

ACE

- AMIGA ●
- PC ● ST ●
- MEGADRIVE ●
- GAMEBOY ●
- LYNX ●
- SUPER ●
- FAMICOM ●

ADVANCED COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

AMIGA EXCLUSIVE LOTUS 2

INSIDE
10 PAGES
Of Console
Reviews!



Gremlin's gas guzzlin'
limit breakin' tyre
squealin' SEQUEL!



CHOPPER ASSAULT!

Core's Thunderhawk
outguns the enemy.



BALLS!
Jimmy White's
Whirlwind Snooker.

EXCLUSIVE! BULLFROGGER

Amazing secrets from the
PowerMonger team.

TRICKS 'n' TACTICS

Playguides, pokes and cheats for:
Gods, Monkey Island,
Super Mario World, Space Quest IV,
Prince of Persia, Strider.

LATEST TITLES PREVIEWED & REVIEWED INCLUDING: EYE OF THE STORM, MEGATHING, THUNDERHAWK, JIMMY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND SNOOKER, CASTLES, CENTURION, ALIEN STORM, MASHYI ISLAND, GREAT BUSTERS, BIG WILD WHEELS, HATERS, G-LOC, HALLET WARS, PACMAN, PSYCHIC WORLD, B-TYPE II & SUPER B-TYPE FACE OFF... AND MANY, MANY MORE!



HUNTER

ADAPT TO SURVIVISE

The Hunter is alone behind enemy lines. No reinforcements, no options, and the capacity to complete your mission. His only accomplices are the weapons, weapons of a 3-dimensional universe; his objective: to attack and survive.



MISSION
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CODENAME
HUNTER

ACTIS

HUNTER

WE SEEK TO DESTROY.

With versatility to make best use of a wide range of state-of-the-art weapons, the Hunter is a breed apart.

When you find structures found in his amazing three-dimensional world, the Hunter has the will to win. Do you?



EXTENSION

Available in September on Amiga & Atari ST

"Deliver,"

the end



Deliver The management skills you need to succeed in the construction industry are yours. Deliver. See how the world is changing on page 58.



Deliver The management skills you need to succeed in the construction industry are yours. Deliver. See how the world is changing on page 58.



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GRAPHIMAGES

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IMPACT SYSTEM (see Laptop)

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reviews

The latest software releases rated

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BULLFROGGER

Surely this cannot be. Bullfrog, top developers of seven games like Populous and PowerRanger long to produce their own Frogger game? What an earth is going on!

But no, straight up, on the level, so to speak. We're on the up and up. This, dear reader, is the game Bullfrog would really like to produce.

In the first of an occasional series, we ask noted programmers how they would, with the benefit of their silly smooth techniques, put together their favourite games of yesteryear.

Turn to page 68





The Thing is the latest in a... *...[The rest of the caption text is illegible]*

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE!

Score points a la old game master! Test your skills and your knowledge of the latest trends in the computer and game industry. Do you know the ACE of ACE? Do you know the game you're playing?

➤ Another exciting feature is... and we will give you other games and the... *[The rest of the text is illegible]*



COVER STORY

What if you could turn your car into a... *[The rest of the text is illegible]*

...the best... *[The rest of the text is illegible]*

...page 40.

SHOCK IT TO US!

Odd, isn't it? In the entertainment business these days you can't move for shocks. It's a roaring trade again. What with Patrick Bateman chopping up old flames in American Psycho, Henry doing for all and sundry in Portrait of a Serial Killer and all yer top rappers singing about flashlights and shootings, the public's appetite for visceral thrills seems boundless. And yet software would appear to be taking definite steps away from this aspect of its supposed sister industries. But is it necessarily a good thing? Shouldn't older gamers have the opportunity to buy games which would pump their adrenalin just a little bit faster? Whatever else you might think, it'd make an interesting change from stacking hats.

features

20 SCARY MONSTERS

ACE visits the Planet of the Gamers, a strange, disturbed world where inhabitants have evolved after centuries of playing particular types of games. Anything but a pretty picture, it's a white knuckle voyage into the fears and minds of an alien nation. Well, alright, perhaps not.

24 QUESTION TIME

The ACE readers, we know, like to pride their noses on a higher degree of industry knowledge than most. And here's the chance to prove it.

27 DIGITAL PICTURES REVISITED

You've seen their graphics! You've seen their faces! And now you can have them speak! In-depth reporter David Upchurch links his pencil and asks the questions.

32 COIN OPS

John Cook floods the latest slots and offers his considerable wisdom as to the most recent developments in the field.

35 VIRGIN CONFERENCE

Virgin Games open their doors to perhaps the most motley crew of visitors it's ever had: the "pleasure" of looking after - ACE readers! Read about their formidable ordeal of free strips and Coke and quinine bags - if you dare!

39 IN THE WORKS

A further three games currently in, if you must, "development" get the critical eye treatment. **• Lotus 2 • Eye of the Storm • Mega Twins**

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Bill Hayes scores magazines from around the globe, cuts them up and makes up some appropriate captions.

11 ACE TECH NEWS

Budgets, upgrades and games. But absolutely no printer cables or disk box holders, thankyou.

14 LETTERS

The write stuff.

34 TRICKS'n'TACTICS

This month's lucky games to receive the enviable TnT treatment are Gotti from the Bitmaps, Monkey Island from US Gold, Super Mario World on the Super Famicom, and Space Quest IV from Sierra. We'll also be paying a return visit to old friends Prince of Persia and Strider.

ACE

SEPTEMBER 1991

THUNDERHAWK

AH-73M



As an elite member of MERLIN, you will be employed specifically to defuse crisis situations around the world without provoking full scale war. Control Thunderhawk in what is proclaimed to be "The fastest 3D graphics system to appear on any home computer".

Available on
4 Eds of
COMPTON Today 486SX
and PC.

CORE
Entertainment

NEWS GAMES NEWS GAMES

Rik Haynes with more out of this world stories...

Take The A-Train

If you're bored with being a Railroad Tycoon, why not take the A-Train? This lively locomotive simulation is meandering its way over from Japan. SimCity creator Maxis has picked up the European and North American rights and is initially working on a PC adaptation which it hopes to release early next year.

Specifically, A-Train from Atlaria is the Japanese version of the popular Microsoft game - except in Railroad Tycoon you just tried to get rich, with the A-Train release you're trying to be a good-city administrator. You have to raise money, buy land, put in your rail and run the trains. Simple, eh?

"This is sort of a living/semi-wr," says Maxis' Tom Hall. "You just put it in and see the trains moving around and the buildings growing and shrinking. There's all kinds of detail going on. Keep an eye peeled for the amusement parks and ski areas."



Like the Atlaria look, Microsoft's Railroad Tycoon has the same look, but the water is more green, and a more realistic looking train. Maxis' A-Train requires the permission to use this illustration.

The Rescue Of Princess Blobette

The blob is back! Combining the story of the award-winning 16-bit and 32-bit Blob, The Rescue of Princess Blobette for the Gameboy has been licensed by Nintendo itself for release in Europe later this year.

jellybean-loving fellow Blobert and his Earth-bug companions are back in a brand-new adventure taking them to the Royal Castle of Blobocandia. Narrating the traps and secret exits, the players must rescue the Princess from the clutches of an Antagonistic Akbaronit and set on a wacky jellybean quest!

Wholly Entertainment's The Rescue of Princess Blobette is the creation of David Crane. This release takes game genre fans to the memorable Pitfall, Clubhouse, and LBS Computer People where he worked for Activision. Crane is now completing development of a new Simpsons Gameboy title for Activision.



The Stormtroopers are also a detailed scene from Star Wars.

Star Wars

AGE can exclusively reveal Lucasfilm Games in California is secretly working on a Star Wars Night simulation based around the renowned motion picture.

Many of the best designers and programmers at Lucasfilm Games have been assigned to the project which focuses on the vital X-Wing fighter team by Luke Skywalker in the original movie. Although development has barely begun, an insider suggested the game is already looking like a potential blockbuster. He told us the graphics engine found in Secret Weapons of the Luftwaffe (premiered elsewhere in this issue) has been refined beyond recognition and used to create the realistic imaging of Imperial Tie Fighters and Star Destroyers. The Millennium Falcon may even make a special guest appearance along with a few Star Wars characters like R2-D2 and C-3PO.

Lucasfilm Games has previously enjoyed considerable success with their Planet (Star and Indiana Jones) and the Last Crusade games for the PC, Amiga and ST. Birmingham-based US Gold handles these prestigious products in the UK.

Unfortunately, nobody there could throw any light on the matter of an X-Wing sim.

New Nintendo at Lucasfilm Games confirmed the existence of the new Star Wars project but added the company isn't "definitely committed" to it... just if the game is given, PC players could be attacking the player Star within a year.

Meanwhile, Frank Ben Umbrell is developing a Star Wars title for the Nintendo Gameboy. Indications are that this handheld game will be similar to the NES console release of Star Wars - due for an interim edition from Lucasfilm Games and PVC Musical Industries (see AGE 42 for further details). A spokesperson for Umbrell said the movie is like a big video game and Star Wars will be one of the most exciting Gameboy titles available.



Leather Goddesses attributes a place for the legendary Blue Mermaids. The concept artist's pencil sketches from July 1991 are shown above and the resulting in-game graphics below.

Leather Goddesses Of Phobos 2: The Gas Pump Girls

Are you ready to be seduced by the Gas Pump Girls? Activision is set to launch Leather Goddesses of Phobos 2 onto your unsuspecting PC adventures. A CD-ROM version is also in the cards.

The state-of-the-art has dramatically changed since the release of the original game. To compete with the likes of Sierra On-Line and LucasArts Games, Activision has collaborated the sequel with 3DRealtime VSA graphics, hundreds of scenes of animation, digitized voices and music, a point-and-click interface and characters which can speak five languages through the usual sound boards. The first interactive Multimedia Adventure Game has been designed by Steve "Sok Sam" Maravitz.

Like a typical Mermaid, Leather Goddesses of Phobos 2 sees a small "We American town" tormented by a mermaid and an alien invader. Only the military and a group of attractive gas pump girls can save the day. Ugly girls just couldn't do the job, obviously!

Activision is including a "Free Live Live Sound Enhancer" widget to play sampled sounds through the parallel port on your PC.

Adventure it is coming to the Ages fall in the first quarter of 1992 (starts in France). You're fortunate if you're "in the club girls zone." "As they battle the evil Spymasters and mutants who are trying to kill the city, beautiful women your age and computer-related will give you an ever-increasing view of the city."

Video games' greatest strength is how constant viewing the top-quality graphics capabilities. About 1000 hours, please the team and again Activision's team of Steve, Ralph, Bill, Leslie and Matthew have indicated.

Dune

Before he created *Dune*, cult director David Lynch attempted an epic sci-fi movie based on a Frank Herbert book. *Dune* may have had *Blade* and *Spider* but the result was confused and catastrophic. With two computer games concurrently in the works, Virgin

Games took over to continue the confusion but hopes that's where the similarity will end.

With developers in the USA and France writing two separate strategy titles, Virgin Games will inevitably split over this momentous undertaking. How would you turn a complicated novel into interactive entertainment?

"At the moment we're trying to decide what to do," writes David Bishop at Virgin Games. "It's going to be decided what we get a playable version of both games."

Users wonder quite how the massive fog "wall" made will end up in computer form, but he seems to see the results nonetheless.

Dune should be available in spring 1992 on Amiga, PC and ST.

The Chaos Engine

These busy *Blazing* brethren are needing another release in the depths of London's East End. The Chaos Engine has very little to do with fractal geometry theory and instead mixes "the finest points of computer role-playing games and classic *Blazing* Brothers action".

Players control up to three characters with individual abilities and weapons on a look-down eight-way scrolling arcade adventure to destroy the devilishly Chaos Engine and a host of creatures.

"These monsters require intelligence and cunning using a unique form of behavior modeling," claims a spokesperson of *Blazing* software. "Additionally, the game encourages teamwork and character management."

The development group has roots of experience with top-selling games like *Speedball 2* and *Gods*. Eric Matthews and Phil Wilcock are designing The Chaos Engine. Steve Cargill is handling the code, graphics are the responsibility of Steve Malcom with music and sound effects provided by Richard Joseph.

The Chaos Engine should be available this winter.



Plan 9 From Outer Space

Generally regarded as the worst film of all time, *Plan 9 From Outer Space* is coming to the home PC and CD early next year courtesy of Gamella.

Collecting the talents of a few ex-Classroom programmers in Ireland, Gamella is busy converting this 1959 black and white ad-hoc flick into an action adventure. The team reckons this genre-of-the-movie will be unlike anything you've played before. "We don't want to make the usual mistakes made by our competitors," confessed Ian Richardson at Gamella. "We're taking our time on this project and aim to get everything absolutely right."

Feeling the burden of the title to *Plan 9* has proved to be a task in itself. The production of the original movie was plagued by problems and a severe shortage of cash and talent. Tragically struck after only a few days of filming when leading actor Boris Lugosi suddenly died and the director ended his career writing pornographic novels, Will Gamella faces similar problems.

Fans of *Plan 9* will be pleased to hear Gamella will include a video featuring edited highlights of the movie. Additionally, there are rumors of a West End theatre production planned for later this year.



Laffer Utilities

The programmers at Sierra On-Line are continually looking around as they've come up 'the ultimate in productivity software' for your office PC. Laffer Utilities is an off-beat collection of programs designed to keep boredom at bay.

"Now you can efficiently waste time at work," remarked a spokesperson, "pretending to be hard at work while you actually create letters, play games and read jokes."

The database of yags, supplied by ol' Laffer but Larry himself, can be fine-tuned by playing with the humor level and 1000-0-Moby.

A built-in safeguard feature in Laffer Utilities immediately changes the screen display, just in case the boss suddenly looks over your shoulder.

Dan Dare

The Pilot of the Future and his faithful companion Digby are to star in a multi-million pound series for television, as *High Games* is continuing releasing their Dan Dare computer games to take advantage of the renewed interest in this occasional comic book hero.

Smith, the acknowledged TV producer-company behind Inspector Morse, is pumping huge amounts of cash into the shows which should air on ITV early next year.

High Games has especially retained the computer game rights to Dan Dare, though a spokesman for the firm said he doubted they will do a new game to coincide with Dan's TV debut. "We might go for a special compilation package," he announced, "Dan Dare II was my personal favorite."



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Who's pushing the envelope of electronic wizardry? Rik Haynes finds out...

Putting On The Polygons

Not wanting to be left behind in the race to create virtual realities, Japanese video-giant Sega is now developing sophisticated polygon-gaming video technologies. These could hold the key to a new generation of arcade gaming. According to leading Sega scientists, the humble coin-op will soon be showing sophisticated computer-generated images similar to those normally seen in movies and military flight simulators.

Most sophisticated titles, typified by Sega's *Out Run* and *VRML*, tend to be simple driving and flying games where the programmer manipulates motion objects to create the illusion of speed.

Designers of games utilizing photorealistic polygon graphics can create their own worlds for players to enter and experience. Right now, complex polygon-based games are expensive to develop and produce, but systems like Microsoft's *FLS Strike Eagle* and *Wildlife* from W. Industries are showing the way.

"We're working on a very powerful system right now," claims a Sega spokesperson. "It's simply a question of improving polygon-generation



Computer-generated images are now being used to create virtual worlds. Sega's latest technology promises an exciting new realm for flight and driving simulations. Includes the information to compare 17 real and virtual video systems, plus information on computer CD-ROMs and other exciting technologies they represent on the market of 1991.

Sky-High Video Games

Flying business class on Japan's All Nippon Airways certainly has its benefits, namely the video games! Passengers on long trips from London to Tokyo are treated to luxurious seats with individual TV monitors and a wide choice of stereo channels offering high-quality CD sound.

Konami, a reputed Japanese software house, has created six video games for the airline including a colour conversion of the *Castlevia* title, *Quartz*, and a popular golf simulation. (note it leaves about the actual system except the software runs on Sony screens. How you really can join the elite-high club!

For reservations or more information contact your travel agent or All Nippon Airways on (071 495 7007).

Rappa

Better known for toy lines, Bandai is 'in the best' with a portable drive machine. Rappa is the size of a Walkman and consists of one large pad for the base drive and four smaller pads providing space, time limit and crystal sounds. Each of these four track-mounted Rappa pads can be varied to produce two other precision sounds such as an electronic cello, combell, clap and carnival whistles.

"Now you can say to your favourite cars with the latest and most sophisticated chip technology," suggests a varied spokesperson for the company. "So next time you're listening to a groove, remember to stop a Rappa in your stereo and lounge-in-tunes."

I don't believe they said that, either! Rappa costs £30. For more info and what write to: Hobby, Woodford, Harpende, Kent CT9 4DZ.

More things you should know with: www.bbc.com

More details have confirmed on the new CD-ROM edition of the Sega's Mega-Drive video game console. For more being an updated system, the Mega-CD can read and write optical discs and has built-in RAM expansion memory of 32,768KB and is capable of built-in 3D to speed things up. Despite this game are currently being developed for the Mega-CD or Sega's next console and Super 32-bit. All the machine will be available in the UK next year. A price to be set.

Video Painter

Not everybody wants or understands the latest hot video or optical animation package for their computer. Video Painter from View Electronics (0203 003445) is an

easy to use electronic sketchpad for kids with a spare £80 in their piggy-bank!

Connected to a normal TV set and operating on batteries or a 15 AC adaptor, Video Painter provides the young artist with twelve bright colours and six different patterns to play around with. There is also an extensive library of over 50 pre-drawn images including vehicles, fashion characters, people, animals and shapes for those poor essential souls who need a helping hand of pretty pixels.

"Added entertainment is provided by the automatic mode which brings objects to life," promises a spokesperson for View Electronics. "As if that were not enough,

Video Painter can also connect to a VCR for picture storage with so-extra attachments required."

Manufacturers in England. Email: info@viewelectronics.com or www.viewelectronics.com



Digital Art



Verbum, the Journal of Personal Computer Aesthetics, has launched a CD-ROM magazine which features a smorgasbord of animation and interactive multimedia works, interactive columns and feature stories, with music and images from musicians Todd Rundgren and Graham Nash, and several unique visual electronic music compositions. This is the perfect

way for you to experience the sub-culture of electronic art.

"Verbum Interactive allows the 'reader' to interact with the magazine in a way that has never before been possible by making sound, motion and interaction with the magazine's contents available in a free form, 'reader selectable way,'" states the thoughtful publisher, "We're pleased to be playing a satisfying role in this exciting field of emerging media."

The first two-disc Verbum Interactive edition contains over 600 megabytes of text, graphics, sound, animation, 20 minutes of music tracks, 90 minutes of audio interviews and 350 pages of printable text. It costs \$50 and requires a Macintosh SE/30, II with 5MB RAM, 540 colour monitor and CD-ROM drive.

Verbum plans to launch a regular quarterly subscription service in early 1993 with editions for Macintosh, MS-DOS, CD/D and DOS. Write to Verbum, PO Box 12384, San Diego, California, USA for further information.

Expansions

Things really get real up with the Expansions pattern generator for the Apple Macintosh. Based on geometric modules which contain crystalline rules of growth, viewers have interactive control over the creation and modification of these modules. Thus a vast number of patterns may be quickly created, making Expansions the perfect gift for architects, styling designers and illustrators seeking inspiration.

These strange patterns grow within a 1280 by 1280 pixel array and may even be grown inside the artwork of imported MacPaint compatible documents to crystalline chaos. Expansions is priced at \$79.95 and comes with over 200 predefined pattern definition files and a 132 page illustrated manual.

Author John S. Stokes III has been updating the software since 1985 and his company Pixel Pathways (505) 533-294-8686 is currently seeking other forms of 21st century computer aesthetic to "open up new creative possibilities".



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Verbum is an Apple registered service. Verbum Interactive edition and Verbum Interactive magazine patterns were prepared using a custom program and software.

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Panasonic Digital AV Mixer

If your home cinema are looking a little tired, why not try Panasonic's WAVESET? This Digital AV Mixer can turn out a variety of special effects like fading, time-lapse, auto-zooming and 30 wipe patterns. The Picture-in-Picture function enables you to fit an entire input image into a smaller area of a rectangular wipe pattern. Wipe scrolling direction can be selected and even inverted to provide greater interest.

Panasonic sees the device as a great advantage over existing equipment thanks to the wealth of easy-to-use features built into the WAVESET. "It's packed with technology to provide many innovative effects," assures the company. "Video Editing has become real fun!"

Manufacturing your own video effects is just one of the many digital video possibilities with Panasonic's DV-AV10 Video Mixer.

The next time you hear a Burger King and somebody starts to sing in the USA you may find yourself in the middle of a cable fence. Panasonic will continue to use the word "cable" when referring to the latest video communication and advertising on video. Some feel that this is the only way to describe the word "cable" and they are already using the word "cable" in their advertising. And they say it could save Bigger ads here.



This Desert Storm multimedia magazine is the first of many CD-ROM projects from Warner Bros.

Desert Storm On CD-ROM

Unlike any war before it, the Gulf War encouraged the use of startling information and communication technologies. News reporting via satellite links up some of the world during the conflict and now Time Magazine has pioneered a new form of publishing with Desert Storm: First! The Conflict of History.

This multimedia magazine on CD-ROM is a joint venture between Time Magazine and Warner New Media giving you a week-by-week look at the Gulf Crisis via an "extraordinary volume of war-related articles, reports, photographs and maps."

Information junkies will be absorbing over their Macintosh because the forty-dollar disc contains more than 6,000 screens of information, including exclusive audio reports and other unique material previously unavailable to the general public.

"Essentially, electronic journalism should feel like you're on newsstands," says Warner New Media's president Stan Soren. "The real story would be transferring it to home computers via cable."

Developing a good multimedia product requires a lot more planning than just say a book, play or film. After the idea is struck upon, an interactive designer doubles how the product will work, what the interface will look like and, crucially, how the user will navigate through the disc without getting totally lost in a mass of multimedia.

Warner New Media is currently working on a number of projects with other divisions of publishing giant Time Warner such as Time, Life Books, Sports Illustrated, Time Magazine and 60 Minutes.

"Multimedia has become a revolution just as the Talkies and Technicolor revolutionized Hollywood," proclaims a spokesperson. "By developing new forms of interactive-rich entertainment from mixes of graphics, music, interactivity, animation, computer control, narration and video, Warner New Media is defining future home entertainment."

Stereo Replay

Is the Stereo Replay the first stereo sound sampler for the Atari ST range of computers? Microdeal certainly thinks so.

"This completely new hardware cartridge contains dual analogue-to-digital and digital-to-analogue converters to ensure the ultimate in 8-bit sample quality," and there's more. "The turbo plasma outputs provide the user of a standard ST with high quality stereo output."

Stereo Replay costs £90 and comes with a Stereo Editor program which allows you to manipulate mono and stereo samples in 8-, 12- and 16-bit rates. With the Stereo Edit software you can load up to 32 different samples into memory and then play three-channel sounds out from the stereo ports of the cartridge at the same time. Contact us in the house, yet again! Microdeal can be contacted on 01726 480100.

Rapman

Growls in the house thanks to Code's RMP-1 mini keyboard which aims to tap the current popularity of Rap and House music among the pool of teens.

"The instant keyboard over is one to make your teenage groan with envy," say the big boys at Code.

New twelve keyboard jockeys can create their very own melodic mixes via the built-in "turntable" disc, mini microphones, three drum pads and thirty auto rhythms reflecting the latest dance styles.

Special sound effects are produced by Rapman's Voice Effector function which enables rappers to modulate their voices approximately one octave higher or lower than normal.

Rapman RMP-1 costs around £70 and is available from your local Code dealer.

Worshipers of rap and the 80's groove should be looking for a keyboard with a built-in "turntable" and mini mic.



CODE SOUNDTRACK

Get ready to dance out your Saturday Night Fever. Code's RMP-1 mini keyboard is a new form of music on the scene.

Microdeal Digital Systems has captured the imagination of computer users in a series of multimedia publications in eight CD-ROMs. The first, CD-ROMs approximately 20 minutes worth of audio tracks, including software companies, CD-ROM and software companies.

"This series will include video information on software, from the computer market," follows Steve Palmer of Digital Systems. "We know, we know in a few months we'll see more getting down from the scene on Day of the Page."

When complications are on their way, including music, that video game for the education and TV. And you're off to a CD-ROM world of information, including a 20-minute audio track from the scene on Day of the Page.

WING COMMANDER II
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Letters

ANYONE FOR FOOTBALL?

I just thought I'd write and tell you about our Computer Football camp we are running in the Birmingham nearby Lutonwood area. We will be staging a compo to win a Sega Megadrive sometime in December. The compo will be staged sometime in Liverpool and we are looking for people to enter.

The compo will use Kick Off and Kick Off 2 for its knockout round and use ST's only (they are a lot faster!). If you could mention us, we would be grateful.

We will ask that the competitors bring their own joystick and the entrance fee is five pounds.

Merseyside Computer Football Association
 M.C.F.A.J
 28 Watlington Lane
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 Liverpool
 L25 8QJ
 Tel: 051 4384280

Well, how about if I embody notions themselves a bit and would like to try their luck, give it a go. We're not too sure about your claim of the ST version being faster, though.

AND ANOTHER THING!

I'm sorry to tell you that my letter is yet another one that is going to complain about one machine, in defence of another.

I am referring to the Sega Megadrive, Master Link, Super Nintendo and all that rubbish - these consoles are filling up your magazine like nobody's business, and what do we get? Terrible screenshots of someone looking hell-out-of-someone-else, badly written reviews about the same-old games, games that might have looked good about eight years ago, but now, in their old built-in enclosures, are looking slightly less attractive to say the least.

I'm not saying you should completely cut consoles out of your otherwise excellent mag-

azine if it would be nice... I just tone it down a bit - balance the reviews a lot more. If ACE stands for Advanced Computer Entertainment, why are you supporting machines like the Gameboy and GameGear? They may be portable, but speaking from experience, I can say that the majority of games on the Gameboy (I have included) are completely unplayable - the graphics are tiny and blurred, the sound is awful, so should the GameGear be the same.

It seems that the only real way forward for games lies in the hands of the PC, and maybe the Sega. While the Megadrive may deliver impressive aesthetics (though nowhere near as good as a VGA PC with a sound board), it is quite obviously limited only to alcohol-free games. Although various manufacturers will try to tell you otherwise, consoles are no good for playing decent, long-lasting games-on, such as Sierra adventures, or Ultima type games - platform shoot-em-ups are not long-lasting games, so that's how good they are.

I know there are many people out there who will disagree with me totally, but there are also people who will agree with me - most of my friends prefer proper computer games to consoles. I know a good PC will cost you nearly five times as much as a Megadrive, but prices will come down very soon, and it will be a matter of comparing the Megadrive's lower price to the superior features of the PC.

Piers Jerry
 Northampton

So ACE has terrible screenshots and badly written reviews, but the magazine is excellent! Sorry, but those two statements would seem to be mutually exclusive. That means that can't both be true, Mr Jerry. Just what is the problem with console games anyway? The fact that you're having a go of the Sega GameGear without even having seen it working is a bit rash, isn't you find? What the Gameboy, unplayable? What about games like (Droptail, Super MarioLand, Hard For Real October, James, Qix and many others too numerous to mention?

Isn't it funny how people always believe that the way forward for computers is with the machine they happen to own? Now we sometimes have high hopes for the PC, but when you start on one about four months before it is that the Megadrive you bought by your own admission a decent model costs less times the price-off comparison seems a little unfair.

You mention that while people (such as me) disagree with you, many people will also agree

with you. Well, let's see how many people leap to your defence over the next couple of months.

OUTRAGE!

ACE - you are my only hope! I've suffered in silence for so long now that I'm on the brink of doing something psychotic.

What is making me so unreasonable? What has got my goat? What, at the moment, is biting so severely at my neck and sticking right into my brain is the middle of my crazy!

Shopkeepers.
 How don't get me wrong, I've had plenty of experience of generally decent shopkeepers who value our shoppers, but I seem to find the "standard" (what a pile of s---) service provided in the computer shops in the UK.

At first I thought it was just me. I lived in London until recently and sort of expected the rude, discourteous and unhelpful service provided in Centre Computers.

But I've recently moved into a far quieter part of the world I'll refrain from saying exactly where, in order to spare the embarrassment of store owners in the area and I couldn't believe my misfortune.

For a start the shops seem to be staffed entirely by either professional boys with only the slightest knowledge of both coming videos or stupid old men who seem to think that just because I'm female I don't have the right to vote about anything, one of these people actually tried to convince me that a Sega Megadrive was simply a Master System for the American market, and it was also a waste of money. What a coincidence that they only had Master systems in stock.

I've also had cause to complain a number of times about faulty disks. Now, I'm fully aware that many software companies provide replacements, but I'm also aware that it is the owner of the shop's responsibility to provide goods of a suitable quality. I don't take kindly being told that my son (who doesn't exist, unless I'm very much mistaken) has "Probably already made a copy of it and just wants a new game."

In a word I'm disgusted. If you purchase a dress or a clock or a record, a portion of the outlay, it's nice to believe, is intended to ensure a decent treatment by the people who are taking your money.

Mavis Nicholson
 Address withheld by request

IN THE RED CORNER...

It's happening again, isn't it? It started with "my Spectra's better than your Commodore". It should know as I owned both of one time or another. Time passed. 8-bit owners upgraded to more powerful 16-bit computers. And then it began again: "My Amiga's better than your ST". Which wasn't strictly true for several years because Amiga games used to be straight portovers of ST games and were released a couple of months after the final version. This kept me happy because by then I had upgraded to an Am 512.

But now the ST is on a decline - all of my local computer shops have stopped stocking STs and their software because of nearly non-existent support from Atari and the recent boom in Amiga sales.

As an ST owner I can see the limitations of my machine now that companies like Physionics are exploiting the Amiga to the full.

I can see the age-old argument against progressing further now that consoles are again resurging with new-found popularity. How long is it, I wonder, until your stream page is full of "My Famicom is better than your Megadrive" letters?

At the moment I wish a Megadrive II managed to bug my ST to come unobstructing itself and instead to buy a Famicom as well when it's officially released over here. At present the Megadrive retails at £150 so Nintendo will have to undercut this price if they want to ensure that people "not in the know" will choose their product over the Megadrive. I have read in the computer press that it will be about £200 - the price of 2 or 4 Megadrive games. I won't buy a Famicom to replace my Megadrive, just to widen the range of games I can play.

I also noticed that in a reply to a letter a couple of months back you said that several magazine publishers were getting together to try and solve the inevitable problems. Well since I bought that issue I noticed TMO weekly magazines published by Future have joined the bandwagon. Isn't Future one of the companies that agreed to help stop the copyright spiral in your "legal issue" (page 70)? There is an advert for "The One For Amiga Games" announcing TMO free games. Can you explain this or are you just a bunch of hypocrites?

By the way, I notice you've dropped the PC Engine in favour of the GameBoy and the GameGear. Since the GameGear is basically a ported Master System and the GameBoy is monochrome, I don't really think these count as "Advanced Computer Entertainment". You can't see me in the belief that it's all due to the small user base of the PC Engine users in this country because the Famicom's got an even smaller user base here at present but still gets its own Direct Line section in the Pink Pages. Toshiba Kawasaki probably knows of the Famicom users personally!

Apart from that your mag isn't half bad by this I mean it looks to be the best out of the tabloid approach over in C&EG.

