the answer - thank you ST00L, several puzzles still to be puzzled and at least one maze as yet unexplored. And that's just from wandering about to get the feel of the thing!

Progressing through the game brings you into contact with a gingerbread house (yes, you can eat it), a goblin who provides you with half a screen of dying words in his own language, a room which drops a 1000 ton weight on you, Sam & Jerry style, if you don't fill a receptacle correctly and hit five buttons in the correct order and a fire which doesn't burn you but first to mortars just a few of the features.

The parser can handle virtually everything you throw at it and the text descriptions simply drip with atmosphere. Even getting lost in the sewer pipe system is an experience as pipes narrow and branch or sand you shooting incoherently down one way chutes.

Jim MacBrayne has produced an adventure

of infinite level 9 proportions which will delight any seasoned veteran. And the best of it is that the game is shareware. Thus it costs the enormous price of \$3.00 if you send a disk and return postage to the author or \$2.50 via loan LT (in Software). (See panel for addresses.)

Shareware is distributed freely on the understanding that if you like the program having experienced it you will voluntarily send the author a 'donation', in this case \$3 is suggested. I'd suggest it to be at least three or four times that figure in exchange for the pleasure this game will provide.

<b>LANDSCAPE</b>	5.0
The graphics are very bland with little variation in scenery and minimal animation.	
<b>ENCOUNTERS</b>	5.0
Plenty of items to find and attack in this game. Encounters in the woods of Ryzik take advantage of the adventure system.	
<b>CHALLENGE</b>	5.0
A well balanced RPG with plenty of challenge. A hint to keep the interest going.	
<b>SYSTEM</b>	7.0
Requires a good mouse and the whole party is dead but otherwise well designed and easy to use.	
<b>ACE RATING</b>	<b>5.25</b>
Nostalgia, atmosphere, novelty, graphics-free, shareware... what more can I say?	

<b>RELEASE BOX</b>
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Be sure to check game - it's best only. The best way to see whether you've got a shareware!

Last month I commented on how larger memory machines were encouraging increased use of graphics and sound effects with little effect on gameplay improvements. Dungeon Quest is a perfect example not only of lack of improvement but also regression.

The screen display is divided into two areas, the upper half showing a still graphic of your location (with small animated details such as bushes), while the lower half is reserved for text and responses. The program is entirely keyboard driven apart from the option to click on central compass points for movement.

Graphics are excellent, well drawn, colorful and detailed - each location has a different one which must be loaded from disc every time you move. This makes for incredibly slow play, especially as many locations are mere scenery which must be passed through to reach more interesting areas of the game.

In addition to the excellent graphics, sound has been used to great effect. Atmospheric samples such as birds singing, footsteps in the distance, church bells etc are present at each location. Occasionally the sound can become annoying if much time is spent at a single location (ring things out, but on the whole it is balanced and does not add to the game).

Text is beautifully presented too. The main description of each location is displayed in the style of an illustrated manuscript with a large pictorial font letter. Later visits to the same location simply bring up a brief description. Unfortunately the text window is rather shallow so anything but the simplest message needs to be scrolled up in stages.

With such a well crafted display I expected great things of the game but my enthusiasm changed to disappointment and frustration as I began to play. The parser is reminiscent of early text only adventures with most verbs restricted to verb/noun and no multiple inputs



There's more going on here than meets the eye...and, there's also...little display, slow reading - beautiful!

# DUNGEON QUEST

**GAINSTAR put adventure games back by several centuries**

doesn't seem to have any other options.

To call this game a disappointment is perhaps an understatement. It appears to have been written by a graphic artist more so a gallery for his work than anything else. Pretty pictures and sampled sounds with no adventure behind them do not make a game.



An another beautiful location - if only there was more to do!

on the lines of GET GEAR AND GO NORTH, BASKAL, DOPS, GOTO and all the other commands we have become used to seeing as standard simply don't exist in this game.

Having battled through boring locations I finally reached a section of a castle where the main description tells of a hole in the system wall just big enough to get a hand through. By what magic was my body transformed to hand size so that I could wriggle through the hole? That is not one example among many of inconsistencies which totally ruin any chance of being in the game world. The players can read quite a few spelling mistakes as well.

Struggling with the parser causes its own

problems. At one point there is a building before you, its door locked by a letter being opened the rest. The picture clearly shows the key out and the description suggests you would have to step down through the doorway to enter. Trouble is, the parser doesn't seem to recognize the existence of many things, the letter included. I still haven't managed to move, climb, push or carry out any other normal or fantastic action with that failure, ignoring it altogether and concentrating on getting through the door produces responses implying that the door isn't here and doesn't exist anyway. So why can I see it?

Another example of the limitations of the parser is a small sack containing Drapefip. All my attempts to open the sack, examine it etc were useless. When I met the creators for whom it was obviously intended I spent ages trying to do the right thing, using dozens of word variations. At last I gave up and typed "use sack" ... (bing)

In yet another room I typed "use sword" and was treated to a graphic description of my attempts to open a box. Unfortunately this is the only mention I could find of said box as it

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Other versions TBA		

LANDSCAPE	90
Detailed graphics combined with well chosen sound effects but a limited number of options to play with.	
ENCOUNTERS	85
This has proper characters and descriptions but is limited.	
CHALLENGE	85
The main object is to reach you find the solution.	
SYSTEM	80
While demanding to the parser and about requirements with a few nice visual bonuses would you enjoy this?	

**ACE RATING**  
450

A classic example of gamemagic being ignored behind the front-end display.

# 1

**PERFECT  
5.1  
GOLD**

## Rainbow Islands from Ocean

You follow up to Bubble Bobble looks set to be another of our all-time best-selling games. New Zealand Music. It combines colour & visuals with lightning-ly adds for gameplay, with the result that you end up with one hell of a game.

Graphics have been downloaded from the original arcade version and the islands are just the same. Load Bob and Bob to the top levels for frog rainbows into the air and then clearing them. When you reach the top of a play field, you can collect thousands of bonus points. There are seven islands to complete, each one more challenging than the last.

Gameplay's 5.1 version of Rainbow Islands is one of the best console conversions to have appeared along time! Best Game, 21 Points



### Rainbow Islands

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Amstrad CPC	Cass	£ 9.99
Amstrad CPC	Disk	£12.99
Commodore 64	Cass	£ 9.99
Commodore 128	Disk	£12.99
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# 3

## Fiendish Freddy's Big Top of Fun from Mindscope

Mindscope's iconic misanthropic image you'll find, spins and a whole barrel of laughs. One from high boards, walk lightbulbs, or feed from cannons, using no weapons, these quality photographs in a distinctive font to make the most from the big top fun. An original madhouse game with a wicked sense of humour!

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# IG

# 2

## Black Tiger from US Gold

US Gold have had major hits with *Gold* and *Shadows of the Gods*. Now comes their latest horizontally-scrolling action game, *Black Tiger*. In a similar fashion to *Shadows*, the objective is to slay through horizontally-scrolling levels, slinking, leaping and dodging and avoiding to fall over the edge of the level. Among the way fight up gauchos, snakes and more deadly wildlife using your powerful weaponry. When the going gets tough, disappear inside the black rock and come out a vampire, and go on for another merry blast. If you're a fan of horizontally-scrolling action games, you'll love this one.



### Black Tiger

	PC	MS-DOS
Amiga 4000	£ 11.99	£94.95
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Ami 31	£ 19.99	£94.95
Amiga	£ 14.99	£94.95

# GET ONE FREE!



# 4

## Cabal from Ocean

*Cabal* is centered with Cabal. A fast leaper, he's dropped behind enemy lines and must fight his way back home. Level after level for a vision of hell and hell goes with machine guns, grenades and bombs. It looks like *Cabal* that for the order line that plays like a hit.

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Amiga 4000	£ 19.99	£94.95
Amiga 500	£ 14.99	£94.95
Commodore 64	£ 19.99	£94.95
Commodore 128	£ 14.99	£94.95
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# CD Giveaway



1. See those Windows Altiris icons in windows from space in *Outrage*?



2. Don't you "look off" in this 100% version of the game that still appears to show Windows icons despite being away from your PC?

There is something wrong here. You're grasping the joystick, eyes glued to the screen, blasting away at one of the most popular arcade games of the early 90s. In your ears are the resounding, crystal clear sounds of some of the greatest hits of 1988.

It's not 1990, and the sound your hearing is pure CD quality from your portable CD player, and the game is *Renaissance* from Impressions. Yab.

It's hard to remember time with this latest release featured in this issue which does what everyone always talks about: takes the greatest hits of yesteryear and translates them onto today's latest machines.

*Renaissance* costs £19.95 for ST & Amiga. To celebrate its release, Impressions are giving ACE readers the chance to win one of three state-of-the-art portable CD players. In addition, there are no less than 50 razzle-dazzle prizes, free games, and posters - see the prize card for full details.

## WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO

1. **COPY** to **CLIP**. Take your first step to the ultimate luxury in portable sounds by capturing the screenshots on this page. Each shot has a number printed below it and a caption that follows. In the

**ENTRY PANEL**, below there is a list of three games. All you have to do is to use your limitless skill and judgement to decide which screenshot comes from which game and then zip the answer on a postcard and send it to the address shown in the **ENTRY PANEL**. Easy eh? So jump to it!

