

# ST

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VOLUME 1 ISSUE 9 JANUARY 1989  
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# ACTION SEGA

THE WORLD'S ONLY DEDICATED  
ST GAMES MAGAZINE

**OVER 35 PAGES OF GAMES REVIEWED, INCLUDING  
R-TYPE, AFTERBURNER, DOUBLE DRAGON, HEROES OF THE  
LANCE, MENACE, CHRONO QUEST AND LOADS MORE!**

**REGULARS: OCEAN-SOFTWARE PROFILE**

**FEATURE: FEDERATION II - ON-LINE ENTERTAINMENT**

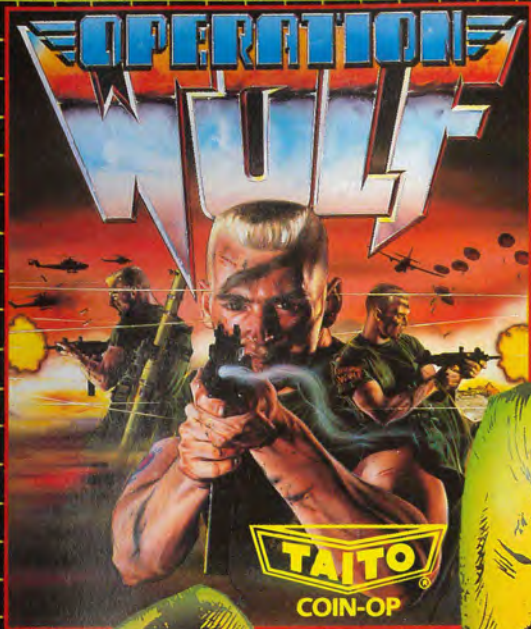
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# THE OCEAN



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"Not only has all the action and gameplay been captured, but so has the excitement, making it one of the most satisfying and compulsive shoot-em-ups to have appeared in a long time" ACE

Your Opponents in your battle for supremacy are four types of Evil Ninja star-throwing Assassins whose skills are manifold and dangerous.

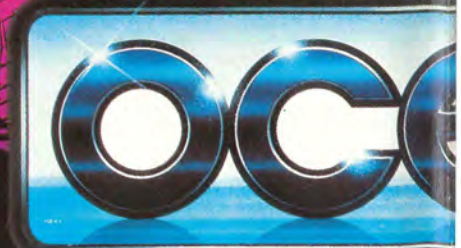
Also out to spoil your day are Acrobatic Women Warriors and vicious Guard Dogs.

At the end of each level you must overcome the Ninja Master in order to progress - some examples of these superhuman villains are: A fire-breathing fat Man, an Armour Clad Giant and the Green and Gruesome Giant Ninja - who has a disconcerting habit of suddenly multiplying into an army!

**DATA EAST**

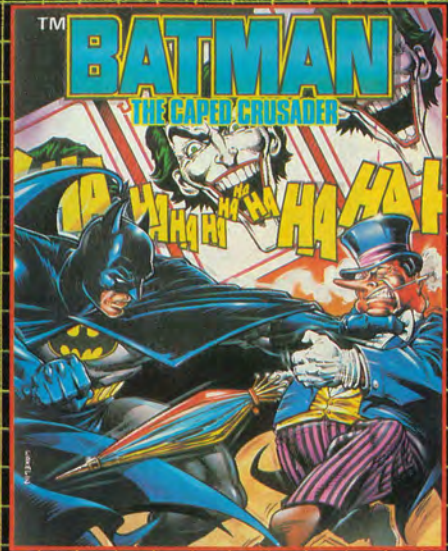


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# AN FORCE



D.C. Comics' famous super hero Batman breaks onto the micro screen in a Wham! POW! Arcade adventure as you engage the forces of evil in Gotham City. Start in the Batcave and move on through the world of fun and excitement as you face the trickiest customer of all... the Penguin. Save some strength for battles ahead with the dastardly Joker however, or you'll miss the thrilling climax! Cartoon style graphics and animation make for stunning realism with



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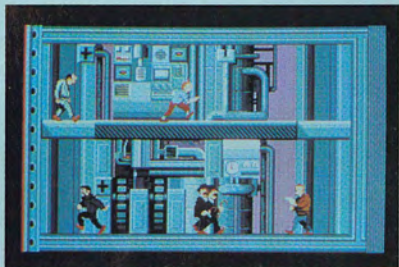




# ACTION PACKED

## FEATURE ARTICLES

**ACTION NEWS:** Young Master Moth digs up some hot news from Hewson, MicroProse, Chrysalis, Edge, Sierra-On-Line, Infogrames, Mastertronic, Software Horizons, Grandslam, Magic Bytes, Microdeal, CDS, Palace, Cascade and Electronic Arts.



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### LICENCED TO THRILL?:

With TV/movie licences becoming almost as big as arcade conversions, are the companies trying to squeeze a gallon into a 512K pint pot? - Steve Merrett

14

### GIVING THE GAME

**AWAY:** Steve Merrett reveals tips for Starglider II, Virus, Elite, Stargoose, Powerplay, Afterburner, Empire Strike Back, StarRay, Exolon and Manhattan Dealers. This month's mega-pokes are for Bubble Bobble, Zynaps and Garfield.

82



### PROFILE ON OCEAN SOFTWARE:

Ocean have managed to gain an enviable reputation within the software industry for establishing a brand name, something that a lot of companies strive for but very few achieve. Martin Moth visited their Manchester offices to speak to the people behind the company.

30



**FEDERATION 2:** Since the creation of MUD (Multi-User Dungeon), the play-by-modem adventure game, many people have written Multi-User Games. Until recently, most of them were based loosely around the same theme: collect all the treasure, solve a few puzzles and, finally, become an immortal wizard. However, a new style of MUG exists. It's called Federation 2 and is available through the Compunet network.

94

## REVIEWS

### HEROES OF THE

**LANCE:** Before you stands the entrance to the ruins of Xak Tsaroth. You hold in your hands the fate of the 'Companions of the Lance'. Eight adventurers, each a master of his art, trained to kill or be killed by the fearsome terrors which wait below.

40



**AFTERBURNER:** Well, here it is! The most important arcade conversion since Outrun! The question is, did Jez San and his team have the skill and know-how to compensate for those 'shake, rattle and roll' hydraulics?

42

**LOMBARD RALLY:** Mile after mile of bone-shaking track; hour after hour of split-second timing and total concentration - have Mandarin and Red Rat captured the essence of the gruelling 24-hour RAC Lombard Rally?

44



# MORE REVIEWS

## NIGEL MANSSELL'S GRAND PRIX:

After dominating the Grand Prix circuit for a few seasons, Mansell had a run of bad luck which culminated in his horrendous accident in Suzuka. Perhaps Martech's simulation is realistic enough to give Nigel some practice!

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## JOAN OF ARC:

In great contrast to their usual style of software, U.S. Gold present a serious, accurate and rather highbrow adventure, which concerns one of history's truly incredible stories, that of Jeanne d'Arc.

48

## POWERDROME:

What will be THE sport of the future? A Rollerball-style game or a series of intergalactic race meetings? Whatever the game, pundits seem certain that win or lose, survive or perish, these games will be brutal and violent!

50

## ESPIONAGE:

Peter Wright's book, Spy Catcher, revealed the world of espionage as being far removed from James Bond lounging in casinos or sipping champagne in a Jacuzzi

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## MOTOR MASSACRE:

Take some cars that look as though they have just driven off a Mad Max set, combine Spy Hunter-style road-racing with intermittent, overhead, Shackled-style game-play, and what would you get? Either an exciting and changing game, or a confusing mishmash!

53

## LIVE AND LET DIE:

'James, this is a Carlson special, perhaps the most expensive speed-boat in the world - don't break it 007!' 'You worry to much M!'

54

## MANHATTAN DEALERS:

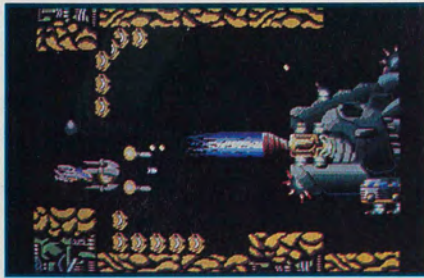
Another consignment of narcotics has slipped through customs and made its way onto the streets. Drug abuse has reached epidemic proportions, something has to be done.