Famicom planning to be a Super Famicom until it's officially released in this country, you could be in for a bit of a wait. There's still no official UK launch date, and it may not be until well into 1992, and possibly even later. You wouldn't be badly advised to invest in an export model - it may set you back a few k, but at least you won't have to wait until Judgement Day to play Super MarioWorld - and you'll get a nice bonus machine, and not the redesigned old model. That's one ugly mother.

The reason we don't cover the Engine any more is because - for a start, we simply don't see software for it any more, so there's not really anything for us to cover, and also because the Engine is never going to be released officially in the UK - unlike the Famicom, which is a new and interesting machine, and will definitely be launched over here at some point. Fair enough?

As for the copyright controversy - The One For Amiga Games did in fact comply to the full game ban, which didn't come into force until August '87. All magazines published before that date (which included the magazine Amiga One) were perfectly alright. Future, however, got a bit carried away and a couple of its titles went one game over the limit. But not to worry, now that the new regulations have had time to take effect, you'll not be seeing any more commercial licence games appearing on magazine coverdisks. So that's alright.



This isn't the only letter we've had from ACE readers who are disgruntled about the poor standard of customer service in computer shops. What is most worrying is that the problem doesn't seem to be isolated to just a few countries - even the supposedly reputable shops are apparently doing a lot less than they could to ensure that their customers get a square deal. There is an organisation called NACOR (the National Association of Specialist Computer Retailers) which is supposed to keep a watchful eye on this sort of thing, but things obviously aren't working out if this kind of shabby service is still the best pattern can expect.

Have you been on the sharp end of a four-mouthed and seven-necked pencil-necked shop assistant? Or bought a game only to find that there was no disk inside and been told when

you took it back "well son, that's the chance you take"? Or maybe you've been the victim of actual physical abuse by a retailer or shop assistant. Never keeping a dossier of complaints here at ACE, so if you think there's something we should be told about, write and let us know.

A SOUND QUESTION

I have just purchased a PC, and not being impressed with the built-in speaker, I am

looking for a sound board. There seems to be four on offer: the Roland, AdLib, SoundMaster and SoundMaker II. Could you tell me what the difference there is between them and which one is compatible with the most games.

It seems a shame that computer manufacturers have concentrated on providing excellent graphics and improving performance, and have neglected the sound. Every computer manufacturer I seem to offend a whole range of processors, hard disk drives and monitors, but not to see even mentioned anything about these computers' sound capabilities. Not every one does word processing or the company accounts all day - not even the accountant! Some sound effects seem to be on the ball but a lot of most software focuses as well.

I, and I'm sure many others would welcome the day when sound wasn't just added on as a

taken effort. After all, sound could make or break many games.

James Westcott Working Survey

It's all quite simple, really. Roland delivers what is generally considered the highest quality sound with its BT, LP and LAMP 1 boards. They're effectively fully-blown MIDI systems, so you can generate professional-quality music with the right software and apparatus, as well as play games. But be warned - they're VERY expensive. The AdLib is slightly lower in sound quality, but is substantially cheaper. Finally, the Sound Blaster, which produces sound roughly equivalent to the AdLib in quality, is the cheapest and is rapidly growing in popularity. As far as compatibility concerned, you'll find that the vast majority of software, particularly the CD stuff, supports all three formats. So it's just a matter of personal choice and how much cash you're willing to lay out, really. Check it to the max!

IT'S SONIC GUY!

A few words about Sonic the Hedgehog.

Firstly, in your review of the game you called the bad guy Dr Eggman when he is actually called Dr Robotnik, and the sixth level is actually called Scrap Brain Zone and not Clockwork.

Also, there is a time limit of two minutes which may be a problem to those exploring a new act but is plenty of time once you know what you're doing.

Apart from that I agree totally with the review and it is an excellent game.

As I haven't played on the Famicom I realise I may be talking a bit hot but from the screenshots I think that the Sonic graphics are better than Super Mario 4. The backgrounds especially look far superior in terms of detail and imagination. There is, however, one criticism, I being a fantastic game-player, completed Sonic after two weeks of obtaining the game (being given and have seen the real game sequence). This isn't the masterpiece I was expecting, I don't want to spoil it for others to say what it is, but with a game as good as Sonic I would have thought that Sega could have done much better. This seems to be the case with a lot of games, computer and console, these days. Do you in your infinite wisdom agree with this?

Well, that's it for now. Keep up the great mag and please send me £2000 for writing such a bull letter.

Adrian Popson
Brockbourne
Meets

Remember... we're not sure we agree with you about the Sonic/Sonic graphics. While Sonic is indeed more detailed, we reckon that Mario beats it hands down in terms of imagination.

It's one of those things where you really have to see the game in order to understand. Remember, graphics aren't just about giving a game a really nice - really good! graphics actually work with the gameplay and serve to provide the whole thing with an appropriate atmosphere. Marcellino's claim that more effectively than any other game we've seen.

So there. And you're right about the Sonic and sequence. Gamers who look out good money for a game and then spend weeks completing it are entitled to a decent reward when they finally complete the game. We don't like to rub it in, but you really ought to see Blackbird! - now there's a game with a REAL end sequence.

IN THE WORKS - LIVE!

YOUR CHANCE TO MEET BULLFROG AND SEE THE AWESOME POPULOUS II IN DEVELOPMENT BEFORE YOUR VERY EYES!



Our magazines may offer you second best when it comes to showing you up-coming games in development, but here at ACE we believe that only the best is good enough for you. Before now, the closest you've come to seeing a game being put together is seeing words and pictures on a page. Next month, however, you could be lucky enough to see a game in development before your very eyes AND meet the people behind the magic when we take in The Works into a new dimension. Six people will get the chance to visit the offices of esteemed development team Bullfrog Productions (creators of Populous, Flood and PowerMonger) as they put together their most eagerly-awaited title yet - Populous II.

Not only will you meet the Bullfrog team and see first-hand via live demonstrations how Populous II is being put together... you'll actually get a chance to put forward your own ideas for the game! It may sound too good to be true, but you'll be designated special playtesters for the day, and after experiencing the game, in progress and in action, the Bullfrog team will open their ears to listen to YOUR comments and suggestions. If any of your suggestions go down well, the idea will not only be implemented in the finished game, but you will receive a credit in the manual as a member of the game's design team! How's that then? A special report on the day will appear in the next issue of ACE.

If you'd like to take part in this once in a lifetime experience, you'll have to apply fast as only six places are available. To get it on the action, write (DON'T PHONE) to us at ACE, not forgetting to include these vital details:

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PLANET OF THE

In a major exclusive, ACE reports on shock discoveries by the Hubble Space Telescope

There were great hopes for the Hubble Space Telescope when it was launched last year. In orbit high above the Earth and beyond the obscuring effects of our planet's atmosphere, scientists predicted that the Telescope would radically change our view of Space, and that astronomers would be able to see interstellar objects in more detail and clarity than ever before.

However, nobody was expecting the Telescope's most recent discovery. Last month, the launch of the Telescope's lensing system

revealed a planet orbiting Alpha Centauri, the Sun's closest stellar neighbor. The planet, named Alpha Centauri Bb or ACo-Bb, bears many similarities to Earth. Geologists believe that the planet's many continents were once part of a single land mass, but owing to volcanic activity and shell-plate drift they have become separated by vast seas.

But this was just the start. Using advanced image-enhancement software the astronomers achieved even greater photographic resolution, and then they made their greatest discovery yet: aliens. Each of the planet's continents is populat-

ed by a species of being, each very different from the inhabitants of the neighbouring continents, yet still strikingly similar.

Further study revealed something very peculiar: the ACo-Bbs (or just Bbs as they came to be known) are obsessed with computer games, and spend nearly all of their waking hours playing them. Rather than enjoying a variety of games, each species on each continent plays just one type. So while the beings on one continent may play platform games, those on the neighbouring continent play flight sim-

ADVENTURE GAMER

This enormous skull houses a massively powerful brain, which makes the Adventure Gamer approximately sixty times more intelligent than Albert Einstein.

Over the millennia the eyes have slowly migrated from being side by side to their current position. The bottom eye is devoted to watching the keyboard and keeping a track of the hands typing, while the top eye maintains a watch over the monitor screen.

The hands are highly specialised for the act of high-speed two-fingered typing. The fore-fingers of each hand are long and slender, while the rest of the hand is severely distorted to prevent any mis-keying. Being capable of typing speeds of over 200 words, this feature would be the over-worked secretary's ideal assistant!



Generations of Adventure Gamers sitting cross-legged in front of monitors have resulted in the legs becoming little more than an after-thought.



The spine is bent almost at right angles, so that a computer keyboard can be rested on the upturned stomach.

GAMERS

Although their computer gaming technology is closer to Earth's, they are completely primitive beings after technological options. They have no cars, boats or planes, so there is no contact between the continents. One alien did invent a wheel, but used it to create a floppy disc rather than a revolution in transport.

Scientists believe that the different species have evolved from just one man-like creature that existed at the time the continents were joined. Fans of one game type congregated together, and when the land masses split apart, the game-playing groups separated too. Over the years the Gamers have radically evolved to suit themselves best to the games they enjoy, resulting in the bizarre mutations observed.

In his exclusive report, ACE reveals the secrets of how the strange creatures on the Planet of the Gamers...

ADVENTURE GAMER

Field Notes

This hermitlike creature leads an unbelievably ponderous and slow-moving life. Its sole purpose is to play text adventures, an activity facilitated by the light-evolved brain, eyes and hands. All non-cerebral activity is kept to a minimum, resulting in severely under-developed arms and legs, and primitive internal organs.

Feeding

Due to its tiny mouth and its under-evolved digestive tract, the Adventure Gamer's food has to be pulped down into a liquid paste. The process goes something like this:

'You enter the kitchen. You see: some green vegetables, and a red blender.'

'TAKE GREEN VEGETABLES'

'You take the green vegetables.'

COMBIE RED-BLENDER

This is a device for pulping food. There is a slot on top where food can be entered and a small on/off button.

PUT GREEN VEGETABLES IN RED BLENDER

The green vegetables are made the red blender.

PRESS BUTTON

'Which button?'

PRESS SMALL BUTTON

The vegetable spin round and turn into a consumable paste.

SUCK PASTE

I don't understand 'SUCK'.

EAT PASTE

'You eat the nutritious paste.'

Hinting

Reproduction is something that only happens

once in an Adventure Gamer's life, and then only if it's very lucky. Should two Adventure Gamers of the opposite sex happen to stumble across each other, then they perform a ritual not known as "A Meeting Of Minds" (the Gamer's guru, Ben, forbade them together and gave Socrates).

RPG GAMER

Field Notes

This is perhaps the loveliest and saddest of all the creatures on AcaGamma. During a game the RPG Gamer has the strange ability to alter its body shape and assume the form of the character it's currently playing, even more astounding, this cloning is mental as well as physical. Thus if an RPG Gamer is playing an old wizard, it will grow a pointy hat, a beard and talk words of wisdom in an arcane language. (A bit like Steve).

However, between games the RPG Gamer has little character of its own. Its floppy, dough-like body looks like that of every other RPG Gamer, with no distinguishing features. The babyish face and vacant expression convey no sense of any intelligence behind its dull eyes. The creature can only ever be said to be truly alive when playing a game.

Feeding

The RPG Gamer will eat whatever food it finds. Having strong preferences or dislikes imply some form of character, and as noted above, when not playing this creature has none.

Mating

It's very rare for two RPG Gamers to meet, and even when they do they usually ignore each other. It is fortunate, then, that the RPG Gamer has the ability to reproduce asexually.

Fertilisation is done purely to look. Should a Gamer form a mate character immediately after being a female (or for vice versa) then there is a small chance of conception during the brief incubation period. The Gamer grows larger and fatter, until enough body matter is developed for a second fully-grown Gamer to feed off.

SHOOT-EM-UP GAMER

Field Notes

This Gamer is renowned for its incredible swings in mood. During a game it is calm, calm and calm, quietly collected, but as defined the creature becomes an uncontrollable ball of rage, leaping out at the monitor and screaming abuse at the screen. This is all due to the bizarre nature of its adrenal glands.

These oversized organs generate huge amounts of adrenaline during play, which is temporarily stored in sacs growing from the being's back. Between games these adrenaline reserves have to be depleted, which can only be done in the suburbs described above. As you might guess, the Shoot-Em-Up Gamer has a tragically short lifetime due to rapid burn-out.

The Platform Gamer that showed others many of the physiological features of the Shoot-Em-Up Gamer, but its adrenal glands are far less productive, making it a more placid if slightly grumpy creature.

Feeding

The Shoot-Em-Up Gamer is a voracious stolid eater. In between games it feeds on junk food so that it can get eating over with as quickly as pos-



RPG GAMER

None of the top RPGs are controlled by bots, the RPG Gamer has evolved unique hands. On one hand the majority of the fingers have joined to form a glove that flexibly grips a mouse, with elongated fore and middle fingers for pressing the mouse buttons. On the other hand a rough skin webbing has grown between the fingers, so that the upturned hand forms a flat mouse mat.

Scientists believe this Gamer closely resembles the ancient creature that all Gamers evolved from. RPG Gamers all look very similar, with rather bland if generally featureless.

sible and return to another game. Particularly good on steel tips and flame-grilled accept.

Mating

Following a lengthy gaming session the Gamer's adrenaline levels occasionally reach intolerable high levels, which can only be reduced by procreative acts of reproduction.

To find a mate, the Shoot-Em-Up Gamer can alter the pigmentation of the skin across its back, much like a chameleon changes skin colour. The creature uses this ability to display its current hi-score. The higher the score, the more attractive the creature becomes to a possible mate.

The reproductive act itself cannot really be dealt with in depth in a youth-magazine such as ACE. Suffice to say it involves twerking shorts, using a pencil and beanie power-ups.

FLIGHT-EM GAMER

Field Notes

Strangely, for creatures that have never developed any form of powered flight, Flight-em are very popular, with this species of Gamer being one of the largest in number.

The Flight-Em Gamer combines many of the physiological features of both the Adventure and Shoot-Em-Up Gamers. It's most unique features are the bone and cartilage growths from the head and neck, which resemble a World War One flying helmet and scarf. These appear to serve no purpose other than making it easier for the Gamer to "get into" its pilot's role. Some scientists believe these may act as an attractive feature to possible mates.

Feeding

With playing sessions taking several days, it's all about for the Flight-Em Gamer to find time out for a proper meal. Thus a huge "In-Game Feeding" service industry has built up around them. Giant food tankers out alongside the concentrating Gamer, and drop a food chest down to the creature's mouth. The Gamer then works up a light rubbery soap.

Mating

Same, but again we can't reveal too much here. Scientists believe the creature's reproductive act shares many similarities with that of humans, beginning with the male twerking its undercarriage and... Well, you can guess the rest.

SHOOT-'EM-UP GAMER

The Shoot-'Em-Up Gamer has little time for intellectual thought. The creature brain is little more than a watching eye, as far as all of the eyes to joystick moves together.

An enlarged mouth and large and elongated vocal cords have evolved due to the excessive shouting and screaming of abuse that always occurs when this gamer loses its last life. Its vocal power is such that it rates up to 100db in any case. It is used to yell in shock at the loss. (See "World noise".)

By altering its skin pigmentation, the Shoot-'Em-Up Gamer is able to display its facial features, which is used as a means to attract mates. (See "Mating".)



The Shoot-'Em-Up gamers are somewhat larger than those of its ancestors, all the better for hearing those stereo sound effects.

This gamer has many eyes, each allocated to watching a certain part of the monitor screen. Its increasing muscle or skin game evolved by its race along vision. The eye socket has grown to form a raised honey ridge that prevents any outside distractions affecting play.

These large smaller eyes are used to store the huge amounts of adrenaline produced during play, which is discharged between games by such acts as excessive shouting and screaming, kicking of the monitor screen and occasionally frantic mating. (See "World noise" and "Mating".)

FLIGHT-SIM GAMER

The large eye is used to scan the main on-screen action, while the four smaller eyes below keep a track of all the data and progress to the cockpit display.

The larger genitalia on the skull and comb are an attempt by this creature to simulate the appearance of a real flying helmet and seat.



Again, the creature's arms are rather dextrous, but the hands have undergone inevitable amounts of adaptation.

The fingers of one hand have spread out almost a right angle to form a strong locking grip on the base of a joystick. The thumb of the same hand is large and muscular, and can rapidly generate a fire button.

The thumb and forefinger of the other hand have become joined at the tip to form a variable diameter splint that permits a vice-like hold on the shaft of the joystick. The other fingers are shortened and useless.

Neither hand has any sweat glands, so there is no chance of the stick slipping in the

The arms and hands share many of the Shoot-'Em-Up Gamer's features. However, since flight sims usually use proportional joysticks, the Flight Sim Gamer has evolved very precise and subtle control over the stick, as opposed to the Shoot-'Em-Up Gamers' violent jerks.

The withered legs are bent up so that the feet are raised above the keyboard. The toes of the feet have grown to become like fingers, and these are used to press the myriad keyboard controls typical of flight sims.

ARE YOU BRIT KNOWLEDGE

You may have seen some allegedly tough, tricky or perhaps even "rock hard" quizzes. But this, dear reader, is the toughest. A veritable Magnesian of games questions. A plethora of quizzers. Those with anything but a complete knowledge of their chosen subject need not apply. Whatever your ability, however, you should do very hard but enough questions presented to keep you engaged in the puzzles/vandens for many an hour.

There is, of course, a software prize for the first reader who gets all the questions correct and mails their answers to ACE, Galt, Proulx Court, 38-32 Farrington Lane, London EC3R 3AL, so please remember to specify which machine you own.

GENERAL GAMING QUESTIONS

- 1) What is the name of Mario's brother?
- 2) What car is featured in Turbo Outlaw?
- 3) How many islands are there in Rainbow Islands?
- 4) What was the follow-up to Don-Don called?
- 5) What game by LucasArts has the shortest title?
- 6) Which has the longest?
 - 7) How many batteries does a GameBoy need?
 - 8) What does COIN stand for?
 - 9) Name the chap who co-created Elite with David Braben.
 - 10) How many bits are there in an Arcos Arcanoid?
 - 11) What classic Golf game was written by the Carver brothers?
 - 12) Which German programmer converted Star Wars and Hard Drive to DOSish?
 - 13) How many black To- The Future games have appeared on 1-6-88?
 - 14) Which Clive Barker movie was adapted from his novel?
 - 15) What color hair do Lemmings have?
 - 16) Who programmed 3D- Am Attack?
 - 17) Who is programming Gem Art?
 - 18) What game from Cinemascope featured lots of ants?
 - 19) What was the follow-up to Don Donch called?
 - 20) Which software house produced Super Pigeon?
 - 21) What was the name of the roller-skating game from F. I. I?
 - 22) Which UK software house specialised in graphic adventures like Espionage Island and Golden Uppost?

- 23) Name the star of Andrew Graybrook's De- Sol games.
- 24) Name the first arcade adventure to feature over 100 locations.
- 25) Who used to edit Morrison's Computer and Video Games Adventure Magazine?
- 26) Name Bubble Boy's biggest hit.
- 27) Name the author of Adventureland.
- 28) What was the name of the game that Geoff Brown, now head of US Gold programmed?
- 29) Name the hero of Fantasy Games' Pyramid and Damselby Castle.
- 30) Name the author of Android 2, Cyclone and T.L.
- 31) Name Geonix's ZXspectrum clone.
- 32) Name the top game with the most extensive expansion packs for the Spectrum which effectively ended Mike Gern's games production business.
- 33) Who wrote Castle Adventure and Planet of Doom on the BBC for Acornsoft?
- 34) What did Acornsoft call their Mouse Command clone?
- 35) And their Defender clone?
- 36) And their Panic clone?
- 37) And their Scramble clone?

LOOKS FAMILIAR?

Here are ten people selected, with no particular common thread except they have all played an important part in the industry. Can you name them?



BRITAIN'S MOST MEMORABLE GAMER?

- 26) Name the company to first use a keyboard control method.
- 27) What was the first ever four-player arcade game?
- 28) What colour were the two ducks in *Duckie Golf*?
- 29) Name the two-acter *Winters*.
- 30) What was the name of the bad guy in *Tin Tin Pig*?
- 31) What was the first ever *Lizard/His Game*?
- 32) What was the first ever game to have a *blast* here?
- 33) Name four *Lord* games, in order of appearance.
- 34) Name the last *Lord* following *Lord Command*.
- 35) What was *Archie Marbler's* first game?
- 36) What colour is *Tony Crowther's* hair?
- 37) Name the game he wrote about a *receptacle* for his.
- 38) Who lives 80% *OS/4* music maestro *Bob* *Richard* live web for?
- 39) Name the first synthesiser that *Bullring* produced.
- 40) Name two *Spurs* players who have entered computer games.
- 41) Who programmed *Quadranters*, *PIH* and

- Little Computer People*?
- 42) Bob *Dinnerman* wrote which classic *Amiga* *fight* *game*?
- 43) Who published the *Ultimate Brothers* 'first game'?
- 44) What was it called?
- 45) Who designed *Kick Off*?
- 46) Which *poorly* *Quadranters* character said "You can't *push* here!"?
- 47) How many *The Hunt For Red October* *games* have they been?
- 48) Who was supposed to be doing a *PlayStation* *On Elm Street* game, but never did?
- 49) What *Infogrames* game saw you trying to *rescue* *hostages*?
- 50) What did *POST* stand for?
- 51) What does *FOOT* stand for?
- 52) Who wrote the original *GameUp*?
- 53) What is the name of the only game *Jeff* *Minter* wrote for *Hexxex*?
- 54) What is the name of the company which has *been* *out* *of* *Hexxex's* *control*?
- 55) Name *William* *Smith's* last game, which was never released.
- 56) Which game's title was incorrectly translated over a *telex*, leading to a *historical* *name* *mis* *up*?

- 57) How many lines of *Invaders* first appear on the screen in *Space Invaders*?
- 58) What's the new game from *Michael* *Thornthorn* *Power* called?
- 59) Name the game that *They* *on* *a* *Spring* *music* *master* *Bob* *Hubbard* programmed before turning his hand to *screenwriting*.
- 60) Who was *Whispering Horace*?
- 61) How many *Beam* *Software* titles started their own *Horace*?
- 62) How many games has *Tony Crowther* had on the market?
- 63) Tell me *what* *and* *why*? *Calculus*, *Dynamic* *Debugger*, *Search for the Moon*, *Psychoplas*, *International 3D*, *Tennis* *and* *Quadranters*.
- 64) Name the *unifying* *factor* *between*: *Combus*, *Formater* *Must* *Do* *and* *a* *Man* *to* *a* *Man*.
- 65) What was it in the *Motorola 68000* *data* *bus*?
- 66) Who programmed the *con* *on* *Opus*, and what do they call themselves these days?
- 67) What was *Continental Circus* supposed to be called?
- 68) Name the follow up to *Seeing Double*.



6

ACE KNOWLEDGE

- 1) What two *Ace* *lads* have been featured on *ACE* covers?
- 2) What is the lowest *ACE* rating ever given, and what was the game?
- 3) What was the game to receive it?
- 4) Who edited *ACE* before *Jim Douglas*?
- 5) Who went to write *ACE's* *Page 12*?

1



J



M

STORM

SO CUTE... IT'LL MAKE YOU PUKE!!

Something very bizarre has happened in the fairy village... the inhabitants have changed from silvery chipmunks into fluffy birds! It's so bad they've even gone and kidnapped the beloved "Moon" of our favorite fairy heroes, Tami and Rik.

Now she lies captured in the top of the Malboro Tower where she can only be saved by whopping anything nearby on the head with their magic rods.

So cute... it'll make you puke?

FIND OUT IN SEPTEMBER.

ROD LAND

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50 Lombard Road,
London, SW11 3SA
Tel: (071) 885 1008.

Amiga, Atari ST - £39.99
C64 cassette and disk - £14.99, £18.99
Spectrum cassette - £11.99

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When rendering a scene using the pipes, the animator can either use a combination of their own buildings straight into the rendering software or create paintings and shading with the software. Here's a 3-D rendering and animation software (left, just right for the building).

PICTURES PALACE

ACE visits Digital Pictures and discover the tricks of the computer graphics trade.

Before it or not, there's a picturesque little Spanish town sitting in the heart of London. No really, there is... after a flash an it's the creator of Digital Pictures, the commercial computer graphics company responsible for the extra Barcelona featured last month. ACE visits their West London headquarters to find out how this producer their stunning scene film.

OUT IN THE COUNTRY

The iDigital Pictures most recent projects is a computer-generated flight around Pisa de Siera, a small town in northern Spain. The animation,

commissioned by BBC Films, will be used in a tourism commercial to illustrate the attractive nature of the town and the surrounding countryside.

The animation starts with the viewer above the hills and plains surrounding Pisa de Siera. The viewer zooms down, through a loop of the circus (road, you feel) far over the rugged countryside. The simulator then cuts to a view above a ring highway leading to the town. A dense forest (partially visible) the distance, the further trees growing they being to a the cooling of morning mist. Another cut, and now the viewer is in Pisa de Siera town. Here, just

the newly built modern building and open space starts, and then led into the countryside by the road.

SO HOW'S IT DONE?

The computer-generated animation is the result of the multi-layered work by Digital Picture affiliates: the Pipeline and Mac Room. Their most recent project was the Barcelona simulation featured in last month's issue.

The first stage in a project such as this is to talk to the clients and find out precisely what they want from the animation. In the Case Study Film response that the flight through the town



Right: Animator specifications determine procedural construction, including layout and construction, through a variety of visual editors in the program. The user is shown here in the traditional window construction mode where blocks of data such as models can be imported automatically to control construction of the current application. In this case data can be either copied or pasted into the scene.

Behind the scenes, behind the city is the network from which the data may originate, and the network topology and protocol. The network data used is a virtual network topology, a virtual network graph. In addition, there are other data, including the necessary highlights or projections, which define the appearance of the



allow the viewer to clearly see the newly built indoor market and the strange-looking trash bin.

Next comes the task of collecting sufficient data on the town and its buildings to accurately model it. This data can take the form of city plans, architectural layouts, and occasionally modeling data already in use. Although the latter is unfortunately a rare occurrence, reference photographs are also taken so that the coloring and texturing of the final images matches reality as closely as possible.

Then all this information has to be fed into Digital Picture's custom-written DigPic software

running on Silicon Graphics 4800 workstations. As you'd guess, this can be a long and fairly tedious process—just right for the office jester!

The animators then start planning how the animation will look, plotting camera flightpaths through the city and testing them. This is done out using the standard-looking software 3D. The 4800s, powerful though they are, can't generate the complex objects or solid 3D AFD animate them in real time. What's it, of course, pretty old if the animator is going to be able to do his job properly.

Once the animators load the 4800s are satisfied with the look of the wireframe

SARAKON



SIMPLY ADDICTIVE

AVAILABLE ON IBM PC (VGA, EGA, TGA)
AMIGA, ATARI ST, CBM 64 (DISC & TAPE)



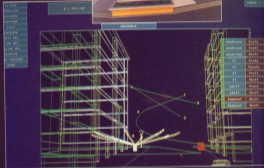
GAMES

Signature

animation, it's time for the acid test: rendering. When the animation code is turned into fully detailed TV-quality images, the time it takes to render each frame of animation (and remember, you need at least 30fps frames per second for smooth animation) depends on the complexity of the scene. Each object has a wealth of data related to it, including such things as its surface texture and reflectivity. A rendering time of 10 to 15 minutes per frame is typical.



Rendering, all the other things that happen, are things that you can't see. You can't see the things that are going on behind the scenes. You can't see the things that are going on behind the scenes. You can't see the things that are going on behind the scenes.



Using the power of today's computers, animating the most complex scenes and compositing the final film.



AND THAT'S IT?

Yep, that's it. All done. It's a beautiful piece of work, and the "holobooks" of some of the scenes is breathtaking. It's just a pity that the majority of us will never see it. But if you're on holiday in London and you happen to catch the commercial, remember: what you're seeing is not real.

Or is it...?

DEUTEROS

Actual 16 Bit Screens

THE NEXT MILLENIUM

It is the end of the 31st Century. Nearly one thousand years ago man colonized the moon, and from there created a range of human colonies which were left to develop other planets. At the same time, life on earth was destroyed by a cataclysmic climatic change.

Now the mutant races are at war with each other, and man has returned to Earth, rebuilt civilization, and forgotten about past adventures.

Deep in Earth City, plans have been made to explore space again. The race has started to develop Earth's resources, to research new technology in hand for future adventures.

You must control the training, research, resources, production and stores of Earth City, in a complex strategic battle to maximize the planet's supplies. You must construct and pilot the hi-tech space shuttles and ships needed for mankind to venture out into the furthest reaches of the war-torn solar system. Operation Deuteros has begun.

Available in August on Amiga & Atari ST

ACTIVISION

3D FLOATERS!

This month brings SEGA back into the limelight, with its new 'holographic' system generating floating 3D images, plus a new dedicated unit that brings a new meaning to 'motion simulator' and the pick of the latest releases, brought to you by the man with loose change, John Cook.

Over the years, each coin-op company has developed its own unique reputation for a particular style of game. Atari produced mainstream, but occasionally wildly off-beam games; then got to well-patched shoot-em-ups. Taito got just three-billions of sprites at the screen and let you to get on with it. And Sega, the Big Daddy of them all? I guess the whole of the industry looks towards Sega for, above all, technical innovation.

In the mid eighties, Sega addressed itself to the problem of Sprite Scaling and Manipulation. They produced games like *OutRun*, *Afterburner*, *Thunderbolt* and *Prayer Golf*—and further development has produced games like *Line of Fire* and now *Real Crazy* that would have been thought impossible a few years back.

Not content with domination of this part of the industry, however, Sega are constantly looking forward, trying to move the concept of video games into the 21st Century. In Japan this concept is planned to produce dedicated Simulation Centers, linking up video and motion bases, the R300 being the logical extension of Sega's long development commitment in that area.

The company are also known to be dabbling in various 'Virtual Reality' technologies.

But it was with a bang before recently, they unveiled the video game parallel by

announcing a new Holographic video game system—and what's more, it was a system that was affordable by the average arcade owner! We waited with bated breath, and *Time Traveller* was launched upon the world last week.

The good news is that it's great—a wonderful novel display that projects the figures into open so you feel that you are almost playing with real animated people. The bad news, by its dictionary definition, it's not a real hologram.

The technology used by this system takes a video image from an ordinary monitor (fed by a laser disc in this instance) and uses a parabolic mirror to project this screen onto a platform, so the image appears to 'float' or 'flow'. If this was *Neighbours*, it would look rather odd—but if you use chromakey technology to match out the background of any footage, the effect really is



Real Crazy: high speed action riding, and this time the only action is real-time!



Time Traveller: the good news is you're being watched by 'them' and the other facts are that this game, amongst the others, is great on the face of the holographic screen: the city goes together to an extent for the Real and Imagined worlds.



Real Crazy: high speed action riding, and this time the only action is real-time!



See side effects of the new technology... (caption text is partially obscured)



A glimpse of the game's high-tech graphics...



They're in a tight spot...

...and you... that was... in the... suddenly... into space... with real... a delu... takes a... ed by a... parabolic... system, so... so was... but if you... at the... really is...