## THE PRIZES

Here's the list of goodies on offer.

1. **THREE FIRST PRIZES** of **SONY CDQ** CD players will go to the first three correct entries pulled out of the hat after the closing date. The CDQ is the latest in the CD Walkman range and at the time of writing wasn't even available in the shops, so it not only sounds good, it's exclusive too. First prize winners will also receive a free copy of *Renaissance*.

2. **TWENTY SECOND PRIZES** will go to the following twenty correct entries out of the hat. Each second prize winner will receive a free copy of *Renaissance* and an Impressions T-shirt.

3. **TWENTY THIRD PRIZES** will send their way to the twenty runners-up, each prize winner receiving a free copy of *Renaissance* and a poster.

## ENTRY PANEL

Here's how to enter:

1. Examine the three screenshots on this page. Each one comes from Impressions' new releases, *Outrage*, *Concave*.

2. After you've identified the screenshots, jot down on a postcard the following information:

I think Screenshot 1 is from \_\_\_\_\_ (enter name of game here)

I think Screenshot 2 is from \_\_\_\_\_ (enter name of game here)

I think Screenshot 3 is from \_\_\_\_\_ (enter name of game here)

**NEB!** Check out the review of *Renaissance* on page 52 if you need help.

3. Add your name and address. Please include a telephone number if possible so the help us to lobby promoters more effectively.

4. It will also help us if you include answers to the following questions. Purchase any **ACE** part of the competition and are not required to answer you for a prize.

a) How often do other magazines you buy regularly?

b) How old are you?

c) Which computer do you use?

d) Do you buy ACE regularly, occasionally or is this the first copy you have bought?

4. Post the card to **ACE CD Competition**, Penny Court, 50-52 Farringham Lane, London, EC3P 3AU. Closing date for entries is 30 May 1990.

5. Please note that employees of EMAP BACH, Impressions, or anyone involved in the production, sale and distribution of their products are not eligible for entry.

Impressions have got three portable CD players to present to lucky ACE readers to celebrate their blast from the past: *Renaissance*.

As inspired by one of the most famous settings from many productions, this is one treasure that *Outrage* brings to surround.



# Total Power!

## GREAT FOR GAMES

The graphics spec of the PCS45 could have been tailor-made for games programmers. Apart from the tremendous colour and resolution potential, the machine offers hardware scrolling and panning in pixels, multi-screen buffering (enables for full-screen art stations, extended graphics, and hardware graphics commands for fast handling of sprites and maps).

Future upgrades are planned to include a 16-bit 256 colour graphics and two camera modules into the standard computer display. Another intriguing proposal is to provide an extension enabling the use of superimposed several different screens on top of each other — a feature that could possibly be used to generate higher resolution displays on colour TVs.

Plans for the Spectrum, Sir Clive's little black box not only launched a new age of gaming, but it also gave many people their first opportunity to break into the hardware design market. In cities all over Europe, crated coffins slaved into the small hours, designing everything from 8088M-Pack mobile devices to black boxes for controlling your Gray Mark 2 using your Spectrum Plus. Now, years later, those same people are bringing us the latest games technology: Fire Technology, for multiple, ex-GiGler designers, responsible for the Kame hardware spec; and now, in Canada, Cybercube Research. What they've come up with is...well, every bit us. Let's just say it's probably the most awesome games machine spec currently in existence.

Cybercube is run by three brothers: Günther, Ralf, and Ulrich Dorschel. They started business in West Germany in 1984, calling themselves Ions Software International and producing (amongst other things) a parallel PC board and plotter interface for the Spectrum, an Amstrad MDI interface.

"We soon realised that there was a huge gap between the systems you could theoretically design and the existing ones,"

recalls Ralf. "During one of our regular meetings we felt that we could assemble a computer that would make full use of high integration, super fast processor performance, and state of the art technology."

This remained something of a dream until the company reformed as Cybercube Research Ltd

after the brothers moved to Canada. "The new name reflects the new major product: parallel computer systems based on the INTEL80386 model Combine Cybernetics and Hypercube and you get Cybercube". Their first product? Machine Number 1, or MN as it's affectionately

known. We've seen some awesome machines since we issued the ACE Challenge, but the specification for this little baby breaks all the records. Check out the Cybercube PCS45 and pray to St Gokosias, the patron saint of games players, for one of your own...

## THE ACE CHALLENGE

We launched the ACE Challenge in November 1989 to encourage hardware initiatives in the entertainment sector. The Challenge offers £20000 to developers of hardware (and the software that runs on it) providing they fulfil certain conditions, details of which are available from us on request. The original ACE Challenge machine specification was not necessarily our view of an ideal games computer, but was intended to spark off discussion and debate — which it certainly has! The Cybercube is the latest in a series of top hardware projects to be judged as part of the ACE Challenge Debate...



## The Cybercube MINI PCS45

The PCS45 has a number of innovative features designed to make life easier for the user. If there's a problem — processor overheats (AMF fails) or overheats — there's an LCD-front panel that clearly indicates the condition in English (no obscure error codes or Gerni-style icons). You can also call up the system's performance statistics for your own (or your's a programmer's) reading or fix, for example, an on-board parallelism — without having to attach a keyboard or mouse, making the system effective even when on the move. Other features include auto power-up/down, alarm wake up, modem response wake up, 100K battery backed up RAM, battery charging on file, and modem auto response.

## PACKAGE DETAILS

- Built-in power supply
- Biosware: BIOSWare/BIOS
- Case: Address + System + Power
- PC/Floppy/CD, multiresolution, multitasking, and multi-user
- Emulators for other processor types
- 386SX computer emulator
- 286 computer, MS-DOS, and LSP
- Full editor w/PCMC
- Assembler/Debugger (ASM)
- 386 functions library
- Complete ZIP package
- The basic system consists only with keyboard, mouse, disk, power supply, software, and/or printer.

remotely called, it will be available both as a base machine (the BRB PCS45) and in a specially configured arcade system (the Phantom).

## MULTI-POSSIBILITY

"We think the MM and Phantom systems are best suited for multiplayer, multiresolution simulations," says Raff. "And look at the floating point performance—over in the basic unit you get 17 mfloats, which can be increased to 28 mfloats on-board. The integer performance is up to 100 MFPS (expandable to 220 MFPS)."

Together with the display of 262,144 colours processed simultaneously from a palette of 16 million, this power can give you almost photographic image realism on-screen. And if that's not enough for you, there's the sound spec, which is pretty awesome as well: 6 FM channels for music and voice, 5 squarewave and 6

noise channels for sound effects. "Just wait till you see music demos," says Raff, "and what's more, we can handle samples at up to 65544!"

# CYBERCUBE MINI PCS45

The Cybercube Mini is a superfast computer system. The basic system consists of a 386X (80386) and one FD processor. The number of CPUs can be increased to a maximum of 16 on-board. Additional processors can be linked through a fast Local Area Network.

## MAIN CPU

32-bit 80386 processor, 15-20MFPS, peak instruction throughput 16-20MFPS. Integrated MMX/DSPs (Floating Point Unit, LMA coprocessor, Timer, Job Scheduler, Fast Status RAM, Bus), DMA, data transfer rates up to 26.8 Mbytes/sec.

## MAIN RAM

16-32 Mbytes 720ns 60M DRAM's. Configurations 4,8,16,32 Mbytes. Customised DRAM controller with integrated cache.

## ROM & RAM

### On Main CPU

### ROM & RAM

256K base and up to 2 Mbytes ROM. The operating system, a debugger, and the editor are all ROM based. Further software packages can be transferred to the Flash EPROM area, thus allowing fast switching between applications. System status is preserved after power down. 128K of fast static RAM with battery back-up.

## VIDEO CPU

On main CPU, run with a slightly slower maximum data transfer rate (8.0 Mbytes/sec).

## VIDEO RAM

1 Mbyte of 1024x16MAM + 128K fast static RAM for program code, data, and graphics buffers.

## VIDEO CONTROLLER

Uses 3D bit-plane controller and own gate array supporting several video standards. 24-bit colour palette (optional). Internal and external D/A converters. 3D modes allowing stereo. Non-stereo 3D (see patent's data). Interprocessor-instructed video. Pixel clock 70-100MHz, programmable in 0.5MHz steps.

## COLOUR AND RESOLUTIONS

Programmable resolutions ranging from 400x400 to 1280 horizontal by 1024 vertical. Two colour modes are included: 256 colours or 16 million colours simultaneously on-screen (in practice this is limited to the resolution of the display to 262,144). Lights-24 images can be hidden, making video game play supports hardware scrolling and panning.

## DISK CONTROLLERS

16-bit 8032 processor with onboard FDC and RAM; also 8047 fast static RAM for disk caching and 32K FDC with high-level data bus and File Name registers.

## IO CPU

8032 CPU with watchdog timer, 2 parallel and 8 serial ports, timers, clock generators, and interrupt controller (all on gate array). Auto power-on/reset, full modem support, 6 FM channels + 10-squarewave channels + 6 noise channels. Also 844 fast static RAM with battery backup plus 8K ROM for I/O routines, together with keyboard, MIDI, printer and serial buffers.