56

## R-TYPE:

For the umpteenth time in the history of computer games, mankind is under attack. So, strap yourself in the latest, super-duper spaceship and go and kick some alien ass!

58



## DOUBLE DRAGON:

In a novel entrant to the fighting genre, Melbourne House don their street-wise clothes and smash all opposition out of the way.

64

## MENACE:

Taking a brave step, Pysgnosis launch their new label with something that is a bit of a novelty for them - a game that isn't an icon-driven arcade/adventure. Instead, they blast into space, adding another to the list of horizontally-scrolling shoot'em-ups. Can it rise above the rest of the space flotsam?

72



## FLYING SHARK:

After what seems an eternity, Firebird release Flying Shark. Put on your Biggles goggles and wind your long scarf around your heroic neck, as we take to the air. Was it worth the wait?

76

**CHRONO QUEST:** So far, PSYGNOSIS have achieved great success with their arcade games. Will their new range of graphic adventures also rise to the top of the best-sellers list?

80

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## CREDITS

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# ACTION NEWS

**HEWSON KALASHNIKOV**

Hewson have yet another multi-directional scrolling shoot-'em-up that will hit the streets in January '89. Following closely in the footsteps of Cybernoid, Kalashnikov features even more weaponry and three levels, which include 250 screens each! The scenario seems as lame as any other similar game, but that hardly matters when all you need to do is collect weapons and blast hell out of the enemy.

Following hot on the heels of Cybernoid - The Fighting Machine, is Cybernoid II - The Revenge. Featuring extra levels, animated landscapes, Black Holes and new weapons, the game is being programmed by Tony Cooper, responsible for Cybernoid I. No release date as yet, but expect it out early in the new year.



## US GOLD

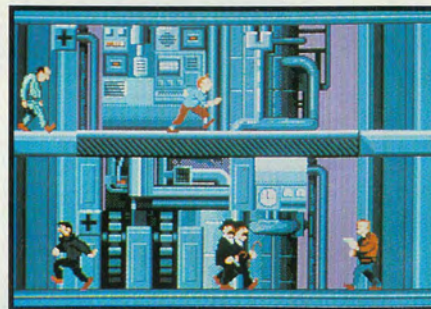
LED Storm has been rescheduled for a January release. Roadblasters is just about finished and is to be released at



the end of November. At the time of writing this, Desolator has just been completed and it might be in time to scrape a review this issue, but who knows. Anyway, look forward to a review soon. Tiger Road was not quite finished in time for a review this issue, but next month...

**'Come on Snowy, we're in a game!'**

Infogrames are working on a computer version of the French cartoon classic, Tintin. Called 'Tintin On

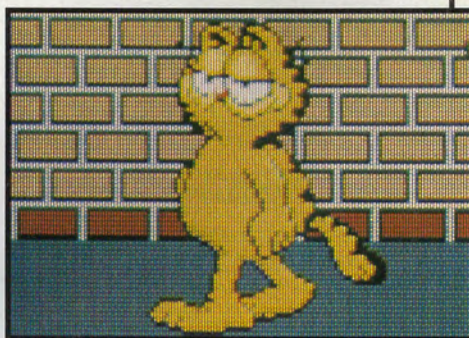


The Moon', it's arcade action and based around the two 'moon' books, 'Journey To The Moon' and 'Explorers On The Moon'.

## ON THE EDGE

Soldiers of Light has arrived too late for a review this issue. Retailing at a price of £19.99 on the Ace label, the game is a horizontally-scrolling game where you control a spaceman with a jetpack. Inside Outing is a 3D arcade adventure in which you have to burgle a house. Alex from the Edge says that it should just about be ready by the time you read this. On the Edge label, it will cost £19.99.

Garfield II is in progress at the



Garfield - yet another game from our hero at the back of the Daily Express

moment with a provisional working title of 'A Winters Tail'. The game is to celebrate Garfield's 10th birthday, and included in the game will be loads of party games. Look out for it in late December/ early January. Darius is a coin-op conversion that could be quite tricky to convert; the arcade game had three screens and the left to right horizontal scrolling was across all three screens, extending the play area. Unfortunately, an ST can only support one screen, so we'll have to see what the outcome is. Expect Darius in the new year sometime. Finally, Softek have acquired the licence to Peanuts.

## Hot news from the Sierra mountain

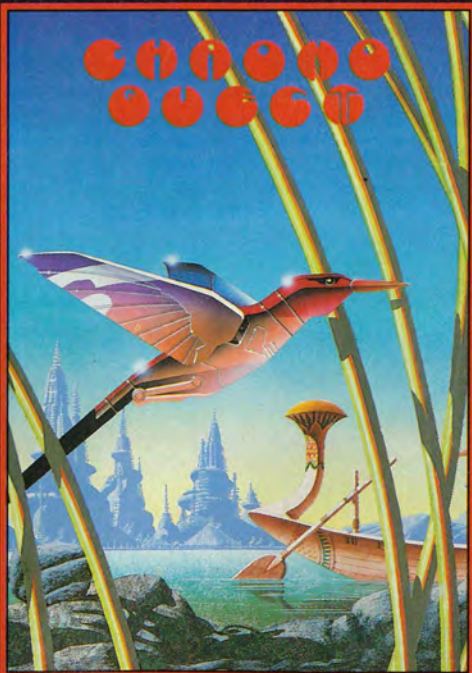
Leisure Suit Larry II and King's Quest IV are due out in the first week in December. There are also two brand new games that are due out the first



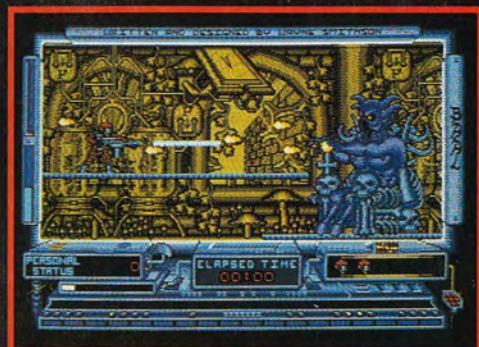
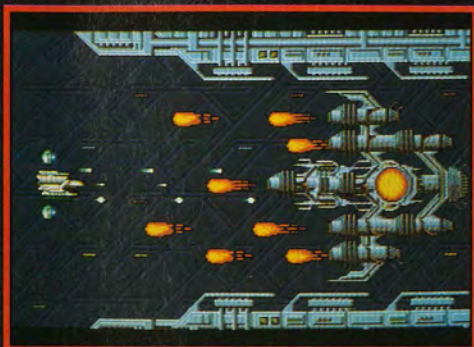
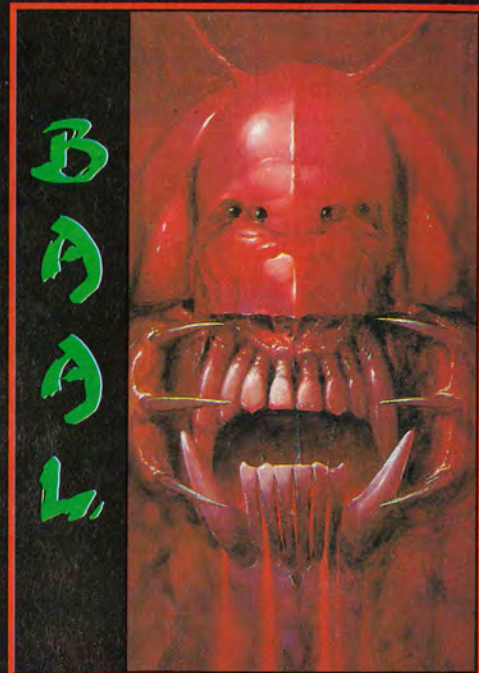
# MENACE



# CHRONO QUEST



# BAAL



## MENACE

This is a pure arcade game — a fast action packed journey through six very different worlds where lightning fast reflexes and furious fire button action are your only hope of survival.

Your mission orders are simple, you must destroy the planet Draconia. In theory possible, in practice . . .