...and you are presented with cut-d... sion points in the action where your... left/right, duck/jump-or fire your trusty six... shooter. Unlike... Dragon's... Lar, all the... sequences are... timed



...you've got a hard... case of jabs...

...using live action actors and lip-sy... special effects. Believe me, this looks good. To add to the variety, according to Sega Europe's MD Vic Lewis, the 20 or so games that can potentially make up a game are drawn from over 60 sequences stored on the disc - so it's unlikely that you'll ever play two games that will be exact ly the same.

...Undoubtedly, the game plays well, with a neat buy-in feature of Time Reversal that plays a scene backwards if you get killed, so you can try it again - and the disc is sensibly stored on the disc - so there are no long load-times between games.

...Now as for if you see one - you'll enjoy the experience... but I wish that they hadn't called it a hologram...

FILE UP!

Sega releases tend to come all at once - so while Time Traveller was being shown for the first time, so was a whole host of new Sega titles, the best of which was Real Chess.

This one is decidedly influenced by the Mini Chess applet on the Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom and Atlantis, or you play a mate, sitting on a bench next to clutching a joystick.

The idea is all. You're positioned at the HQ of an evil empire, and you're playing chess and getting a vehicle that travels between you and the car, taking you to control along tunnels and traps filled with enemies. What's more, it can do all sorts of things - there are Super Soldiers, charging cars and towers.

Now we come to a gem, with which you should be happy to play. It's called Real Chess, and it's a real chess game. The chess pieces are on a board, and you can move them around. It's a real chess game, and it's a real chess game.

The screen is being made up almost completely of water. It's a real chess game, and it's a real chess game. The chess pieces are on a board, and you can move them around. It's a real chess game, and it's a real chess game.

...of the... technology... (caption text is partially obscured)

THE BEST OF THE REST.....

HEROES - DATA BAST

Data Bast isn't the best thing since... Heroes... Data Bast isn't the best thing since... Heroes... Data Bast isn't the best thing since... Heroes...

BLADE MASTER - SHEN

Blade Master is a good game... Blade Master is a good game... Blade Master is a good game... Blade Master is a good game...

CRUSHED SWORDS - NEO GEO

Crushed Swords is a good game... Crushed Swords is a good game... Crushed Swords is a good game... Crushed Swords is a good game...

WARRIORS - KONAMI

Warriors is a good game... Warriors is a good game... Warriors is a good game... Warriors is a good game...

...and you... that was... in the... suddenly... into space... with real... a delu... takes a... ed by a... parabolic... system, so... so was... but if you... at the... really is...

WIN A DJ SYSTEM!



THIS BRILLIANT SYSTEM INCLUDES 2 TECHNICS DECKS, MIXER, CD PLAYER, CASSETTE DECK, MICROPHONE AND EVEN MORE! SO CALL NOW!

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WIN A GAME GEAR!



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WIN THIS INDY HEAT ARCADE MACHINE!



INDY HEAT IS THE MOST RADICAL DRIVING GAME AROUND AS 3 PEOPLE CAN PLAY AT THE SAME TIME! PLUS, WITH 14 DIFFERENT CIRCUITS TO CHOOSE FROM, THERE'S ALWAYS A NEW CHALLENGE! BUT THE BEST THING ABOUT THIS MACHINE IS THAT WE ARE GIVING IT AWAY! SO PUT YOURSELF IN THE DRIVING SEAT AND CALL NOW!

0898 404633

WIN AN AMIGA 500 SYSTEM!



0898 404637

WIN A RADIO CONTROL HONDA BIKE!

0898 404639



POCKET THIS 6 FOOT POOL TABLE!



WIN A HONDA MOPED!



0898 404638

0898 404634

Virgin Territory

Readers infiltrate Virgin HQ
in the latest no-holds-barred
ACE Conference...

Let's face it, Virgin supreme Nick Alexander told the assembled ACE visitors, back in 1993 when we started, we had to be pretty stupid not to make lots of money...

There were three words from Nick, because at least one of those present (the schizophrenic Steve Cooke) had vivid memories of 1983 and Virgin's Secret—a legendary (and) title that, when you chose to change the team members,

prompted you to EODF LINE 2407. And that was probably the last lot about it. Turkeys of that ilk call it sickly green fun over Virgin's stage and, in those good old, bad old days, even Virgin themselves had to admit that most of their titles were a load of old gadders.

What, however, would happen if right now you stepped back to the early 80's, found Cooke hunched over Secret, trying to work out where the ball was, whether the game had started and

which team was playing, and told him what 'his' Fa Coms. What would you have said? And what response would you have got?

Yes: E... Steve...

Cooke (for it is he): I'll be off!

Yes: Ahem... I came from the future.

Cooke: Far out, man. (Comments 'ignorable')

Other: Decal is getting to me or this is 'strong stuff'...

Yes: And I'm telling you that three hundred games companies are going to go bust in 1994...

Cooke: Virgin will be the first to go. It'll be you that for nothing...

Yes: E... actually they're going to get their act together...

Cooke: Tell us, blogger! another! Yes: They will then release a string of hits, from the superlatively vintage Dan Dare through legendary titles like Silkstorm to the stunning Supremacy...

Cooke: Guffaw!

Yes: They will champion tool-less poppies like Wonderland (and Infocom). They will launch Europe's first official Japanese 16-bit console...

Cooke: 16-bit? What stuff?

Yes: They will buy Macintosh and



See Secret (which you can still play) when it's added to the ACE Conference and a download for the whole Virgin Archive Edition when you can't. Virgin, 2001. The publisher of the new-looking games secretly referred to as 'disputed' in the text of the game. Virgin Archive Edition is available for £19.99. Virgin Archive Edition is available for £19.99. Virgin Archive Edition is available for £19.99. Virgin Archive Edition is available for £19.99.

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34

PO Box 200
the you of the

control one of the largest areas of computer entertainment, and they'll end up one of Britain's top software houses, finally being won, kissed, courted, and captured for £30 million by Sega...

With this last entry, you fade from the scene, leaving the withered (yet) hack squelching. With a deep sigh, he removes the Great Cassette and attempts to load a copy of *Wacky Wablers*... Meanwhile, back in 1990, Nick Alexander has departed, leaving the 400 readers gathered in the conference room at Virgin's West London headquarters. During the next few hours, they were clag'd up in a whirlwind of meticulously planned Virgin presentations: they met legendary developers, ranging from Virgin's own Andrew Knight to the remarkable *Warrior* Maxton; they saw some of the country's best CDTV dedicated software actually up and running; they saw among the first partners in Europe to use Termination on the Magazine; and they were able to try out for themselves a range of expert software on console and computer.

And YOU could have been there... if only you'd applied! Meanwhile, you can visit your emulous eyes over these pages and see what you've been missing...

Most of the information obtained from the conference is available. Practically every conference attendee could also access on-line through a dedicated modem server (more about this in a future issue) the complete text of the level of documentation and more!



His studio prepared for release! The road started in the studios at BRUNN'S home office in which that old developer has indeed so much continuity for the next thing after leaving an major vision collapse. The program remains one of its most important things from which it can be distinguished at least from other games and software, involving the maintenance level for the in British or British and foreign games.



After time for good, the stage returned to a woman - for the American. Another woman with a great collection of all American Magazine, several editions of her own, obviously, obviously-winning, games, and a beautiful face to give her the look of a...

Superlative Sega Titles...

Superlative titles were available to bring you some of the most interesting and most efficient on the other side. The first was on the Sega Master System, and the second was on the Sega CD-ROM. Both titles were available to bring you the best for all. The first was on the Sega Master System, and the second was on the Sega CD-ROM. Both titles were available to bring you the best for all. The first was on the Sega Master System, and the second was on the Sega CD-ROM. Both titles were available to bring you the best for all.

It's Begged!

Many titles of the first... we have to report it seriously begged. Only several other titles, spending the most, then begin to be given the ability, settling occasionally and even looking up the scene before taking off again. Then there, when left to themselves, the title began to display themselves in a different way, including their progress out of the player's understanding in a game by...

Now the day, it has to be said, about the title's progress in the first... we have to report it seriously begged. Only several other titles, spending the most, then begin to be given the ability, settling occasionally and even looking up the scene before taking off again. Then there, when left to themselves, the title began to display themselves in a different way, including their progress out of the player's understanding in a game by...

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Superlative titles were available to bring you some of the most interesting and most efficient on the other side. The first was on the Sega Master System, and the second was on the Sega CD-ROM. Both titles were available to bring you the best for all.



After this last entry, you fade from the scene, leaving the withered (yet) hack squelching. With a deep sigh, he removes the Great Cassette and attempts to load a copy of *Wacky Wablers*... Meanwhile, back in 1990, Nick Alexander has departed, leaving the 400 readers gathered in the conference room at Virgin's West London headquarters. During the next few hours, they were clag'd up in a whirlwind of meticulously planned Virgin presentations: they met legendary developers, ranging from Virgin's own Andrew Knight to the remarkable *Warrior* Maxton; they saw some of the country's best CDTV dedicated software actually up and running; they saw among the first partners in Europe to use Termination on the Magazine; and they were able to try out for themselves a range of expert software on console and computer.



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to become about that. Berman, a field marketing manager for a big publisher, is the president of the Association of Chief Executive Officers (ACEO) and says he'll be back in the office next week. He says he'll be back in the office next week. He says he'll be back in the office next week.



Don Marder, president of the conference group, arrived a day earlier. From his hotel, he'll be back in the office next week. He says he'll be back in the office next week. He says he'll be back in the office next week.



High-end software is more about location. It's designed to be Programmable Business Programming Language. It can track what happens to other the better location. It can also track what happens to other the better location. It can also track what happens to other the better location.



That's 12, generating a tremendous amount of data. It's a big amount of data. It's a big amount of data. It's a big amount of data.

ACEO's executive organization is a National Office Club. That's to be in the office next week. He says he'll be back in the office next week. He says he'll be back in the office next week.



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Why don't you come next time? Why don't you come next time? Why don't you come next time? Why don't you come next time?

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It's not just you, it's everyone. It's not just you, it's everyone. It's not just you, it's everyone. It's not just you, it's everyone.

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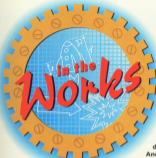
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BLOW • ARMALYTE • THANG
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PAINT ON FILM • MUSIC X VE
SION 2 • INSTALL KEYBOAR
SHORTCUTS





**CAUTION:
DEVELOPERS AT WORK
HARD HATS MUST BE WORN
IN THIS SECTION**

Yes, you must be careful to wear protective goggles before turning the page and entering this month's In The Works. You never know when you could get hit by a fast-flying piece of exclusive, or caught in a dangerous shower of sharp development information. And make sure you wear only loose clothing, because everything about In The Works this month is so HOT!

As usual we've been sticking our nose where it's not wanted to bring YOU the most exclusive, incisive and interesting information on the most blistering up-and-coming games, including in-depth interviews with the people who matter and close-up analysis of the game actually AS it is being written! Better start unbuttoning that shirt (and your trousers too, if you're of a particularly weak disposition)...

40 WING SPORT TURBO CHALLENGE 2

The hottest racing game of last year is back, with better everything! Fly, and without taking either... Jim Douglas has seen it. And what will you clock the stuff that Magna Fello's running into the summer's most highly-anticipated sequel. It will blow you away!



42 EYE OF THE STORM

Jovan Ringplay, the author of Murder and Blade Warrior tries to land an Elite-style space-age combat/trading/strategy/action adventure in the latest from Creative. We've got all the gear, so just flick these little pages right on up to the number 42...



46 MEGA THINGS

US Gold's latest CapCom collaboration marries the colorful gamplay of Rainbow Islands with the unmatchable programming pedgogee of top developer's Taito. David Spilthorn talks to the boss in the hood to find out what's going down, too. Ho.



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LOTUS ESPRIT **TURBO** **CHALLENGE II**

Last November, Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge found itself the subject of a rant. It was a peculiar situation that united so many heavyweight driving fans and console connoisseurs, a sports-driven arcade game with a surprisingly basic premise: the sheering or lurching in polygons or speed was stored to be versatile by inflex and paying customers alike.

The secret, clearly, was Lotus' partaking of the Kick-Asser's identity, the Lart Factor. There was no mowing around selecting which tire compound to use, no engine overhaul to worry about. No pulling into the pits for an oil change. Just staying on the road and going as fast as possible and winning.

The game held together so well and felt so natural to play, you could be forgiven for thinking that it was a one-off hit. A bit of a software star that just happened to come together in the right way at the right time, whose sequel would almost certainly fall flat.

But Gremlin are confident that they've hit on the magic formula again, and predict an even better-rounded product with Lotus 2.

FALSE START?

The Lotus follow-up was never a certainty. Although the first title was such a hit, both Gremlin and Magnetic Fields were concerned that the sequel might be considered too lightly by Lotus' demands that their cars weren't about being blown up or smashed. A perfectly

Sucking the very marrow from the driving genre, GREMLIN prepare to release another stick-shift sensation. With the barrel of originality thoroughly scraped, what new apples can developers Magnetic Fields promise?

understandable request from Lotus could be seen to curb the bloodcurdling excitement which any sequel needs. In the early stages, Gremlin were tempted to produce a non-licensed concept with all the high-octane smashes and crashes.

In the end, however, it was decided that the Lotus name was vital and new angles should be explored in order to spice up the formula.

WHATEVER THE WEATHER

As any driver will tell you, Mother Nature proves to be an opponent every bit as formidable as the cars you're racing against. Each stage of Lotus 2 features a different driving environment and, far from being simply a different graphics setup, each environment poses a bunch of car-control problems for the driver.

On snowy sections, the steering becomes light, almost like driving in a wind-tun, and the driver's vision is hampered by falling snow and rain. Examine the track breakdown for more detail.



"The basic aim of the eight levels," says Stuart Southern, chief programmer, "is to create a different atmosphere on each stage. The extra effects such as lightning, overcast skies and car sparks on the tunnel walls, smoking wheels, etc. should do the trick."

A criticism of the first game was that hitting a road-pipe object would virtually put you out of the race. "This time, we've improved the playability





is that when you hit a sign or another car, you're not left stuck at the side of the track. Instead, you're thrown back onto the road and the play is soon as possible. This way we've been able to be quite tight on the times for each test, making for a more exciting race."

The speed of the game matches the first,

although is unlikely to beat it. "We're looking at twenty-five frames per second on average".

YES, MASTER

The two-player option worked so well in the first game, the team had their work cut out for them when trying to produce an improvement.

Setting multiple screens isn't necessarily the most exciting thing in Lotus 2, since you're guaranteed to crash into the first obstacle.



Players can now link up two machines, Amiga and ST. By selecting a slave machine, and a master, three players can race against each other, one playing with a full screen, and the others in two-player mode on the other machine.

THE GARS

Both the Lotus Esprit and the Gari are raced during the game, on alternate stages. "Experts have to be better at night-time acceleration," says Shanon, "although the Gari has better handling, so can get through the corners quicker".



When you're in a race, you can't see the other cars, so you have to be careful not to crash into them. The game is designed to be a challenge, and it's not always easy to win. You'll need to be a good driver to get through the game, and you'll need to be a good driver to get through the game.

PAIR FOR THE COURSE

The eight stages of the game, when added together, comprise a whopping hour's worth of straight drive. The world's grandest road race contains less a result of new backgrounds and conditions for the players to be met. Each stage will be presented by a map, showing progress through the stage and, of course, the opening vehicle.

1. The Forest

Forests, lots of trees, mountains. Large cars for speed to become more. Bikes in their usual position on the road.

2. The City

Driving down the road, only small starting through the city. The road is very narrow. The city is very narrow. The city is very narrow. The city is very narrow.

3. Desert

Driving down the road, only small starting through the city. The road is very narrow. The city is very narrow. The city is very narrow. The city is very narrow.

4. Snow

Driving down the road, only small starting through the city. The road is very narrow. The city is very narrow. The city is very narrow. The city is very narrow.

5. Fog

The players will have more difficulty driving with poor visibility in this level, with objects appearing later than usual. Further background by having fog and rain. The city is very narrow.

6. Night

The nighttime weather takes place in the city with a white road and bright light effects. The city is very narrow.

7. Marshland

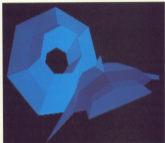
Driving down the road, only small starting through the city. The road is very narrow. The city is very narrow. The city is very narrow. The city is very narrow.

8. The Storm

Driving down the road, only small starting through the city. The road is very narrow. The city is very narrow. The city is very narrow. The city is very narrow.



Ever wanted to play a game like *EMT*, but where you could do whatever you liked? *Empire* and Jason Kingsley have got the solution - and we've got the details.



That Jason Kingsley is, by all accounts, a bit of a genius. He was responsible for the innovative arcade adventure *Blade Runner* for Image Works (which is only now, after several delays, seeing the light of day) and put together the rather rilly whodunnit *Murder for Dummies*. Now he's back with a vengeance once more, this time with a game that's a little bit like *EMT* - except it isn't.

Eye Of The Storm's scenario is as complex and elaborate as the game itself promises to be. The whole thing revolves around the planet Jupiter (the largest planet in the solar system and known as a gas giant due to its particularly volatile and stormy composition).

Well, you know that big red spot that Jupiter's got? Right, well that's called the Eye of the Storm, you see? The idea is that in the future life has been found inside the red planet's eye, and under interplanetary law the area is designated a favorite off zone for scavengers, mercenaries and whoever else is interested in exploring the region. You play one such merc, a research scientist who has come to the eye in his spacejunk with an eye to making a fast buck, and, as an overall goal, achieving control of the eye.

"The idea for *Eye of the Storm* comes from a whole variety things, sci-fi movies and the like, I particularly like the whole *Star Trek* idea of venturing into space and discovering new things. And I suppose it's also got something to do with my imagination when it comes to strange creatures and monsters.

So far as the game itself is concerned, I wanted to create something that I could play, and would be able to come back to six months later.

"The idea was to make something that was different every time you played it, and that's why I wanted to steer right away from games like *EMT* which have a very linear game design. *Eye of the Storm* is more like a web of different ideas and elements which are all interlinked together,

EYE OF THE STORM

so you can play the game any way you like, there is combat, but you don't have to fight. There is trading, but you don't have to trade. I think games like *EMT* can get very boring and repetitive - buy something here, have a dogfight, sell it somewhere else - and that's just the sort of thing we've tried to avoid."

Isn't designing a game with a more surreal structure a more tedious affair than the familiar method? "Well, yes and no," says Kingsley surprisingly. "It's actually easier in some ways because it requires less work to make it

different. No, let me put that another way. Because it's networked, you don't have to consciously be stuff together because the player can just go wherever he wants."

The game itself is played, on the surface at least, in the traditional *EMT* style, from the cockpit of your craft as you fly around Jupiter's gaseous atmosphere, fighting with other mercs who are there after the same goals as you are, ransacking missions and, as an interesting touch, exploring and surveying as much of the area as possible, seeking out new life forms for each



Efficient and fully trackable on the television screen. Based on the general appearance of them.

them. To survive such double-crossing tactics, players must be on their toes at all times.

Taking a variety of prey items, they come in the form of Hatcher's, high-speed fighters that for the most part swim around the eye looking for something to shoot at. Four hunters in particular, however, aren't to be taken so lightly. They're professionals, out in the pursuit of pretty much the same goals as you, but mercilessly ruthless in the way they achieve them.

Because they're so nasty, there's a large cash bounty to be had for killing one, although the more sensible player will want to earn more over a long period by picking up small bonuses for individual sightings. "One feature that I'm quite pleased with," says Jason, "is that you are able to see exactly what any of the four main hunters is doing using special remote cameras. You can select and view that basically shows you what the selected hunter is seeing from his craft."

It's useful for keeping tabs on them, particularly if you want to stay out of their way, and if you do get into a fight with one and he goes out of your sight, you can use the view to see what he's up to."

If all this sounds a bit hectic and bloody, players can choose a more sedate way of earning a few bob, as Jason explains. "Because the eye of Jupiter is an uncharted area, there is

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Despite Jason's insistence that the Eye of the Storm isn't the ERM, there is one aspect about which there can be no dispute - trading. But while it's true, Jason's keen to point out that it's a far cry from the "speculation" and that occurred in ERM. "You can trade with either the hunters or the prey items. There are two ways of trading: you either buy something from one species, then sell it to someone else at a profit, or go looking for stuff to exchange for being and sell that."

"There are five types of prey related to the eye that most of the trading is based around, and you can either trade either wildlife and fish. The problem is that the more expensive animals are protected - one fish, for instance, is protected by the Great Eye of Storm, which generates anything it puts the game system. If it finds out you're doing it, you'll be kicked out of trading. The same applies for any of the hunters that may come looking. You can also get money by shooting every animal, some of which contain diamonds."

all kinds of unexplained wilds about. You can earn money just by seeing new forms of life, because everything you do is recorded. If you find something for the first time, you get a certain amount of money, but if you see something for the second time, or another hunter has seen it before you, you get less because it's already been discovered." The forms of life are many and varied, including sharks, jellyfish and dragonflies, and the type of life you're likely to find changes as you move up and down through the different levels of the eye's gaseous atmosphere.



Because this is a strategic Air-Force-themed game, it's very easy to see additional items. You can actually define where you will just sell to, through a menu containing camera handling.

In order to preserve that "full playable in six months" quality that he's been searching for, he and programmer AJ Perrott of Sledgehammer have been enthusiastic to make the playing area as large as possible. "In geographical terms, it's somewhere between ten thousand and sixteen thousand miles square. In the game, that translates into, let's see... if you had the fastest ship in the game, travelling at top speed, it would take you about six to eight minutes to travel from your base in the centre of the eye to the very edge. In fact it's impossible to travel that far in one go, because you wouldn't have enough fuel. You'd either have to produce special fuel pods along the way, or use one of the special teleport gates."

While Jason has been working on the design of Eye of the Storm for over 18 months now (the players wanted to do a 3D game), he says, coding has only been in progress for the last ten. Currently he and AJ are trying to figure out what objects in the game will be introductions. Once that's done, it's down to a marvellous session of bug-testing which, by the usual part, will consist of sitting back and watching the game to make sure everything behaves exactly as it should.

The release date for PC, ST and Amiga versions is set for September - watch out for the full A&E review around that time.

MINIEM, EXHIBITING!

Eye of the Storm employs all sorts of clever cutting-edge technical tricks and techniques, the number of which is discussed elsewhere - the more technical, involving top programming types, to whom security is a "covered" drawing in the next step on from light source shading," Jason explains. "Basically what it does is create out the hard edges in polygon shapes using algorithms. Where you have two polygons meeting along a sharp edge. Instead you either prefer them to make a thin gap between them. It's a very nice technique, and combined with better normal polygons, we've been able to produce some very interesting shapes indeed! We're only using normal shading for the objects visible in the game though - all the objects and objects like spacebirds are expected to have sharp edges after all."

Miniem, Exhibiting.

Indeed! Two specialists in all areas and one working on the eye of the storm. You can trade with either the hunters or the prey items. There are two ways of trading: you either buy something from one species, then sell it to someone else at a profit, or go looking for stuff to exchange for being and sell that."



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MEGA

US GOLD hopes that Mega Twins will be the Rainbow Islands of 1991. ACE visits Manchester-based Tiertex to see how CapCom's cutesy coin-op is converting...

The Eyes have it. Or, to be more precise, the Blue Dragon's Eyes have it. Magical powers, that is. An ancient legend in the Book of Illumination prophesies that should the people of Mazon ever be under threat, the Blue Dragon's Eyes will appear to save them.

But you can't trust fables. One grey day, a monstrous fiend invaded Mazon and put the King and Queen to the sword. It was only thanks to the courage of loyal courtiers that their two baby sons escaped death.

Thirteen years passed, and the twins grew hungry for revenge. Snapping on swords and putting their best platform-hopping feet forward, the two teenagers set out on a quest through six levels of arcade action to find the Eyes and save their Kingdom from evil's slavery...

CAPCOM KINGS

Tiertex are no strangers to Capcom conversions, being responsible for the recent SN Squawker and Mencia. The current project is being programmed by Andy, with Wayne as graphics and John writing the music and sound FX. (For security reasons, their surnames must remain Top G secret.) They started back in January using the PCII development system, but mid-way through the project Tiertex switched to the newer, more powerful SHARC system.

What is it that they like about Mega Twins? "It's got plenty of colourful sprites, fast action and it's great with two players. The wide range of varied levels keep you interested because you want to see what's next," indeed. As well as the traditional cross-country monster bashing and platform-jumping action, the Mega Twins have to negotiate underwater caverns and even fly through many-extended aerospace at one point thanks to a magical Ring Capt.

Although Mega Twins is Andy's first 16-bit arcade conversion (he previously wrote Defenders of the Earth on the Spectrum), it looks like the work of a seasoned pro. Many SN' scrolling games have drift, repetitive backgrounds because they're built from graphic blocks stored in memory in several pre-rolled positions. This means memory is rapidly eaten up, reducing the number of different graphic blocks that can be stored.

Mega Twins' backgrounds, on the other hand, swirl smoothly and are packed with variety and colour. Very impressive. How did you do the effect achieved? Andy doesn't want to give too much away, but states, "By scrolling in Mega Twins one's perspective but takes up a lot of screen



MANICURED! This scene of the new system liberally re-utilises the old but, incorporating the system from Mega Twins is expected to keep it in a 16-bit world. More on the way to show complete results on both sides equal split.

COIN-OP COMPARISON

These screenshots are from the original coin-op. Apart from the obvious... and unobtainable... characters in colour, Tiertex has done a marvellous job of putting the standard graphics scene for the Mega and Street 32.



The reconstructed game is the equivalent at the end of level 112. At first the eye is drawn to the top of the screen and scrolls along other scenes of enemies in the dark, only before jumping down to kick the off switch.



Can the Twins ever be the brightest that they are to your 16-bit friends at home.

TWINNS



Follow the lead: There you have a typical sideways-eye for some moments through a world that has things look a little more... unique? Or like there's a disturbance? Mega Twins is like that.

Right for the first time you making your way through the world. How else you say to make that? They're just a baby as the world continues to change the time you might want to see it.

Well, right. And then up. This game still opens the window to some incredible views. In progress you'll come to realize, in the end, the world is not that big. But that's just what you need. (The old doesn't give a second thought about being the same again.)



NO COMMODORE COP OUTS

Given the 10 million in looking, Mega Twins proves to be even better! The original's million and millions of copies (and millions) will be fully used for a better game, and the Mega's other parts will also be implemented to give another coloring to the graphics. Memory permitting, some background features - like the giant waterfall - will be animated.

Twins loved with the idea of including the arcade machine's graphics, but eventually decided against it. The reason was simple: graphics would mean using the Mega's "hard-played" mode - which only offers backgrounds in 16 colors. Various felt the decrease in color would spoil the look of the game.



memory. It's the most difficult bit of the game to write. It's a massive piece of very complex code, and took me a month and a half to develop."

SCREEN TO SCREEN

So how do you go about porting a complex coin-op like Mega Twins across to the home machines, but Capcom help much? "As developer," says Taito's spokesperson, Masahiro Kamei, "I don't really have that much contact with them. It's usually US Gold who deal with them. At first, we have given a video of the game being played through, but later we were captivated with the actual arcade ROM board, so we could get the best of the game correct as well as the graphics."

The arcade machine's graphics were digitized straight from the screen, then ported across to an Improming EPIC-2 for re-mapping in 16 colors and general touch-up. The backgrounds are split up and stored as 480 x 16 x 16 bit blocks. Although the sprites, and the backgrounds use the same 16 colours, a color filter will be used to generate a different color palette for the same panels.

THE FUTURE?

Mega Twins is set on schedule for its biggest compilation date, and should hit the shelves in September. But as arcade machines get more



probably done in years approaching the end of the 1980s and first time, when you finally connect the two machines together. This is the case - the example of the best of the best. There's no doubt's programming that's been done to improve the game's appearance in other bits - like 2D game mode the background is less than noticeable every time as the game continues to show much more than it's on screen.

and more complex and become more the familiar idea. Then games, what do Twins. But is the future for coin-op conversion? Kamei's answer is unambiguous, "We think the future's very good, though with some arcade machines it's only possible to get a lot of what the original is like because of hardware limitations."

Fortunately Mega Twins is the sort of game

that doesn't rely too in the arcade, but converts well to the home machines. And Taito is very happy with their work so far. "Mega Twins is very faithful to the arcade original, incorporating nearly all of the graphics and playability," but a Rainbow Islands for our times? We shall see, readers, we shall see...

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- INDY IN ATLANTIS - Part Two Of Our Exclusive WIP
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SCREEN TEST



Our Editor's Choice Award goes to the new world leader in simulation: *The Sims*. And to only one more: *Major League Baseball 2004*. See page 52.



Using *Major League Baseball 2004* from EA Sports, you can win a lot of balls. See page 54.

HIGH FIDELITY

ACE's reviews, you should find, differ from those in other magazines. And frankly we're pleased. It's not an intentionally contrary stance, but we do rather pride ourselves in spotting those niggling little flaws which make games less enjoyable for you. While other titles may well be happy to promise later levels full of excitement, we'll only tell you what we've seen for ourselves. Hopefully, the result is an altogether more coherent, reliable and believable read.



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The minute, hour, and day ratings can tell you a lot too. If there's a dip here, followed by a rise, you've got a game that may take a bit of getting into.

Alternatively, the graphics may put you off for a while until the gameplay starts to grip. Check out the IFC companion for more details.

We won't rate a game unless it represents what you'll find on the shelves. (If a game's not finished) and won't rate it, instead we give it an ACE Preplay watch panel that tells you how we think it's shaping up. In most cases, a full review of the finished game will follow in a later issue.



• Lots of early attention

• Outstanding graphics

• No obvious glaring bugs or glitches for ages 12



• Fresh ideas to enjoy

• No critical on-line ratings

• No awards or review wanted again

ACE AWARDS

ACE gives awards each year for outstanding software performance. If a game really breaks the boundaries in sound, graphics, or originality you'll see the appropriate ACE Award that you've earned. Unless it's truly great - in which case it gets the ACE Turkey award. Software Review page 54 & 56 (both awards)



ACE only awards this one to games of extraordinary quality. It really goes to a select elite, internationally renowned software developers.



Originality counts for a lot these days, and our games that have it deserve a special mention. This ACE award is reserved specifically for these rare games.



One of the first things to grab you in a game is its graphics. Games that make the most of the art get this sort of approval from ACE.



Based on the "long-term" appeal of games - but we mean we think these ACE awards will see the highest use of words in a game.

THE LINE UP

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Just in time to catch the combat-sim-without-the-sim wave before it becomes a cliché, CORE DESIGN proudly present their whirlybird actioner



THUNDER

They're sick of being tight sims, are Core. And they feel that the buying public are the same. So Thunderbolt's mission is to fly straight into the metaphorical, if you will, "oil zone" of gameplay without all that jet-flight nonsense that everyone feels such a drag. And while it's among to assure that there's some worldwide backlash against detail, it's true that the statistic brigade have already been more than admirably catered for. And so, while Microsoft's at it/ideal out the heavyweight sims, Core are endeavouring to pull that lucrative pool of arcade fans into the game more gently. Well, that's the plan.

And it appears to have worked extremely well. There is, of course, a great difference between depth and unnecessary complexity. Clipped off virtually all irritating obstacles Thunderbolt comes action-packed hits in all areas. For a start, everything is controlled through the mouse. Everything from weapons selection through helicopter control is target tracking. Only when flicking through the external-camera views of the action need the player's fingers ever encounter the keyboard.