## INTERFACES

2 LAN connectors with priority control up to 20Mbytes/sec.

1 Centronics port + bidirectional, 1 serial port (RS232)

1 Keyboard connector

2 MIDI connectors (IN, OUT) 5-pin DIN, 5-pin DIN, 5-pin DIN, 5-pin DIN

1 SCSI controller (16 channels + 8 key latched low number of keyboard necessary to setup the system for specific tasks. Easy shut-down recovery, constant system status monitoring).

1 Analogue video connector, 1 SCSI II connector, 1 stereo sound connector (stereo amplifier externally, volume-control, mute switch, LED's)

2 Stereo ports (adapter needed for Acoustigig speakers).

2 floppy and 1 ROM fast drive ports.



One of the images generated by the BRB system.

## Latest news from Subjective Technologies

Remember ST? We profiled them briefly last month in our American issue, telling you how they had developed a hyperspace room and a new system called the BRB: the Interactive Multi-Media Engine. We've also revisited for their news from president Jack Lampit. "The highlight of the system is its unique ability to respond to a variety of triggering stimuli via its flexible, reconfigurable Multi-Purpose Interface (MPI). Our view is that traditional interactive systems such as those based on computer driven laservideo players have used limited input modalities, generally mouse or touch screen to choose from a small range of predefined audio and video tracks. The BRB overcomes this barrier by providing sensual input capability through the MPI.

"The input and storage structure of the BRB is designed to allow the development of applications that can present information in a non-linear manner. This is desirable when simple black and white answers do not adequately describe a problem or express a particular incidental condition. The BRB will support these advanced applications with proprietary software tools that assist in the creation of complex algorithms that interpret the input data and control multimedia output.

"One of the exciting potentials of these dynamic simulations is that they allow the creative developer to emotionally involve users in the situations of multi-dimensional, changing, and interdependent phenomena. This will be the key to learning and entertainment in the 1990s and beyond..."

We are currently attempting to arrange for a display of the BRB, engine at the CES show at Las Vegas in September. Keep your fingers crossed!

First in a new series of up-to-the-minute ACE interviews, Bill Haynes talks to Bob Gleadow, the UK boss of Atari...

is the CD console still a goer?

• The CD console is known as Project Panther, it will be circa £150, undoubtedly, with a BIOS at 1MHz and advanced graphics - better than an ST's graphics, its storage medium will be either ROM or disk depending on how we finally configure it. The problem with Panther is simply that of resource allocation. Panther development has been continuing as a secondary priority to the Lynx. Software houses will get their Panther systems later this year. The timing of it will mean that we won't have hardware and software for the Christmas. From a marketing standpoint, we want to give the Lynx a clear field this year.

With the current emphasis towards home user CD-ROM devices like Japanese computers like Fujitsu and NEC plus Commodore with a CD-ROM version of the Amiga, do you see Atari following suit?



Bob Gleadow, Atari UK regional boss, keeps more than Atari CD products.

• Cool your mind back, BIOS - an CD-ROM, had some great CD-ROM and laser disc software, but didn't happen; then CD-ROM's were relatively expensive and I believe that adding a CD-ROM today in and user terms must add £150-£200 to the retail price. Is it therefore viable yet? If the market says yes, we'll also have one, so don't believe it is ready in six yrs - yet when the market is ready, we

# ON SAFARI

FORGET CD, SAYS ATARI BOSS BOB GLEADOW, WE'RE TALKING PANTHERS AND LYNXES...

have a product which we've had for two years now but has no software to go with it.

What's the future of CD-ROM technology then?

• I see a major opportunity for CD-ROM in intuitive learning programs. As for games, you can get hundreds of today's games on a single compact disc. I'm not sure that the price of the hardware isn't going to prevent that from happening in the next two years. CD technology itself is advancing quite quickly, eventually you'll get very fast and graphically great games at TV quality, but that will actually only take us back to where BIOS was with the laser disc back in 1984.

I think the Sony/Philips CD system is a step in the right direction but it's not expensive and comes within my three year plan for when CD's become a better

feature. The battle CD of three years time will obviously be a CD system, and by then there should be a whole load of software available which makes it worthwhile - it still won't be cheap though.

When will the Lynx be launched in the UK?

• The Lynx will sell in the UK for £179.95, the £149.99 price could be available but that's without the built-in game and power supply. As a consumer I'm always appalled when I get home and

find a product hasn't got the batteries or plug needed to operate it. So we've gone to £179.95, and that includes California Games cart, power supply and a cable that allows you to link to

**"Three years ago Atari was on its knees."**

Bob Gleadow, Atari UK boss

another Lynx. It will be available in April through Decca and other stores. There are seven titles available now, with at least another 25 games due over the next 12 months. The next three will be Rampage, Gauntlet II and Onyx Challenge. Obviously the recent tie-up with Tengen is important. The Lynx connectivity factor is the key to success. You have a new concept in portability, we'll add more than a million Lynx's this year without a doubt. I can't see why it's a market that should be any less than that of the Walkman. Software writers are very enthusiastic about the concept and the technical status of the machine. We offer a Lynx develop-

ment kit, but at the moment we can't produce these kits fast enough. We're hoping to organize a UK developers' conference in April which will embody the Lynx, Portfolio, ST, and the 7600 games console.

Are there going to be any future enhancements to the Lynx?

• We're developing an infrared connector which will allow you to link up the Lynx without the use of a wire. There's also potential for a full TV tuner. Enhanced models of the Lynx are currently on the drawing board, but their release is at least two years away.

Do you feel worried about NEC's colour portable PC Engine?

• At the moment I feel no willing need to react to what really is a rumour.

Is Atari announcing any new products this year?

• No, we're busy fulfilling our existing product plans for the Lynx, ST and TT.

Do you ever envisage a £199 386?

• No, most of the cost reductions with computer manufacturing has been achieved in the semiconductor area, the electromechanical parts such as the power supply, keyboard and disk drive represent a larger proportion of the cost of the machine. This means that dramatic cost reductions are unlikely in the future, semiconductor content will rise for the Lynx cost, so you'll get more RAM, advanced processors and better chips - all within the £299 pricepoint.

How do you view the Amiga ST vs Amiga debate?

• With some amusement, because I recognise that both machines have their strengths and weaknesses - the reason this is likely to be a long debate is that there is truth in both arguments.

## HOLDING OUR BREATH

Commodore have now developed a CD-ROM console based on Amiga technology. Are Atari going to follow suit?

At the moment, the answer seems to be no. But we can reveal that, at the time of going to press, Atari were planning to make an announcement to software developers regarding a new product later this month. Will it be a CD-ROM unit?

Here at ACE we reckon that if Atari are going to maintain a foothold in new technology a CD-ROM machine is essential. This is because CD technology takes a long time for software developers to get to grips with. To develop titles using the new systems will require at least twelve months - and Philips CD-i, which is likely to start the ball rolling in earnest - is now exactly one year away from release, with titles currently being commissioned by Philips for publication next year. No-one wants to rush into new waters, but this is one area where 'let's wait and favour the Decca'. Non-disclosure agreements allowing, we'll let you know next month what Atari have to say for themselves at the conference.

# ELECTROCOIN



SNK



AMIGA



ATARI ST



COMMODORE 64

AMIGA £24.95

ATARI ST £19.95

COMMODORE 64

CASSETTE £9.95

DISK £14.95

ELECTROCOIN SOFTWARE  
10000 Route  
10000 Route  
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10000 Route  
10000 Route  
10000 Route



## TIME SOLDIER

Electrocoin brings the environment and excitement of the arcade to the home micro with this SNK conversion. Battle your way through six levels of thrilling action rescuing comrades and defeat the evil 'Oyland'. The game features a complete arcade environment, comprehensive animated effects and special collectable bonus weapons.

# ARCADE ACE

JOHN COOK TAKES ANOTHER GIANT LEAP INTO COIN-OP COUNTRY

From Blackpool to Tokyo in two pages - it could only happen in ACE, where John Cook looks behind the events of the last two major major coin-op shows of the season

## THEY STILL MAKE 'EM LIKE THEY USED TO

### PT 42

(ONE OF A SERIES)

Machine down games continue to proliferate and what's covered both *Breakbusters* (SNK) and *Lotus of Fire* (Digital) in previous issues. My



previous findings that these sorts of up and downers are, shall we say, a bit unhealthy have only been increased by close examination of the promotional literature being given away by the distributors. For *Breakbusters* - "Gives you the feeling of the ACTUAL GUN" their capitals. *Lotus of Fire* - "enables you to actually feel the thrilling action of firing a weapon," and "experience the authentic feel of shooting a machine gun!"

Call me a wimp - but if the "thrilling realism" of firing a machine gun is so cool, why don't they just bring back national service? Let's hope this boring machine down game gets the death it deserves - and soon.

SNK's *Breakbusters* enough to make you feel with delight?