The planet Draconia, an unnatural planet, has been formed over many centuries by six of the most feared rulers that have ever existed. These rulers, exiled from their home galaxy, have ravaged and plundered space, using the worlds they have destroyed and the life forms they have created to build this planet of fear and death.

Now an end must be put to their reign of terror. A large scale attack will prove too costly to our space fleets, Draconia has many orbiting defence systems, the sacrifice may be in thousands of lives. A single fighter craft, approaching undetected, may have a chance to avenge those who have perished, by destroying Draconia. You have that chance . . .

*Screen Shots are from the Amiga version*  
**AVAILABLE NOW ON THE PSYCLAPSE LABEL**

## CHRONO-QUEST

This is the first of a new generation of adventure games from Psygnosis. An adventure game in the classic sense.

Your quest begins in your fathers chateau circa 1920, there you find (or should find) your fathers latest invention; a fantastic time machine. Your father is dead, murdered, you are the prime suspect. A letter left by your father leads you to think the real culprit was Richard, his not so faithful servant. But he has escaped to the future using the time machine . . . who will believe your fantastic story . . . do you believe it?

You will be presented with many objectives; ultimately you will have to travel through time to collect the fragments of magnetic card to drive the Time Machine into the future. There you will have to . . . Meanwhile, the immediate objective is to find the time machine . . . Sorry, a more immediate objective is to find the room with the time machine in it. But its dark . . . Very sorry, an even more immediate objective is to be able to see where you are going . . . 3 hours and 250 minutes and even more immediate objectives later, you are standing in the hallway thinking . . . hellpppp!!!!

*Screen Shots from the Atari ST version*  
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## BAAL

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- ★ More than 100 monsters and 400 traps.

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His army of undead have stolen an awesome weapon of destruction, a War Machine.

As leader of the ultimate battle fighters, your quest is to invade BAAL's domain, fighting off his monstrous demonic beasts to retrieve the War Machine . . . but . . . you must kill BAAL in the process.

Can you succeed? There is no option . . . the alternative is literally 'Hell on Earth'.

*Screen Shots from the Atari ST version*  
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 C64/C128 Disk — £12.99  
 C64/C128 Cassette — £9.99

## CHRONO-QUEST

Amiga/Atari ST — £29.95

## BAAL

Amiga/Atari ST — £19.95





## ELECTRONIC ARTS



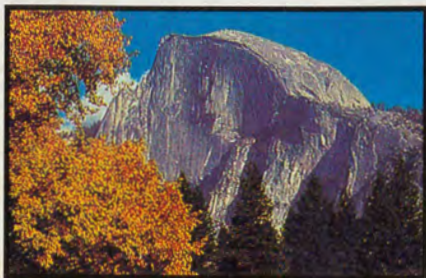
(Above) Fusion - a bi-directional vertical-scroller

Two games are announced by EA this month; Fusion and Zany Golf. In Fusion you have to collect all nine pieces of a bomb scattered over thirteen levels and return them to the first level. An arcade strategy game, it will be released in January at £24.95. Zany Golf is another crazy golf game with good 3D graphics. Cost, again, is £24.95 and the game will be out in December.

(Below) Zany Golf - totally zany!



week in January. These are Gold Rush, in which you must make the trek to California in order to pan for gold, and Manhunter New York, set in



the future and which diversifies from the usual Sierra adventures in that it is a 3D graphical quest.

## DRAGONSCAPE

Software Horizons are working on Dragonscape on the ST. Featuring eight-way scrolling, you set out with your pet dragon (sounds like Mitch's cup of tea) to restore peace to the land. The game has some quirky features, such as getting attacked by a copy of The Times. The game

sounds like a cross between the favourite genres of the computer world, with some shoot-'em-up action, puzzles and strategy all rolled up in a £14.95 package that is set for release in February '89. There are two other games in the pipeline. No details as yet but they will be revealed at the Atari Christmas Show.

## 2 FROM GRANDSLAM

Two major licences currently being worked on at the moment are Thunderbirds and Running Man. In Thunderbirds, you join International Rescue in a four-way scrolling role-playing graphic adventure. You are filmed by your arch-enemy, the Hood, and must recapture the video in order to preserve your anonymity. Along the way, you must save various people from disaster, such as rescuing a



crew of a nuclear submarine from the bottom of the ocean. The game features all of the International Rescue crew, including Lady Penelope and Parker. The game will feature digitized graphics throughout the game for things such as the launch sequences. Expect this one around February '89.

Running Man is due out early in '89. Yet another Arnold Schwarzenegger film licence, it is a sideways-scrolling game with parallax set over five levels.

## MICRODEAL EXTRAS

A few useful ideas for small presents for Christmas come from Microdeal. Joystick extenders are extremely useful in protecting your mouse and joystick ports from damage, and for ease of changing joysticks. In fact,

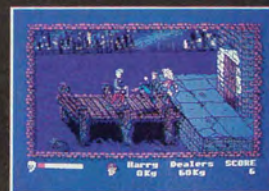
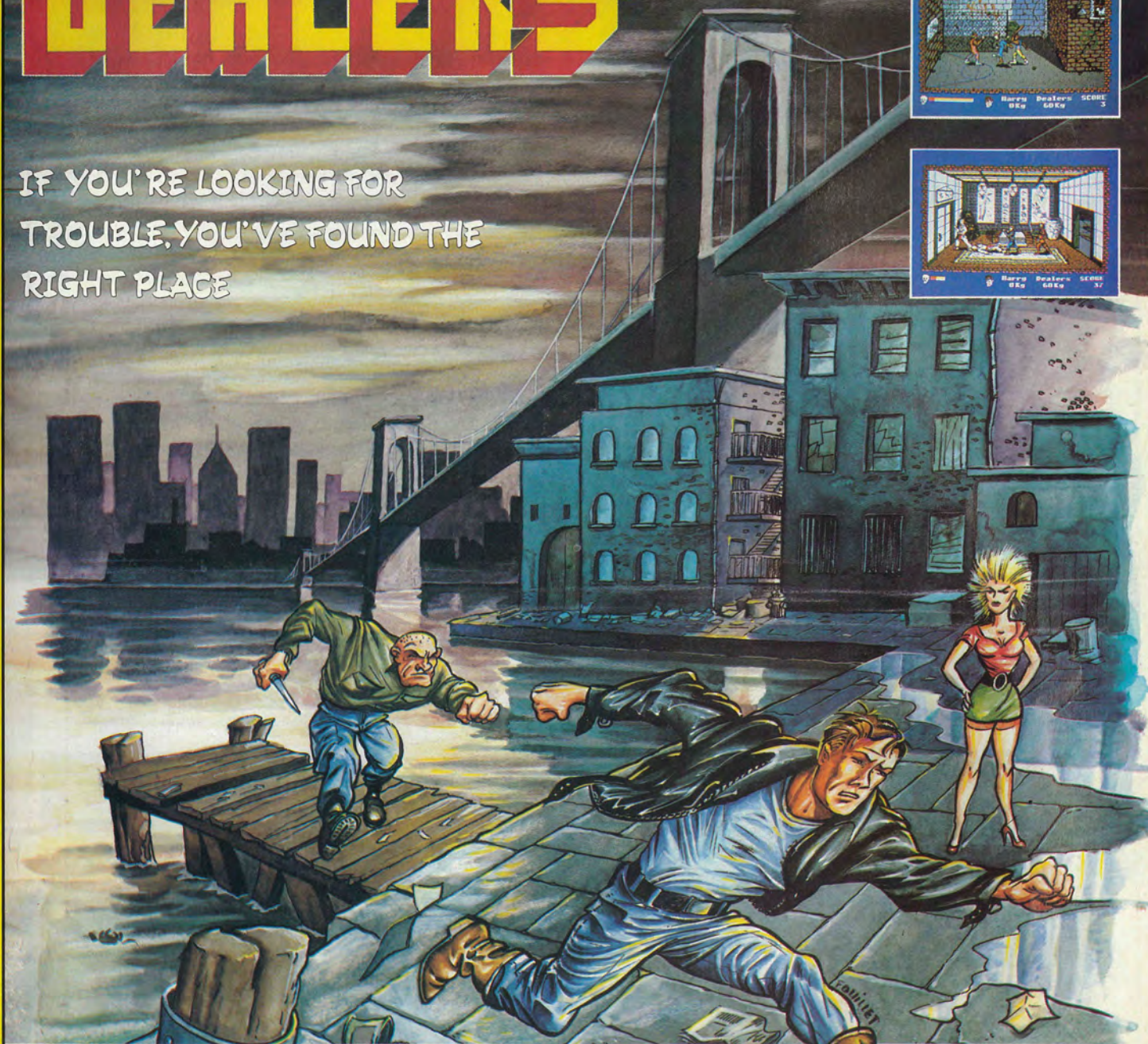


they are standard issue on all STs in the ST Action office. Cost: £5.95.