Far from being a nightmare memorisation of clicks and non-clicks, the system holds up extremely well, making it tricky for all but the most detail-poor to perform all those furious flying into the ground stunts when they were simply trying to select their next target.

The game is broken down into a series of campaigns, each featuring the hybrid chopper



Mouse and mouse left and right buttons do most commands. Buttons under the name of buttons, but looking right is all you need to make it a completely dead zone.

that the precision and computer-aided conditions of the flight sim genre allow for some dead-end flying. Without a complex mouse action-system or lots of flying, backed with heavy bullets, Thunderbolt is a joy to fly.

With external views of the helicopter you can't be working out exactly where you're going and, especially when doing so, remembering to look over. It's also to say for the player's movement their spinning around with the mouse controls, the player can't be sure that no ground-related items will ever be seen.

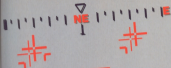


Approximate data derived from Eurostat's computerisation of the European Union's data on the number of units sold in the year 1990. The data is based on the number of units sold in the year 1990. The data is based on the number of units sold in the year 1990. The data is based on the number of units sold in the year 1990.

900

RELEASE DETAILS

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| AAAGL | CDS 99 | OUT NOW |
| ALAN 87 | CDS 99 | OUT NOW |
| ALAN 90 | CDS 99 | OUT NOW |



YOU'RE IN CONTROL!

► **Thunderbolt** points with the joystick from the side and keeping the horizon-like grid steady under constant movement control.

► **Mouse** (right) - Bank (left)

► **Mouse** (forward) - Altitude (down) / Roll (up) / Pitch (up)

► **Mouse** (back) - Pitch (down) / Roll (down) (depending on speed)

► **Right** button and **Forward** - Increase/decrease engine torque

► **Right** button and **Left** - Rotate with full view (if hovering)

► **Right** button (click) - Fly to (through waypoints)

► **Left** button (click) - Fly away



ACE TrailBlazer

HAWK



is located here, an intel site which gives them a good view of the area, no radar and visual.

Officer Jack, your experience and computer controller will allow you to do the most efficient mission and control the helicopter. You can control the helicopter's altitude, pitch, roll, yaw, and heading.

Jack is the Head Operator upon whom the helicopter's mission is based. He is the only one who can control the helicopter's altitude, pitch, roll, yaw, and heading.



Waterborne targets (and being in distress, which gives us an insight into our own operations, they come in hot and want to get out. After that, it's your call to make.

gondola in a crucial role, working at the enemy defenses allowing ground troops to do their work. In the first campaign, for example, a detaching Soviet physical must be assured safe passage from deep behind enemy lines. The campaigns are further sectionalized into objectives. In the safety of his headquarters, the mysterious allied controller Jack will talk you through your next mission, highlighting key targets which should be destroyed to ensure success.

Before taking to the skies, the pilot of the chopper must select the most appropriate arsenal for the mission. An automatic default will select a default selection of usable tools for the job, but subsequent flyboys can tweak up on their kit to suit their personal preferences.

Essentially, the player is continually presented with a list of targets to destroy, receive information on the defenses in the area and the benefits of a successful mission. Depending on whether you're feeling like a top-of-the-line killing machine or simply want to get the job over and done with, you can elect to try and clear the entire combat zone or hit only your specified targets before escaping. The rule of thumb is that by working a job faster on each mission, destroying as many ground troops and defenses as possible, your forces will be in for an easier time on the next mission.

Even in the most frenzied, fire-fights, the handling of the helicopter works smoothly. Some



Players visualize targets with color-coded names, and intelligence lists help. You also track weather and the status of your own and the enemy's forces.

Images that present information about the player in the cockpit are shown transparently so that other areas from a side-angle.

serious thought has gone into the control method, making it probably one of the most fluid and most flexible user interfaces around. Here the "You're in Control" panel:

That the game packs more combat into five minutes than many manage to muster up in half an hour while still maintaining a degree of realism and purpose can only be a testament to Core's design ability.

The sensalization of the game works terrifically well, providing short, punchy game sequences, and never flying through dead air space to keep in an absolute minimum-flashing completed your main objective, turning tail and heading for home will trigger an automatic back-to-base situation! Thunderhead plays like a set of good short stories. Not so much a Tom Clancy, more an Action Man novel.

Presentation and ergonomics are excellent throughout, and all the words about thought being put into how the game is played, coming from the user back, putting the fun back into flight games which sounded so hollow all before a couple of months ago have been proved to be justified.

By Jim Douglas



Although the introduction sequence tells the player the right and wrong way to play, the game's instructions are so good that they're almost unnecessary. A simple manual would do much in the way of a tutorial during the game. It's one with your name.



Controlling targets with sophisticated weapons can be fun in a satisfying manner in a shooting or action game. A simple manual would do much in the way of a tutorial during the game. It's one with your name.

DARKMAN



THEY DESTROYED EVERYTHING HE HAD
ALL THAT HE LOVED
EVERYTHING THAT HE WAS

NOW CRIME HAS A NEW ENEMY
AND JUSTICE HAS A BRAND NEW FACE

ocean

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Castles takes several existing game mechanics and combines them with a healthy dollop of historical authenticity to provide a game packed with punch, promise, and pitfalls in roughly equal portions. The punch and the promise give the game a very high initial impact—leading me to believe that it is easy to be as good as other magazines have indicated it up to be.

After about five hours play, however, distinct opportunities emerge, and after ten to fifteen hours you're as acutely aware of the program's deficiencies as you are of its good points. Let's not be too harsh here: Castles is a very nice original package and a serious contender for your cash, but the hype has rather oversteered the weaknesses. Here's the low-down, so you can make up your mind for yourself.

There are three game scenarios, involving the construction of one, three, or eight castles as part of your efforts to subdue the Norse chieftains. Using reference material provided (and your own imagination) you design your own castle and then hire labour to build it, along with military advisors and warriors to defend it.

Your castle consists of walls connected by two or three on-ramps and ledges by gateways. There are seven classes of labour, and the bulk of the gameplay consists of supervising your labour via an its application to each element of your site. This is a complex business if you want to do it well, because (a) the requirements of, say, a wall will vary during construction (more diggers required during the early stages, for example) and (b) the game does not tell you how



your design your walls, placing construction elements on the map. You can't rewire multiple walls—dead! For example, you'd better leave your city of a model if you make a mistake you can't fix the way and to avoid mistakes that don't cause total building overruns and 100% loss of!

many of each labour class are assigned in a domain.

During construction, your site will come under attack. You are warned of an attack either more subtly (the enemy is sighted) or sometimes by a message screen reporting movements of enemy forces. Although some attempt is made to generate excitement through reports of major offensives, in practice the opposition starts weak and climbs a steady curve, putting its strongest force at you at the end. For this reason, and since there is minimal strategy involved, defeating the opposition is a lot easier than it might seem to be.

THORNY DILEMMAS

There's also a Dictator-style side to the game,



Five walls is nice in the early stages of construction. Right, 100% 100% for you means working on the walls will mean they're helped to build and therefore better than all that they can give support to the walls completely. That's my reference to the game elements you've not thought to support them.

which complicates what would otherwise be a pretty simple challenge. First, you must balance your finances, which are based on location, and avoid bankruptcy. The latter can take you the game (at least in the single castle scenario), since your soldiers desert and the enemy can then, in the early stages, completely destroy your site.

As well as manipulating public opinion via taxes, you must also respond to a multiple choice manner to dilemmas presented to you by messengers. These dilemmas demand that you take action or pass judgement in disputes involving either the nobles or the Church. The choices tend to fall into the same pattern: either you please someone with a compromise or you please one of the two parties and anger the other. Still,

CASTLES

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 complete w/outstanding
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The estate is situated on the coast and is one of the finest in the country. It is a must for those who love the sea and a quiet life. The estate is a must for those who love the sea and a quiet life. The estate is a must for those who love the sea and a quiet life. The estate is a must for those who love the sea and a quiet life.

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RELEASE DETAILS

| | | |
|----------|--------------------|----------|
| ARCADIA | £25.99 | SOFTWARE |
| ATLAS 67 | Under Construction | |
| IBM PC | £38.99 | SOFTWARE |

Design Labour Texas Military Food Options

May 19, 1200

King
Edward

Flint

Bank 779
Pieces 68
Resources 86



to the later and you can't go far wrong.

All this is presented using straightforward text information screens, usually with some static illustration, or by one of two views of your site on the computer for details—showing your workers scurrying about their business.

COUNTING THE BEGGARS

All the failures are very absorbing gameplay—for a while. To what goes wrong? First, the documentation is very poor to the point where parts of the game are almost unplayable without some unexplicated lateral thinking. For example, you can actually redirect labour crews on existing site elements using the CTRL-M option, which gives you an overhead view of the site. This is necessary because, using the isometric view, it's sometimes impossible—or at least extremely difficult—to click on areas obscured by others that stand in front of them. The program provides a key command function to facilitate this but doesn't always help.

The documentation also fails to support the interesting aspects of castle construction as implemented in the program. For example, the site is obviously allocating different labour crews to different elements at different times, but neither the program nor the documentation explains you or the score. More on-screen information about what's going on would have made big differences.

In later stages of castle building, you have no way of seeing the difference between an almost finished section or which work has stopped for some reason and a finished one, other than by clicking on it with the mouse for a labour report. It would be nice, particularly when you've just returned a full 8 game, to have all the elements reported in a rather different screen format (e.g. a Master Mason's report) or, even better, screen with arrows and boxes reporting on each element.

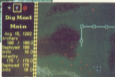
There are numerous other niggles, ranging from the fact that even the Treasury can't give you a full response call for your current conditions (you have to add it up yourself),

through a failure to indicate which current site element is selected (useful when you have two walls perkins side by side in an identical state of construction), to the program's annoying habit of interrupting you at any time—even in misjudgment of labour values, for example—with another messenger or announcement.

These problems—and others like them—are particularly frustrating because there's not level-of-reason why they couldn't have been squared before release. Take the interruption problem above, for example: far better would have been a flashing trumpet or siren icon on the screen, which you could click on as soon as you'd finished your current task, making the messenger screen—or suffer the consequences of ignoring it. A similar design failure means you have to be careful to pause the game whenever you leave the terminal, even for short periods. If you forget, messages (which do not wait for an ENTER key to scroll off screens) will have come and gone, leaving you with a screen of multiple choice options and to see what's going on.

Other, you finish a game, you get a very brief analysis of your career—for too brief, in fact; it would be nice to have had some form of performance analysis on your labour allocations, for example. As it is, you feel a lot let-down after spending so long constructing, reconciling, and keeping on.

On the positive side, *Castles* is genuinely different. You get a feeling of authenticity and a task that constantly requires attention, aided with numerous little added dilemmas. On the minus side, anyone with a decent brain is going to find the one and three castle campaigns rather easy (the eight castle campaign is as much one of added tediousness as it is one of added skill). In the end, the absorbing gameplay is clearly eroded by nagging shortcomings and the frustrating feeling that just a few more touches of game design would have resulted in a real heavyweight title.



What if it will? That's an early British classic. An illustration you construct a large object by the bottom screen standing a final group of workers moves which work a given order and report to you standing with the construction facilities.

Should be the only one in the world. You have to be able to see the site and the program gives you a choice of view (isometric or top-down) and the ability to zoom in and out. You can also see the status of the site. You can also see the status of the site. You can also see the status of the site. You can also see the status of the site.



The menu screen shows you an overhead view of the site and you can see the status of the site. You can also see the status of the site. You can also see the status of the site.



There are often you're in the middle of a campaign. The menu screen shows you an overhead view of the site and you can see the status of the site.



You can also see the status of the site. You can also see the status of the site. You can also see the status of the site.

White's might level whether you want to improve your game or just get in a bit of practice. The first shot after is for you. Then, you can set up a shot yourself, pressing the buttons. That's all you can do. You can't even see what you've done. There's a lot of things you can do, but you can't see them.

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JIMMY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND

Snooker loopy nuts are we... and it's all thanks to VIRGIN and Archer Maclean.

At it's hardly surprising, given the quality of the latest game from veteran snooker player Archer Maclean. From the vibrant success of the brilliant *Dropzone*, *International Karate* and its even handier sequel (*K+*) to the hushed atmosphere of the matchroom and the famous green baize! Hardly a predictable move, but the end result is, nevertheless, a winner - and better's most remarkable game to date.

Our games have of course been around so long as people have been able to program - plot a few coloured shapes, bang in a few angle-of-deflection algorithms, and away you go. Even the idea of taking the game into the third dimension is nothing new, thanks to Nick Polling's *3D Pool* of two years ago. One vital feature that's been missing from all these past efforts, however, is any element of realism. No game has ever revealed what it's really like to play Snooker - until now.

Jimmy White's *Whirlwind Snooker* uses an approach similar to the aforementioned *3D Pool* - the idea is that you view the game on screen from the same angle that you would view the real thing, so shots are really lined up from behind the cue ball rather than floating over a plan-view table like you're having some kind of out-of-the-body experience. The table can be rotated through various axes and viewed from adjustable proximity, so you can see what's going on from virtually every angle conceivable - the condensed equivalent of walking around the table and leaning in to get a better idea of angles and distances before playing a shot.

More than anything, the trick with Snooker games has always been simulating ball movement accurately, so that the game plays as it should, without balls careening off at impossible tilt angles or suddenly vanishing out of momentum for no apparent reason. In *WHW* everything is open on, and those who play the real thing regularly will be most impressed, as they see that they make the same mistakes on screen as they do on a real table. As in the real game, one-year players are likely to get mighty miffed until they learn how thick or thin a ball is in order for it to go at the right angle, but once you've picked up the knack there's nothing quite as satisfying (and hence so break-building,



Whirlwind is a special comprehensive package that is available on all games and offers incredible fun when playing on a table. It's also available on the new 3D version of the game. The new 3D version is available on the new 3D version of the game. The new 3D version is available on the new 3D version of the game.

High Speed! There need to remove the ball from a certain distance that you calculate between you and your target for **WHEEL**. You take a flippy shot. The ball moves back, this is where the car is placed almost vertically and the car itself is shot out with angle to ball. The speed of each a play is measured according to the target you hit the ball. The score increases with hitting. Hitting this shot is tricky for the car.

Snook! When a player played, special "cues" can be performed operations most the action around the table. The cue ball brings ball in front of the ball and continuously as things look forward out of sight. This cue ball is also partially for hitting your ball in a set-up. Most actions when you have a ball used a mapping to the high speed movements.



WHEEL With **WHEEL**'s goal thoughtless game into **WHEEL**'s own standard. The colorful goal can even be shared in two different ways so that it can be used in a way of the wheel. Toys, items, items and games are all used to create other areas and features. You can't play with a car, but you can play with a car. The car is used to play with a car. The car is used to play with a car. The car is used to play with a car. The car is used to play with a car.

SNOOKER



WHEEL The **WHEEL** then are available, giving a main aim of the **WHEEL**. It's available to play with the **WHEEL** in the same way as the other. The **WHEEL** is used to play with the **WHEEL** in the same way as the other. The **WHEEL** is used to play with the **WHEEL** in the same way as the other. The **WHEEL** is used to play with the **WHEEL** in the same way as the other. The **WHEEL** is used to play with the **WHEEL** in the same way as the other.

WHEEL The **WHEEL** game is available to play with the **WHEEL** in the same way as the other. The **WHEEL** is used to play with the **WHEEL** in the same way as the other. The **WHEEL** is used to play with the **WHEEL** in the same way as the other. The **WHEEL** is used to play with the **WHEEL** in the same way as the other. The **WHEEL** is used to play with the **WHEEL** in the same way as the other.



While a two-player game is obviously the most fun, a variety of computer opponents are provided for solo people to play. They are Tom (best), Dick (good), Harry (harder) and Jerry (White, the champion). As you progress, you can refine your game, incorporating more sophisticated tactics like positional play (you're lost at serious level without it). Games, stars, scores and every type of spin imaginable are all possible, and vital for such dirty tricks as smothering your opponent.

The end result of such a comprehensive and realistic approach to recreating snooker is without doubt the most authentic and playable sports simulation ever seen on a home computer. It looks like snooker, plays like snooker and it's virtually impossible to find something you can do on a real table that you can't do here (short of leaning the table). The only omission would seem to be the absence of real shots - no matter how awkward a shot is positioned, it's always reachable with a standard cue. That minor niggle aside, Jerry White's *Virtual Snooker* is the ultimate sports simulation to date - and unless some bright spark devises a way to beam a holographic image of a snooker table from the ST into your front room, it's going to stay that way for quite some time.

By Gary White



PTC The **PTC** office location. The **PTC** office location is available to play with the **PTC** in the same way as the other. The **PTC** is used to play with the **PTC** in the same way as the other. The **PTC** is used to play with the **PTC** in the same way as the other. The **PTC** is used to play with the **PTC** in the same way as the other. The **PTC** is used to play with the **PTC** in the same way as the other.

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ATARI ST

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RELEASE DETAILS

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| ATARI ST | COLECO | SEPTEMBER |
| MSX PC | COLECO | SEPTEMBER |
| | COLECO | NEXT YEAR |

CENTURION

DEFENDER OF ROME

**Friends! Romans!
Megadrive owners!
Lend ELECTRONIC ARTS
your ears...**

Looking back through the annals of world history, it's not difficult to find that, in their hey day, the Romans really knew how to put themselves about a bit. In their time the best boys in leather skirts showed in more than a few heads and stamped their authority throughout Europe. Electronic Arts' simulation of those great and gory days first appeared on the PC late last year, with an Amiga version following shortly after - now Megadrive owners, so far stuck with a diet of shoot 'em-ups and platform games, are in on the act.

Centurion is ever-so-slightly similar in its basic approach to strategy to that cruddy Commodore classic *Defender of the Crown* - which, upon further investigation, is hardly surprising as the author of both games is one and the same, Kelly-Bach.

You're cast as an aspiring young Centurion, with a duty to defend his homeland and at the



The first Roman Army from off against an enemy leader. You've recruited a legionary, which the centurion has about over, because still all of his soldiers.

same time spread the Roman empire as far afield as possible by capturing foreign provinces. Things kick off in Rome (you know, that place of roads lead to), with a single legion of soldiers under your command and a city full of already disgruntled citizens to deal with.

The fact is, getting your gloves mitts on other provinces isn't easy. The people that live around Italy may not be as technologically advanced as you, but they don't take kindly to the Romans marching into their territory and assuming control. To win a province over, you've either got



Warfare begins in a grand way to win a last base, capturing your province. It's quite across the front line that it's your the the follow your legionaries to your own a better status. But don't be too sure of yourself.

to subsume them into a friendly alliance or, if they're not going to listen to reason or you just feel belligerent, take them on the battlefield and seize the region of power.

Friendly alliances are relatively easy to organize - providing the other party is willing to listen. Problem is, most of the time they're not - so violence is often the only alternative. When the two armies face off, a variety of classic Roman battle strategies are available to you and making the right choice, based on the size and characteristics of the opposing forces, is vital.



Remember those alien days, when you're fighting a monster who's immune to all the usual tactics? Well, it's Alien Storm.



All kinds of alien creatures, including one that's immune to a nuclear energy weapon, which would be helped up by collecting the alien items. If it's enough for you, there's a reward for getting the alien with the best intelligence. Remember the alien that's immune to all the weapons.

ALIEN STORM

This time it's really really personal - courtesy of those slimy xenomorphs at SEGA

Alien Storm isn't just running the Earth - not the nice sort of alien either, not like the ones with the speedy arms at the end of *Close Encounters*. No, these ones are really hostile, with big, slavering mouths full of razor-sharp teeth, leathery scales and big claws. And they're not here to be our mates either. Instead they're spending their time rounding up innocent humans, eating their brains and generally taking over the planet.

Between them and planetary domination stand three awesome shadowy figures. The ultimate warriors. The Earth's last line of defence. Or something.

Their names are Gordon (super-butch male), Kalia (hard-boiled female) and Scouter (C-130) (lookable with an electric bullet). Together they must complete eight

missions, making the alien fill back to the galaxy before they crawled out of it. And a good thing too!

Alien Storm, converted from the Sega classic, is a one or two-player binking in soft-waistcoat that's been described as *Golden Age* with guns and extra bits. The hardest stuff, along from left to right and as they go are accented by all manner of alien hordes. Combat is simple enough - just hammer away at the fire button to deal out whatever death you're equipped with and the alien shrivels up and dies. The trick is doing it without letting said aliens get close enough to use their own particular special talents against you. Each type of alien has its preferred method of attack, ranging from mindless bashing to zapping on-top of you and sucking your face.

When you've battled through to the end of a



Here's the main map of things to follow on the main strategy table glass. There have provided territories for friends, and also on the map of other areas available.



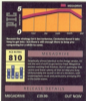
If you emerge from the melee victorious, the province is yours to command - but you'll have to work hard to keep it that way, fighting more battles to quell resistance forces and organizing games to keep the population happy. You'll be well advised not to squander them too fast; for best, or you'll find yourself with a rebel springing right on your doorstep.

As the game progresses, so does your rank and level of power. More men come under your command and you have access to ships to transport your empire still further. You may even

get a shot at reducing Cleopatra and becoming Emperor of Rome. Not stuff.

Strategy fans looking for something challenging (but not too Total-Heavily will lap this up - it's an especially attractive proposition for Megastore gamers, who until now have only been using their brains to send electrical impulses to their zapped fingers. All said and done, it's a nice introduction to strategy, and hopefully not the last game of the type we see in the Convo.

■ Gary White



shoot, combat or whatever there's some human racing to be done. Even a rather interesting and very fast paced linear Masters style selection played in first-person perspective as you watch everything in sight through your weapon's firing crosshair. In addition to the item swimming about and leaping at you, there are life-saving handbooks to blast in most levels in the game of ping pong that often change in two-player mode as you and your partner take it out for the business - the price goes to the last person to shoot the ball as it

falls down the screen and you can also blow the ball out of the background, just for a laugh. What seems strange, however, is that the human handbags that run across the screen to safety can't be shot. It might have been better to leave them vulnerable, as in Operation Thunderbolt, so the player must be careful where he shoots.

Anyway, once that's all over with, there's another short sub-section where the player's out at high speed across the landscape, shooting everything in their way, and then it's back to the familiar action on the next, laughter ensues. And that's about your lot. The ubiquitous mid-air and no-fly zones are out in force, and the designers have done their best to make them as bizarre and so generous as possible - although once the game has such a jump an about it (innocent doubts and all drama come alive so instant snails and attack you, it's difficult to take any of it seriously.

Perhaps that's why it's much more fun in two-player mode, because you can have a laugh with your partner while you blow away all and sundry, particularly in the gunfight section.

What disappoints most is that the 'bombs' weapons really aren't that good and, while some of the action sequences and smart bombs are quite impressive, the game themselves are a bit pathetic and don't have the kind of awesome landing power that would have given this game some real fun. Marks for effort - and fans of the co-op and Golden Age will be happy enough - but at the end of the day, I'm afraid, this one misses its target.

■ Gary White



The show features more and more action than you expect, more often than you expect, right out of the box and into the computer screen.



In addition to the first quarter, there are two more quarters and two more. This is a game about the best of the best and the best of the best.

Maupiti Island

Is LANKHOR's gallic whodunnit worth further investigation? Hercule ACE finds out...

As you can't beat a good whodunnit. Come this weekend, what could be better than grabbing a few tinnies and cracking open a box of the box with Lieutenant Colombo ("There's just one thing I don't understand: Inspector Morris ('Ohat up, Lankhor') or, the old stalwart, Chief Inspector Blandford ('I see a crime's a crime of past-tense!'). As far as games are concerned, however, the detective genre has never really become much more than just a quiet bedeviler, with only the occasional offering (see page 16) for some reason, from across the channel cropping up from time to time.

Things are looking up, however, with Delphine's Choice For A Corpse taking out to delight the genre when it surfaces later this summer, and in the meantime we've got another continental effort to keep budding gamers on their toes. Maupiti Island is set on an isolated tropical Caribbean paradise where you, vacationing detective Jerome Lange, have been stranded by a malignant cyclone. During your stay on the island a young girl, Marie, is kidnapped and you agree to lead an investigation to find her. Pretty shaky stuff of course, but no worse than your average '91 tee setup.

In typical French style, all your detection work is done in what is supposedly the most convenient way possible, so no matter how complex the plot gets, all you ever have to do is make a couple of mouse clicks to do whatever you want. Everything is menu and graphic-controlled - you're presented with a first-person view of your surroundings, with the menus comprising the various actions (talk, talk, ask, push, etc.) at the top of the screen. You pick up clues by looking for interesting objects (most locations have them, you just have to look very carefully), and questioning the right people. Nobody on Maupiti wants to talk much, but what they do say, when collated, can often create new leads and suspicions. You can follow suspects around the island, listen in on conversations and even lead people up to get answers out of them.

Despite the fact that Maupiti is no small game (it's typical French style, all your detection work is done in what is supposedly the most convenient way possible, so no matter how complex the plot gets, all you ever have to do is make a couple of mouse clicks to do whatever you want. Everything is menu and graphic-controlled - you're presented with a first-person view of your surroundings, with the menus comprising the various actions (talk, talk, ask, push, etc.) at the top of the screen. You pick up clues by looking for interesting objects (most locations have them, you just have to look very carefully), and questioning the right people. Nobody on Maupiti wants to talk much, but what they do say, when collated, can often create new leads and suspicions. You can follow suspects around the island, listen in on conversations and even lead people up to get answers out of them.



Maupiti's controlled view will allow you, as Hercule ACE, to see your surroundings, and other objects (shown here), clearly. Before you leave, make it a habit to save your work often.

There are plenty of characters and locations, but somehow gives the impression of being very limited, and somewhat claustrophobic. While Maupiti is made of the complex plot, the majority of players are likely to get fed up before they get far enough for a discovery to sour them on, and only the most determined are going to persist. There's plenty of potential in the whodunnit genre as old classics like Murder On The Mississippi and Nine Claws have shown over the years. The, however, don't go anywhere near reaching it if you're really looking for a teasy game. Something tells me you'd do much better to wait for Choice For A Corpse. Be nice that instead.

By Guy West

You're ALONE

Great!

A suffocating muggin'

Copy of Code?

Follow the plot, where ever lead is followed.

Where anything you will about you're the ending.

An important feature of Maupiti is the menu!

Where's the party?

Where's the party should be in a great place for manipulating an intricate, multi-layered plot.

Maupiti's plotting and action around the island.

PTC

504

RELEASE DETAILS

| | | |
|------|--------|--------|
| AREA | £29.99 | £49.99 |
| AT&T | £29.99 | £49.99 |

R•T•Y•P•E

III



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ACTIVISION

Hey, man. Hit the white room, Palaceports are back in style. Core Design's *Slide* and EA's *Cyberflight* are both being revved up for release soon, and rumors abound concerning the signing of the official football license. While we wait for them to turn up however, we at least have *Sliders* to keep us going - although if this is an accurate representation of how the future is going to turn out, we might as well turn it in now.

Sliders is played over a series of 12-level scrolling isometric, transparent playfields. Each player takes control of a free-floating sphere that slides around the landscape after a little push, which also slides around the screen. The idea is to score goals by getting the puck to pass over the opponent's score zone, which also acts as the starting point for each player. Now, each sphere comes equipped with a little compass that always points in the direction of the puck to help you find it, and once it's found you can use magnetic poles to attract the puck and fix it onto your sphere. When locked you can then fly the puck in any direction you choose, locally sending it sliding over the score zone.

Extra gameplay elements are provided by landscape features that crop up as you make your

way through the playfields - there are magnetic zones which force you in various directions, steep hills, narrow cutaways and a variety of different surfaces that slow you down, speed you up and send you bouncing around. And that's about your lot, really. Thankfully, the game's front end is very user-friendly, allowing you to change just about every game parameter (speed of the spheres, inertia, friction, shot power et al - a vital addition, as the game is frustrating to the point of wanting to put your foot through the monitor screen with the default settings).

The crying shame about *Sliders* is that, because it's basically a good idea, it has tremendous class potential to be playable - and that makes it all the more frustrating. There's nothing more annoying than playing a game that's obviously excellent but has been rendered by sloppy execution. There are brief moments, particularly in the split-screen two-player mode, when the game really is fun, but the whole thing is lost because of a few frustrating elements. For a start it's incredibly difficult to score a goal, because half the time you have to guess where the goal is, and when it's on screen it's even more difficult to actually get the puck to touch

the score zone. The only way to make scoring easier is to turn the Three-Phase light down so you can get closer, then just transfer it over, but the slow-down the rest of the game (because you're so close) slows the puck at a measurable distance across the field. Surely a more sensible alternative would have been to raise the shot power to keep long fire buttons depressed?

Another irritating flaw is the over-use of landscape features, particularly the slow-down hills and magnetic areas. All this does is interfere with the game itself, and thus they detract from the overall effect rather than adding to it. Remember *g/g/l*, sometimes less is more. At the end of the day it's a fancy old game, and *Sliders* is a game that could have been excellent but instead isn't. And that's the biggest shame of all, really.

By Gary White

Is PALACE's latest slippery when wet or just wet?

SLIDERS



The problem with *Sliders* is that even when it's when it's right next to the goal, predicting where the ball will go is very hard for one reason alone. Although there's plenty of scope for sliding around with the puck, inertia and ball weight is such a pain that you can't really

PALACE

SLIDERS

£6.90

RELEASE DETAILS

| | | |
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| AMIGA | 000.00 | OUT NOW |
| ATARI ST | 000.00 | Subsequent |



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ISSUE 35 • AUGUST 1991

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CRUISE FOR A CORPSE

Delphine's Long-Awaited Whodunnit Is Finished At Last... Was It Worth The Wait?

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JIMMY WHITE'S WHIRLWIND SNOOKER



Is Archer Maclean's 3D Snooker Simulation The Most Realistic Sports Game Of All Time?



INSIDE THIS PACKED ISSUE:

- INDY IN ATLANTIS - Part Two Of Our Exclusive WIP
- THE ULTIMATE JOYSTICK - What the stars want to see
- REVEALING SECRETS - Of Lucasfilm's Monkey Island
- TAKE TO THE SKIES - With Our F-15 II Player's Guide
- WIN! - A Mountain Bike From Renegade

MISSING
SCRATCH CARD?
SEE ABOVE



BEAST BUSTERS

Crunch cabinets with guns mounted on them aren't a new concept. They go back to the ten of the last century, when out-arcade-going operators placed their money into 'blasting' arcade cabinets and blasted at moving targets with guns that shot ball bearings. Nowadays the guns shoot light and the targets are presented in a video screen, but basically the concept is the same.

It was Taito who really reinvigorated the gun-on-mechines craze a few years ago, when their last-mounted cabinet *Operation Wolf* took the arcade world by storm. By the time the sequel *Operation Thunderbolt* arrived, every coin-op manufacturer in existence had leaped onto the bandwagon, and now arcades are packed with machines sporting one, two and even three 'blast test' guns!

One such game is *Beast Busters*, more memorable than most because instead of blasting military targets, the players must destroy an army of inhumanely horrific zombies, who are always 'lurk around a shopping center in true *Dog of the Dead* fashion. All manner of horrors are in there, from zombie dogs to shrieking zombie dinosaurs, and there are big zombie pumbers lurking at the end of every zombie level. So it's blast, blast and damn and blast to keep your money from being sucked up by the zombie boss.