## THEY DON'T MAKE 'EM LIKE THEY USED TO

### PT 1

When the traditional coin-op scene starts to get tedious and the ratings decline, it's time to get the machines out - that's the accepted wisdom of any era. There ought to be a government health warning on some of them - like *Cop Copiers* for instance. Billed as the "Stunning reality of the 80's", those of a suitable age will almost certainly suffer from severe early 70's flashbacks, as you guide a ping pong ball down a vertical playfield. Likewise the crude gender variants. Fanny old word, isn't it.

One innovation that is trickling over the Atlantic, as a result of the downturn in coin-oper-

ated basketball (not destined to work in the UK, the balls would inevitably get nicked) and electronic darts. Both highly popular in US arcades, they're unlikely to succeed here.

Best new pinball of the show - *Blizzard* from Williams - a good follow up to the popular *Earthshaker*, although the best sound must go to the *Robotcop* pinball. Licensed through Oceanic by Data East. Superb use of sampled sounds from the movie raise the average playfield to something almost enjoyable. Best of all - when you tilt the table - come a fast *Robotcop* voice saying - "CRUISE". This like,

once went to Blackpool in February - everything was closed and the town had undergone some fabulous conversion into a major construction site, undergoing its annual facelift before the punters start flooding back later in the year.

The single area of activity was centred around the Winter Gardens where the UK coin-op trade was scanning the latest releases, testing tunes and trying through goal attacks in order to try and obtain the machines that would keep the punters throwing the money down the corridors this summer. Anyone expecting great new releases was going to be disappointed - this was being held back for the Tokyo show that followed a couple of weeks afterwards, but there was enough on display to ensure that no-one wanted the train fare.



Marvel's *Lotus of Fire* machine complete with giant lotus screen cover



SNK's *Breakbusters* - machine alternative to *Lotus*

lots of new P00's of course, the favourite of which was the cute and cuddly *Marvel Lawton* game. In the same mould as all those *Wonderboy* games, it may well rival *Wonder Land* (Newman's previous career output) as the coin-op most likely to be talked under the chin after playing. Controlling a Betty Boop character, you bounce around in beautiful shades of pastel giving the fourth rule enemies a hard time by jumping - a common female ploy - and firing power-ups that will give you extra powers. Expect to see quite a lot of this one.

Most other new P00's gave the on-road feeling of old vs - pointing to the development stagnation that seems to have hit the programmers right now. *Beast and*

Rescue from 1991. Not at all similar to Super-Heroes, grade A's Buster, distributed by Namco - well, I always did have a soft spot for Thunderous Super Hero from Data East and Fire Shark - so look here, more vertical action. Then, *Along River Deltas* and *Ballade (Ball)* - come back Super Sprint, at a bargain price.



Work of your frustration ends with this updated version of the old but true Whizzer machine.

Best new original game had to go to Atari Games for the very excellent *Alien*. A highly polished space-shooter game, based on the manipulation of colored tiles rather than ships, it stands a chance of being another take the hit for them simply because of the lack of competition in the marketplace right now.

Most interesting PCB development was *Outlaw from Tule* - a low rate-playing arcade action flick where you choose your character class before you start the game and gain extra money for monster hunting. More please - and later.



## SKILL WITH PRIZES GETS NON-TRIVIAL

We've all got used to the SMP 'til-it-is-machine' that are almost endemic in the pubs and clubs around the country. But the manufacturers have now thought of several other ways to try and challenge the punters. *Spellbound* gives you a selection of six letters from which you have to try and make four, five or six letter words for points - and points make prizes.

Other ideas include a Connect Four clone, which has you playing for money against the computer. Can't see that lasting long as clever punters formulate winning strategies. Best of all - fear about playing 'lots for money' type - there is now a SMP that pays out if you score over a certain amount on



three games - but don't be deceived, this version is pretty tricky and the prizes don't cover you.

Yeh, but at 50c a throw - you'd better build up your technique on the home version first.

## THEY DON'T MAKE 'EM LIKE THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO PT 8

True story - true story. There I was, minding my own business, having a lookover of these fine arcade games and - by golly to god, what did I see other than a PC Engine hanging out of the console. *Bloody Hell!* As it happens, then, there's now a company called Tempus that is taking production PC Engines and modifying them to work with a JAMMA front the industry standard cabinet. They're selling them for

about £200, but then the operators can just use existing PC Engine carts when they want to install a new game, rather than pay a further £800 or so for a new board. The trade is reported to be widely interested. I wonder if the news might come off this one, however. If they fear the rumour that NEC are considering marketing the PC Engine in the UK later this year, for around the princely sum of £120?

## THEY'RE TRYING TO MAKE THEM UNLIKE THEY USED TO PT 1

Reports are coming through from the Tokyo-NOJ show held last week - with a little more optimism when it comes to the machine front. The NEO-Geo - the big new system from SNK - was on show in cabinet. Impressive, they say, but there again, so was the price.

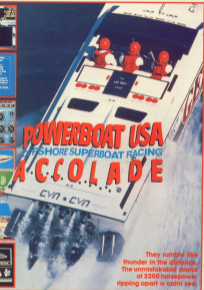
Big news was the unveiling of G-Lac from Sega. A light-em in the Afterburner mould, this has you on the tail of the enemy fighters and chosing 'em - rather than flying towards them like before. Apparently, the moulded-in of the unit is even more rigorous than before, thus enabling the player to take a bucket of dirty

washing and some soap suds into the cockpit - and thus save a visit to the laundrette.

A new golf game from Sega, *Major Title*, is being touted as a real first-act - it must be considerably good to be thought better than *Super Masters* from Sega.

Lastly, a sweetie game from Namco called *Coma (Gang)* - based on Space Invaders, where you shoot advancing aliens with an electronic gun. Interesting, but it's never replace the pure satisfaction of *Space Invaders* - when you fit steady enjoy over the head with a mallet. Take me home *Buddy*...

# SEVEN TONS OF SPEED



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They rumble like  
thunder in the distance.  
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powerboat racing. Buckle your life vest, it's going to be a bumpy ride.

# ACCOLADE

Accolade Europe Ltd., The Computer Business Centre,  
90 Lombard Road, LONDON E9 1 3BU.  
Telephone 01-538 1241.

Release Dates  
IBM PC - April - £24.99  
Atari ST - April - £24.99  
CBM 64/128 Cassette -  
April - £9.99  
CBM 64/128 Disk -  
April - £16.99

Screen shots from IBM and CBM 64  
versions.



# IN THE PINK

## HARDWARE FAILURE!

Just as we were about to go to press, the file containing the ACE Hardware Guide refused to undergo treatment at the hands of the Editor. We promise to have it rebuilt by next month and apologise for its temporary unavailability.

### THE ACE CHARTS AND STOCKMARKET ..... 100

The games charts that leave the others on the shelves. For the first time, you get charts, showing which games are attracting the best reviews. That way you know which games really deserve to hit the high spots. You can also find out which software houses are flavour of the month in the unique ACE Stockmarket...and you can win prizes by predicting next month's positions.

### ACE CLASSICS ..... 105

We've split the software guide into two sections. This section profiles classic games that we believe you should add to your collection - if you don't have them already. We'll be dipping in alternative suggestions every month from now on, to give the committed collector a chance to build the ultimate games portfolio.

### HOT OFF THE SHELVES ..... 110

A new software choice selection that gives you a regularly updated list - and mini-reviews - of games that have been ACE rated in the last five months. Here's where to look if you want to head off to the shops and pluck a winner off the shelf.

### ACE READERS' PAGES ..... 110

Everything from pen pals to second hand machines in the ACE market place.

### THE ACE PRIZE PUZZLE ..... 115

Are you related to Einstein? Is intelligence hereditary? It

the answer to both these questions is yes, you could be in with a chance for a prize...

### THE ACE PRIZE CROSSWORD ..... 115

Years of frustration for idiots, hours of fun for the rest of us.

### THE ACE DIARY ..... 117

What's going on between now and the next issue of ACE.

### ACE DEALS ..... 118

Check out the latest special offers, from pens to a flight in Max Microprose.

## ASK JERRY!

We have a lifetime PINK Pages reader's liaison officer, Michael Corbin, who will always be on hand to help you out with problems about Reader's Pages and/or PINK Pages membership difficulties. Just if you're a reader and would like to share an advertisement in the PINK or arrange a reader offer, contact Jerry Hall at 01-221-8322 Ext. 1495.



# THE ACE STOCK MARKET

WELCOME TO THE BEST CHARTS AROUND - BECAUSE THEY WIN YOU PRIZES AND THEY'RE BASED ON THE AUTHORITATIVE OPINIONS OF GAMES EXPERTS AND REVIEWERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. IF A GAME HITS THE HIGH SPOTS ON THESE PAGES, YOU KNOW IT BELONGS IN YOUR COLLECTION.

**W**e've made a couple of final improvements to the Stockmarket this month. First, to avoid confusion, we've clarified the name 'Stockmarket' to the Company Counter, because this is the only place which has 'share ratings' - and we've given the various 'counters' the more accessible title of 'Charts'. Give us a thought too for originally and run out of ten for ease of use!