# manhattan DEALERS

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## STARRAY

Apologies for last month's mistake, where a screenshot of Luxor managed to get swapped for the Starray shot. Anyway, to make amends, we are printing the Starray screenshot for you now. Coupled with this re-print is the news that Starray has just won the best shoot'em-up award from the French games mag, Tilt. The Tilt D'or award is quite coveted within the industry and Herbie from Logotron is "mega-chuffed about the whole thing!"



Look - no Luxor!

Another accessory proving popular in the office is the disk wallet. Available in grey or red, it will hold 32 disks (and quite a bit of paperwork in the middle as well!). It is A4-sized, has a velcro closure and costs a mere £12.95. Other accessories are available, but these two have been thoroughly 'user-tested' by us and are worthwhile purchases.

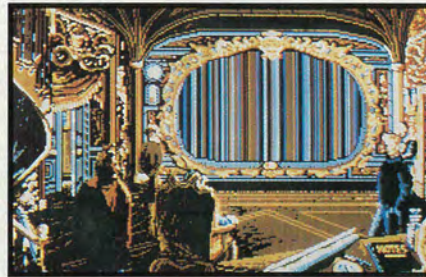
### ACTIVE UPDATE

Following on from last month, I can now show you a couple of screenshots from games that are being released by Active Distribution in the UK. Mid-



Freedom - 'free, free, set them free'

November sees the release of Freedom, from Coktel Vision, where you lead 18th century slaves to free-



20,000 Leagues - escape the evil clutches of Captain Nemo

dom. The game has a wargame structure and plenty of strategy involved. Price: £19.95. Another from Coktel is 20,000 Leagues (Under The Sea). An arcade adventure, you play the part of Professor Arronax, a captive of Captain Nemo, you discover the hidden world under the sea. This one is also available mid-November at a price of £19.95. E.A.S. are releasing Ringside after Christmas, again at £19.95. The game takes you through 10 different opponents on your way to, hopefully, becoming the World Champion. Release date is late-November and price, again, is £19.95.

### COSMIC PIRATE

Palace are working on Cosmic Pirate and a shoot'em-up construction kit for release around January. Cosmic Pirate is a space shoot'em-up and trading game. Basically, the theme of the game is that piracy in space is controlled by a Mafia-type set-up and, to become a successful pirate, you must prove yourself on simulators and then progress to capturing cargo ships.

### CASCADE

Cascade are working on a game with a working title of Project X (impressive, huh?). Anyway, the game is similar to the film Inner Space in that you enter a person's bloodstream in order to save their life. How do you do it? Well, the person in question has two brains and you must laser one out of existence before his head explodes! On the way, you encounter all sorts of bad things that try and upset your journey, as well as your stomach. The game is scheduled for a February release and I'll keep you up to date with any developments.

### MICROPROSE SPRING RELEASES

Ultima V is due for release at the end of November. Unfortunately, the game is being developed in the US and therefore no screenshots have been forthcoming for me to show you at time of going to press. Times of Lore is going through playtesting at the



MicroProse Soccer - 'If it wasn't for Tottenham's 3 goals, West Ham would have won!'



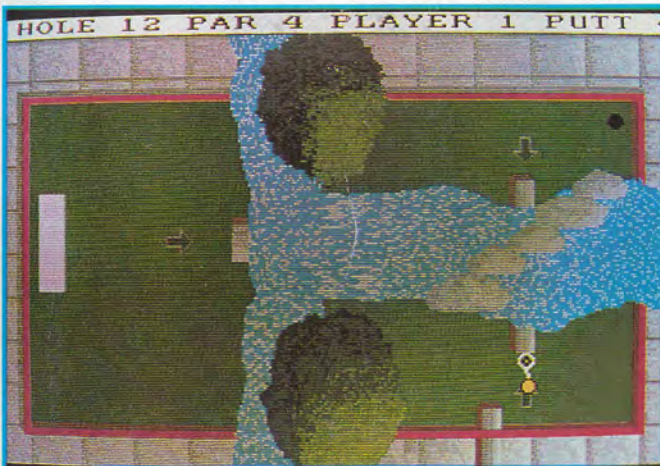
## MAGIC BYTES BACK IN ACTION

Magic Bytes are set to release seven games over the next four months or so. The first of these will be Minigolf, a crazy golf simulation with tubes, tunnels, mazes and other hazards (release 21 November). The Paranoia Complex is scheduled for release on 15th February and is a Pandora-type of game with more action. Tom & Jerry is basically a platform game for two players. Jerry must eat and uses the furniture to gain access to the food, normally situated high on a shelf somewhere. Tom attempts to catch Jerry and uses various tricks to make Jerry into a lunchtime snack. This game is due out the same time as Paranoia.

Nightdown, also for release on 15th Feb, looks like a poor-mans Alien Syndrome. Guide your prototype robot through the mazes on the planet and survive to test another robot. Wall Street sends you into the life of stocks and shares, making a quick buck before prices drop. Expect

this one out on April 1st.

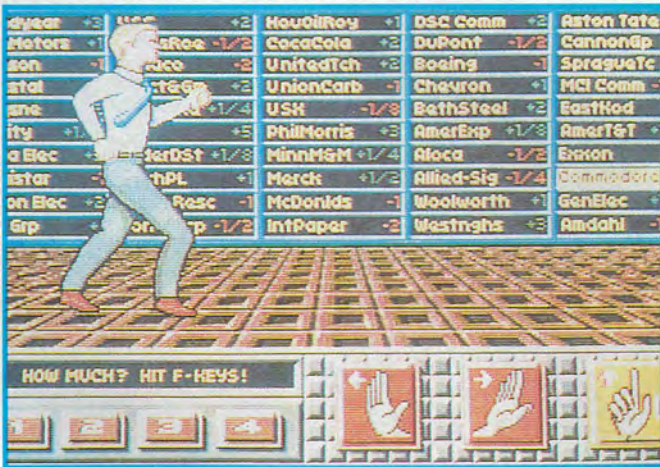
U.S.S. John Young places you in charge of the said ship when WW3 breaks out in the Persian Gulf. A 3D strategy war game, it involves navigating and controlling ships, deciding on target priorities and whether or not to go nuclear. Also available on April 1st. Finally, Persian Gulf Inferno is set on an oil rig somewhere in the middle of the Persian Gulf. On board there is a 1 Megaton nuclear bomb, 5 VIP hostages and some terrorists. A rescue mission has failed and there's only thirty minutes left... You play the part of the last remaining survivor of an anti-terrorist squad on board the rig, and you must defuse the bomb and free the hostages. The game features 8-way scrolling, 220 screens, ammunition, keys, equipment and bombs to collect. This one should be available sometime next June...