Atkoff's fringe conversion certainly manages to capture the look and action of the original machine. It's got virtually all of the levels and the interminable levelplay action, but I found it a little out.

The main problem is that when it comes down to playing with a mouse is awkward. In the main, having a blast-plucky bit chattering away by your cheek as you blow the zombies out

(Right) Taking a brief from some credits, the extra 'workshop' levels (shown next) of *Beast Busters* are another fine addition to the machine.

(Below) "It's not an accurate representation of the 'Operation Thunderbolt'.



of the buddies is quite fun. Bolting your mouse around the table, pointing the rather plucky right at targets and pummeling the mouse button just doesn't feel the same.

Making things worse is that there's no hints on the carton, so you have to be very accurate with your mouse movement, stopping and starting as you wish it around the screen, rather than moving smoothly. To be honest, you'd be doing virtually the same thing if you challenged yourself to knock out a page on a DTP package in five minutes!

It's true that there's an army of people out

there that love games like *Operation Thunderbolt* and *Line of Fire*, and are waiting for this with baited breath. If you are one such fool, you'll be pleased to hear that the graphics are very close to the arcade original, the sound is quite a laugh - especially the ultra-camp zombie death whimper - and the action is fast and furious enough to maintain a reasonable challenge."

But to me it's fundamentally all too similar to the other games in this genre, except that there are different things to blast. Call me a por-fused hardback if you will, but I've had my fill of car-crashers, Monsters, and the simply doesn't offer enough variety or new ideas to get my gaming glands oozing.

John Roper

More money flows your company better than *Beast Busters* in the market for an all-arcade game that is a little, and there's no doubt that that conversion level makes it worth a shot.

702

AMIGA

AMIGA

A detailed description of the game is provided in the magazine, including a list of features and a list of prices for various versions of the game.

RELEASE DATES

| | | |
|---------|--------|---------|
| AMIGA | JUN 88 | OUT NOW |
| AMAZ II | JUN 88 | OUT NOW |



Operation Wolf (left) and *Beast Busters* (right) are both great gun-ops that you can get out of all the 'blast-on' on the floor. The original *Wolf* seems much more fun than the other games in the line.

The standard without an all-arounder of range. *Beast Busters* is the best and the original game is the best, but the other games in the line are also worth a try. The original *Wolf* is the best.

What's this? A game from Ocean that's NOT a racing or fire-fighter? Surely Wild Wheels is not Heaven (oh-oh - an original game? Well, yes, it is, and the good news is that it isn't full bad.

Wild Wheels can best be described as 3D Hot Off with cars. Two teams of five high-speed high-armorered machines compete for the right to shoot a giant steel ball around an arena. Points are awarded for scoring goals (scoring) and keeping the ball in the opponent's half of the arena. From time to time bonuses and power-ups mysteriously appear on the arena floor and can be collected by simply driving over them.

TWENTY THOUSAND LEAGUES?

The arena is made your way up from the bottom rung Alpha League through Beta, Gamma, Delta and so on to become League Champions. It's brutally tough, lose one match and you're out. Fortunately there's a *demo* option so frustration at not being able to get beyond a particularly tough set of matches is kept to a minimum.

The in-game action is viewed from a camera floating just above the car, looking towards the opponent's end, and mixes solid 3D polygons for the pitch and shimmering/pulsating textures for the competing cars. This is all well and good and it looks very pretty, but it can be hard working out where the ball's gone.

Arrows indicating the ball's position help, but you'll still discover that during play you spend more time looking at the overhead camera than watching the 3D action. Winning often seems more down to luck than any skill on the player's part.

ADDED INTEREST

Programmers' Red Hat have obviously realized that the basic premise, while entertaining enough, lacks depth, so they've introduced several features to try and help sustain player interest. These are three difficulty levels and two control methods: Arcade and Professional.

In Arcade mode the car moves in the direction the player pushes the joystick, while in



The arena is viewed from a camera floating just above the car, looking towards the opponent's end, and mixes solid 3D polygons for the pitch and shimmering/pulsating textures for the competing cars.



The overhead camera than watching the 3D action. Winning often seems more down to luck than any skill on the player's part.



Wild Wheels can best be described as 3D Hot Off with cars. Two teams of five high-speed high-armorered machines compete for the right to shoot a giant steel ball around an arena.

WILD WHEELS

Go for a spin with OCEAN's car-based future sport



The arena is made your way up from the bottom rung Alpha League through Beta, Gamma, Delta and so on to become League Champions. It's brutally tough, lose one match and you're out.



Wild Wheels can best be described as 3D Hot Off with cars. Two teams of five high-speed high-armorered machines compete for the right to shoot a giant steel ball around an arena.

Professional mode the player pushes up/down to accelerate/decelerate and left and right to rotate the car. The idea is that beginners start in Arcade mode and 'graduate' to Professional, but I found Professional the better control method right from the start.

When a game the points scored are converted into cash which can be used to equip the team with a new car. Although the cheaper models only vary a minor way such as how well their tyres grip or how quickly they accelerate, some of the more expensive models are fitted with unique add-ons like giant metal jaws or nitroxy tubes. The higher-powered vehicles require special licenses or insurance that can only be earned by taking over the bonus files mentioned earlier.

Thus, player interest is sustained by both the urge to find out what the various unique features of the more expensive vehicles do and by the need to 'earn' certain items before these cars can be used. And while these help, they still don't compensate for the lack of real skill or strategy needed to succeed.

TEAM SPIRIT

You can build your team from any combination of these five car types:

STRIDER - This is the car you need. The quality of its playing is up to you!

KILLER - Actually works out the opponent's weaker vehicles to use in its addition.

BLOCKER - Likes to protect your car by getting itself between the Strider and the opponent's Strider.

FETCHER - Attempts to herd the ball towards the Strider.

GUARD - Protects the goal mouth and tries to block any shots.



For the complete list of stats for all car types, visit our website at www.ocean.com. You'll also find out how to get the most out of your Wild Wheels experience.

AMIGA

738

AMIGA

RELEASE DETAILS

| | | |
|-----------|--------|--------|
| AMIGA | 075.99 | 087.99 |
| AT 486 CD | 075.99 | 087.99 |

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ELF

OCEAN takes us on a magical mystery tour

To only fail to say that, while Ocean chooses to distribute original software only very rarely, since Eidos, the fruits of its endeavours are usually very fully realised. From the 'Good Old Days' of Head-On-Hero and Match Day to the more recent F2D Retaliator and Battle Command, Ocean's original products have often proved themselves to be considerably more appealing than many of the firm's licensed wares. Here to continue this trend, Ocean is promoting a higher proportion of original games in its future line-ups - and if they're all of the same high-quality of E3, that can't be a bad thing.

The game casts you as a brave little Elf called Cornelius, whose girlfriend Eliza has been abducted by Necrious, the Mad Vexy Nix. Setting her back involves rifting your way through eight levels of Tolkien-esque fantasy work, starting out in the forest near Cornelius' hometown and ending in the castle of Necrious himself, where Eliza is slowly being lowered into a vat of boiling liquid. Good thing!

What of the transition to its six levels of multi-directional scrolling platform action with some lefty shoot-'em-up overtones. It's a little like Rick Dangerous meets Ghouls 'n' Ghosts meets Lord Of The Rings. There's an unremarkably strong Dungeons 'n' Dragons feel to the whole adventure, spiced with a smidgen amount of fantasy. The result, as you back, slay and leap your way through the densely inhabited landscapes, works well, with the pungent atmosphere doing a lot to add to the overall effect.

Each of the six levels is like a giant maze. Enemies will surely stain their pants over Necrious comprising all manner of platforms, ladders and dangerous enemy-scaping devices. To protect himself against the latter, Cornelius has some primitive magic power



Which, like sleep, the slaying of the Necrious' army of spell-thief gnomes from your perspective. The specific features, from those you can collect an equipment (you can see an example)

allowing her to fire initial sets of energy, and a variety of special powers are available from the level shops, should you be lucky enough to find it. Here, magic spells can be purchased in exchange for herbs and animals that Cornelius collects along his travels. The most prized and expensive transform Cornelius into a Hero (as indicated by him wearing a flabby pair of shackles) who is impervious to the shots fired by enemies, and a Wolf who can fall any height without taking himself.

At the end of each level there's a guardian that needs slaying. Each one, when killed, relinquishes a green crystal that are used to gain access to Necrious' chamber on the final level. Getting there, however, is by no means easy. Each level presents its own unique problems, and so new strategies and playing styles need to be developed to overcome them. The common thread, however - platform obstinacy and ready-bashing - hangs together well and remains appealing throughout. It may not be everyone's cup of tea, but it's a quality romp, and one that will keep variety-starved platform fans busy into the small hours, at least.

by Brett White



Platformers are certainly fun, but they are not only boring, they are also not what you want to play. And platformers are probably the most common type of game that you will play on your computer. So if you are looking for a new game to play, you should consider a platformer.



The line graph shows a curve that starts at 0, rises to a peak of 100, and then falls back to 0. The y-axis is labeled 'P.T.C.' and the x-axis is labeled 'Time'.

| AMIGA | |
|-------|------|
| 810 | 100% |
| 100% | 100% |
| 100% | 100% |
| 100% | 100% |

| RELEASED DETAILS | | |
|------------------|------|------|
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| ATARI ST | 100% | 100% |



Platform games are not what you want to play. And platformers are probably the most common type of game that you will play on your computer. So if you are looking for a new game to play, you should consider a platformer.

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The line graph shows a curve that starts at 0, rises to a peak of 100, and then falls back to 0. The y-axis is labeled 'P.T.C.' and the x-axis is labeled 'Time'.



PC

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DIAL A DISK

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A PHONE CALL
AWAY!





Mount the clones can be used as a fence around the main castle, allowing the pigs to swing up to different heights. Their basic skills are the same riding a roller coaster (see our list below) but they can go off and do their own thing.

give-aways to bring out behind the main castle as he runs along and jumps about. Tapping fences causes them to swing around the main gate in a big circle, clattering anything in range. But every hit causes one of the clones to disappear, so they have to be used wisely.

At the coin's end, the pig must battle one of the Wolf Lord's henchmen. Rather than being a epic slug-fest, the two-fees play 'stone/hammer' school* - but with a twist. If the pig wins then the player has to hit him to strike the buddy before he ducks. If the pig loses then the player has to defend against attack by pulling back on the joystick. Combat continues until the pig or the buddy is crushed into submission.

Perhaps it's a touch of nostalgia for Marvel Land's 'old-style' gameplay, but this is by far the best game I've played this month. It's easy to pick up, easy to control and easy to like. There are enough surprises and novelties to keep interest going, and a persistent system means that you can cut past the boring bits. Hell, I'm even starting to like the graphics...

— **David Shepherd**

Thanks to Electronic Classics (081 889 1412) for the loan of this review copy.

MARVEL LAND

Marvels will never cease! NAMCO prove that you can make a silk purse from a sow's ear

Just what is going on? On the one hand you have Sonic the Hedgehog and Alien Storm setting new graphic standards, and on the other you have Wonder Special and now Marvel Land and another pending spin-off that look more suited to a old game circa 1986. Perhaps the Japanese facilities into style graphics cuts and unusual characters? Strange people, the Japanese!

However, whatever your nationality, there's one thing everyone agrees that a game should have to make it special, and that's addictiveness. So let's give credit where it's due and admit it: Marvel Land has this magic ingredient in dozens of large buckets.

No big surprises, it's your usual old rubbish and his helpless family who have been kidnapped by the wicked Wolf Lord. The status dog has placed nine of the fences in each of the four areas of Marvel Land, and it's up to you to be loosed in the game to break through the normal level's making up each area and move them.

The gamey/hark back to the Good Ol' Days like days, with lots of bottomless gaps, really low, crumbling ledges, levitating lifts, moving platforms and - of course - wandering enemies. However, as a concession to those gill-breathed fans, the pig can hop the ledges like a new trick by jumping on their heads.

Items and power-ups can be discovered by clicking pig-golden chests. Most attractive is the 'time power', which causes a bunch of



It's a little bit of the old but with a new twist. Have you seen riding a pig? You can't see that on the screen but it's possible.



The clock of the time! The monster's intention is to capture a pig and to take against the monster's attack.



Available in some areas, the pig can hop the ledges like a new trick by jumping on their heads. This is the most interesting thing you can do in the game.

At last, real shoot-'em-up action hits the Famicom - but just how Super is IREM's souped-up conversion of its own coin-op classic?

SUPER R-TYPE

While the majority of us might feel it difficult to take pity on those who are fortunate enough to own Super Famicoms, there has, even since the machine's appearance, been a gaping void in their gaming lives. They may be well served with platform games (Super Mario World), beat-'em-ups (Final Fight) and racing games (F-Zero), but apart from the technique-driven 3-D tactical shooters that have been on a state-level and take-aim-water-shed as far as shoot-'em-ups are concerned - at least until now. And what better way to bring some real action to Nintendo's 16-bit wonder than with a turbocharged version of the best shoot-'em-up of recent times?

Actually, what you're getting with Super R-Type is R-Type II with knobs on. Quite a lot of knobs in fact, and they're less ones at that. It's nice to see that Irem's designers have gone to the effort

of bolting on a few extra bits and bobs, rather than just going through the motions of jacking over the coin-op, even if not all of the new additions hit their target.

The majority of the game's seven levels are in fact straight out of R-Type II, but there are a couple of original worlds - the first one you play, for example, has you blasting through a densely packed wasteland. In addition, there are a couple of excellent new power-ups - one that fires a wave of high-speed shots, and a rather nasty cluster bomb that acts like missiles, but explodes violently after a few seconds' flight, taking everything caught in the explosion with it. They're great. A new field has been added to the Super Beam weapon too - if it's held for too long without firing, it overheats and reverts back to the regular beam and has to be powered up again. A nice touch, that.

One of the more impressive new options is a skill-level selector that can be set to Easy, Normal or Hard. The latter two is a real test, as it not only gets very stingy in the way it does out power-ups, but it increases the intelligence of the alien greatly, so they're not only at your current position, but also at where they anticipate you're going to be in a second or two's time. Very nasty. There's also a rather nice intro sequence that shows the R2-fighter being prepared for

PVC

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SUPER FAMICOM

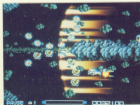
RELEASE DETAILS
SUPER FAMILIAR 15000 - 15000 (15000)

combat and blasting off towards the final empire. Completely useless, of course, but very nice all the same.

On the manual front, there are a couple of little nuggets. For some reason (probably the crap art team wanted to prove they know how to use the Famicom's background-scaling technology), the screen fades out and back in again before the confrontation with the end-of-level boss, and the result looks rather cheap and fragmented. Also, when the game gets tough, the action starts flickering and slowing down - not much, but enough to distract slightly from the action. This, however, is a small price to pay for the amazing synth-rock riffs that are on show here, and the game has a tremendous feeling of chunkiness and weight, so that when the Beam weapon blows something up (for example, the visual and aural effect really packs a punch), unlike the rather firm "boom boom-boom" explosions that 16-bit gamers so often have to put up with.

Having then for the first really good shoot-'em-up on the Famicom, it's got everything you could want and more, and comes at a price that at a time when frustrated Famicom owners seem just about to go over the edge through shoot-'em-up desperation. Go for it!

— Gary White



Several backgrounds with a fairly hefty amount of scrolling is the only way to work through the stages, even a life and you're still well within about 10 minutes.

With Super R-Type, Irem's Super R-Type is anything but impressive when it comes to the game, even a life and you're still well within about 10 minutes.



Just don't forget the Super Beam! It's the most of the original's fun, but it's also a bit more complex to use. And it's also a bit more complex to use.



Even in its best and worst, the original's fun is never really lost, when it's firing on and holding the button down still longer, the beam turns into a Super Beam which, when fired, spreads out across the screen in little blobs, launching EVERYTHING.

R-TYPE II

ACTIVISION comes up trumps with its conversion of the sequel to Irem's modern arcade classic

What's going on? Don't tell me that we're forgetting our roots. With the occasional exception of games like *2600*, which succeed solely on doing anything new, but by sheer force of nostalgia, the year-old arcade Master has been floundering a bit of late. What makes it so? It's not because of gamers opting for "deeper" games, and more due to the sheer lack of inspiration and originality that is spreading like a cancer through the shoot-'em-up genre.

When the disease has not yet reached America or Japan, as last year's crop of coin-op offerings was as fit and healthy as ever, in particular the top-notch sequel to the game that took the shoot-'em-up world and spawned teams down the Eastern Of The Last Ark—the seminal first *R-Type*. Making the sensible decision not to bid farewell too much with the original game play, *R-Type II* designers opted instead to build around the existing framework, adding newer tactics, designing more torturous landscapes and generally souping the whole thing up into a high score, turbocharged GTE version.

For a while, it looked as though problems of balance might sour its conversion of *R-Type*. *Paladin* was over-released, but thanks to fresh fire The Disc Company stepping in to save the day, at least that is put up with to a slight delay. But has the wait been worth it?

There's certainly plenty to get you slavering to make you tear off the telephone. It's been



When the Super Beam is fired, it spreads out across the screen in little blobs, launching EVERYTHING.

commented by Art Developments, which has a long and prestigious track record, including titles like *Dragon Riders* and *Crack Down*. And once the action gets started it becomes apparent that—at least in this case—podgame counts for a lot, as the team have played a hand in bringing the sequel to the small screen.

The storyline—such as it is—runs thus—years after getting a right old pounding from you in the original *R-Type*, the evil *Sydo* Empire has been licking its wounds and re-training its forces in preparation for another attempt to spread its vile tentacles throughout the galaxy. With a number of powerful planets already in its grasp, you've been recalled to once again leap into your trusty *RX* fighter and hit the *Sydo* where it hurts before they seize control of the universe. Good.

For the most part, the gameplay remains the same and fans of the original will have no problems at all getting back into the saddle. So (as opposed to the original's agitated horizontally-scrolling levels) avoid you, as you battle from left to right through the alien hordes towards the mother alien that awaits at the end of each world. Handy unfamiliar stuff of course, but like *2600*'s exor-

ence of execution and not originally that impressive. However, things do start to get slightly dodgy when you begin to realize just how similar the game is to its classic daddy. The look, the weapons and power-ups are the same, so are many of the aliens and even some of the level-designs create a remarkable feeling of déjà vu. A nice touch is the new *RX*'s beam weapon. As before, holding down the fire button powers-up your laser into a tremendous bolt of plasma energy that tears through anything in its path. But if you dare to fire on and hold the button down still longer, the beam turns into a Super Beam which, when fired, spreads out across the screen in little blobs, launching EVERYTHING.

While the approval fan fans of the original will be impressed, seems to get dragged out of the cupboard every time a sequel is released, in this case, quite the opposite is true. If you bought the original, you might feel a twinge bit cheated to see that this isn't radically different—at least not enough to justify a 62% rating. If, however, you're coming into it clean, or are enough of an *R-Type* fanatic, is not care, if *R-Type* fans are already well-served by the best 16-bit shoot-'em-up since *2600*. And that can't be half bad.

■ Gary White



THE GEAR



COLUMNS

Columns, blessed with the exciting challenge of lining up lots of similarly coloured blocks, is now available for the Game Gear. Clearly pitched at Tetris fans, this variant on the theme is either a novel twist teaching the player different prioritising abilities, or glorified 2D Snap – depending on who you listen to.

A narrow strip down the centre of the screen is gradually filled by falling bars. Instead of rotating the bars to make building blocks complete lines, the player must cycle through the order of the blocks, endeavouring to place similar coloured next to each other. A line of three or more

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RELEASE DETAILS

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colours – whether diagonal, horizontal or vertical – will disappear, scoring points. Causing previous lines to separate blocks to fall down and form new lines scores extra knock-on points.

For variety's sake a bunch of extra graphics have been included, enabling the player to opt to try to line up similar fruits/ice/prints, etc. The size of the screen, however, and the nature of the graphics means that most of these (especially the dice, which are visually indistinguishable from one another) simply make the game more difficult in the same way that all games are more difficult if you squint or put jam on the screen.



Personally, I have a big problem with Columns. Perhaps it's too much Tetris, or some cerebral deficiency, but I find it impossible to plan ahead when trying to align colours as opposed to stacking. The result is that instead of building shapes, I end up simply trying to dispose of the current block as swiftly as possible, hardly a winning strategy.

Also, I find it slightly impossible to accurately predict the results of knock-on effects, since the colours all tend to fall down and knock out each other in particularly unexpected ways.

It should be clear, however, that many people find Columns particularly satisfying, and there's no doubt that in normal (logically-minded) people the graphics are large and clear enough to make it an ideal Tetris journey's worth of fun, if not much more.

■ **Jim Bagley**

PSYCHIC WORLD

Colon's been hijacked by some nasty ones there... Her sister Lucia needs your help to save her! Will you out-think such a well-oiled and imaginative cry for help? Not me, that's for sure.

So what do we have here then? A side-scrolling arcade adventure with precise title to recommend it, apart perhaps for its novelty-bug title.



The Psychic World is, to be sure, a fairly odd place. It's full of plates and flares and funny beasts. The 'nasty creatures' description is actually very accurate, since they're probably the best appearing collection of bug-eyed environments I've seen in quite some time. Neither scary or interesting, they're quite surprisingly appealing as they bounce around the screen on their little platforms, following their silly attack patterns and sapping your energy.

Dealing with the creatures is simple enough, the majority throwing a single shot before coming out. There are, of course, the obligatory end-of-stage monsters such as the big triffid which sports clearly visible all over the screen and tries to trip you up with its roots. Big deal.

Progress further into the game is rewarded by newlock locations and encounters with more selections of loathly monsters.

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RELEASE DETAILS

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Psychic World has about as much character as a shop dummy. It's got all the elements you'd expect to make a decent game but it has absolutely nothing to make it stand out from the (growing) crowd.

Hardly the Best Game Gear title available.

■ **Jim Bagley**

R HUNTER

A veritable plethora of new Game Gear releases this month, three from Virgin and a rather excellent shoot-'em-up from Japan

HALLEY WARS



PIC

780

GAME GEAR

SHAMUSAM £29.99 OUT NOW/Import

Halley Wars, currently only available on import in the UK, deserves mention at this early stage simply because it's probably the best shoot-out the Game Gear has to offer. Carefully designed to show off the machine's sprite handling abilities, Halley Wars offers a swift learning-curve of play and plenty of variety.

In the cockpit of the rebel forces' most advanced fighter, the player must fly up the screen, swooshing alien ships and ground installations with his over-expandable arsenal of weapons.

Power-ups are mined from asteroids drifting around the space lanes. Shoot down the asteroids and collect the spacecaps/booster enhancements. Protective force fields and drone pods which fly around behind you can also be earned.

The alien attack waves are simple enough to form recognisable patterns to begin with. A smart piece of design, since losing a ship will result in the loss of your last power-up and when you return to the game, the asteroids at the start of each tricky stage are rich in weapons, so even continuing with no extras in the later stages doesn't become pointless.

Inevitably, the long-term appeal will wear once completed, but Halley Wars still provides enough mindless entertainment for the price.

■ *Jim Douglas*

Thanks to Stephana Connors (081 899 8412) for loan of this review cartridge.

G-LOC

In the big block of Fall Orders, converting G-loc into a hard-hold system sounds extremely tight. Unfortunately, the Game Gear version bears few similarities to the core, losing none of the aesthetic appeal of what was basically a graphic-novelty game.

That being the case, G-LOC is forced to cut an incredibly sticky-wicket, since even the original could hardly be said to boast anything but the slightest edge.

The player relies on the war-torn future world through-trip person perspective out of the cockpit of his state-of-the-art jet fighter as enemy jets, tanks and warships attack.

Being selected which area of the map the alien wishes to fight in, he is treated as to his mean-three 18 planes, Destroy 5 tanks, etc.)

and it's off into the blue yonder to do some good.

After getting to grips with the controls (particularly easy, except it's a shame that pulling back on the typical pushes the plane's nose down it won't be long before the radar starts beeping, warning of enemy forces in the area. If they turn out to be planes, they'll swoop, occasionally behind the player's aircraft and launch a missile attack. Locking on with his own missiles and bullets, the G-loc warrior can return fire, successfully downing enemy planes in satisfying bursts of fame.

Tanks and tanks are somewhat less vital bringing, behaving more like sitting ducks than their real-life equivalents. These too can be dispatched using missiles or bullets.

And indeed, all of the combat and the flying is decent enough, and entertaining for a few hours, but let's be honest, it's all been seen so many, many times before. And unfortunately the cockpit for the ground, instead of being super-intel and skilled, are rubbishy triangle-like planes of rubber.

Only G-LOC fanatics need apply.

■ *Jim Douglas*



PIC

680

GAME GEAR

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let's hear it for

THE



Only the Red October (right) is a submarine simulator, and the submarine title that the others you will regard as strange to the rest, for the rest.

Eight things are floating up there the surface, with an enemy submarine, meaning forward you into an intense, fast-paced action.



THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER

When Tom Clancy's naval techno-thriller was topping the best-seller lists, back in the mid-eighties, nobody seemed as enthralled about the computer game potential, strong though it was, took reviews just aren't "easy" in the minds of reviewers. As soon as the film appeared, however, it was a different story. *Grand Slam* was quick to change up its original format and turn out a fast-paced arcade game to cash in on the movie's record-breaking success, and now it's surfaced on the GameBoy.

As renegade sub-commander Marko Romanov, your mission is clear: the client requests Red October and defeat with it to the West is represented by a series of shoot-up-style probing levels - it's eminently similar to *Grand Slam*'s game, in fact. Steering the sub

through the torturous underwater caverns is tough enough, and things are complicated by the assortment of Russian spy craft including choppers, subs and missile boats that are out to sink you.

Weapons come in the form of straight-line torpedoes and the more sophisticated homing missiles, which must be collected as you progress. A novel touch is the Catalyst Drive feature - if things get too hot, the sub can be put on silent drive for a few moments, rendering it invisible to enemy ships and torpedoes. There's also an interesting two-player feature, where the second player commands the Russian fleet and tries to sink the October.

It's all very simple stuff, and if you enjoyed the book or movie, you're likely to be left with a bad taste in your mouth, as such a basic arcade game simply doesn't do justice to the weighty subject matter - Heaven knows what Clancy himself thinks. Enjoyable stuff all the same, and still cut enough to keep even the most seasoned *Gambler* fiends on their toes.

— Guy White

RED OCTOBER

780

RELEASE DETAILS

GAMEBOY 129.95 OUT NOW! Import

PAC MAN

Oh yow! guts is back! Yes, the Pac Man comeback tour continues - this time on GameBoy City! Last month the system computer was caught taking through *PacLand* on the Lynx, and this month *Narcia* takes you further into the Pac (back)catalogue with this conversion of the timeless original.

You're probably well aware of the complex - but - plot, but for gaming new-comers or those with the memory span of a goldfish, here it is: guide Pac Man around a maze, eating the dots (forming

PAC MAN

796

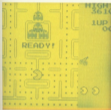
RELEASE DETAILS

GAMEBOY 129.95 OUT NOW! Import

the pathway while avoiding four nasty Ghosts. Pac Man isn't defunct - by eating special Power Pills that reside in the far corners of the maze, our plucky yellow-bellied, light grey-tinted hero can turn the tables on his other partners and munch on them for a big bonus.

The game can be played in one of two ways: either full-screen view, or quarter-screen scrolling view. Both methods have problems: the former's small graphics make it hard to tell between-dot (ly) and eatable Ghosts, while the latter's restricted window make it hard to plan route strategies (the more perches of the two Ghosts).

BOY!



Get ready for the action... after the standard tests to get away from advertising, because once you're back, you're on the forward battlefield too. Boy!



Go! The black action screen takes the form of this state of the art Boy! screen. (Screenshot by Boy!)

Boy! (Screenshot by Boy!)

computer's "game over" line to fall slightly. As the game progresses the playing units get tighter and tighter until eventually one player is forced to lose!

While *Matrix* isn't as immediately "kick up" as *Tetris* or as heart-pounding fast paced, it doesn't take that long to get a handle on how the game works, and it's just as engaging and addictive as its Russian forerunners. If you want to get ahead, get *Matrix*.

David Upshaw



CHOPPER II

Don Colin's classic

Chopper first

appeared via Intellivision in

1983, and is still a

fondly remembered

favorite today. Now

there's no need to chat

your dusty old 84 and

the ugly wiring out of the

cupboard in order to

enjoy it—now all you have

to do is pop the cart into

your slot.

Converting such an old

classic to the *Play* is a

pretty tall order of

anything—but the job has

been handled admirably,

with only the inevitable

differences in graphic

scale caused by the

physical size of the



As these games continue to come to the Play, it's time to get in on the classic action.



screen causing gameplay differences. You're cast as a crack helicopter rescue pilot whose job is to extract survivors from a series of war-torn horizontally-scrolling scenarios—it's a little like *Defender*, really.

While tanks and fixed artillery take potshots at you, you've got to avoid the fire and land in the correct places to pick up the frantic survivors sitting still on the ground and waiting for them to get on board can get pretty hairy at times, then ferry them back to base. A level is completed when the required amount of survivors are associated successfully.

To add action to the proceedings, you're

Probably the most exciting thing about this deal from the past is the two-player link-up option. Players compete head-to-head in a number of rounds, and any *Choppers* taken by one player appear in the other player's maze! It's a smacking twist and injects new life into an old theme.

Overall *Play Matrix* the same derives from "bad", which means "bad" in Japanese has converted well to Nintendo's hardware. All the groundbreaking playing tricks you found as a rock-a-dipper still work, and more of *Play Matrix*'s charm has diminished over the years. While coin-ops regret the lack of mazes (there's just the one in effect), most will find this a more than welcome addition to their software library.

David Upshaw



MATRIX

You can't help a good game designer down. Akira Futabayashi, the designer of *Tetris*, is back! And, in partnership with Taito America, he's written yet another using an old-school.

Like all great puzzle games, the basic concept is extremely simple. Pairs of different hats fall down or "fall." By moving the pair left or right or waiting to "tumble hats" position, the



player has to try and stack hats of same type. Stack five hats together and they disappear. The longer you survive, the faster the hats fall. If a stack reaches a line at the top of the screen then the game's over.

Score a *Matrix* by completing two stacks at the same time and the player earns a *breakout*, which can be fired down a line to destroy the top-hat. Even better, stacking up three *breakouts* rewards the player with a *hammer*, which crushes all the hats in one line.

Like *Tetris*, two players can play head-to-head where completing a stack causes the



armed with a cannon and a limited number of bombs and nuclear missiles is drop-in ground enemies. To make things more difficult, you've also got top-to-bottom streams of steam clouds and flying bats, both of which can dozer your chopper.

Although Chopper looks and feels considerably more classic/placid than its eight-year-old dad, it's still a damn fine play, with plenty of variety later levels take you out to sea and into underground caverns. Toughness-wise, it sits just on the fine line between addiction and frustration, but like all the best games never crosses over it. The top three bump up for sheer fun value.

■ Guy West

BUBBLE BOBBLE

Bubbly and bubbly! Unfortunately, this latest incarnation of Tat's cabin two-player classic is nothing to foam at the mouth about—unless it's frustration. Bubble Bobble did the rounds on computer about three years back courtesy of Epyx, and with considerable success on all systems. Here, however, it's a whole different kettle of bananas.