Finally, we've further simplified the entry system. You now need to name only the FROD game in each category, but which list chart watchers can still try to fit the jacket by entering up to five titles for the sector of their choice.

We believe these are the best charts around. That's because (with the exception of the Console Sales chart) they're based on REVIEWS - not on sales. Each month, ACE reviewers read 10000 major British computing magazines. They note down all the review ratings for the games reviewed that month, together with the name of the software house, the machine the game runs on, and the name of the magazine the review appears in.

This data is fed into a spreadsheet and the

charts you see on these pages are automatically calculated by the program.

There are three charts that deal with games. First, there's the MACHINE CHARTS. This tells you which games have been getting the highest review marks for each machine.

In addition to the Machine Charts, there's also the two processor charts, which show you which are the best reviewed 16-bit games and the best 8-bit ones. You can draw some interesting conclusions about 16-bit and 8-bit games by comparing these two charts.

Finally, there's the Stockmarket itself. This one tells you who the top ten software companies are this month and is ready for the experts - you can check out how it works in the TYCOON box.

That's all there is to it. Now all you need to do is win a few prizes - the only form is on page 120 and now it's easier than ever to win. So get out your crystal ball and start gazing...

**Top Ten Console Sales compiled by Statkema Computers, 11 Oldlands House, High Road, Wood Green, London N22. Tel: 01 833 8410. Fax: 01 833 9410 and at 121 Tottenham Court Road, London, W1 Tel: 01 402 4820**

## ROUND THREE WINNERS

The Company Counter was suspended in Round Three as we introduced new ratings. On the 16-bit counter everyone was defeated by *Shuflo*, *Sim City*, and *Eye of Horus*, but *Andrew D'Armes* at *Barnes* in *Formica* was one of several who got five games in the correct positions. Similarly, almost everyone was put off by the appearance of *Super Wonder Boy* in the Spectrum charts, but *David Pearl* of *Barnes* managed to get all five titles correct, though only one in the correct position, narrowly beating a *Don* out of *Booth* who got four titles correct and three in the right places. *Lee Healey* of *Sheffield* was one of very few entries to get three titles correct (two in the right place) in the Amstrad charts. On the 8-bit, *Paul Westhead* of *Waltham* got five in the correct position, and *Khalid Hossain* of *Redbridge* picked three winners for the Amiga, (see the entry form on page 120 for scoring details).

## TYCOON

The ACE Stockmarket gets its name from the fact that each month we let the 100 software companies choose one of their shares (not for each one). The Stockmarket tells you which software houses are currently producing the most successful titles. Each company has a THIS MONTH rating, which is calculated according to the reviews it games have received during the current month. A company whose games are all rated highly will have a high 'Total share' score.

The next rating in the company counter is the SHARE PRICE. This simply tells you how well a company is doing relative to its past performance. If a company gets more reviews this month than last month, its price will drop. If it gets better reviews, its price rises. Companies who get no reviews at all have their price decreased each month until they get reviewed again.

Associated with the share price is the rating, which simply tells you how much that company's share price has risen or fallen this month.

Finally, there's the company's INDEX RATING. This allows you to see a company's games have done this month compared to the average score gained by all the other games reviewed. It's the rating that determines the position of a company in the charts. The average score for ALL games reviewed each month is called the SOFTWARE INDEX, and is printed at the top of the Stockmarket. In other words, if a company's index rating shows a +1 figure, that's because its games have scored higher than the industry average during the current month. A minus figure shows that its games have scored less well than the average.

## THE 16 BIT CHART

Title	Publisher	Format	Rating
8-Motion	US Gold	Amiga, PC, ST	85.83
Clivity	Image Works	Amiga, ST	81
Tv Sports Basketball	Commax	Amiga	80.93
Player Manager	Amos	ST	80.25
Witchcraft	Amiga	Amiga	80.2
Crashdown	US Gold	Amiga, ST	80.5
Paperback	Emery	Amiga, ST	80.4
Indiana Jones Adventure	US Gold	Amiga, PC, ST	80
X-Out	Parsons Arts	Amiga	87.2
Games of the Season	Micropos	PC	85.88

Runner-up: *Planet of the Apes* (Electronic Arts) Amiga; *Dragon's Breath* (Palace) Amiga; *Shogun* or *Crashdown* (US Gold) Amiga.

5 titles and 100% bought it out for top-ten this month - good to see original games doing so well after all the releases of the past few months.

## THE 8-BIT CHART

Title	System 2	DB	DB
Verdella	Comax	DB, CPC, Sp	82.33
Rainbow Islands	Comax	DB, CPC, Sp	82.33
Day of the Dragon	US Gold	DB, CPC, Sp	82
Blaster	Emery	DB, CPC, Sp	81
8-Motion	US Gold	DB, CPC, Sp	80.83
Crashdown	US Gold	DB, Sp	80.25
Be	Comax	DB, CPC, Sp	80.08
X-Out	Parsons Arts	SP, Sp	81.88
Stack Tiger	US Gold	Sp	81.84
Wings	Comax	DB, Sp	81.42

Runner-up: *Space Master* (Micropos) DB, Sp; *Joe Blade* (Petersen) Amiga, Sp; *Fighter Bomber* (Parsons) Comax.

Following the highly successful *Wings*, System 2 has come up with another classic in the form of *Verdella*, while *Crashdown*, *8-Motion* and *8-Out* have made it into both the 16-bit and 8-bit counter - games that covered well over 40 formats.







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essential purchase for fast-foot fans.  
**ACE RATED 4-4**

### INGERS' BACK

Level 8 • Atari ST  
 £19.95pb

A great follow-up to *Storm Ranges*. Level 8 has really got to grips with the use of characters in their games and you can program them in very effective ways.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**

### M1 TANK PLATOON

Microsoft • PC  
 £29.95pb

This is a welcome break from lightning that focuses through detail to keep even the most competitive strategy fans, and at the same time has a breadth of challenge and combat scenarios that should satisfy the most ardent generalist. A winner.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**

### NEBULUS

Microsoft • C64 £9.95pb  
 £18.95pb • Atari ST  
 £18.95pb

Quite possibly the top of its class right now using the special platform, life and bridge that form the rules. It's a highly original game that strikes a fine balance between frustration and addiction, added to which is the witty word, thus making it a good-looking, playable winner of a game.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**  
 C64

### NEW ZEALAND STORY

Ocean • Spectrum £19.95pb, C64 £19.95pb, Amstrad £19.95pb, ST £19.95pb, Amiga £19.95pb  
 Although played at the 600 x 400 it is hard to beat with *New Zealand Story* is not a game to be ruled out. It is interesting for to play provides lots of varied action across many levels. Soft, rich world mapping out.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**

### ODS

Microsoft • Atari ST  
 £19.95pb

A magnificently thoughtful title. The Ods are relying

on you to save them, but the floozies aren't going to do things without throwing missiles, rockets and a number of other weapons at you. Included with the program is an excellent facility that allows you to design your own planets—great stuff!  
**ACE RATED 4-5**

### POWER-DROME

Electronic Arts • Atari ST  
 £24.95pb

This superb unrelentingly futuristic driving simula- tor will keep you enthralled for months to come. It may not be better, it may not get straight into bed. It's well worth persevering with. You'll be playing this for months.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**

### PURPLE SAT- URN DAY

Ocean • Atari ST  
 £24.95pb • Amiga  
 £24.95

A terrific title of games that delivers punch, both audio and visual. The car initially goes gamelike ensures you'll enjoy playing each subsequent time and again. It's a little tricky to get the hang off, but master it and you'll be pleased you persevered.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**

### QUEDEK

Titmouse • C64 £9.95pb  
 £14.95pb

In the impressively challenging game you must drive a metallic ball through an efficient system of mazes, tunnels and obstacles, of which a set time limit. This simple game concept has a host of added features to make it particularly pleasing: you can carry out a second time to the next corner, try another, and tackle the different screens or games or any other you wish. Excellent graphics and superb sound effects.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**  
 C64

### RAINBOW ISLANDS

Ocean, Spectrum £19.95pb, C64 £19.95pb, Amstrad £19.95pb, ST £19.95pb, Amiga £19.95pb

£19.95pb, ST £24.95, Amiga £24.95

The sequel to *Bubble Bob* is a scorching hot fast-footer. The graphics and sound are superb, as is the gameplay.