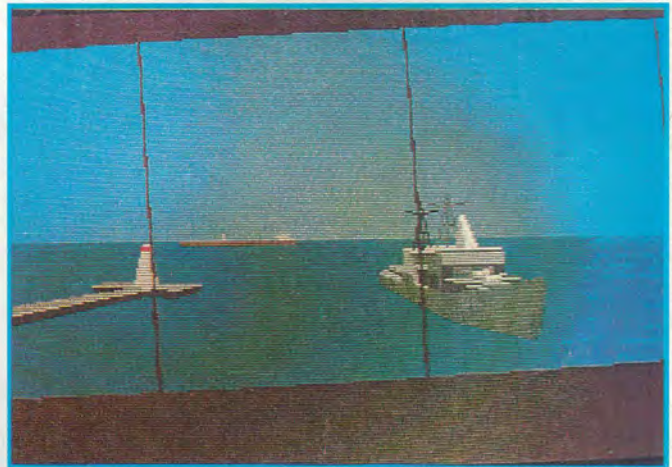
(Above) Minigolf - on-screen crazy golf



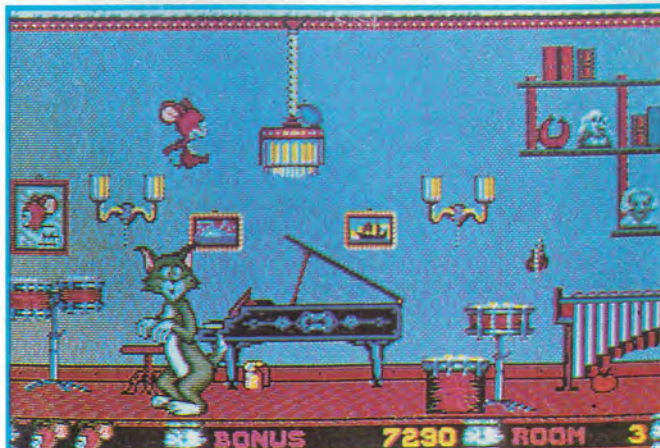
(Above) Nightdown - maze shoot-'em-up



(Above) Wallstreet - play the stock market



(Above) USS John Young - WW3 in the Gulf



(Above) Tom and Jerry - more cartoon capers



(Above) Paranoia Complex - look-down shooting action



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ST Screen Shots Shown





Kennedy Approach - 'Delta 41, you are clear to land'

moment and should be finished very soon.

Kennedy Approach is looking good, but when we saw a demo version, the digitised sound must have been recorded with a bucket over the speaker's head! However, knowing MicroProse's insistence on quality, they'll no doubt have had this rectified for the final version. Expect a review within the next month or so. Finally, MicroProse Soccer is fast nearing completion.

### TANK ATTACK

CDS Software are due to release Tankattack for the ST in January. The game, playable by up to four players, is based around the board game of the same name. Each player controls a Tank Corps of one or more armoured divisions. The objective is to either capture enemy headquarters or annihilate the enemy forces.



### TOP TEN SCORING GAMES IN THIS MONTH'S ST ACTION

1	R-Type	90
2	Menace	77
3	Double Dragon	73
4	Lombard RAC	71
5	Flying Shark	69
6=	Chuckie Egg	68
6=	Manhattan Dealers	68
8	Turbo cup	66
9=	Afterburner	65
9=	Return of the Jedi	65

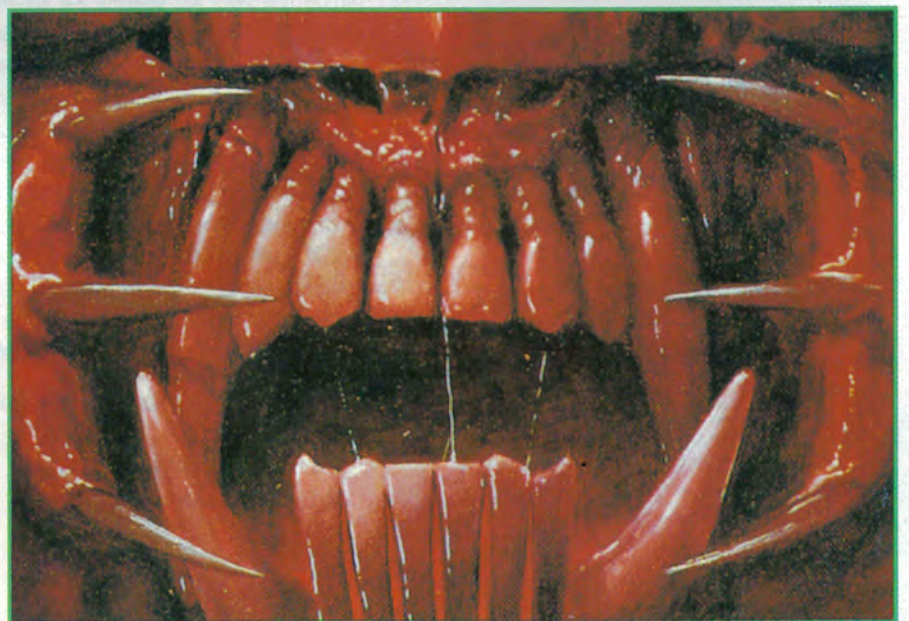
### PSYGNOSIS ROUND-UP

Baal is in the final stages of playtesting and is due for release around the 3rd week in November. Captain Fizz (meets the Blastertrons) is a new game under development on their Psyclipse label. Captain Fizz is a simultaneous, two-player maze game that involves both players working together to destroy the aliens and collect coloured cards that enable you to access further areas of the space maze. Aqua Ventura is nearing completion and is due for release early in the new year. Two new programs are currently being worked on for release in late January. One is an adventure in the Chrono Quest style; the other, as yet, untitled game from the programmer who gave us Menace. More details when I lay my hands on them.



(Above) Aquaventura

(Below) The next release from Pygnosis is Baal



### ASTAROTH

Astaroth, Angel of Death is soon to be released from Hewson. The room-based arcade adventure is programmed by Mark Dawson, with graphics by Pete Lyon. The game, set in a labyrinthine crypt, features traps, treasure, monsters and the Angel of Death, who guards the final haunt.





## NEW LABEL FROM MICROPROSE

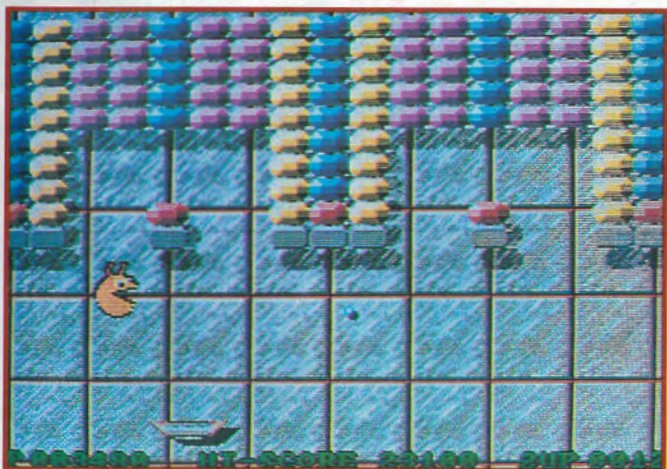
MicroProse have announced a new budget label for the ST and Amiga, called Axxiom. The first three games for release are Mission Elevator, Spaceport and Skyblaster. Games to follow in the new year include The Way of the Little Dragon, a two-player karate beat-'em-up; Crystal Hammer, a Breakout clone and Gunshoot, an interesting-

looking game that has you protecting the bank from villains and duelling in the desert. Other games in the pipeline are Powerstyx, Final Mission and Spinworld; more details to follow as and when I receive them.