The lack of a two-player edition (one of the original's best features) and a disorienting omission here has led to a change in storyline. With Bub back in bed, his brother Bob has to venture into the cave of monsters and recover the Moon Water, which will make him feel better.

This involves bubbling your way through 99 monster-infested levels. The basic gameplay remains the same—jump about the platforms, trap the monsters inside the bubbles, then fund



the bubbles to turn them into jammy but, when they're all gone, you can progress. Special bubbles and bonus items pop up along the way to provide variety.

The biggest problem with *Atari* that the converters, anxious to keep the cutesy graphics recognizable, have done everything to scale (which means you can't see the whole play area at once any more—you have to scroll around it). This can lead to frequent disorients and Game Over which aren't the player's fault because you can't see where the monsters are. Bad idea. Also, the levels have been completely redesigned to go along with the new display format, and to top it all it doesn't even feel much like the original. Fans of the original may well be pleased the original music has survived intact, but for everyone else, it's a bit of a suffer fest.

■ Guy West



MICKEY'S DANGEROUS CHASE

If you can't level 'em, join 'em. With Mario having topped Mickey as the most instantly recognizable character in 2D video, Mickey's obviously trying to regain some street cred in his own platform case.

The plot is typical Disney, i.e. non-event and more than a little sad. Mickey has bought a lovely big jumbo for his beloved Minnie (Pine for example), but Big Bad Pete has swiped it! Bad Hiaw. Taking on the role of either Mickey or Minnie, the player has to chase the villain through five levels of action, each split into three stages.

The first two stages are platform-based, with Mickey rising over a horizontally-scrolling landscape, jumping across platforms and avoiding the mouse-bubbling wildlife that "mouse-bubbling" is really in Disney's honey-dew world over "bubbly" anything. Mickey can dispatch the almost-sentient by pecking up any nearby coins and lobbing it at them. Some special casts also contain various point and health bonuses.

The final stage cranks the game's pace up a notch as Mickey cannons around the screen while driving a variety of high-speed vehicles or leaping from some balloons. The aim here is basically to screen from one end of the level to the other avoiding trouble and grabbing goodies.

It's all very nice, though the graphics are a bit bad compared to the gorgeous softies and backdrops seen in Duck Tales. It's a bit of a paradox that while the game takes aim at the difficulty of being a little kid, this is a gift because otherwise Mickey would be the perfect game for a younger player.

■ David Quigley

Photo by Matt Hume/Amiga.com (left) and (right) for the beauty of the cartoon-style cartooned hero.



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TNT

Tricks 'n' Tactics

Super Mario World

After all my hard work, I feel there was a bit of a problem with last month's guide around Mario World - there were no errors, showing you which of the locations the tips were referring to (but I guess I was). This month we're reprinting all last week's tips (all present and correct) this time along with the rest of the undercover area.

Got a bumper bundle this month! There's the conclusion to the Space Quest IV guide, the Gods quest continues, there's the first trip to Monkey Island, Super Mario World in full, more Prince of Persia hacks and... a secret room found in Megadrive Strider. Curiouser and curiouser...

Mario gets his 1-up in the forest at the end of the level, but it's only for the right time (he's not yet 100% yet) - the 1-up is a power-up that gives you 100% health. You can't get it until you've beaten the level. The 1-up is a power-up that gives you 100% health.

A red pipe, like the one in the forest, is a secret room. It's a secret room that gives you 100% health. It's a secret room that gives you 100% health.

One of the great things in Super Mario World is the 1-up. It's a power-up that gives you 100% health. It's a power-up that gives you 100% health. It's a power-up that gives you 100% health.

Right at the end of the level, just before the 1-up, there's a 1-up. It's a power-up that gives you 100% health. It's a power-up that gives you 100% health. It's a power-up that gives you 100% health.



One of the great things in Super Mario World is the 1-up. It's a power-up that gives you 100% health. It's a power-up that gives you 100% health. It's a power-up that gives you 100% health.

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A red pipe, like the one in the forest, is a secret room. It's a secret room that gives you 100% health. It's a secret room that gives you 100% health. It's a secret room that gives you 100% health.

IN THE WOODS...

Just past the half-way point, you'll find a yellow circle. A blue gemstone is positioned above you where it should be. Moving you where it is, you'll find the yellow gem. After you find it, you'll see the gemstone and you'll have to get to the yellow gem.



You should have no trouble finding your way to the yellow gem. You'll find the yellow gem in the center of the yellow circle.

The yellow gem is in the center.

An eye collection in the end of the trail, you should see a yellow gem. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem.

In your search, you'll find a yellow gem. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem.

INSIDE THE ROCK DRAGON'S MOUTH...

You'll get to the yellow gem in the center. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem.



You'll find a yellow gem in the center. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem.

In the blue stage, you should see an eye. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem.

UNDER THE MOUNTAIN...



You'll get to the yellow gem in the center. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem.

You should see a yellow gem in the center. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem.

SECRET ISLAND



STAR ISLAND

You'll get to the yellow gem in the center. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem.



You'll get to the yellow gem in the center. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem.

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In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem. In the center of the yellow gem, you'll find the yellow gem.

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The Secret Of Monkey Island

Luciferian seems to do no wrong with their pirate adventures, and this island is the series' is a fine example of their craft. Here's our list of things to do in Scotland with the best part of the complete solution...

GETTING STARTED

Look at the menu board, then walk right and enter the Gourm Inn. Once inside, talk to the fat pirate beside the door and then to the pirate in black at the table, namely about the Governor and LeChuck. Go to the next room and start a conversation about wanting to be a pirate with the important-looking pirates. Find out more about the three trials, and then bid them farewell.

Wait until the cook leaves, the kitchen and then go to the first room, then speak into the kitchen. Put the piece of meat in the pot of stew, then remove the stewed meat. Take the pot under the table that the meat was on.

Open the door to the dock and a girl will fly down and start eating some fish. Walk to the right of the dock, then stop at the plank the fish is eating on. Repeat this process until the girl eats the fish while the dock is in mid-flight. Once you have the meat, fish and pot, leave the village and access the map of the island.

Travel to the clearing and enter the circus tent. Wait until you entered at the Pegasus flies quickly, then when allowed to perform their morning tale, ask how much it's worth. Agree to be offer of 430 pieces of eight and when asked if you have a safety helmet, say yes and view from the pot. Perform the stunt and stage go back to town.

Go to the store of Meles and buy the map, if you want you can also get two pieces of eight and some minutes from the pirates nearby. Visit the jail and check out the odious prisoner, then go to the store and buy the sword, the stew and the meat items. Examine the visitor from the play and feed him to reveal the thief. Go back to the jail and start a conversation with the prisoner, after leaving down his breath with the meat. Visit the wooden lady, making sure to get the rubber chicken on the table. You are now ready to face your trials...

TRIAL 1: MASTERY OF THE SWORD

Go to the house in the south-east. When chased by the Troll, ask about the toll and give him the fish (actually a red feather). Once at the house, read the sign and knock on the door. Pretend that you do know "what it takes" and Captain Smirk does agree to train you. Pay him 500 pieces of eight.

After you've been trained, wait on one of the balls until a pirate crosses your path and give him a light. You'll almost certainly lose the first fight, but you'll remember the good advice in later fights: use any new results until someone else has the sword (usually yourself). These are necessary to win the battle with the Second Baron. Once you've defeated at least three people you're ready to fight the Master.

Enter the forest and search for a location with a signpost on a bridgehead. Pull the sign



and a secret bridge appears. Go across and challenge the Second Master (for it is tied to a fight. Although she uses different insults you should by now have correct reports for each).

When you win, take the Tablet and leave. If you are beaten, do not return to the forest again (unless you're particularly masochistic), as once you've discovered the secret lesson you can't go to the map till the point of light inside the forest, away from any traps.

TRIAL 2: TREASURE HUNTING

Re-enter the forest and consult the map. The dance steps correspond to directions in the forest, with back meaning backwards into the screen. At one point you should encounter a plant with bright yellow flowers - remove one of its petals for later use. Once you have found the treasure site, read the plaque and marker, then dig up the marked ground. Collect the "treasure" and return to the Gourm Inn to bring off your success.

TRIAL 3: THEWEIY

Go to the Governor's mansion, and use the yellow pot with the meat. Feed the dog the dropped meat and enter the house. Fill the Ming vase and enter the door beside the entrance. After the lengthy scene that ensues, return to the jail and trade (It's the gopher repellent for his carrot cake. Open the cake and feed the fish. Return to the mansion and leap through the wall once more and again the boy, often apprehended by the Sheriff, claim that the idol was given to you by the Governor.

Visit the Governor with your eloquence then leave the mansion, remembering to take the vase as you leave. Use this opportunity to insult Fester, as everything you say results in you being dropped in the sea, along with the idol. Hang around later, all Gorbunius claims to be able to hold his breath for ten minutes until hope of television comes (and goes), then pick up the idol and make good your escape.

That's all for now. Move on with the scary news about death!



Space Quest IV

The madness continues in this, the second half of AD&D's complete solution to Sierra's fantastic graphics adventure. Once again, warm thanks to Dave Dreizin from Artberg in Belgium for all his hard gaming, remember - the term "clicking" means clicking with the hand cursor unless otherwise stated.

PART 1: SPACE QUEST 1 - THE BARRIN ENDANGERED

You appear next to the Credits-R-U shop at Urania Flats. Go south and enter the bar. Walk up to the microphone guys at the bar. Once you are thrown outside, get your revenge by sandblasting the nearby land bikes. Do this by clicking on the bikes. After the animation sequence you'll find yourself at Troy's Used Spacecraft shop.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If at any time you hear a whining sound approaching, stand still until a blue flashing "X" and when it does, click the walk cursor anywhere on the screen.

Go east and enter the bar again. Walk up to the bartender and take the book of matches from the left corner of the bar. Now, go back to your time pod and click on it. Tap in the coordinates that were on the display the very first time you entered the timespod (i.e. at the supercomputer's landing bay).

PART 2: SPACE QUEST 12 - VORHALL'S REVENGE 2

After arriving at the supercomputer, walk all the way east and click the X of both cursor on the door lock. After passing it, call up the inventory screen and click the book of matches cursor on the sign. Click [OK] to go back into the game. Now that you can see the laser beams, click on the device in the western wall and enter the numbers 140, 30 and 110 to get all the lasers vertical. Click [OK] to leave the keypad and walk through the lasers.

You'll find the text file easier to understand if you enter to the map.

Walk all the way north and take the last bar. Now take the first left bar: you come to and save the game. In the middle of the screen you should see a pillar. Walk a while and walk around it (i.e. walk north at the left side of the pillar). Then walk off the screen to the right - you should find yourself at the third screen.

Take the other way out of the left side of the screen (i.e. path in the middle left of the screen) and follow it all the way west. When you arrive in the strange room inside the supercomputer, click on the door: now enter this set of numbers: 6 9 4 5 8 8 7 6 6 9. The door should open.

Enter the programming room and you will find an overdriven user interface. First you must turn off the guard-droid system by putting the cheat disc in the toilet and then format the system by putting the bomb in the toilet. Icons are selected by clicking on them. Both get the SQRT icon in the toilet or you'll return to DOS. Instead follow the directions on the map to find your kidnapped son.

Eventually you should come across a fishy hint-puff. Fight him (it's pretty easy, but stay away from the edges just to be on the safe side). Once you've defeated him click on the ladder going down. When Roger returns, select the 3.15 floppy from your inventories and click its icon on the disc drive next to the beam. Load up the program on the disc and the one from the beam. Select (Roger 3) and push (beam down) to complete the game.



Gods

Feel so stoned? You may remember that last month I asked you how to get the gems on World 3. Well, Christopher Lawrence from Steelevale and David Accelero from Milton frames moral for you simply get to where the Stone Gargoles are, then go left and then when you get to the third platform jump into space. With luck you should land on the moving platform. Then jump onto the platform with the gems above it. As if by magic the ledge will disappear and the gems will drop down.

Your quest continues here, with the guide to Level 2 of the *BitMap Bros'* wondrous arcade adventure. No more ado, let's get on with it...

LEVEL 2

At the start, throw a switch means pull it down or push it up - depending on its current position - while toggle a switch means pull it down and then push it back up again.

IN THE SHOP

Stay with the throwing stars and bullets, and use your cash to up their power.



WORLD 1

Make sure you push the pressure pad to the right of the start position. Go left and down a little. Kill the monsters lining up across the gap, then jump across to pick up a gold key. Continue going down, then right.

You should find yourself near a door and a shield guarded by some spikes. A thief will appear. Don't kill him - let him get the shield then drop the key to attract him. Kill the thief, pick up the key and use the shield to get through the spikes. Throw the door switch. An autohatch key and a thief will appear. Position yourself in front of the door, then - just before the thief touches you - enter.

You'll be transported to a new room. Grab everything and drop down the shaft. At the bottom, take advantage of your shield by pressing the nearby pressure pad and killing any local bad guys. Once all your items, then go right to where the thief was. That's for him to get the key. Go and pick up your previously dropped items then return. The thief will approach you. Kill him and get the key.

The rest of the level's pretty straightforward. You've just got to find the ice gem, water gem and fire gem and take them individually to the

gem rooms in that order so that you can reach the World key. The ice gem is in the room at the top of a ladder by a treasure chest. The other two gems are found by killing ladders.

That there's a quicker way to get the World key. Take the ice gem to the gem room so that the key platform drops a little. Then toggle the door switch a couple of times to drop the teleport gem - this takes you to a bonus room. If you complete it properly you'll find a jump pad which you can use to jump up to the World key. Simple, what you know best.

WORLD 2

Jump onto the ladders you first come across to climb to a ledge with a choice on it. DON'T hit it - if the drop doesn't kill you the spikes at the bottom will. Throw the switch, then climb down the ladder and drop off the bottom. Go down the ladder to your right to collect a key.

Go back up the ladder and go right. You should come across three switches above two trapdoors. Throw the switch above the left trapdoor and then the switch above the right trapdoor. Drop down the now-opened-right trapdoor to find another choice.

Make your way back up and go right. You should come across a golden tunnel! Any return left and go down the pit of switches and trapdoors. At the bottom go through the door to your right to be teleported to the door to the ship room. Pick up the third and last choice and go through the door to enter the ship room. Pick up the two keys and drop all your choices before leaving.

Go left and down the ladders. Kill the monster on the platform to your right - a teleport crystal should appear. Use it to reach the treasure room. Now make your way to the World door...

IN THE SHOP

Buy as many spikes as possible.

WORLD 3

Having got the door key, throw the switch to the right of the door, then the switch to the left, then the switch to the right again - this should reveal a secret corridor. Incidentally, has any



are there a way to open this door?

Open the corridor are four doors. Enter the second one you come to to find a skull. Take this to the room behind the last door to be rewarded with a piece of mosaic, and a bottle of herbs. Take the herbs to the third room to find another mosaic fragment and a goblet. Take the goblet to the first room to get the third and final mosaic piece. Your reward for your restoration work is a teleport to a new dungeon area.

Go left, killing all the monsters as you go. Eventually some will drop a key. Go back right and throw the first switch on the level - a platform will appear letting you reach a secret chamber containing another key. Go back down the left to open a passage down to another secret room. Throw the switch in this room.

Go up and left to find some trapsdoors and switches making steps to an upper platform. As you jump up the steps, trigger all the switches you come across. Get the candlestick at the top-right and the key at the top-left of this area. Run down through the trapdoor in the upper platform. Go back right to the treasure room.

Return left and go down. Get the coals at the far left just past the spikes. The rest of this level is fairly straightforward through golem-like monsters where the treasure lay is. Remember to take the coals to the chapel for a big crystal reward. This will come in very handy against...

THE DRAGON

Drag the crystal to the left of the screen and stand between it and the dragon. The monster will aim its fire at the crystal leaving you free to kill him. Just crouching now and again to avoid the fireballs from its tail.

Strike, or tough, but your quest is only half over. Get ready for Level 2 - next month!



Strider

Not really a cheat this, but an interesting little featurette none-the-less. Did you know that there's a secret room on the second level? Nope! Well, neither did I, but here to show you how to find it is D. Roman of Edgewood in Middlesex.

From the beginning of the level, with the wolves and the giant robot gorilla! Well, once past these points, you should find your self riding an some rotating platform and under attack by guards and what not. Normally you roll this section by jumping up a small sloping passageway to climb above ground before you'll meet the phantom fighter!

Instead of doing this, jump into the stone wall just below where the passageway starts (as shown in the diagram). You should get stuck in the rocks and forced into the secret room. Don, scary! Kill the phantom fighter then go right to continue.

(Actually, I have an admission to make: after many goes I couldn't get into this super secret secret room. But then it's not the world's best Strider player - although I do try! Perhaps you'll have more luck! If you do find it, please write in.)



Prince Of Persia

Some time ago we posted a PC cheat in this, allowing you to kill any enemy swordman at the tap of a button. Well, it appears that this is just half the story. Seth-Gun Platt from Australia and Robby MacLary from Fla, Scotland have written in with lots of extra secrets.

As before, load the game from DOS by typing "PRINCE.MEGAINT". Then press the following keys during play for the required effects:

- R Kills any swordman instantly. **WARNING!** Don't use on skeletons.
- U View screen above.
- M View screen below.
- H View screen to the left.
- J View screen to the right.
- SHIFT Extra damage point.
- SHIFTs Flips screen.
- SHIFTs Advance one level.
- SHIFTs Makes you light as a feather (no damage falling off ledges).
- SHIFTs Blocks out non-essential objects (very useful).



THE
New
ORIGINALS

FROGGER

By Peter Molyneux out of Bullfrog



How would today's developers revamp their own favourite classics? ACE asks that very question in the first of an occasional series.

I does sound like a bit of a stretch, doesn't it? Frogger by Bullfrog? To be honest it wasn't Molyneux's first choice. When first approached with the idea, he instantly chose Ultimate's classic Knight Lore. Then deciding that wasn't such a good idea, he spent a day in deep contemplation before deciding "I want to do that caterpillar one. You know, Centipede." Then, while explaining why his Centipede would be so good, he threw in one last twist as the Frogger because bit him. And that was that.

Fortunately, it all fits in rather nicely, and there's more behind it than the rather tenuous similarity between the two games. Not only is it genuinely one of Peter's old favourites, but not too

long ago Bullfrog actually wrote its own version of the classic cat-and-mouse. When doing PowerFrogger, we were worried that the player might get bored while waiting for the game to load," Peter explains. "So we wrote Bullfrogger, which was basically a slightly tweaked-up version of the original Frogger that you could play while waiting. We got it finished and playable and everything."

However, it was at that point Bullfrog realised that were they to release such a game, even with another game, the chips of Gogo would be quite anxious to talk to them, using words like 'copyright', 'soliloquy' and 'twenty years hard labour', and so it was shelved. Now the game's got a few years of life—at least hypothetically—thanks to Molyneux's New Originals treatment.

"I think one of the reasons I chose Frogger is because it's an old classic that was very popular in the early days, but never got updated," explains Peter. "Asteroid became Asteroids, Breakout became Arkanoid, but nothing ever came of Frogger. Which I think is a shame because Frogger was the first ever game to have a cute character—something that's been very popular recently. The other thing I liked was that it had a down-to-earth theme. While all the other games had space mutants, here you had a frog trying to cross a road and a tree."

Peter believes that Frogger has plenty of potential for enhancement: using today's more sophisticated technologies and gameplay philosophies. "Purely from a technical point of view, there are all sorts of things you could do. The graphics would obviously be very important, and with the right use of colour and animation you could create a really nice wall and slippery feet that would be just right for Frogger. Yes, plenty of modifications."

According to Peter, the most useful application of any enhanced graphics would be to bring the



This is how Peter Molyneux's team envision Frogger would look in the artist's imagination. Bullfrog's graphics team had thought about making a similar Frogger for the new 3D hardware, but decided not to do it because they were not interested in doing a sequel to a game that was not their own. The illustration used, however, is not dangerous to drive over, and our names will never feature in the next version.

LEVEL BEST

to how long and the levels going to be short? "Oh, that'd be just one... uh... infinite lengths," says Peter. **THE BEAST?** "The problem with games with a definite end is that when you've completed it, you don't want to play again. In this game there wouldn't be an end to death, so the objective would just be to get on the next level. There's more content so you could have a definite point that would allow you to restart from there if you die.

"The way it works to like the little holes you form to jump into at the end of a screen," Frogger says. "You form, say, five tunnels or things, but only some of those will be usable in reality. There'll be a little clue as to what working one just before you get there. The two you have the right tunnels that have just a constant. If you jump into the right hole, you've given a constant.

"We generated what actually contains the information that the program uses to set up a level because the entire landscape will be generated, not stored. In every time you start a new game, you play on a new, randomly-generated landscape. And if you have in a game-generated landscape, and if you have in a game-generated landscape, and if you have in a game-generated landscape, you could set up your level to be a certain way."

WATER, THERE'S A FLY IN MY GAME!

Several times in fact, as Peter explains, "As Frogger goes along, he works up an appetite for flies. Every so often flies buzz across the screen, and if you miss Frogger, he automatically shows his tongue out and eats it. But the more flies Frogger eats, the more he hinders his game, so when he lands on an object that's floating on water, it starts to sink and he has to jump off again quickly. This effect wouldn't last very long though, and after a while he'd start back to normal size by using a lot of Frogger Tokens. This would also give him an extra boost of speed as the statistics people like along." **Alone.**



The latest Frogger—originally called in a game to give the frog extra Frogger Tokens—is a new generation of Frogger, which is a new game in its own right.



More Frogger—this time with Frogger Tokens that help control the game. Frogger Tokens are used to control the game. Frogger Tokens are used to control the game.

platform, fell balance as one last, looking it all help create a more interesting character." **For Frogger, this type of treatment would work particularly well. Running the game at a little bit of a second, you could produce some dazzling frogging animation. If he jumps on a log, he'd swanmer around as the log rolls under him. If he jumps on an alligator, his eyes would bulge with fright. If a city passed past him, he'd do a "Whoosh" gesture. This would all be tied in to different sound effects. Besides, it's the not the size of the apple that determines its character, but the animation. That's something that the development of the people in Previous is teaching us.¹**

The most controversial changes are in the game's design. "The game wouldn't be just a single static screen, but an on-going, vertically-scrolling level. This would help keep the player involved, as the game isn't fragmented, so keep the game play varied by adding new terrain for Frogger to cross. There'd be a back garden area, for instance, where you'd have traps, rats, birds and dangerous plants to avoid, and a sewer area, with even bigger alligators.

"One of the advantages of this new scrolling format is that you can give the enemies more detailed movements rather than just moving from side to side in a straight line. They'd move in fixed movement patterns so that with practice the player would learn their habits and play to avoid them. Random movement patterns don't work, because then it's more down to luck than judgement."

"It change of pace every now and again is essential, like in the Mario games, because people get bored with doing the same thing all the time. Frogger could jump into a pond and instead of jumping, he would swim. Underwater you'd have real froggy movement, so Frogger would push himself along in little bursts. In this section the enemies would come down the screen towards you instead of from the side, and there'd only be a limited amount of air, so Frogger would have to catch oxygen bubbles in the water to top up his supply."

Peter's more than aware of the dangers of updating an old classic. "It's very important that you don't destroy the feel and spirit of the original. The trick is to enhance the game while keeping the original qualities intact. I know, the look does remain the same—it's still all done from a plan view, and the little frog's got to work his way up the screen, avoiding danger. That's another thing I like about Frogger—it's a simple arcade game. You don't get anything or go looking for treasure. You just have to avoid things." **Amazn.**



Frogger returns to another level of a new game. Frogger Tokens are used to control the game. Frogger Tokens are used to control the game.

LOVE STORY

"It wouldn't be good if you could have Frogger distracted by things. You could have the Frogger who says up from these things and a fly that would eat like a new message that shows Frogger towards him, but you'd have to fight and keep him away from him because that'd be recommended by dangerous objects."

central character to life and give him more character than the original's staminate green blob. "In today's arcade game's it's important to establish a player-character bond. If a player is going to spend more than ten minutes playing a game, he has to care about his character. I'm not suggesting that people ever really think about how much they like Mario or Sonic, but it's substantial and it's important."

So how do you create a character you can care about? "The most important quality is the way the character reacts with your commands and to the environment," says Peter. "The way he responds to things creates the player bond. Sonic does this well—if you leave the controls alone for a few seconds he taps his feet and looks at the screen, and if he's on a small

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The legendary O'Rourke, founder of the American Computer Game Design Conference and Editor of Computer Games, will be Editor of Games and Editor of the Board in one of the new issues of the ACE Challenge magazine. He'll also edit the new magazine, and you'll find more information on the competition on page 10 of this issue.

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One thing's for certain: Microsoft must've shuffled over the scales of heaven if budget is relevant. And Microsoft's monopolist at the helm is striking evidence that our graphics advances are still slow and boring.

IBM PC

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| Heart of China | Dynasty | 90 |
| Capital | Rainbow Arts | 88.0 |

Games-based Rainbow Arts steps the Yanks from making a clean sweep of the PC top five. It's also nice to see a change from the PC's usual diet of flight sims and traditional strategy - only Clash Yeager, which is well worth the number one slot, and a good mix of gaming styles making up the rest of the chart.



AMIGA

| | | |
|--------------------------|--------------|------|
| Xenos 2: Megablind | Blower Image | 93.0 |
| Warrior | Artisoft | 91.0 |
| North and South | Artisan II | 90.0 |
| 3D Construction Kit | Demarc | 89.0 |
| Manchester United Europe | Krisalis | 88.0 |

Third budget title to top the Amiga chart, evidently no-one's forgotten the impact Xenos 2 made last time round.

ATARI ST

| | | |
|--------------------|----------------|-------|
| Xenos 2: Megablind | Blower Image | 94.0 |
| Lemmings | Pygmalion | 94.0 |
| Flame | Star Performer | 93.75 |
| MS-D | Demarc | 93.50 |
| Trek | Ocean | 91 |

Lemmings leaps on but Xenos 2 collects its second number one this month with one of the highest scores ever on the ST.

GALLUP CHARTS

...and here's how they sold! Use the Gallup sales charts below to compare review marks with sales performance.

The success of Castle on the PC just games show how important first impressions are in the software business. When the program was launched, reviews were flooded in praise (83% included) by the original reviewers and customers alike. This led to a great deal of positive coverage in magazines that have obviously given the title a very strong sales boost. Unfortunately, it only gave us time for our review on page 66, but without it the impression can be. The good news, however, is that it's now probably the most polished product when the game hits the shops.

Meanwhile, this CD-ROM continues to establish its dominance in the charts at number 1. It's rather daunting to think, however, that CD-ROM is just one of the best that will appear in the CD top 20 chart to be supported by the Amiga, which could be taken as evidence of a dearth of quality releases for the Amiga.



IBM PC

| | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------|
| Castles | Electronic Arts | £24.99 |
| Lemmings | Pygmalion | £24.99 |
| Castles Chess X | CDI | £24.99 |
| Fun School III (3-7) | Compuress Software | £8.99 |
| Links | SSI/US Gold | £28.99 |

AMIGA

| | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--------|
| Manchester United Europe | Krisalis | £25.99 |
| F15 Strike Eagle II | Microprose | £25.99 |
| PGA Tour Golf | Electronic Arts | £25.99 |
| Monkey Island | Luxcellery/US Gold | £25.99 |
| Lemmings | Pygmalion | £24.99 |

ATARI ST

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|--------|
| Flames of Freedom | Rainbird | £25.99 |
| Manchester United Europe | Krisalis | £25.99 |
| Armour Golden | Pygmalion | £25.99 |
| Kick Off 2 | Acce | £24.99 |
| Terrage MH Turtles | Microsoft | £24.99 |

THE STOCKMARKET

In addition to our games charts, we also have a list of five with the figures each month when we produce the ACS Stockmarket. This is the list of the companies whose games are getting the highest review marks of the month. Any software house that gets to the top of this list of 250 has a right to expect some healthy sales figures...

Being ranked at the games reviewed in the latest issues of computer magazines, we calculate the average month that each publisher received for every one of its games as each month. We print only the top 25 companies each month. In fact, we have lists on all of them, but you don't want to read through a list of over 250 names in every issue. Unfortunately a new company will enter the listings, to confirm your search is made with an accurate, this month, we welcome budget labels (Magnum and Star Performance) changed to number one, and (MAGP, better known for its language capabilities) to the ACS Stock Market.

Usually we take care that the software featured is genuinely useful. In that case we don't mind companies which have only received a single solitary review.

What 1987 were last month's games?

Despite some very high individual scores last month about the software titles, which is the average of all marks received, it is to be noted we only 18 months ago we listed 250 titles. ACS, through accumulating our list on these pages, has become a more judicious editor and no longer are we the last month, which has pulled the figure down from 250 games received the average of 6.8 out of 10.0. Watch the index and you will see a long return to normal scores.

Software Index: 75.28

| PUBLISHER | SCORE | Action 25 | 80.88 |
|-------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| *Star Performance | 86.28 | Actionaid | 80.57 |
| Pygmalion | 90 | GB4 | 80 |
| Orion | 82.00 | Magnum | 80 |
| Mongoose | 90 | Care Design | 78.67 |
| Arksia | 84.42 | GBA | 78 |
| Serra | 84 | *Magnum | 78 |
| Minor Image | 83.50 | Electronic Arts | 77.67 |
| Virgin | 82.5 | Compuware | 77.5 |
| Dynamic | 82.08 | Green | 76.75 |
| *Hi-Soft | 81.75 | Millennium | 76.25 |
| Granite | 81.73 | Rainbow Arts | 74.06 |
| Storage Brothers | 82.5 | Hi Speed | 73.6 |

WIN A PRIZE!

If you've completed the entries in our monthly ACS games contest in the latest pages, you can win a prize for your trouble. Here's how...

STEP ONE

Fill a postcard - or write your entry on the back of an envelope. I can't see your problems, a simple envelope number if you have one, the magazine you read your tips and the Board Number to the list below.

STEP TWO

Complete the month's chart. Then, using your knowledge of the game board, by number of magazines all come top of the ACS game list (ACS). Finally, enter in your card.

- ★ The best game for the 286 PC.
- ★ The best game for the Amiga.
- ★ The best game for the 386 PC.
- ★ The best game for the 486 PC.
- ★ The best game for the 386 & 486 PC.

STEP THREE

Now we will select to predict what company will be at the top of next month's Stockmarket listing from the pages listed on the card.

STEP FOUR

From the companies a computer will be chosen not later than the closing date for the card (25th August). The address is ACS Stockmarket.

20-22 Farnington Lane

W10 6AA

The first month's drawing for each chart takes place in the first week of the month. If you get more than one entry (which won't be selected to better chance for each category) then increasing your chances of winning a prize. And don't forget to include the Board Number.

THE RULES

- ★ All entries will be received by August 25th 1987.
- ★ No companies in 1987 or in any magazine listed in the previous issues, Magazine, or list of ACS Magazine are eligible for entry.
- ★ All entries will be received by 10.00 am on the day of the drawing.
- ★ No cash prizes to be paid. Specific software titles are entered, but not selected that we will make any effort to ensure that the game for the month is available.

THE 25

ROUND 22

Round 22 winners (except Actionaid and Star Performance) will be selected from the ACS Stockmarket listing for the August, and will be listed in the next issue of the magazine. The ACS Stockmarket listing will be published in the next issue of the magazine. The ACS Stockmarket listing will be published in the next issue of the magazine.