One of the best land-based arcade conversions of the year that should not be missed.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**

### RVF

Microsoft • ST £24.95, Amiga £29.95

RAF offers a real artificial supply of fast-paced lake action as you view your Honda RVF. Attention to detail is paid out of along the road with your ride going like a coach after after a crash. An excellent mix of arcade and simulation.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**

### SENTINEL

Titmouse • Spectrum £9.95pb, C64 £9.95pb, Amiga £19.95pb, Atari ST £19.95pb, £19.95pb • Amstrad £19.95pb

Stunning and compelling strategy game played over the checkered surface of a planet-dominated by the Sentinel. Fundamentally you have to absorb enemy units trying to stop the Sentinel from absorbing more. A clear-cut and fast-twitcher game is both necessary in this very original and strategic. Available on all major platforms.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**  
 AMIGA

### STARGLIDER II

Titmouse • Atari ST  
 £24.95pb • Amiga  
 £24.95pb

One of the best examples of a game using vector graphics to their full advantage, gets the solid 3D treatment and comes out looking really 3D in a way. You've got a large tank to control and you're constantly upgrading it. Sensing, making this combination of shooting and exploration that should head above the competition.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**  
 ST

### SPIDERTRONIC

De International • Atari ST £29.95pb

Looks your spider-like character around the game area, collecting coloured gems in the coloured water. The built-in construction set means you'll be building out your own levels off the class course home.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**

### SPONE

Balloon • C64 £19.95pb, Amstrad £19.95pb, Spectrum £19.95pb

The winning combination of strategy, focused thinking and great graphics make *Sponge* a worthy full-priced release. What a bargain then. It's able to pack it up for £1.99.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**  
 C64

### STAR TRAK V

Microsoft • PC £24.95pb  
 £36.£24.95pb

This is easily the best interpretation of Star Trak yet. The graphics provide absorbing and challenging focus of fun. A must for friends and an entertaining space strategy simulator for everyone else.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**

### SUPER SPRINT

Electronic Dreams • C64 £9.95pb, C64 £9.95pb, Amstrad £9.95pb, Spectrum £9.95pb • Atari ST £19.95pb

One of the better console conversions currently available. With us to drive player's all concerning all track, the action is fast and furious and it will take a fairly long time to complete some of the more tortuous circuits that appear later in the game.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**

### TETRIS

Microsoft • Spectrum £9.95pb, C64 £9.95pb, £12.95pb • Amstrad £9.95pb, £12.95pb • Atari ST £19.95pb • Amiga £29.95pb • IBM PC £19.95pb

A fascinating geometrical study, the Russian game

derives the obscure mathematical logic of tacking into a fall game. One at a time, shapes fall downwards into a certain game playing area. Left to their own devices they'll pile up until they reach the top of the screen; your task is to guide them down and pack them tighter so that they'll fall out. Different versions have provided 10, 15 or other variants in their unique aspects.

But the instantly simple idea behind them means they're not worth a look whatever your machine.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**  
 C64

### THEATRE EUROPE

PSG, Spectrum £9.95pb, C64 £9.95pb, Amstrad £9.95pb, £14.95pb

The perfect game for 3-6 players who go great with any when they look at Conflict Europe, Theatre Europe is the favourite to the weekend 16 bit game.

The graphics and overall play are not as impressive as the best of the 16 bit, but it's a must for a game.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**

### TIME AND MAGIC

Microsoft • Spectrum £14.95pb, £14.95pb • C64 £14.95pb, £14.95pb • Amstrad £14.95pb • Atari ST £19.95pb • Amiga £19.95pb • PC £19.95pb

The combination of the Level 8 games, *Level 8 Of Time*, *Star Wars* and *The Price Of Magic* have been re-written with better parsing, bigger vocabulary and improved audio. Surely worth if you don't already own them.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**

### TOTAL ESCAPE

Microsoft • C64 £19.95pb, £19.95pb • Amstrad £19.95pb • Atari ST £19.95pb • Spectrum £19.95pb • PC £19.95pb

The third game using the *Freemove* system is a bit of a departure from the first two, but it's still an incredible game. In total escape you're battling

against time both in the 1000 x trying to prevent the moon exploding. For more adventures why not purchase the *Freemove* system is a godsend.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**  
 AMIGA

### ULTIMA V

Origin Systems/Microsoft • C64 £24.95pb • PC £29.95 • ST £24.95pb

Increasing level of detail in this re-playing effort should give those who have had the pleasure of watching the magical, fanciful, and geographical worlds that will enable you to defeat the forces of evil for good ground. Superb, very good looking, interesting, and tough challenge game.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**

### UMS

Microsoft • ST £24.95, PC £24.95, Amstrad £24.95, Amiga £24.95

Probably the greatest we've used to date. UMS' unique 3D system enables the creation of almost any battle in which you'll be with a very sophisticated computer opponents set. In fact of this are set on computer and a very real computer that'll keep you going for ever-longer. An absolute must purchase.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**

### ZARCH / VIRUS

Supernova Software • Amstrad £19.95pb • Spectrum £19.95pb and £24.95pb on normal discs £19.95pb • Atari ST £19.95pb • Same for Amstrad/Amiga development

A solid three dimensional shoot-em-up with such graphic perfection and smoothly addictive play that it became an instant classic. Now the latest versions have arrived and they're just as good as the 16-bit versions.  
**ACE RATED 4-5**











# HOT OFF THE SHELVES

TWO MONTHS AGO GIVES YOU THE LOWDOWN ON THE LATEST AND GREATEST RELEASES TO HIT THE SHOPS. THESE ARE ALL THE AGE RATED GAMES THAT WE HAVE REVIEWED OVER THE LAST SIX MONTHS. WE WERE VERY IMPRESSED BY ALL OF THEM, AND WE KNOW YOU WILL BE TOO. SO IF YOUR SOFTWARE COLLECTION IS LOOKING A LITTLE DRY IN THE MOUTH... THESE ARE THE GAMES YOU SHOULD BE LOOKING AT TO MAKE YOUR MICRO BEARINGS. YOUR SIBBLES WILL LOVE YOUR JOYSTICK JOYFUL, YOUR MOUSE MIGHTY, YOUR DECK DRIVE DELICIOUS. ALL OF THE GAMES COVERED HERE SHOULD BE AVAILABLE FROM YOUR LOCAL RETAILER. SO GO ON OUR LISTING, GET YOUR BOSH OUT, AND START HAVING A GOOD TIME AGAIN. FILE UNDER "ESSENTIAL".

## BATMAN

ES Code ■ Atari ST  
£19.99 ■ Amiga  
£24.99 ■ Spectrum  
£9.99 ■ £4.99 ■ C64  
£9.99 ■ £4.99

The game of the month. Michael Keaton put up a pretty good show as the caped crusader in the film and his digital counterpart isn't too far behind. There are no less than five sections to the game, the first, Ace Chemical Plant, and last, Gotham City Cathedral, are superb 3D platform games in which you have fun by using aerial or fly-by tactics to bring down the villains before they get into town. There is also a train game in the Batman and two excellent 2D games set in the film world and featuring spectacular music for all 3D comic fans. ■ ACE RATING 900

## BOMBER

Atari ■ Atari ST  
£24.99 ■ Amiga  
£24.99 ■ Spectrum  
£14.99 ■ £11.99 ■ C64  
£14.99 ■ C64  
£14.99 ■ £14.99 ■ PC  
£14.99

A tight and involving fast paced vector graphics with more bells and whistles than most other 2D games. There are a total of fourteen fighter bombers from around the world featured in the program. If you get tired of the standard forward-catch-up then it's possible to select one of a variety of set of control axes. The PC version is an impressive nod to be moved operating.

you have a 286 or 386 machine with VGA or better card but for all the other versions - by the way you had ■ ACE RATING 925

## CHAOS STRIKES BACK

PC-Microsoft ■ Atari ST  
£24.99 ■ Amiga 194  
The King wanted to see Douglas Neave. If you have already played through the first campaign you'll see your winning characters, otherwise there is another half of characters you can select from. Chaos has a similar feel to Dungeon Master, but it much simpler. There are also some new features thrown in like a character editor, and help made very handy. If you haven't played Dungeon Master, then play that first before having a definite idea with this game. ■ ACE RATING 900

## CONQUEROR

Battle A/S ■ Atari ST  
£14.99 ■ Amiga  
£24.99 ■ PC £24.99  
An arcade style but one which makes use of a 3D graphics system based around the one David Braben developed for Jaws. There are three forms of game available: arcade, strategy, and what you call three are best played with two joystick/keyboard style, but there are control options to suit every set-up. A definite nod to rock 'n' roll. ■ ACE RATING 940

## DAMOCLES

Magnum ■ Atari ST

£24.99 ■ Amiga  
£24.99 ■ PC 194  
This unusual combination between flight sim and adventure game, the impact to the well received Mercury, has been in development for a couple of years now, but the resulting game has been well worth the wait. The excellent graphics of the original game have been replaced by solid 3D wireframe graphics, but they are just as fast. There are lots more points to explore instead of one city, so there is plenty of long term challenge here. ■ ACE RATING 940

## FUTURE WARS

Palace ■ Atari ST  
£24.99 ■ Amiga  
£24.99 ■ PC 194  
A totally massive 3D graphics adventure from French developers Orange. You are cast as an underground office worker who gets caught up in a war plot to conquer Earth in the 43rd century. The graphics and background music are very exciting and the game is made very accessible by the fact of fast entry. There is enough of a challenge here to keep most adventures happy for some time. A delightful game. ■ ACE RATING 940

## GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

ES Code ■ Atari ST  
£9.99 ■ Amiga  
£24.99 ■ Spectrum  
£9.99 ■ £4.99 ■ C64  
£14.99 ■ C64 £9.99

£24.99  
The only sequel to Capcom's hit comic book 37 Soldiers. Once many of local popularity selling levels in one of the toughest 2D games to emerge for some time. You must guide the little knight through many areas of your castle to rescue the princess. Being a bit, but not in the fast track. ■ ACE RATING 920

## GRAVITY

Impressco ■ Atari ST

£24.99 ■ Amiga  
£24.99 ■ PC 194  
Deep space strategy unlike anything you've ever seen before. The concept is being tested by the alien races who are attempting to form all the suns in the universe into black holes. Meanwhile you must create as many habitable worlds as possible. The game makes use of the principle of Coarse Movement Control - this makes for some very smooth graphics. When you add programmeable

shores and travel via black holes you have created a highly original and very exciting game. ■ ACE RATING 920

## HARD DRIVEN

Comarc ■ Atari ST  
£19.99 ■ Amiga  
£19.99 ■ Spectrum  
£9.99 ■ £4.99 ■ C64  
£14.99 ■ PC £14.99  
A very competent conversion of the Amiga classic. Give your Atari hard

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after a speed track of a dual track complete with a loop and slow bend to try. The race-up ladder is 3D, the race-down ladder is 2D, the race track itself is 2D, and the graphics, and there has been faithfully reproduced in the computer version. A most joy.