(Above) Mission Elevator - a classic platform game

(Below) Crystal Hammer - the game format takes you back a bit



(Above) The Way of the Little Dragon - more kung-fu antics

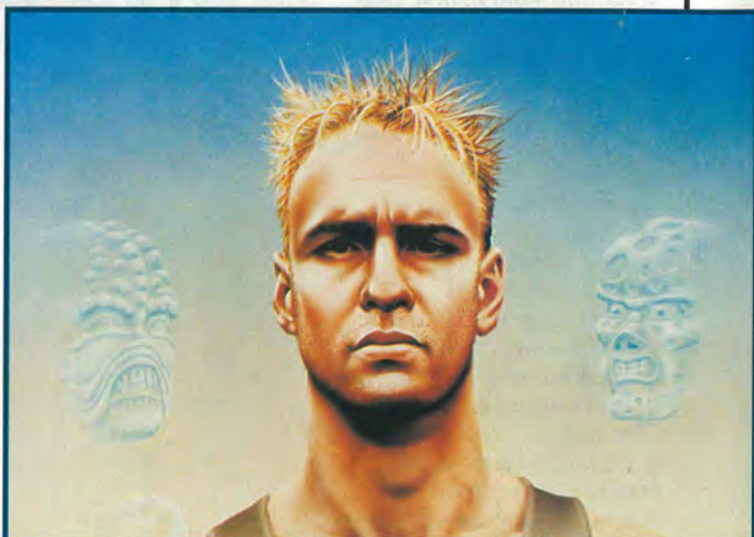
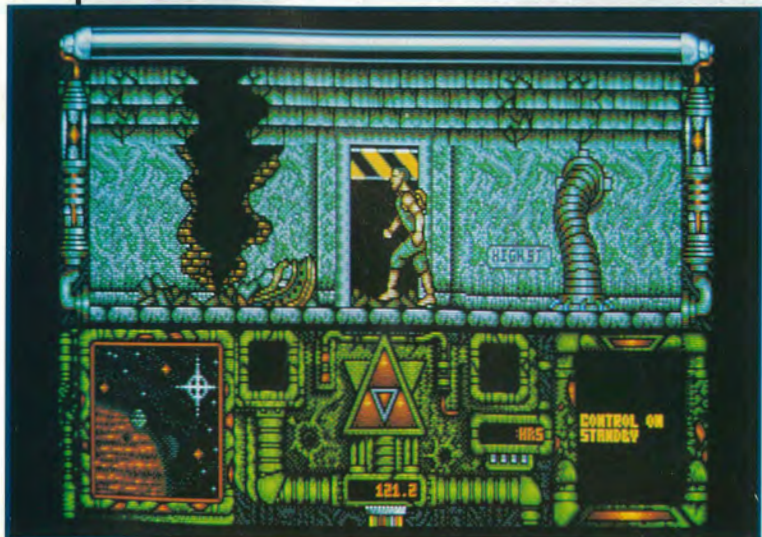
(Below) Gunshoot - a last request before you die, Gringo!



## BIRTH OF CHRYSALIS

Chrysalis are a new software house spin-off from Teque, who have previously developed titles such as Pac Mania and Terramex. Their first title under the Chrysalis label is Prison. The arcade adventure is set in a penal colony in

space and the object of the game is to find clues to the whereabouts of the escape ship that will allow you to escape to freedom.





With TV/movie licences becoming almost as big as arcade conversions, are the companies trying to squeeze a gallon into a

512K pintpot? -

Steve Merrett

# LICENSED TO THRILL!

Can the excitement of a film like the all-action, Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom be captured in a computer game? Sadly not. Yet Ocean managed to capture all of the atmosphere and action of Platoon - How? Well, it's all in the implementation. It's all very well having an incredible, brand-new licence, but unless the programmers discuss the parts of the movie they want to include and how they will implement them, the end result will be a pale imitation of the original. A classic example of failing to do this is the Gremlin/Magic Bytes' licence, Pink Panther. This appalling concoction was eagerly awaited by the STA crew, and having seen screen shots of the pretty graphics, we were decidedly miffed when the final product arrived. We all know, and we have seen plenty of examples, that licences can be worthwhile, the aforementioned Platoon and Activision's Predator, being two that are particular-

ly memorable. The latter, although another scrolling shoot'em-up, adhered closely to the original, not to mention brilliant of playability. A lot more could have been done with the licence, but what emerged was more than adequate.

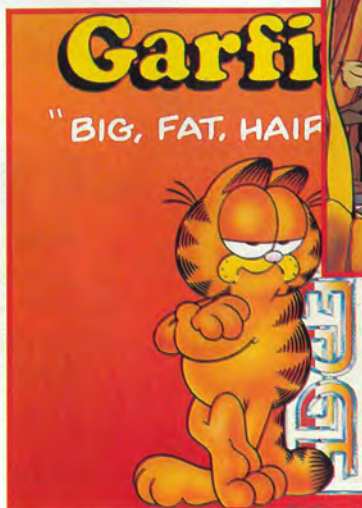
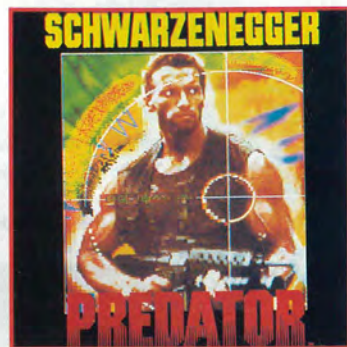
Another problem that can make or instantly condemn a licence, is if it has been converted from an arcade machine. It is hard enough getting all of a film into an ST, so how are they going to cram in arcade quality-graphics as well? True, this can be said about any coin-op licence, but, for the most part, the actual machines' games are lacklustre pot boilers anyway, and this instantly stifles any original concepts and kills off the possibili-

ty of a decent game - Indiana Jones being a classic example.

Occasionally, a licence will appear that will cause your sides to split at its sheer naughtiness - anyone remember the Archers game on the 8-bits? I mean, how can you possibly base a game around a group of farmers who no-one has actually seen? Mind you, I must admit that a few of these underwhelming licences have been rather playable, especially the Domark set of 'Bob's Full House', 'Every Second Counts' and 'Blockbusters', so it just goes to show that it's not how big the licence is, but just how good the implementation is.

As I write this, even more licences have been snapped up and are being written: Tom and Jerry, A Question of Sport, Live and Let

Die, and even Joan of Arc! All of these, with the exception of the dull-looking Question of Sport (errrr, over to you, Emlyn), are looking promising, but, as usual, only time will tell.





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Six stages of unrelenting Vietnam style action



### Platoon - Ocean

Platoon was one of the films released during the epidemic of 'Nam movies last year, and portrays the effect the war had on a young, raw recruit. It showed the apathy the fighting produced, the fear, the loss of innocence and, worst of all, the corruption - shown in the form of the murderous Sergeant Barnes. All of this seemed to be impossible to encapsulate in a computer game, and everyone expected the programmers to add another to the huge 'Gung-ho!' pile of 'Commando' clones. But against all the odds, Ocean hit back with what must rate as one of the best licences ever.

One of the nicest things about Platoon is the variety in the levels, each adhering to the film rigidly, and being a game in its own right. The first section, the jungle, has you leading a patrol of six men through the dense thicket avoiding both snipers and the attacking Vietcong troops. This section is extremely hard, and is made even harder by the fact that you can be killed by an off-screen enemy's bullet. The second section, the village, is basically an extension of the jungle, requiring the player simply to enter huts and find a torch and a map, before exiting via a trap door to

the tunnels. The tunnels is the most atmospheric level of the lot, and is my personal favourite: you control a soldier as he wanders through the stagnant waters in a veritable warren of tunnels. Every now and then a Vietcong will appear, and killing him is a matter of moving your cross-hair onto him and firing. After finding a compass and two sets of flares (no, not the trouser variety), you leave the tunnels and enter the bunker. By now it is night-time, and as you lay there the enemy begin their assault. You must launch flares so that you can see their silhouettes, then shoot them. Next, you reach the second jungle. Anyone familiar with the arcade machine, Gryzor, will recognise this bit: it involves running 'into' the screen and choosing one of two routes until you find Barnes' fox-hole. This final stage is very easy, with you simply lobbing grenades at the guy.

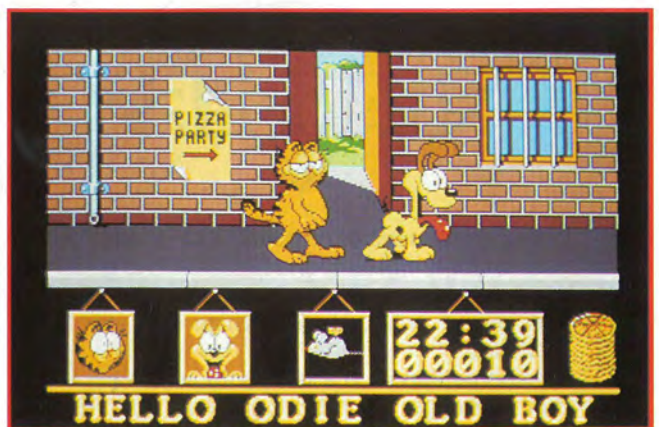
Everything about Platoon is polished, and although the game does initially seem over-hard, perseverance will reap rewards, and a great deal of fun will be had.