AMIGA, ATARI & PC SOFTWARE

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The Punter

LET YOUR COMPUTER TRY TO MAKE SENSE OF THE AMBIGUOUS POINTS. THIS SOFTWARE CAN BE USED FOR ANY BAZING BONUS. THE BAZING LEADERS ARE INCLUDED FOR EACH BAZING.

The Dogs

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League Manager

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The Bookie

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HARD SELL

Once again, a rather truncated hard sell this month, but it should hopefully provide an at-a-glance comparison between computer sets. Consider: Still awaiting retail prices for the great Commodore or Computer? Debate? Well, if you can afford one of each, our money's on the Amiga and MegaDrive. But if you only go for one, get an Amiga: It's an excellent all-around performer that gives the best VFM.

COMPUTERS

ATARI STE

Models: Atari 500TX, 1000TX, Mega 1TB
Package: 1.5M and 1.6M four-key keyboard with built-in disk drive. Mega comes with separate keyboard. Two eyes pointed for current software.
Memory: 128KB (1.5M), 166KB (1.6M). Mega ST 1, 2 or 4MB. All machines can be expanded internally to 4MB.

Processor: 6.5MHz Motorola 68000
Recommended Retail Price: 500TX £279; 1000TX £339
Contact: Atari UK 0750 22344

IN BRIEF

Hard days for the machine that rightly started the craze for 16-bit computers. The ST's best capabilities come on par with its arch rival the Amiga, but the Commodore machine seems to be the one most people want: three chips, its theme because this is still a great general purpose home machine for games, small business and productivity, and thanks to its 68000 port is still the number one choice for MIDI musicians.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: Low-res 320 x 200, medium res 640 x 200 (high res 640 x 400)
Palette: 4096
Colors: Black and white in high-res, 4 colours in medium-res, 16 in low-res.

IO: Yes
Monitor Output: VGA
Monitor Supplied: No
Monitor Options: 50" monitor SMP134 high-res model; SC1442 small res colour

Speakers: No
Sound: Four 16-bit resolution digital is only available on mono/dual channel, medium and low res displays only available on colour monitors in TB.
Sound:
Speaker Quality: Depends on model.
MSB: Yes
Mouse Output: Yes

Performance: Three 6.5MHz three-channel channels

HARDWARE

Disk Format: 5.1 inch - 1.2M
Disk Price: Around £1.50
Disk Performance: Fast, reliable
Keyboard: 88 keys including 14 function keys. 80 or 8-track pad which can be improved with third party game kits.
Keyboard/Mouse: Two joystick ports on monitor; two-button mouse is supplied with machine.

SOFTWARE

Existing Software Base: Excellent. The budget market provides a relatively cheap way of building up an impressive collection of software titles.

Current Releases: None of the latest software houses ignore the ST as it is well served with plenty of good software.
Games: Across the board.

Graphics: Good with some specialist software to manipulate them. Music is offered. Plenty of sound samples, editors and MIDI software make this the musician's choice.
Business: Very good, but the Amiga is currently the favourite with software houses in the UK and the chance of a sudden boom of interest in the IT business look very slim.
Software loading: No problems at all. The ST's drive is fast and friendly to the user, so it's feared that some companies will release games on two or more single-sided discs to hang on from the old days when the ST had single-sided drives which can mean annoyance and annoying loads of disc swapping.

PERFORM

Best Buy Price: As low
Second Hand Availability: Very common and quite cheap. Beware very old, single disk ST machines.
Maintenance: One year's guarantee. Return to dealer if faulty.

COMMODORE AMIGA

Models: Amiga 4000, 5000, 6000, 4860
Package: 800 has keyboard and built-in drive with separate PSU.
Processor: 5MHz 68000
Recommended Retail Price: 4000 £245, 5000 £295, 6000 £345, 4860 £285
Contact: Commodore UK 0750 22344

Performance: Three 6.5MHz three-channel channels

Disk Format: 5.1 inch - 1.2M
Disk Price: Around £1.50
Disk Performance: Fast, reliable
Keyboard: 88 keys including 14 function keys. 80 or 8-track pad which can be improved with third party game kits.
Keyboard/Mouse: Two joystick ports on monitor; two-button mouse is supplied with machine.

IN BRIEF

A stunning specification with custom chips to rival almost everything around, the Amiga is the first choice for the most expert of games players and video-professionals. After an initially shaky start the machine continues to sell extremely well and has outsold the TI on the UK, though the latter machine still has a slightly larger installed base. The 4150 is a near-identical copy with the 4000 but cheaper. The 4860 is a top-end workstation substitute, includes Diskbench 2, featuring enhanced fonts, file handling, and security features plus Amiga Vision, a multi-media programming tool. A 4000 also comes in three configurations, ranging from a 2MB/4000KB two-disk to a 2MB/16/1000KB disc.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: from 320 x 200 to 640 x 400 (more pixels in software)
Palette: 4096
Colors: 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 or 4096
IO: With modulation
Monitor Output: SCART - composite video in machine box.
Monitor Supplied: No
Monitor Options: V1561 £140 (high res).
Speed: 12.5MHz software controlled 60MHz from hardware.
Sound: Very fast with good software.

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Depends on model.
MSB: No, third party interfaces available.
Mouse Output: 2 phone connectors.
Performance: Among the best around. Custom software equates 8 volumes of 8-bit digital sound into the four channels.

HARDWARE

Disk Format: 5.1 inch - 1.2M, 4000 80/160/400KB hard disk formatted.
Disk Price: Around £1.50
Disk Performance: Very and sluggish. Third party software is available to improve early software.
Keyboard: 88 keys, 14 function keys and separate cursor 'dudon'.
Keyboard/Mouse: Two-button mouse supplied as standard.

Interfaces: Two hybrid/master, stereo audio, external disk drive/SCSI serial, Commodore parallel printer, SCART RGB/RGB composite mono/dual channel, expansion bus (internal on 4000 & 4860), 12-bit on 4000; modularity expansion on 4860 only, internal PC expansion on 4000, 4860 and 4860.

SOFTWARE

Existing Software Base: Similar to the ST.
Current Releases: Everyone's doing them.
Games: Something for everyone.
Graphics: Quality and range is unsurpassed.
Music: Needs better support for MIDI. Internal sound software is well supported thanks to ST standards.
Products: Excellent.
Software Loading: Very but usually reliable. Paged by videos.

REVIEWED

Best Buy Price: 500 Amiga 1000 can be picked up cheaply enough but those looking for the extra graphics muscle of later models. Try to find a good value deal.
Second Hand Availability: Not many available. Best buys are late Amiga 5000 with 16MB RAM, 1.2 MB harddisk. One year's warranty too. Beware faulty machines to deal with.

IBM PC

Models: IBM PC was the first PC to be accepted in large quantities (but the first PC) and remains the standard by which all others are judged. There are hundreds of clones and variations including offerings from Aminal, Atari and Commodore. In general, with PC you pay for speed and better graphics standards. The extra money is worth it if you can afford it.

Package: Depends on the manual but although most are packed with manuals, they are even better bought in kit form as to save buying manuals. Usually 500K or 1MB. Can be upgraded from 64K to 1MB+. Always go for a 640K model.
Processor: Intel 8088/8086 in base machine in some models replace with the faster NEC V3080. Intel based machines are based on Intel's much faster 286, 386, 486 and even the 586/486.

Recommended Retail Price: Can be picked up for as little as £299 for a "no frills" machine. With upgrade, the range 486 based clones - and the official IBM version - at the sky's limit. Look for a good 386 or 486 model for between £750 and £1200.

IN BRIEF

Superb value if you want the ultimate all-around: the PC still holds its own in business circles. Almost every major software house has got their claws in the PC but there remains limited by the constraints of the base.

most common machines - which means they tend to be limited in sound and graphics. Definitely NOT the choice if entertainment is your preferred use for computers, or if you cannot afford the better ISA or VME models (which are really meant for good games playing).

GRAPHICS

The first PC wasn't fitted with graphics standards but most clones incorporate the necessary hardware and come with a monitor. There are three main standards: CGA - a nasty but all too common video display; EGA, about the lowest video display worth considering, plus an average-looking display; and Hercules monochrome, ISA or VISA which are usually only fitted to mainframe or more expensive machines (Amstrath's PC986 is one exception).

Resolution: CGA 320 x 200; EGA, VGA 640; Hercules 720 x 384; VGA 640 x 480.

Palette: CGA 8 bit two fixed 16K; EGA 66 VGA 256.

Colors: CGA 4; EGA 16; VGA 64; Hercules 2.

Monitor Output: TT, RGB/RGB (CGA), analogue RGB (VGA).

Monitor Options: lots. Many monitors are dedicated to just one or two modes - some have amber, green or white monochrome display - check before buying.

Speakers: none.

Speed: From very slow - 600K - to very fast - 80MHz.

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Built-in sound is very poor. Third-party add-on sound boards such Roland (CR80) and dol (41708) - which is fast becoming a standard - provide synthesizer quality sound through an amplifier.

MIDI: Third party interfaces available.

Stereo Output: With boards, yes.

Performance: Not the ideal machine for the musical bend - an Amiga 25" offers more for MIDI, but Amiga now has software sound cards.

HARDWARE

Disk Formats: 5.25in - 800/500K; 3.5in, 1.2in (2MB/1.44MB).

Disk Price: 60p - £1.00.

CONSOLES

ATARI LYNX

Package: Lynx. Play sticks for peripherals and includes California Games, Pacman 1000K/500K.

Capacity: 100K/500K.

Recommended Retail Price: £79.95 (200K) with peripherals, £124.95 with peripherals and game).

Contact: Atari UK (0711 586) 9679.

IN BRIEF

Designed by the man behind the

Disk Performance: Storage. Most PC owners use hard disks. A large amount of PC applications software refuses to work unless you have a hard disk.

Keyboard: Almost as many as you want.

Monitor Output: No.

Monitor Support: Yes - 15" backlit colour LCD.

Monitor Options: None.

Speakers: Special graphics hardware effectively limits AA screen objects to sprites.

Speed: Fast.

Sound:

Speaker Quality: Very good.

MIDI: No.

Stereo Output: No.

Performance: Four-channel, five octave stereo sound has to be heard to be believed.

HARDWARE

Graphics: Eight-way joystick.

Ports: Cartridge port; multi-player party interface; stereo headphone jack.

SOFTWARE

Price: £38.75.

Cartridge Memory: 64Kb.

Existing Software Base: Very small.

Current Releases: California Games is a great 'brainer'.

Prospects: Uncertain but several new titles in the pipeline.

BUYERS

Best Buy Price: As RRP.

Second Hand Availability: Very low.

Maintenance: One year's guarantee.

STAR RATINGS

Graphics: 4.0/5.0

Sound: 4.0/5.0

Expansion: 4

Overall: 4.0/5.0

NINTENDO GAMEBOY

Package: Main unit with four games.

Processor: 1.6MHz customised 8-bit Z80.

Capacity: Memory: 8K.

Recommended Retail Price: £68.95.

Contact: Brighton PB (0747 430) 2973.

IN BRIEF

Nintendo were the first company to produce a dedicated handheld console and now it seems everyone wants to get in on the act. On reflection even the Game Boy was a long time coming since the technology employed by the display is starting to look dated. Not to be dismissed - simply because of those graphics - this machine has some superb titles and games making use of the two-player link-up option are becoming clear but especially the superb Tetris clones.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: 20 x 18 characters.

Colors: 4 grey shades.

Monitor Support: Yes - LCD display to fit for ambient light.

Speakers: 8Kb x 8 bit sound chips.

Speed: Fast for what it is.

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Depends on headphones.

Stereo Output: No.

Performance: Plays a lot better than it looks.

HARDWARE

Package: Built-in 8-way joystick.

Ports: Headphone socket; cartridge interface.

SOFTWARE

Price: £20-25.

Cartridge Memory: 64K.

Existing Software Base: The best for any handheld.

Current Releases: Increasing.

Prospects: Excellent.

BUYERS

Best Buy Price: As RRP.

Second Hand Availability: Some collection (Compa Game) do seem.

Maintenance: One year's warranty.

STAR RATINGS

Graphics: 4.0/5.0

Sound: 4.0/5.0

Expansion: 4.0

Overall: 4.0/5.0

NINTENDO SUPER FAMICOM

Package: Console unit, controller unit and Super Mario World.

Processor: 3.58 MHz 65C816.

Capacity: Memory: Not known.

Recommended Retail Price: 160.

Upper price: £200.

Contact: local dealers.

IN BRIEF

With the weight of all-powerful Nintendo behind it, the Famicom can hardly fail, although not hugely superior to the Sega Magazine technically it's the games that impress - surely the founded Mario world which will no doubt help sales in the UK and US. That said, there are some real killers amongst the game (Big Man, anyone), but it's still early days yet. The Super Famicom's enormous game potential has barely been scratched.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: 320 x 224.

Palette: 32,768.

Colors: 256.

TV: Yes.

Monitor Output: No.

Monitor Support: No.

Monitor Options: RGB, SCART.

Speakers: 128.

Speed: Remarkable.

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Depends on TV/speakers.

MIDI: No.

Stereo Output: No.

Performance: 8 channel custom 16-bit PCM digital.

HARDWARE

Japanese supplied.

ports One big expansion port.

SOFTWARE

Price: £50.00

Cartridge Memory 16 Mb.
Existing Software Base Small.
Current Release: Lots, and plenty more planned.
Prospect: How can a full-load cartridge come in the edition before it was launched.

BUYLINES

Best Buy Price: As 100.
Second Hand Available: None at yet.

Maintenance: Take care: grey imports are rarely under warranty.

STAR RATING

Graphics: 4.0/4.0
Sound: 4.0/4.0
Expansion: 4.0/4.0
Overall: 4.0/4.0

SEGA GAMEGEAR

Package: Gamegear unit, Processor 1.5Mhz/2MB, Cartridge Memory, 32 KRAM/16K Video RAM.
Recommended Retail Price: £29.99
Contact: Sega 011-332-8000

IN BRIEF

Spikes used to be that the Gamegear was going to be the handheld answer to the battle of

the colour handhelds. But then - and, alas, apparently, price - has changed. The Lynx, a technically superior machine with some fine games available for it, has had its price slashed and - if its success any longer is enjoying a sudden upswing in support from American consumers, in the Gamegear's favor - is the best of mighty Sega and the potential to turn the unit into a portable TV via a cheap adaptor (around £20 in current estimates). But at the moment, it's anybody's game.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: 768 x 144
Palette: 4096
Colours: 24
Fw: No.

Monitor Output: No.
Monitor Support: Yes - £17 leads to colour LCD.

Monitor Options: None.
Graphics: Not known.

Speed: Okay

Speaker Quality: Good

SDRAM: No

Game Support: No.
Performance: Three channel FM sound channels + three channel

HARDWARE

Playable eight way joystick.
Atari Cartridge port, multi-player ports, monitor or screen transformer jack, TV tuner port.

SOFTWARE

Price: Around £20-25

Cartridge Memory: Not known.
Existing Software Base Small.
Current Release: Few at yet, but lots in the pipeline.
Prospect: Very good.

BUYLINES

Best Buy Price: As 100.
Second Hand Available: None at yet.
Maintenance: One year's guarantee.

STAR RATING

Graphics: 4.0/4.0
Sound: 4.0/4.0
Expansion: 4.0/4.0
Overall: 4.0/4.0

SEGA MEGADRIVE

Package: Console unit, controller, and Mickey Mouse or Wonderboy game.

Processor: 6.25Mhz/640K + 256K
Cartridge Memory: 768 bytes, 64K video.

Recommended Retail Price: £149.99
Contact: Virgin Mastertronic 011-332-8000

IN BRIEF

Excellent examples of the new 16-bit console technologies. The first decent 16-bit console to receive official support in the UK.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: 1024 x 1024
Palette: 512
Colours: 24
Fw: No

Monitor: No.
Graphics: 30
Speed: Very fast

SOUND

Speaker Quality: No.
MSB: No.
 stereo Output: Yes.
Performance: 12 channel stereo sound is produced by a custom 198 chip and sounds terrific.

HARDWARE

Optional dedicated controller support.

SOFTWARE

Price: £30-50 (typically £35).
Cartridge Memory: Not known.
Existing Software Base: Good.
Current Release: Lots.
Prospect: Very good.

BUYLINES

Best Buy Price: As 100.
Second Hand Available: Some companies (e.g. ConsoleQuest) do sell.
Maintenance: One year on UK machines.

STAR RATING

Graphics: 4.0/4.0
Sound: 4.0/4.0
Expansion: 4.0/4.0
Overall: 4.0/4.0

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SHOP WATCH

Is the IBM mainframe still relevant? This year's best word "vital" and collocated it was their new complete line of interactive transaction processing "Virtualizer". I'm convinced that they didn't measure SO Construction Ltd as "Quality Development Tool" or something else they were at it. I think you're not fooling it - it's a very impressive package and a lot of the new "big" titles to be released during this long hot summer. So, well, I hope it does very well.

There are many retailers currently facing a dilemma regarding software. There have been very few "biggest" releases this summer and so sales at retail level are somewhat depressed as hardware is almost as difficult to shift as the proverbial chewing gum on the tarmac. The dilemma is whether to stock too much imported console software. Items and issues are some months ahead of the country regarding new releases and so there is a fairly buoyant demand facilitated by so many of the monthly magazines reviewing imported software for these "unofficial" titles. Up until now individual retailers have decided on themselves whether to stock too much these titles but a new retailer

Software seller Dirk Langhorn trembles at the approach of secret Nintendo agents, and wonders where all the wire-heads have gone...

and has recently come into play Nintendo are visiting retailers and examining their stocks, if they see imports they are shipping any suitable titles that the retailer's supply of "official" software is being put into jeopardy by the continuing to stock these "grey" imports. At this time of year that would probably be retailers here for them, but we all have to have an eye on Christmas and the prospect of December without an official supply is worrying. So what should retailers do? They shouldn't stock titles, and turn customers away to make or mail order merchants do these it out and say "bugger off, you foolies, you can't simulate me!" I wish I

knew - perhaps the solution is to have an "under the counter" supply.

Was you get any more Game Boy titles other than the one on your shelf?

You do you mean, sir?

Well, you've got me...

Right you are sir, know what you mean, stop this way...

WHERE HAVE ALL THE TRODS GONE?

So years ago, the typical customer who came into our shop would want one of the following:

1) an impossible task to connect an audio printer (which we had never been on) to a computer;

2) to see a selection of water's programming books;

3) coffee;

4) help with the current program they were writing (many an hour I've sat with a budding prog writer helping to sort out his variables);

5) to see the latest games that had been released;

6) to find out why their Commodore 64 games load on their friend's computer but not on theirs...

Nowadays they all grab five, like so many grey squirrels, virtually

swamped the others and the role of the computer shop as safety is changing rapidly. Whereas it used to be the local meeting place for all the wire-heads, it is now much like a second stage with programming books, latest magazines being at much impact level, unfortunately, much the same shall hold in the current hot parade favourites.

But, one of the great pleasures - indeed one of the questions of our time is "Where have all the wire-heads gone?" What happened to all the people I used to see in OldMania shops for The One who had trouble with their floating point?

Have they all gone on to become top programmers, or have they "grown up" and lost interest? Who knows?

Finally, please are very kindly embracing the new generation of console users? Their new cut-throat fun, the first boutique range devoted just to consoles and their computers limited the scope of the "they" shows four players crowding around a Nintendo Game Boy player game of... Super Mario Brothers (Oh well, you can compete against that)?

■ **DIRK Langhorn**

BACK ISSUES



ACE issues are available for all issues from ACE 4 inclusive (except ACE 4) at the giveaway price of £2.98 each in the UK and £3.98 each for overseas. These prices include post and packaging (surface mail). (Business readers wanting email delivery should also see the box at the address below, listing the issues required.)

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- **ACE1 (ADVANCED EXPERIMENTAL GAMING MACHINE)**, custom flight simulator for the US Air Force by Perceptics. Uses Falcon software by Spectronics Micro-Systems Ltd. Features include networking for multi-player action, tactile feedback and fingertip sensor selection. (ACE18)
- **BARMAN ONLINE, JUSTICE** is the world's first interactive hypertext by Peter Morison. "Digital is the next medium of the future." (ACE28)
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- **CE4 (Expanded Disc Interactive)** is destined to become the entertainment and education medium of the 90s. (ACE28) (121474181818). Check out issue 30 for multimedia principles (programme list in particular) and issue 24 for a preview of the Philips CD-i system.
- **CDPS**, Commodore's attempt at being multi-media to the mass market. An Amiga with built-in CD-ROM drive and CD audio reading accompanied to look like a VCR. (ACE34)
- **COGNATE GAMES**, the world's first hypergame - a coupling of Cyber software/animation. Check out issue 29 for the first episode, issue 24 for a feature on hypergames, and issue 28 for general hyper-

media coverage. New Game CD-ROM version has formed in issue 24.

- **FLAME TECHNOLOGY**, one of talented Cambridge-based game hardware engineers. Their custom designed Flare (one million formed the basis of the Flame console. (ACE11)
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- **INTERACTIVE VIDEO TAPE**, an alternative to CD. (ACE28)
- **ROCK CONSOLE**, a powerful British console with revolutionary built-in joystick controller which could change into a steering wheel, motor bike handle or joystick type. (Unfortunately failed due to a lack of marketing money. Rumour says you can now buy it unbranded. (ACE18))
- **SHIPPERGAMES** (Ships) (appears from Carnegie Mellon University, USA have developed an algorithm enabling them to generate graphical simulations of objects seen as travelling at 99% of the speed of light. (ACE19)
- **SHIPPER LAB**, Irvine-based research institute will one simply tell - toward the future. Members of this Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) facility are working on computer generated holograms, interactive computer metaphors and built-in multi-media-machine interface. (ACE28)
- **SHIPPER LAB**, the arcade-based games console from MIT in Japan, with storage capacity for 4MBH-games cartridges and 16 card-capacity. (ACE18) (ACE28)
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The October issue of ACE will be on sale at the ECES at Earls Court 2 (6-8 September)
Look out for us at the Enmap Images stand!

AMIGA



Do you need an alternative musical studio with digital effects, dual frame buffers, character generation and 3D animation? How you get 10,000 to spend on such a device? Answer you to both those questions and you should be thinking about purchasing the critically-acclaimed Video Transfer from Amiga graphics specialists, Newtek Incorporated.

Being situated in the sleepy midwest state of Kansas Newtek presented Newtek's engineers from steering you far from of gaudy, 160 wonder the Video Transfer took them over five years to develop.

The New York Times says Video Transfer is the equivalent of a 900,000 TV studio and 1500 video editors-it makes analogue art and it is Hollywood production studio. High price indeed, but what does this wonder edged actually do? For a start you can create animated videos-a full broadcast resolution and 18.8 million colours. Video Transfer comes with filters, digital trails and handles like there's no tomorrow. Yeah, that's a lot of words in anybody's language.

Newtek's Lightbulb 3D animation software helps

you create special visual effects including flying logos and fog. Plus, there are many more sophisticated graphics tools such as fast photographic rendering with adjustable anti-aliasing, particle systems with real-time motion blur and realistic scene preview with jog shuttle control. I don't know what this stuff does, but they certainly sound impressive.

You can phone Newtek on 01202-423-204 (0160). Get them AOL post you and they might say, "See, I love that magazine!"

Comcast and Microsoft are about to unleash a stock car race inspired by a big screen on the NASCAR racing circuit. WinStar Cup Champion 9600 Euro laptop design for ultimate driving experience it complies with software jail rules, checks for your position and 200mph speeds. All this reminds me of Microsoft's Days of Thunder - not a very good one.

The trouble with stock car racing is that it's overly boring and a race happens, horses has tried to repeat excitement into their release through the implementation of a first-person perspective view of the track and bucket car race. Here you adjust your head by adjusting gear ratio, spoiler angle, tire stagger and horsepower for the fastest turn of the wheel. And as the high ranked seats of Daytona and Talladega. If you really get into the game, there's a Gameloft version for players who want to liberate this stock car rails on the way to work every morning.

To make you feel great with stock, Konami's America has got you a full-on competition to meet the Blue, unless the 1992 Daytona 500 got you a sporty-foot Thunderbolt Super-Cup. The trailer are due to play the AOL adaptation of 9600 NASCAR Challenge later this year - where they'll compete to capture the flag as well as the top. Now that's what I call a great race

about something similar in the UK?

Charles Lewis from Palmer, creator of Terminator 2 for Amiga, when things broke into his house while he was on holiday and home. These became frustration as he remarked the place and state Palmer's Amiga based development kit, including a host of pre-programming options which are useful to anyone but even those. Luckily the unfortunate situation hasn't affected the release of the game. Good news really, since getting the movie is breaking low-effort records in America and a due to open soon here later this month.

No topic is required in King's Quest if you fancy RPG lovers can concentrate at their previous thoughts and efforts on exploring gloomy dark forests and vast mountains in search of the royal family of Scepter. For the last year, Sierra Online has employed some of the very best programmers and designers in the USA, Games like King's Quest are proving the producers of the mountain version.

Developments about some plane facts should go further than The Official WorldWar Games for Combat Strategy Plans. Here, what a mouthful! Author's Bruce DeMatteis and George Fontaine have plenty of hot facts to get into: Spitfires '940' and their final hour. The Battle of Britain. Over the Secret Missions of the Luftwaffe have been directed for your playing pleasure.

Without requiring any information already found in the reports, Ontario and Fontaine provide new insights into the history, an incident and the people who flew them.

The AOL strategy game teaches you the special flying manoeuvres controlling plane in battle, explaining in step-by-step detail how to fly your plane through the tricky air-to-air manoeuvres of the skilled combat pilot.

By Steve Whalley

ATARI ST



John's Olympia British Music Fair for International Music Fair as it is now known is an attempt to broaden the range of additional is usually the launching point for loads of new music software.

This year, though, there was hardly a computer to be seen, major distributors like Futurewise, Soundtracks and Zone failed to appear, and the remaining exhibitors showing loads of updates but very little in the way of new releases.

Good news came from distributor MEGACD, whose entry-level CD sequencer has now been ported to the PC, Amiga and Mac. Still costing only £59.99! Likewise, the powerful (but) sequencer program has been ported to the ST and PC, it can record a real-time or step-time, transcribe MIDI files, and support 64 channels with 4 voices per staff. Cost a £69.99.

New from Spexide is Track Chart, for all formats, a studio management program allowing the engineer who'll process the information which can be linked to SMPTE. Printed track sheets can include information such as song files, track names,

comments, start times, track groups and virtual tracks, and while playing Track Chart can trigger user-defined MIDI messages. Cost is £19.99.

Sound Technology's Club display featured music info software programs Auto and MIDI, together with the long-awaited software version of the feature sequencer's music transcription package.

Horizon Alpha was the most exciting product of the show, though, had to be Philip Reed's CD MIDI controller. This advanced, advanced MIDI controller looks like nothing so much as the Sportsman's bag, with its velocity sensitive pressure pads (plates) mounted under the strings of a guitar would be, the CD has buttons (buttons) on the neck, which can be programmed to execute any note from a "chromatic" scale. A button on the end of the neck and the CD on the back allow you to store fancy "tricks" or chords, giving a total of 650 chords. A download button on the neck calls up score programs, and a pressure sensitive plate on the body allows you to introduce performance effects such as vibrato.

In comparison with an ST having a sequencer package, the CD would form a powerful programming system, it will be available from around October at just over £400.

Not seen at the MS, but launched a few weeks earlier of the industry's MIDI Association of Professional Recording Studios show, was the KAT from Friendship, to be distributed in the

country by S-Labs. The members of the MIDI Makers music sharing display The KAT is a remote controller designed for software sequencer users. It plugs into the popular port of the ST, and is supported by the basic accessory software which lets you assign any of the 16 available control functions to any of 27 keys, at your local

for instance when sequence controls for Record/Play/Stop/Pause in software playing software than the computer. Cost will be around £95.

Also on the way from Friendship are Modula's, a 13-in 1 dual MIDI patching and MIDI 100, an expandable remote linking from most ends. The function of a MIDI patching is to allow you to route different MIDI controllers - a sequencer, drum machine, keyboard or MIDI drum pad perhaps - to a number of MIDI sound modules. They're available at a large price, but tend to be expensive and bulky to use. The Friendship products, though, are MIDI-controlled using Super Mac's, an ST software accessory which uses a series of on-programmable grid screen displays which can be called up from your sequencer program, or making your modifications as you play. Prices have yet to be confirmed.

Another product of ST music news is the return of Digital Arts after a period in the distribution wilderness SMPTE track, Send all and MIDI other MIDI software packages have had their place as by Digital Arts. New versions in the pipeline include Get Track Good WLD and SMPTE, Track Good WLD II to the CD, at £175 and £195 respectively both an upgrade path offer from Get Track II and SMPTE tracks, and the latest version of the generic patch editor Send all, at £175 to the CD.

Digital Arts's most interesting new launch is an unusual product from Crosson Systems, "OSM" with a sequencer or algorithmic composer as such, but instead the MIDI program for sequenced performances. Taking simple melodies from a MIDI controller, MIDI can turn them into multi-measure rests, complex melodic or even program change commands. The package is available at £70.

STEVE WHALLEY

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GAMEBOY



Rest games are making the Death Star. James are making your landslide and Nintendo needs a show. What are I saying about? Star Wars of course! And now Gameboy owners will be able to get the fun thanks to Lucasfilm Games and Asoft. This sleeky French firm has managed to snap at the rights to draw up and market a game based around my prime favorite: swooshing war II toys.

"Star Wars is the perfect theme for Gameboy," indicates Nintendo's Creative Services. "The media is just the one big video game. Star Wars will be one of the most exciting games available for Gameboy."

Gameplay will be similar in style to the NES systems from Lucasfilm Games and 3D Biosoft Industries. Both show below the rest of the firm, accepting the black control and other great audio sequences, culminating in the black space Death Star's Death Star in a real killing machine.

Trade it, write going to have to let light for at least seven months before will get a chance to use the same and see your battle tank. Don't know about you but I'd love to give it a go.

Everybody is hung for fighting in Death Squadron from America's gaming powerhouse Activision Entertainment, Inc. Its best-seller death-vengeance game, The Death Star, which should go into the Game on several levels of fun, battery life and power punching performance. We're going to your local arcade to sample its aggressive action factor for yourself. I promise you won't regret the price.

Like the previous Death Squadron, 3D and other Laser Battle Street Thugs with a collection of funny moves and more conventional tactics like the head balls and attacks. Don't get mad, get real.

Combining death-frenzy fun has been equal to making it easy to be the Gameboy. Activision's Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles features all those swar and whistles to show who have come to the. Question is, can the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles against tough competition from the Simpsons, Terminator 2 and AC Hero?

Next week the original comic.

made into game, he tries to go one step further than the oblique scenarios (Shakespeare and King). Players go the difficulty as they have to take tracks through an challenging maze and avoid collecting items. When he has to break the law they are arrested, but players can rescue them once certain points have been reached in the game.

Activision is expanding more great titles with its most intense by bringing the 3. 11 year old game. After all, nearly a million copies of the first Turbo title have been sold so far. Next? I continue!

After the participation with various authors (Ballard and Smith), it seems Nintendo has got a taste for fast-food and so the company is preparing a made title with super heroes McDonalds.