★ ACE RATING 907

### INDIANAPOLIS 500

Electronic Arts • PC  
\$24.95

The ultimate racing game, the 500 uses some of the best 3D wireframe graphics, which really add something to the high speed action. As in Indianapolis, the driver has a variety of on-the-road views to select from. The realistic handling of the cars will have you coming back to the game time and time again.

★ ACE RATING 908

### INTERPHASE

Magnum • Atari ST  
\$24.95 • Amiga  
\$24.95 • PC \$24.95

It's interphased by William Gibson's novel Phantoms. It is a visit to a secret base. You talk to a girl, a female volunteer to be part of the Omega-Tech Corporation by interacting with a strange 3D environment. The game is very odd and very compelling. It is also very hard — don't expect to get through this one in a hurry.

★ ACE RATING 910

### KNIGHTS OF LEGEND

Origin/Multiplay • PC  
\$4.95

Real playing in it's best. An unparalleled game will take minimal time of activities. There are tenmaple quests to complete or you can simply enjoy playing. The program doesn't need because it is attention to detail.

There are no less than forty different algorithms to decide how and when to enemy intruders for instance. Impressive stuff.

★ ACE RATING 940

### MY TANK PLATOON

Morpheus • PC £29.95

The ultimate tank sim. Not only are there realistic 3D PC graphics, but it's also a real-time system, but you also have to think carefully about choice of stations, time, and the way you make each tactical move. Morpheus has a real-time or the Freedom of Information act to get the info it needed for the game. The result is one of the most frighteningly accurate tank sim ever seen.

★ ACE RATING 909

### MYTH

System 3 • C64 \$9.95  
£14.95 • Spectrum  
£9.95 • £14.95

The game that pushes the C64 and Spectrum further than they had ever been before. Fight your way through several time zones to reach the ultimate confrontation with the god Saramon. The game is captivating not only because of it's size and depth but also because of the quantity of animated sprites and their playability.

★ ACE RATING 906

### OPERATION THUNDERBOLT

Glenn • Atari ST  
\$19.95 • Amiga  
\$24.95 • Spectrum  
\$9.95 • Amibest  
\$9.95 • C64 \$9.95

Extremely successful conversion of the best computer Operation Bolt. Grab your tank and shoot your way through forests of tanks to rescue the beleaguered. There are

over 30 scenarios this time to add to the frantic fast paced of the original best played with a light gun, but a mouse will suffice, if you don't have one. joystick or keyboard controls don't really cope however.

★ ACE RATING 907

### PIPEMANIA

Elite Software International  
• Atari ST £19.95 • Amiga  
£19.95 • PC £29.95  
£24.95 • C64 \$9.95 • £14.95  
• Amibest \$9.95  
£14.95 • PC £19.95  
• Macintosh £24.95 • Amibest  
£24.95 • £24.95 • BBC Micro £9.95  
£14.95

The game that proved platforming can be fun. The most constant a continuous length of pipe from several sections before the foot appears. The action is all on each platform or game-like. Tapes and will have you turning the machine to an attempt to beat the odds. It is available for practically every machine, so there is no excuse for not owning a copy.

★ ACE RATING 916

### PLAYER MANAGER

ABC • Atari ST £29.95  
• Amiga £29.95 • Spectrum  
£9.95  
£14.95 • C64 £9.95  
£14.95 • Amibest  
£9.95 • £14.95

ABC's Own a management strategy element. The game is completely non-linear, making it easy to get into. The management detail is superb, right down to planning a match tactics. Add for the match you can either watch from the sidelines or join in with the 100 off style for yourself.

★ ACE RATING 901

### PRO TENNIS TOUR

100 Soft/Soft State • Atari  
ST £24.95 • Amiga  
£24.95 • Spectrum  
£9.95 • C64 \$24.95 • PC \$24.95  
• Amibest £9.95  
£24.95 • PC £29.95

The best tennis game yet. The control method works really well, although the standard of the computer players is good, so you'll have to put in a lot of practice. There is a choice of grass, concrete, clay and indoor courts, as well as comprehensive practice options. A good way of spending a few hours while you are waiting for a tournament.

★ ACE RATING 900

### QUARTZ

Firebird • Amiga  
£24.95 • Atari ST  
£24.95

A game inspired by practically every game ever written. Beginning with an Asteroids style sequence set in the office world of a crystal you can make light through a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up track, a 3D outer space and a tower of Babel style shoot 'em up. Great and addictive stuff.

★ ACE RATING 905

### STAR TREK V

Multiplay • Atari ST  
£24.95 • Amiga  
£24.95 • Macintosh  
£24.95 • PC £24.95

The game of the month in which you must recover the kidnapped Enterprise. The game is made by its creator's own graphics. There are several excellent scenarios throughout the game, which is unusual feature of strategy and action elements. A game to keep you interested for some time.

★ ACE RATING 900

### THEIR FINEST HOUR: THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

Lucasfilm • Atari ST  
£24.95 • Amiga  
£24.95 • PC £24.95

World War II is central element in this spectacular fight epic. You have the opportunity to fly a variety of 1939 craft from the Spitfire to the Hurricane. A real option is the Camera which mimics your flight and can be replaced to assess your performance.

★ ACE RATING 900

### TOWER OF BABEL

Morpheus • Atari ST  
£24.95 • Amiga £24.95

An imagination 3D adventure from Peter Cook — the man who brought you Top Cat. You control three robots, a robot, griffin, and spider. They must be used to complete a quest to look on a number of futuristic levels of a tower. This involves working your way past various nasty obstructions deliberately designed to impede your progress. This game will test your thinking to the limit of it is also ideal for a particularly tricky level.

★ ACE RATING 900

### VENDETTA

System 3 • C64 £9.95  
£12.95

A great arcade adventure that really pushes the C64 to its limits. You must fight your way past the terrorists to defuse a bomb, and rescue the professor and his daughter, but while you are on the terrorist's tail, the police are on yours. Most of the action takes place against an isometric 3D background, but there is also an excellent driving section to deal many hit score driving games.

★ ACE RATING 912

### VEITE

Microplay/Spectrum  
• Atari ST \$9.95  
• Amiga \$9.95 • PC  
\$29.95

High speed racing round the streets of San Francisco in one of four Corvettes or other. The superb 3D color graphics in the game give a great sense of the world's top fuel as you race down already steep streets, desperately trying to avoid pedestrians and other vehicles. Results and lots of fun in the game, from the people who brought you Hooked.

★ ACE RATING 900

### X-OFF

Barrow Arts • Atari ST  
£24.95 • Amiga  
£24.95 • Amibest  
£9.95 • C64 \$9.95 • Spectrum  
£9.95 • C64 £9.95 • £24.95

Possibly the best arcade fully working shoot 'em up ever written. There's something in this game you big gun kung fu could want, well, it's a great action, pretty fast graphics, lots of speed, a handful of weapons for the taking, multibosses, and plenty of challenge — what more could you want?

★ ACE RATING 900

### THE ACE SOFTWARE GUIDE

First month of the ACE software guide will be back, having been thoroughly updated to ensure that you always have the up to the minute consumer information you require. All categories will be covered, and all software featured will be available!

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# PINK PUZZLES

## SOLUTION TO MARCH '90 PRIZE PUZZLE

"VALIANT" reads 86750213. This has a square root of 29300.

The smallest number which can be represented by the word VALIANT is 100140040 and the largest 80004000. As each different letter represents a different digit and similar letters stand for the same digits, the number we are after has the last two digits also occurring in the middle of the number (as represented by the letters N and I), since the two limits given above we can calculate that the square root must be in the range 5777 to 8832. This is the first guess for the loop at the 100 of the total. From this, a number of numbers in the associated squares are computed, this value being converted to string format. One in the form of a string we are able to check the individual digits. For example, the answer to 10 the fourth digit must be the same as the sixth, and the fifth digit must match the eighth. In addition, the first seven digits (as represented by the letters VALIANT) must all be different. The double loops I and O check this by comparing each digit against the rest, a flag being set to 1 if a match is found. Should the happen the values of I and O are also reset to their upper limits to terminate the test as the discovery of a single matching pair means that there is no need to test any further. Only if the flag remains set at zero is the correct value printed out.