### Garfield - The Edge

The most recent addition to the field of TV and movie licences, is the Edge's computer version of Jim Davis' fat feline, Garfield. Everywhere you go now there are Garfields: stuck to car windows; holding your keys; and now the porcine ginger tom has even made it to the backsides of all you boxer-shorts wearers out there. The game takes the form of an arcade/adventure, and has Garf attempting to rescue his 'chick', Arlene. She has been banged up in the city pound, and by solving numerous, object-related puzzles, you must find the key to her cell. Your escapades are all shown over several flick-screens, each looking as though they are fresh from the pen of Mr. Davis himself. Wandering around these screens are your two partners in crime - Odie the stupid dog (your master Jon's other pet), and Nermal your sickeningly cute nephew. All three of you can hold one object each, and Garf can use the other two to store objects for him. Your travels will take you everywhere - the rat-

infested sewers, various shops and the park - and it obvious that with all this walking and with his huge appetite, Garfield is going to get hungry very quickly. Food, like objects, is just lying around the playing area and, once collected, it can be eaten by pulling down on the joystick. Eating food replenishes Garf's ever-diminishing energy bar - represented by a stack of pasta at the bottom of the screen, but if the bar runs out, our hero will keel over in a 'nap attack', not waking up until he is fully rested.

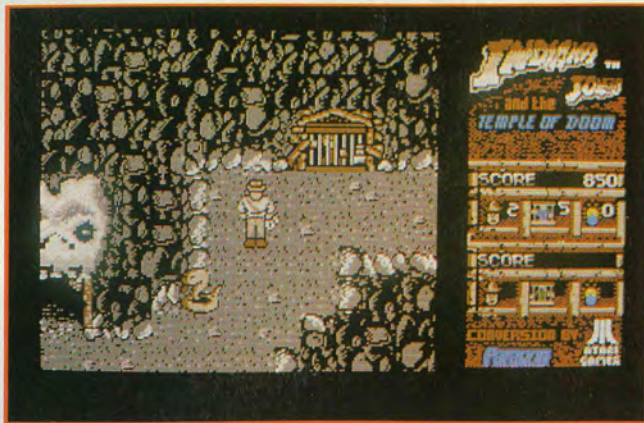
I can't really put my finger on what is lacking in 'Big, Fat, Hairy Deal'. The graphics are spot-on, apart from a few animation hiccups, and the sound is bright and jolly; but somehow the game just doesn't gel. It is basically another arcade/adventure, but it is an uninspiring one, and one that will be solved in no time at all. Only buy this if you are one of Garfield's greatest fans.



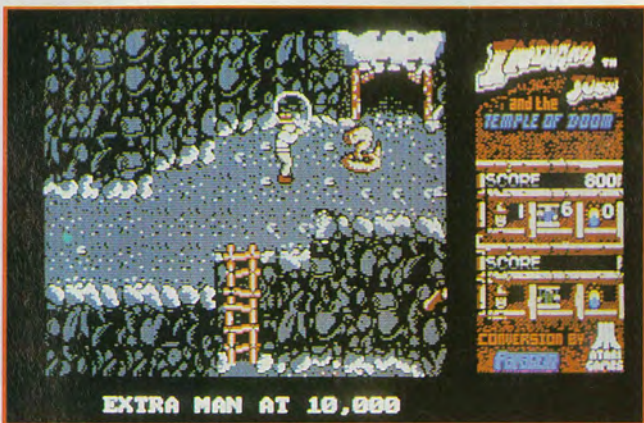
Garfield searches for useful objects in his quest to rescue Arlene



## Indiana Jones - US Gold



Tiny graphics and feeble sound make Indiana Jones look worse than it actually is.



Indiana Jones, the film, and its prequel, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, must rate as two of the best all-action films for a long time. So, when Indy hit the silver screen again, it was obvious that a computer game would follow. Released as an arcade machine, *Indiana Jones* was a substandard three-stage romp which sank, without so much as a ripple, amidst the visually more impressive machines - something that shows in Probe's conversion.

Beginning in a dank 'platform and ladder' cave system, Indy must work his way to the mine entrance, freeing caged kids as he goes. The graphics on this section are tiny and unde-tailed, and the scrolling is of the annoying 'push' variety. Attacking you within the caves are Thuggee guards, and to kill these you must whip them - but should they touch you, you will be stunned and will lose a life. Having reached the mine entrance, the action switches to that of a 3D view, with Indiana sitting in a cart, ready to go. By pulling down on the stick, the cart begins to accelerate and the fun really begins. Sitting-target Thuggees are easy whip fodder, but care must be taken to ride on two wheels to avoid flames and breaks in the track. Thuggees will attempt to intercept you by also riding in carts, and to get rid of these you must bash into the back of them. Reach the end and you enter the flame-surrounded temple in search of one of the stones. Collecting the stone is easy, being just a matter of touching it, and, when successful, you re-enter the first cave system which will now house Indy-crushing rock grinders and lava pools, as well as the odd appearance of the evil, Mola Ram, who bungs fireballs at you. When you have completed all of the nine screens and collected all three stones, you must cross a rickety rope-bridge in order to escape.

*Indiana Jones* is a very playable game, but one that fails to impress on the graphic and sound fronts, with the former being too small and the latter just being plain annoying. Not a bad game, but one that should have been written from scratch and not converted from an uninspiring coin-op.

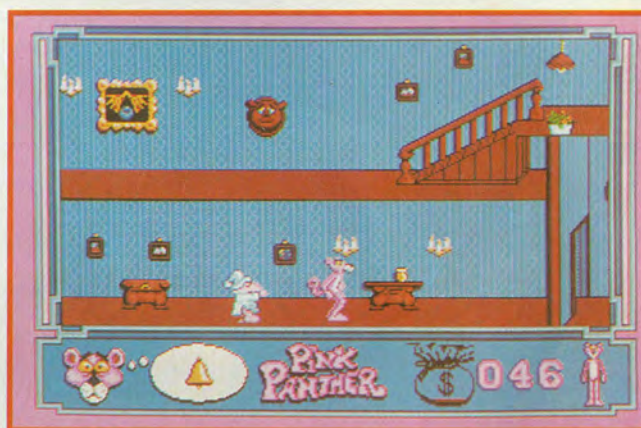
## Pink Panther - Magic Bytes

What a disappointing cartoon-to-ST conversion this turned out to be. With all of the rinky-dink *Pink Panther's* potential, what we end up with is a terminally boring, guide-the-sleep-walker-whilst-nicking-his-possessions game - something I can honestly say I have any seen him do in one of his cartoons.

Graphically, the *Pink Panther* is fine, with Magic Bytes capturing his distinctive walk perfectly and all of the back-drops are attractive and pleasing to the eye. Sound though - bleurgh! What on earth have they done? The famous Henri Mancini 'Dum de dum' tune has been totally slaughtered with only the bass line remaining, and spot effects are limited to various pings.

However, the point on which the game falters is the control method. Before you can go and pilfer anything, ol' Pinky must redirect the sleepwalker (one of those funny blokes with the big noses). This is done by standing in front of him and holding your hands out - he will then walk into these and, without waking up, turn around. Alternatively, you can use one of the items Pinky is holding. These take the form of trampolines, an effigy of yourself and a burglar to distract the ever-present Inspector Clouseau - you know, the sort of things you always carry around with you! All of the guy's goodies must be stolen before Pink gets too tired, and if you fall asleep, your game will end. Additionally, your game will end if the sleeper wakes up or if Clouseau feels your pink collar.

This game is a complete travesty of the cartoons, bearing little or no relevance to the pink hero. Basically, it seems that the programmers have had a game knocking about the office, thrown in the *Pink Panther* sprite and tried to sell it at an extortionate twenty quid. If you see this on the shelf in your local computer shop, do yourself a favour and stroll straight past it.



Above. Searching the large house for stealable items. Below. Our rinky-dink hero relaxes on an island. No doubt he is trying to forget the abysmal game he once appeared in!