Although none of the details have so far emerged, I think it's a fair bet that such a deal would include some sort of Super Mario Bros fan-fiction and other top figures from popular Nintendo games. Thankfully, I doubt whether we'll see a Mario Burger or 'Double Mario' just yet.

The high-speed ball-and-club play in Madden of Street Grids (Futaba's) (Superstar line) brings in the shock.

One of the first exciting titles for the Gameboy, you can choose from eight of the best teams for practice, exhibition or tournament play. There's no time for rest as you pass, check, fight, shoot and, yeah, shoot your way to the top match and score all stars.

Activision's Madden of Street offers one or two-player action and will be available from next month.

TAKE THE GAME

Star Wars: THE FORCE UNLEASHED (problems away with these party scenarios).

LEGO: 5-1000

LEGO: 5-2000

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LEGO: 5-4000

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LEGO: 5-7000

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In case you also own another video game system, these codes work on other versions of the game!

When the STARWARS the series is its biggest (such Super Fight) and (Star) for a sound bit.

Compare CARGOES QUEST with these scenarios:

JOHN CARRINGTON

SAGE NIGHT

KING OF THE HILL

ROCK TRIVIA QUIZ

ROCK TRIVIA QUIZ

ROCK TRIVIA QUIZ

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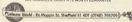


These titles are being re-released on CD-ROM and will be available from the same publisher as the original. Code on top of the image box. No other code on CD.



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SUPER FAMICOM



The race to get software ready for the 25th release of the Super Famicom (Super NES), as it'll be called, is continuing apace, and things are happening to look very interesting.

The recent Chicago CES Show gave a good indication of what was coming out, but since much of the product was at a very early stage—many games had been in development for literally a few weeks—leaving some duty looks to think that they were off-chance—it generally looked poor when compared to the town of speaking nice, virtually finished games that were on display at the fairs stand.

Still, there were some golden gems around, the most impressive of

which is Super Ghost'n Goblins. I don't know what planet last month's writer of this column was from, but the game soft artwork like the arcade original—it's mostly based on it. The first level features great mounds of earth which burst upwards as you walk across the ground, cages full with goblins, and newer, tougher baddies.

There's also a range of new weapons with which you can unleash major death and destruction. It's definitely the best Super Famicom game yet seen, with graphics and sound that'll blow you away. Also a watch out for it, another goblin/beatdown game like Super R-Type. Again, it's not a straight arcade conversion, but is based on the machine. The first level is alone, and features a backdrop of beautiful planets and stars. There is, of course, plenty of alien stuff to blow into the middle of next week, and there's a variety of new and familiar weapons with which to do so. It looks a cracking game, and is one that should 'win' up there should get hold of when it's released later in the month.

Canadian Ninja is a very nice Gals' Land clone, and I was pretty surprised to see what seemed like a

newer copy on display at Gals' Land's stand. I looked underneath the display, but it costed they were pulling a fast one and had a coin-op PCB lurking underneath, but lo, and behold there was a Super Famicom with a Canadian Ninja cartridge in a really neat beat 'em up—in which you guide a nasty cartoon-style character across a very cartoon-style landscape, taking the seven shades of sheela out of her—see cartoon-style baddies. In fact, the only amusing thing about the game is that it won't be available until early next year. Ah well.

Tragedy over the Super Famicom market with last "Newman" Street's Super Offroad Challenge, a featureless copy of the Super Sports-inspired romp. The game looks, sounds and plays perfectly, and apparently uses the same code and the same player systems as the original arcade machine. Not a patch

also for the lack of Nintendo Challenge. Starting the most famous of the freemove/horror action that play out utterly hilarious WFF wending derivatives on satellite info, this is could be the best wending game yet. The early demo I've seen sports some excellent

graphics—the screen smothered really do look like the 'real life' star action—I saw Mike Hogan and the Ultimate Warrior—and the animated and layered sound effects are both superb. Judging by the reviews popularity of the sport, I think this could be a massive seller!

But what I'm looking forward to most of all are Electronic Arts' trio of sports games: John Madden's Football, Laker's vs Celtics and PGA Tour Golf. I saw very, very early demos the John Madden's one was about a week old and was finished two hours before the show and having spoken to the programmers, I think all three could be amazing.

They'll basically be the same as the Magazine version, but with enhancements wherever the hard work allows it. So expect nothing following the ball 3D effects in PGA Tour Golf, and even more detailed graphics in John Madden's Football '90ver!

Finally, if you're thinking of buying a PAL Super Famicom, thoroughly check it out and make sure you've got a guarantee from the retailer. Many PAL machines are unreliable, and often overheat. If possible, buy a SMART model.

ALAN BIRNIE

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HOT OFF THE SHELF

Do you know, I hate writing the intro to *Hot Off The Shelf*. I mean take this month, for example. What on Earth is there to say about the Merry Month of... er... September? Nothing, that's what!

Surely you know the score by now: the top games from the last three months sliced 'n' diced for your delectation. Oh, and there's a smattering of classics too. Read on...

BATTLE CHASE 2
Electronic Arts ■ Amiga £24.99 ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ PC £24.99
 sequel-to its equally from Hollywood to the computer industry! This time round the rules are based on the Chinese variant of Chess, which introduces some new moves, has a river blocking the board (which some pieces can't cross) and links the kings movement to an

'Imperial Palace'. As before the board is viewed in 3D, with all the pieces 'taking' each other in a variety of amusing and well-animated ways. While a bit slow and limping running from Popipes due to all the disc swapping, a fast disc shows the game to be far faster and more tactical than normal Chess. A game that should keep even the most jaded Chess fan happy.

► ACE RATING 900-04 95M PC

BOULDERBUSH
Vector Musical Industries ■ Gameloy 19400 Import
Yet another steal from the aging GPH's catalogue of great games. Hey kids, remember this? Guide-outs and caddy Rockford sound amazeen (that's porno-speak for more than can be counted on one hand) modes of boulders and minerals in pursuit of diamonds. But less in mind that digging around boulders can make them tumble down on your head! An arcade puzzle game of the most addictive kind and yet another game ideally suited to Nintendo's SNW handheld wonder.

► ACE RATING 900-04 GAMEBOY

CHUCK YEAGER'S AIR COMBAT

Electronic Arts ■ Amiga £78A ■ Atari ST £78A ■ PC £29.99
The two previous Chuck Yeager games were exemplary in every

respect save one: there were no guns! Fine for the *San Jose Bands/Wave Flowers in Your Hair* brigade, but more than a little disappointing for the rest of us. This latest outing with the gilded old red rec'd has that complaint... and much more besides. Missiles fly 'planes from either WW2, Korea or Vietnam in a number of missions. Even more fun is the ability to pit, say a Mustang from WW2 against a Phantom from Korea. High realism means this isn't one for the push-up 'n' play brigade, but it's a fine purchase for the sim fan looking for a challenging and long-lasting experience.

► ACE RATING 900-04 95M PC

F-14 TOMCAT

Activision ■ Amiga £78A ■ Atari ST £78A ■ PC £78A
One can't help feeling that F-14 Tomcat is going to have something of an uphill struggle to be noticed, what with the recent release of a whole slew of 190-north flight sims, such as *W. Gold's Jetfighter II* and *Check Yeager's Air Combat*. To be perfectly honest F-14 is inferior to both these competing titles, but it's still a high-quality product. The biggest criticism is that it's very hard to lose. Just set and let the jet crash into the desert and nine times out of ten Command will return you to active duty without even a tacking off.

► ACE RATING 850-04 95M PC

FLAMES OF FREEDOM

Mindscape ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ Amiga £24.99 ■ IBM PC £78A
Now this is a challenge, how do you run up a huge game like *JoJo*? The big three has set in, and *Flame* is now *Agona*, the island HQ of the Atlantic Federation. You play one of their coast agents with the task of supporting an impending attack by the evil *Island Empire*. The majority of the game takes place in a massive world 3D world, with your eye able to use any mode of transport he/she may come across, everything from on-foot to helicopter. But this is no shoot-'em-up. There's more than enough strategy and subtlety to keep any non-arcade fan happy. A major contender for Game of the year - already!

► ACE RATING 900-04 95M ST

HO SPORTS BOOKING

Mindscape ■ Amiga £24.99 ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ PC £24.99
This violent clash between two solid-polygon-generated pugilists is the best rendition of the 'table art' yet seen on a home computer. The use of polygons allows the action to be viewed from absolutely any angle, and a video playback option allows you to watch that decisive uppercut again and again. Highly realistic, some great polygonated expressions of anguish on the fighter's face, a huge range of moves and a lot of work to be put in if you're to become World Champ!

► ACE RATING 900-04 95M PC

ODDS

Renegeade ■ Amiga £29.99 ■ Atari ST £25.50 ■ PC £78A
Renegeade criss-onto the game's come with this, their first release - and what a corker it is! Set in an Ancient Greece, the player controls a handy warrior who must be guided through four levels of platforms, monsters, and puzzles to a face-off with something very nasty in the Underworld. Okay, so Renegeade isn't as pretty for the written-by-computer plot but the implementation is something else - superb graphics, intelligent puzzles (and they are smart, tough and bags-of-devil supplies and secret bonuses to discover. It seems

estimated speed through a world populated by surly knives and assorted cut-throats. Game interaction is made easy-style by the simple point-'n'-click control. It turns both tense and funny. The absorbing atmosphere is only slightly marred by the overuse of the 'TM' symbol.
ACE RATING 910 ON AMIGA

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

Sega/Virgin • Intergame £34.95
 Amstrd, Sonic the Hedgehog. At last a quality title for Sega's little black beauty that really shows what the machine can do in the hands of the inspired. It certainly makes up for the likes of *Kardak* and *Midnight Resistance*. Believe me, you've never seen a platform game move this fast. And thankfully, clever game design has ensured that high speed doesn't mean high unplayability. But better than Mario? Well, perhaps not. It lacks the Nintendo giant's depth and long-lasting challenge. But it's a cracking game, none-the-less, and you'll be a right fool to miss it. Can't wait for Sonic 2?
ACE RATING 920 ON SEGA MD

STRIDER

Sega/Virgin • Megadrive £29.95
 The coin-op conversion was reviewed some time ago in these pages. Thankfully, the Megadrive incarnation is supremely superior - if you didn't know better you'd swear you were playing the arcade machine. Strider Hiryu has to jump and tumble through levels of arcade-perfect action. Stunning for its graphics, sound and gameplay, Strider is a must-buy for any Megadrive owner.
ACE RATING 970 ON SEGA MD

SUPER MARIOLA

Nintendo • Super Famicom (inc. with grey-import cartridge)
 Could this be the best platform game available? The game follows the seemingly never-ending adventures of Mario, as he jumps and joy-rides his way through 99 sub-levels of platform action. What makes the game so special - apart from its superlative graphics, stunning sound FX and super-satisfying control - is the never-ending variety in the gameplay. It's not all just running and jumping. Complete this and you can con-

sider yourself a real game superman.

ACE RATING 940 ON FAMICOM

SPACE GARRY IN

Sony On-Line • Atari ST £78A
 • Jante £78A • IBM PC £34.95
 Top-Quality goofball space adventure with lots of humour and minimal cluttering around. Sony have managed to combine excellent graphics and a Bizare-pot-compatronatable time-travelling story line. Guide Roger Wilco through a roller-coaster adventure involving absolutely no typing and some excellent puzzle-design. Every location contains a surprise! Not too good if you own a slow PC, and a virtually unworkable from *Prolog*. Otherwise, a pretty essential purchase if you can put up with the constant crashes.
ACE RATING 940 ON IBM PC

WING COMMANDER

Origin/Mindscape • Amiga £78A • PC £34.95
 Another 3D space combat game, but radically uses of stunning ray traced and digitised

graphics for the graphics. They rotate, shrink and grow with amazing speed and fluidity. Animated scenes punctuate the action and present the first true cinematic experience on a home computer. The multitude of missions mean this isn't a game of surface gloss. Sadly only best appreciated on the high speed PC.
ACE RATING 940 ON IBM PC

WONDERLAND

Magnac • Amiga £29.95 • Atari ST £29.95 • PC £24.95
 The book, having toured the world with The Fairy way back in 1987, returns with a new classic. An adventure game based on the famous novel *Alice in Wonderland*, the plot follows the book enough to retain its weird flavour, but not so slavishly so to make it ploddy by simply knowing the story. The laugh text, teamed with hundreds of tough (but logical) puzzles, is accompanied by a number of stunning animated graphic scenes. The future of adventure games is here. An essential buy.
ACE RATING 910 ON IBM PC

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CLUES
ACROSS

- 5 No charge to drop from 'Seconds of Twilight' software house (4,4)
7 Kind of light wine one swallowed (4)
8 Changes code - it's put it in (5)
9 Elite game Leo and Dino played together (7)
10 Pa cares my new game from Virgin (6)
11 Being under twenty, she rules the game (4,5)
14 Rat torn to pieces in game (7)
15 Computer helping to write comic routing (5)
17 Loathe Gremlin game (4)
18 Everything shown by the runes I've cast (8)

CLUES DOWN

- 1 Flintstone's first from Ubi Soft (4)
2 Game that's a bit of a cult I'm assured (6)
3 Brown dog! (6)
4 Look out - leaders got Ron to farm software house (8)
6 Be all-consuming! (3,3)
10 Clark Kent's translation of Übermensch! (8)
11 Heighten general awareness about Dornak subsidiary (6)
12 Dads rewriting after ex developed game from Origin Systems (6)
13 Banishment from Aedogenic (3)
16 A game of hazard from Leisure Genius (4)

Make sure you don't miss next month's competition - it'll be the last! To find out why, and what will replace it, don't miss next month's issue!



HOW TO ENTER

Every month we offer a free game worth up to £15 for your machine. If you're the holder of the first correct answered solution out of the lot, the winner will send your solution to us. All solutions must be received by 23.59 on September 19. Crossword, Friday Court, Buntingford Lane, Buntingford.

0208 1747
The deadline for entries is the first of the month but, as September 1st is a Sunday, entries received on Monday 2nd will be alright.

JULY 31 RESULT

Winner of the July crossword was Patrick Murray of London. Budget solution below - the winner will be announced next month.



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NYET - £4.95 - Shareware
Parkside Software (S&M 907)

This little one is for a test with this opponent alone from Parkside.

Is it you you're never seen? Then the game makes manipulating falling coloured shapes. Each piece can be rotated and moved left or right, the objective is to position the shape so that when it reaches the bottom of the plate, the plate is able to flip to create a voided line of colour that can slip to the other.

Search until you're a little more sure of what shape will come or to what order so some frantic mouse clicks are used while stacking (provided that the coloured shape isn't of the way).

If the stack of shapes reaches the top of the screen you've lost. Each time you manage a coloured line, that line is removed from the screen, allowing shapes above to drop down. The other produces a completely different set of gaps to be filled and is necessary to avoid losing entire.

Although not precisely 'State of the art', it manages to compete with a great host of top left and right controlled by T & V while the 16 bit in animation rotates the shape. Tapping the spacebar activates the fall of the shape. Colours aren't too fast either (the 486 Amiga 40 resolution display might feel although there is a toggle for speed, it could get a couple out of the gate).

This is the sort of program which either you're a fan or aren't. Personally I find it a little tedious but a friend is utterly hooked. Either way it's not too expensive to give it a try.

GAMES II

Amiga - £1.99 800k pack - PD
Italy PD

There are 40 odd games with plenty of variations included. It would bring a smile down on the face to say what

ACE FREEBIE WORKS!

ACE knows this column actually results in more sales for participating libraries - at least one has had to be rescued from under the deluge of extra mail. So why we remember do we have no post so much effort into locating suitable software? If you're running a library and would be kind your business, please Steve Cooke on 011 257 4202 for information about editorial coverage in this section.

the game is about. Myself for the old one "100 Flowers".

The old consists of six programs including beautiful but generally unimproved versions of Tetris, Breakout, Snake, Command, Tic-tac-toe and together with a couple of other games. Each is a good game in its own right and so the old is a wholehearted vote. (Although it's a shame that it appears to have been put together by software thieves - I never know what I don't know about this sort of thing).

Remember to copy them and be advised that not what the software is copying to when discussing through history and those who use their old favourites through copying with full plenty of nostalgia.

POM POM GUNNER

Amiga - £1.99 800k pack - PD
Italy PD

Another interesting one to have gone out of fashion these days are all of the strategic elements which appear to have almost disappeared. With this I would recommend find the bit in abundance more recently.

Not on the end world the way you play on Amiga. You have gunnery a separate attack. As a result of this the entire is divided into the entire strategy game and the first three gun trigger. And that's about all there is to the game - but it's a little fun.

The background and game are digital. Despite an attempt at shading based at the bottom of the screen, the graphics is well represented by both graphics and sound. With such simplicity the temptation is to conclude anything that comes - but that's not a fairly good game at all. It's a shame that it was taken off for showing too friendly towards the end of the day.

If you're looking for something out new way to bring before the eye of thought, please this is an excellent candidate.

FLOWER POWER

Amiga (1988) - £3.99 - Shareware
AMMS PD Library (S&M 917)

Can flowers at it again with yet another highly imaginative game. This one's really for kids but the adults who have seen it usually end up having a giggle.

The aim is to grow and guide flowers while avoiding scattered water in the garden. Each level demonstrates new features to be grown as the maximum score for the total Flower score.

Although the advanced style, the graphics are not something the garden to be with with various jobs to be done in order to be the best.

Playing a lot is followed by the planting of seeds. But each seed to be watered to grow, and the watering can needs regular refills if you become too absorbed by

SHAREWARE PROVIDED

Software supplied by:
Italy PD - 091-587 1195 (Amiga), PD
Box 93, Peterlee, Co. Durham, SR8 9WZ
Amiga.com Limited - 0900 766600
(Amiga) 168 Oak Valley Road
Hollywell South Yorkshire SO1 6QZ
Blackburn PD. - 0734 45244 (Amiga),
384 School Road, Telford, Shropshire,
RO1 5AM
Adventures PD. - 0785 44227 (ST) 82
Merrivale Road Rising Brock, Stafford
ST17 9BB
Parkside Software - 0943 211585
(PC/Mac) PO Box 1154 Corroper Martin
British 0118 840.

the interesting garden, seeds and forget to water the plants they will start to die. Only what beautiful flowers are others may you see the flowers and depend them in the following table.

After going from growing steps to game play, it's not all of them will suit you and you'll play them if they are allowed to suit you. There's no killing yourself through a single step to your life and with a little to play strategy to win the flowers, baby.

Amiga.com is really fun attention and the graphics are really nice. The background is a simple, but touch which always makes me to the way the garden looks. Although it's doing a "Tic-tac-toe" while controlling the watering can. The entire game is a good example of what can be done without being too expensive to play.

MEGABALL

Amiga - £3.99 - PD
Blackburn (S&M 918)

One of my new favourite games has to be Breakout and Megaball is one of the best clones around. It's so good that even studying under pressure of work I find it hard to avoid a diversion - just to test it, you understand.

Although generally a pretty standard - hit the ball with your bat to take out other balls in the way - the features included in this version make for a challenge overall. All the old favourites like stars of various kinds, plus, child, expand and so on, but you do have some what happens when your bat hits a high power ball, take out other balls in the way through them (the ball, level the ball level level level).

With all this to contend with you tend to forget about the ball altogether. Why care where it is when you can just make a star or another ball and get more mileage for enough to avoid the level that is so much a little way towards you. Rightly recommended for all ages and efforts.

See you next month!

ONE DAY AT A FRIEND'S HOUSE...



HI JOHN!
COME AND LOOK AT THIS...
I'VE JUST GOT HOLD OF
3 GREAT GAMES



HOLD ON!
THESE ARE COPIED
DISCS!!

DON'T YOU KNOW
IT'S AGAINST THE LAW
TO HAVE THESE?



WELL, I SAW THE
F.A.S.T. ADS, BUT I
DIDN'T REALLY THINK...

IT'S UP TO
PEOPLE LIKE YOU AND ME
TO STOP THE PIRATES!



- AND F.A.S.T.
ARE OFFERING £1000
IF WE HELP.



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ON THESE CROOKS.
I'VE GOT THE NUMBER FOR
F.A.S.T. HERE.



HELLO F.A.S.T.
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I'VE GOT AN
ADDRESS FOR YOU.

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FOR INFORMATION
LEADING TO A
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AGAINST SOFTWARE THEFT)

TELEPHONE 071-497 8973



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ACE DIARY

AUGUST 1991

10-19th July SOFTWARE RELEASES

800: Super Cars 3D Amiga (£2.99). An released top-down racing game in futuristic setting. Further titles from the Spectrum back catalogue to be released this week.

Impassable (S) Amiga (£9.99). **NorthStar of the Year 2** (S) Amiga £3.99. **Old Money** originally from Millennium - (S) Amiga £1.99. **Third Kingdom** (also on Millennium - S) Amiga £1.99.

Midrange: Blue Moon (S) £20.99. Air combat in World War 1. **Sea Hunt** (S) £20.99. Submarine simulation.

Midrange/Electronic Arts: Eyes to Maximize (Amiga) £24.99. **Midrange/Electronic Arts: Army Alley** (PC) £29.99. **Midrange/Electronic Arts: Battlefield 2** (Amiga) £24.99. Strategically-led chess game where the pieces actually rotate and fight one another for possession of the squares.

Mid Soft: First Lane (PC) £29.99. Five racing games: **Steel Car**, **Steel Drifts**, **Steel**, **Steel Formula One** and **Steel 60**.

Empire: Space 1999 (PC) £20.99.

Sunday 11

Motor Racing: Hungarian Formula One Grand Prix in Budapest - can Nigel Mansell make up some of the deficit on Ayrton Senna?

Monday 12

Cricket: First Day of the Tests Test between England and West Indies, at The Oval. The ground shooting season opens.

Tuesday 13

Wednesday 14

Thursday 15

Friday 16

Birthdays in Monaco, in 1958.

Saturday 17

Anniversary of the Proclamation of

Independence, Indonesia. Football: First Saturday of the 1991-92 English league season.

18-24th August SOFTWARE RELEASES

Comcastware Double Double (S) Amiga £20.99. **TV Sports Football**, TV Sports Baseball, **Wings and Guns of the Fighting Fury**, all in one package.

Mirror Image: United (S) Amiga, PC £9.99. **ComFit: Europe** (S) Amiga, PC £9.99.

Image Works/Electronic Arts: Elite (Amiga) £29.99. **Elite** (Amiga) £29.99. Motor racing game in real life style.

Electronic Arts: Powermancer One Book (£2.99). Ideas, tips and tactics for Powermancer edition. **EA Hockey** (S) Amiga £29.99. Strategically-led on-ice game. **BattleShip** (S) PC, £19.99.

Poppage: America (S) Amiga £21.99. First year earth around several planets, destroy anything that moves, marvel at the graphics along the way. **Poppage: Gardens** (S) Amiga £21.99. PC £19.99.

Empire: Megathunder 2 (PC) £20.99. Follow up to an excellent strategy game through it finally scores a week since M71 hit the streets.

Sunday 18

1950: the first Mini, produced by the British Motor Corporation, was unveiled today.

Monday 19

Tuesday 20

Wednesday 21

Thursday 22

The new law allowing pubs to stay open all day took effect on this day in 1965. Cricket: test match, England vs Sri Lanka, begins at Lord's.

Friday 23

Liberation Day, Romania. Middlesex County Council announced plans to open a new base of school, called 'compositional', on this day in 1948.

Saturday 24

America: World Championships begin in Tokyo.

25-31st August SOFTWARE RELEASES

Image Works: Roman 2 (Amiga) £29.99. price £24.99. The graphics, the sound, and most importantly, the music, all on Amiga CD. **Polystar: CD-ROM** price £24.99. Flight sim with heavy emphasis on realistic controls. **Spectrum: Skybirds: Flight of the Intruder** (Amiga) £29.99.

Midrange/Electronic Arts: Rules of Engagement (Amiga) £24.99.

Larkhall/MSI Soft: Mapped Island 3D Amiga £21.99. **Mid Soft: Crusader** (PC) £29.99. Strategically-led medieval saga. **Winning Air** (S) Amiga £29.99. Compilation complete. **Flight Hunter: F100** (Amiga), **Polystar: New 2** (PC) £29.99. About the nearest you can get to the real thing on a computer at the moment.

Amidation: Great Britain (S) Amiga £20.99. Defeat the zombies invading the city centre. **2nd Suspect** (PC) £20.99. Flight sim based on plane featured in Top Gun.

Sunday 25

Motor Racing: Belgian Formula One Grand Prix at Spa.

Monday 26

Bank Holiday England and Wales. Tennis: US Open begins in New York. Anniversary of first BBC transmission of TV pictures using both images and sound, in 1930.

Tuesday 27

Wednesday 28

Thursday 29

Friday 30

Saturday 31

National Day, Malaysia National Day, Trinidad and Tobago.

1-7 September SOFTWARE RELEASES

Domark: Anne's Jewel Collection (S) Amiga £24.99. Compilation comprising **Aladdin** (S), **Alien** (S), **Let's Go** and **My Wife Carol** (S). **Thunderbox** (S) Amiga £20.99. PC £20.99. Underwater realm with mutant sharks and the like in Teeny side-up conversion, delayed from originally scheduled July release.

Midrange/Electronic Arts: Magic Castle 4 (PC) £29.99. Fantasy role playing as you explore the dreaded domains of Gortex. **Jana Warrior** (S) Amiga £21.99. Platform game with five time travel scenarios and plenty of mazes and puzzles on foot.

Emulsoft: Popcorn (S) Amiga £20.99. Airborne shoot 'em up on hardware (S).

Larkhall/MSI Soft: Moon (£24.99). Racing game. **Mid Soft: Mech Master** (S) Amiga, PC £24.99 - 91 and PC with sound cartridge £24.99. Tactical and campaign package.

Empire: Nightjet 2000 (PC) £20.99. Tank simulation. **Quadrangle** (S) Amiga (PC) £20.99. Multi-screen arcade-style game with you as hero, men with a sword and a missile to break havoc.

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 1

All Formats Computer Fair arrives in Leeds, at the University Sports Centre. Doors open 10.00am. Contact number for organisers: 0225 866000. Athletics: First Day of World Championships in Tokyo.

Monday 2

Tuesday 3

1967: Swastor withdrew from driving on the left, in driving on the right hand side of the road. 'Flow'

Wednesday 4

Thursday 5

Friday 6

The UK industry's biggest exhibition, the Computer Entertainment Show opens at Earl's Court 2, London at 9.00am. Phone the information hotline on 0209 582000 for details.

Saturday 7

ECES continues, plus All Formats Fair in Victoria lifts from the organisers on 0225 866000.

THE W I N N E R E N D

PLUS CA CHANGE

Had our report for bogus game scenarios last month had us rolling in the aisles for, well, at least five minutes. The winner, after considerable debate, has to be M. Festival of Horrors, whose entry kept us chuckling the longest.

M. Festival's spec for "Premature Death!" introduced the hilarious possibility of virtual reality boot-camps, featuring two game modes: "TOTAL RECALL" - lots of places to hide until those nasty men go away (LUBBERING MURDER) - nowhere to hide, but who cares...you're there to cut human flesh!

The game kicks off liberally as you "Die your head out...and watch in horror as a gang of roughnecks break bottles over the head of your girl."

"Good luck" exhorts the blarney. ...and let's be careful out there! Well done, M! Your game is on its way. And an honorable mention to Nick (Skelton) who managed to come up with a scenario that panned on literally dozens of well-known games.

And now for a mega-campo detour, as you'll find out below, Bitter is departing ACE this month after four years of (mostly) faithful service. He returns you observe something a little bit special for putting up with him, and here it is...

ACE is mounting the Advancing Computer Entertainment conference at the EGES in Coffs Coast in September (on the 5th and 6th, to be precise). At the time of writing, this conference will give gamers enthusiasts the unique chance of meeting and hearing from such luminaries as Chris Wallace of Power Crawford, Bruce "Beyond Zork" Moriarty, and a host of others. This is a serious affair - perhaps the first professional computer games design conference ever held in Europe. * and the entry price reflects this: \$65 for two days, eight speakers, lunch, and a panel Q&A.

If you think that's pricey, remember that equivalent events cost at least \$200 to enter and usually much more. However, we recognize that for some ACE readers this sort of cash is out of the question, so Bitter is stepping in with a unique chance for the lucky chaps for whom the \$1 is girl in a duck. If you win, you'll be rubbing shoulders with some of the biggest names in the business.

So here's your chance. Simply write down on a postcard the name of the game you consider to be the best designed program you've ever played, and then tell us why you chose it. The five tickets will go to the five entries that demonstrate to us the lowest design price - you don't have to be liberal, just to get, or even funny - we just want five people who REALLY think they know what makes a good game, and who can tell us what, in their opinion, that killer is. Get to it! The address for entries is:

ACE Bitter Good Bye Campo
Prize Card
30-32 Farringdon Lane
London
EC2R 3AU

...and the deadline for entries is August 30th. You MUST also include your daytime or evening telephone number for contact, and in case you win!

your daytime or evening telephone number for contact, and in case you win!

For many of you, especially those of you involved in entertainment media, this conference is really too important to miss. You can book a ticket by telephoning Steve Cooke or Sarah Caring on 071 251 6222 for details. Attendance is strictly limited and interest is already running very high, so get in touch soon if you don't want to miss out.

And as foretold, after 48 issues, Bitter can exclusively reveal that ACE was originally going to be called Bitter (yes, it's true) but a last minute decision went for ACE instead, with Bitter being reserved for the final page.

Early Bitters make pretty good reading - the first reported how Carol Software's latest strategy program had predicted that the company would get into financial trouble. The company (disappointed soon afterwards) in the second issue, Stuart Bell and 'Who' Bill Straley of Microprose are seen cutting a celebratory cake together - later they were cutting each other to Bell stomped off to start Electronic Joe. Then it was Rescomsoft and Rescom going to court - now both of them are on the case. Plus Ca-Change...

...And the games...Bitter particularly enjoyed inspect the Arkland derelict, Photo (an early ST featured shoot'em up), Baramonster from Spacnia, Ultra-V, Cosmic Cruise (with it's linked, Linking Horror (with other game too hot) etc. (winning in it), Beyond Zork and, more recently, Marlon Dreamer. Old readers will always be welcome at the Riverside Home for Retired Nerds, but watch out for that laptop...

IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

Next month we're launching the 5th Year of ACE with news of some major advances in magazine technology! We're not giving anything away, but get next month's ACE for the full story! Plus...

- The Berkeley conference: check out the current games in development at the home of the hottest racing line around...
- Exclusive pre-EGES show reports...
- ...and a host of surprises. Don't miss it!

Dear Newsgator,

You may not have noticed, but I'm a damn slight quacker on the fire button than your average Joe. My excited gamingplay status demands nothing but the best, so please reserve me a copy of the world's hottest computer entertainment magazine, ACE. PS ACE is out on the 6th of every month.

Name _____

Address _____

CD-ROM EXCLUSIVE!

Next month brings ACE readers a real hot exclusive that could take the lid off the future of home entertainment systems. We've all heard endlessly about CD's, but now Philip has invited us for an in-depth tour of the European software development scene in Dordrecht. We'll be able to tell you a detail about the sort of games you'll be playing when the system launches next year, how it compares with CDTV, how much it's likely to cost and - the biggie - whether it's worth buying at those prices for...

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