Now, this results in more than one possibility (total 14 which may seem appropriate as Valentine's Day is February 14th). However, the problem stated that the correct value for the letter 'I' was known and this constraint enabled a single answer to be found. By scanning the final digit of the six-digit number it can be seen that only if the value were given as '7' would a single value result, so this must have been the value originally given in the problem.

```
100 100 N=10017 to 10020
100 10000 00-100000
100 01 100000,1,00000000,1,11 1000 200
100 01 100000,1,00000000,1,11 1000 200
100 00-100000,100000-0
100 100 0-1 10 0000 0-0+1 10 0
100 01 100000,1,0+100000,1,11 1000
1000 100+00-1
100 1000 00000 0
100 01 1000-1 1000 200
100 10000 0+ 1000 1+100000,1,11
100 1000 0
```

The answers are 1-4 T, Center of Excellence, Bendisville.

### RAY TO CROSSWORD by Mike

#### ACROSS CLUES

1. % of around the island (5)
2. I can give around to Bernhardt's house (5)
3. Car computer (4)

10. Car three cloning a game (8)
11. In 1940s for youth rate (May Day) (8)
14. The way to a meeting place (5)
17. Software house as at date of formation (4,4)
18. Black in polyethylene (4)

## PINK CROSSWORD

MAY '90



NAME .....

ADDRESS: .....

TELEPHONE: .....

All entries must be postmarked no later than 3rd May 1990.

setting (4)  
15. Am cutting game back on computer (5)  
20. One three under ground in Paris (5)

#### DOWN CLUES

1. John Lennon's final game (3,3)

2. Was the judge and lawyer (5)
3. Addie's time for playing on computer (1,1,1,1)
4. The game's a par (5)
5. Can get to get spent by game (3,3)
8. Progress game telling heartless story to

10. answer (5)
12. A wartime Paganini reader about to form a software house (5)
13. System '75 game opponent (5)
15. Game about routing in motor road (5)
16. Secret society game

from Ocean (5)

Send your entry to:

AGE May '90 Crossword  
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LONDON  
S20 9AU

# ACE DEALS

CHECK OUT THE SPECIAL BARGAINS AVAILABLE AT LOCAL DEALERS THIS MONTH

**H**appy hour at City Software is limited, you should plan your moment to visit the store with care. The store is holding "Happy Hour" throughout the week when you will get 20% off any software you choose.

The catch is that City Software chooses the items of its "Happy Hour" each day more or less at random. Choosing a busy time to get your discount is largely a matter of luck. However, AOL has found a better bet and can give you a few hints. Happy Hour will occur at some time between 12:00am and noon and then between 2:00-5:00pm during the week end with a longer span too sometimes during April, and Happy Hour is during the afternoon and day then it will be doing

the morning the week-end and on a Friday.

There's also a ruleman to be sure each week at City Software. Through our April, every purchase will give you a raffle ticket, and at the end-of-the-week a ticket is drawn for the prize. Whether, City Software is on Little Street

## WATCH OUT FOR MICROPHONE

Microphone's Collector's Edition software, where you choose custom style changes towards a selection of free gifts when you buy software from any of Microphone's nine outlets, is worth seeing from AOL. It's, and how you can get the best chance of seeing our choice.

It's also a chance to see the latest, often throughout April. If you buy the title published by the Microphone outlet

with a book, Microphone's deal you will also get free of charge a 10% discount on the book.

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List in the Microphone and it'll not only show to Parents Read in Books and has a look round the new Microphone store which has just opened better off, go in and check a copy of AOL, and you might persuade the staff to give you some freedom.

Get in the month of England, the Computer Store means planning a great Easter Egg promotion with a number of gift items titles. Details will be sent through to us

soon to come, so ask at your local Computer Store before we have to say anything.

Computer Store has got some incredible limited periods to be seen in comparison with other outlets, and is not forgetting a simple in-store competition with a wealth of prizes.

Assume these simple questions correctly and you'll have with a chance of winning the big prize - original artwork from American, signed and framed. The winners' names are easily given. Star Trek videos, and books.

And Computer Store has added us not to forget that the world-famous Bruce Lee are still available - free with the store. 1200 Franklin, 1200 Fulton and further subject to game available

10). City Software, Liverpool, is on Little Street for software, hardware, and accessories (operating, printer cables, stand units, blank disks, etc.).

There are Microphone stores in the London Centre, Manchester, the Birmingham Centre, Nottingham, Kingston, Wakefield, the New Centre, Colchester, the Greenway, Newcastle upon Tyne, the Kingston Centre, Bradford, the Bull Ring Centre, Birmingham, the County Arcade, Leeds, and Farnham Road, Basing.

You can find Computer Store outlets in the Arts and Centre, Manchester, Newcastle, Leeds, Preston, Sunderland, Stockport and Nottingham. And part of the Computer Store chain are the two Games Store outlets in Cardiff and Middlesbrough, which

stock role-playing games as well as computer software.

Offers and promotions are subject to availability of stock. We do not intend to ensure our dealer promotion information is also not at all times, but AOL cannot take any responsibility for changes in our relations to readers plans.

## ATTENTION DEALERS!

Don't keep your promotions, competitions, special offers, etc., a secret. Tell us at AOL, and we'll tell everybody else.

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# The BLITTER END



The year is 2024. Amongst the towers of books of Blitter, after Blitter announces that he has closed. (Should he ever make a game? - Blitter has predicted in this issue.)

**J**ust as we sit in press, Blitter received an invitation from Paolo (footnote) to participate in a breakfast discussion about success in computer software. Would, the lady enquired, we be interested in defining the industry against the views of Blitter that women were being treated in stereotypical fashion?

Defend it? Surely there can't be any defence at all. Historically, computer games have always appealed predominantly to males and the various attempts to woo the female half of the population - Blitter's romantic Flashed Hearts, or the recent Games for Girls, for example - have been either entertaining, unsuccessful, or both.

All this could be about to change with the advent of CD technology. Giant corporations like Philips and Sony, who are the driving force behind the introduction of new entertainment media, are unlikely to overlook half the population as they build their profit forecasts. Furthermore, CD technology is viewed more as potential family entertainment than computer games, particularly since the latter are still seen as being technologically daunting or dehumanising. The real importance of CD may turn out to be not its technological superiority but the fact that Blitter will want to use it as well.

Meanwhile the traditional computer games industry has come up with an answer to the problem of attracting women. It's called Bear Queen. At a recent industry conference in Italy, Gian ACE's marketing manager was to be seen chatting confidently across the hotel lobby in his leisure shorts. Unluckily for Gian, and to the surprise of most of the ladies present, the man was a little more undressed than he thought. Anyone who had a camera and the sense to use it can report a large cheque from Playboy magazine - and subscriptions for ACE are expected to soar dramatically.

Meanwhile at the same conference, industry technologists spent their time rife stating, lying

by the pool, playing the piano in the lobby, clubbing, complaining about hotel food, complaining about the taxi drivers, and comparing flats to downtown Beirut. In other words, the conference was a tremendous success...

Good news for Rick Off too. ACE can reveal that one feature of the never-unfinished Rick Off II will be the ability to load in items from Rick Off I. You can therefore practise to your heart's content on the old game, then go forth and conquer.

The Blitter Bros may be hot cakes when it comes to coding games, but they don't have quite the same cutting edge when it comes to challenging the home advantage of rodents. At a recent conference in Nice, the lads were called along to the casino at Monte Carlo in a coach by Microsoft. The coach, they were told, would leave at 1.00pm sharp and anyone who missed it would have to make their own way back. The boys decided to make their own way back by taxi.

At 1.00pm the conversation must have gone something like this...

Blitter-Bro: "Well, that's me cleared out. Let's head for home."

Blitter-Bro: "Me too. Not a penny left..."  
see BROTHERS IN ARMS  
NIGHTMARE "Geez..."

A frantic phone call to the hotel was followed by a car and a large bill.

Strange how companies work. The day we heard about the Arnie accidentally outbidding the Blitter was the day we were invited to interview Bob Shroeder of Atari. How we've heard about the CD Arnie... and an Atari conference on 27th March. Are they by any chance related?

## EAT FROG'S LEGS

...plus pasta, spaghetti, pasta, and bratwurst in next month's spectacular Euro issue.

For the first time ever, ACE is going to cover the entire European Software Industry and show the world the gauntlet that Europe is throwing down to the USA and Japan.

We'll be visiting software houses and hardware developers across the continent, bringing you exclusive reports on companies large and small. Features currently planned include Coktel's CD development, Don Bluth's state-of-the-art animation work in Ireland, and Philips - giants of future interactive CD technology.

Not to mention, of course, the usual authoritative game reviews, news, tips, and features from Britain's leading entertainment technology magazine.

### Ooops!

Oops of the decade last month. Having to include Cyan (programme of Cerebral Demented writer in our US issue at this point, we arrived in Washington DC to discover that they were actually over 1500 miles away in Washington State. Our red faces went, of course, due entirely to autism.



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