## Knightmare - Activision

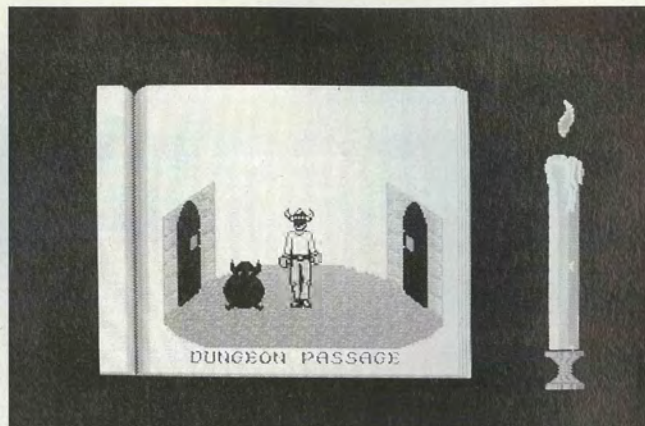
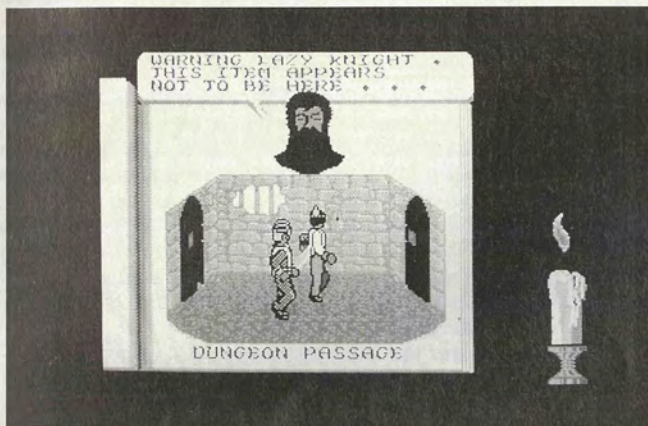
Based on the award-winning Anglia TV series, *Knightmare* takes you on a dangerous journey through the mysterious Damonia castle and its dank dungeons. The game takes the form of a picture book, with our helmeted hero depicted against a pseudo-3D screen, and a page turning as you leave a screen. Your mission is a simple and obvious one - survive and escape, and this is done by collecting and using anything that looks remotely useful.

To help you in your travels, two wise oracles offer, usually cryptic, advice. Care must be taken when listening to these guys, as one is on the side of bad whilst the other is on yours. Entering commands, whether they be to the oracles or of general use, is done by use of a two-word input system. The words you need must be rotated until you have both you require, then pressing 'return' will utilise the function. This system, though simple in theory, is extremely slow and long-winded, and, as the entire game is played against a time-limit, should have been

scrapped for a more user-friendly one.

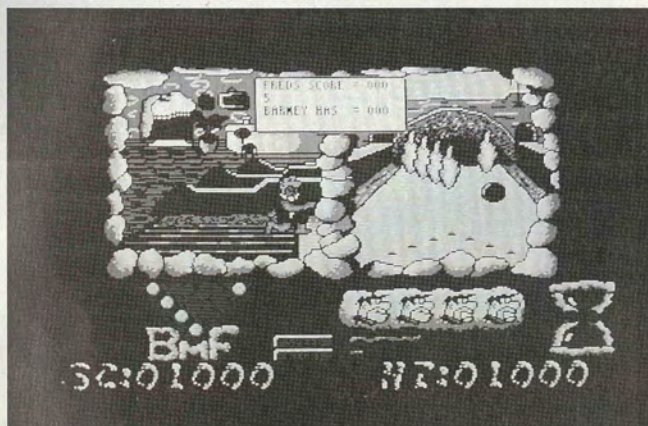
Obviously, the game has its fair share of baddies, and these are encountered as you wander around the castle. They come in the form of Knights, Sentries, Goblin-like things and whatever you would expect to meet in an ancient building, and contact with any of these severely depletes your life force. Thankfully, the forces of evil can be combatted, and this is done by finding and using a weapon or spell, but, once again, you have to use the parser - arghhhh!!

*Knightmare* on the ST is fun to play, for a short time anyway, and like the TV show, loses its appeal as soon as you have grown used to the pretty graphics and backgrounds. Play is limited by the annoying parser, and the whole package is a little too repetitive to hold a player's attention for long. A missed opportunity by Activision to create what could have been an extremely involving arcade/adventure. Instead, we end up with a run-of-the-mill, 'find and use' game.



Beneath the attractive graphics of *Knightmare*, an average arcade/adventure lurks

The tedious and annoying painting section instantly kills any compulsion to continue to other levels.. which is probably just as well!!



## Flintstones - Grandslam

Fred, as usual, is looking forward to the weekend. Mind you, he's got good reason to - it's the *Bedrock Super-Bowl* contest, and he's in it! However, Wilma has other plans for him, and wants him to paint the living room before her mother comes to visit tomorrow. So, with paint brush in hand, we begin to play *Grandslam*'s appalling 'Flintstones' game.

We start the game in the living room, painting away with our live animal brush, and baby Pebbles safely in her playpen in the corner. You make Fred paint by moving him up to the wall and pressing fire, then slowly - very slowly - the wall changes to a lighter grey. This section would be extremely easy to complete if it were not for the aforementioned Pebbles. Every now and then she escapes from the confines of her playpen, grabs a pencil and starts doodling on Fred's newly-painted walls. To stop her, you must go over, pick her up and stick her back in her pen; but by now, your brush has gone walkies and no sooner have you caught the thing, than Pebbles is on the loose again - most frustrating!

Now, if you are still playing, you set off to the *Super-Bowl*.

But, in true *Flintstones* style, the wheel comes off Barney's car. You must find, as soon as possible, a suitable replacement and fit it. Manage this, and you begin bowling - and what a drawn-out process this is. Every time you bowl, you must wait for the pins to be repositioned, and then wait even longer while Barney has a go. Getting back from the bowl, probably extremely tired because of the length of the match, you find that Pebbles has disappeared. You eventually find her stuck on a high girder at a building site, and by running up several ladders and platforms, you must try to bring her down safely.

There is very little I can commend about this. The graphics are OK until they move and the sound is below average; but the final insult is the gameplay - what there is of it. The action is repetitive and long-winded - the bowling particularly - and the whole thing moves at a snail's pace. A useless game and one that, if bought, should be buried in a deep hole at the bottom of your garden.





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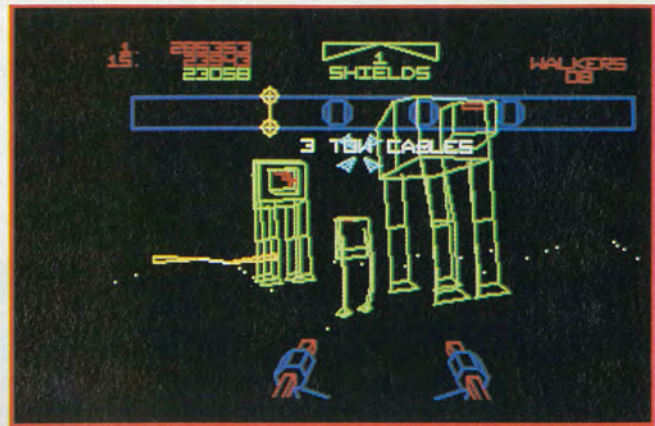


## Empire Strikes Back - Domark

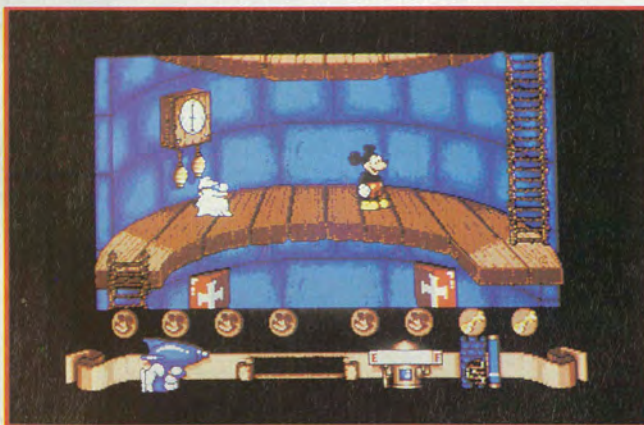
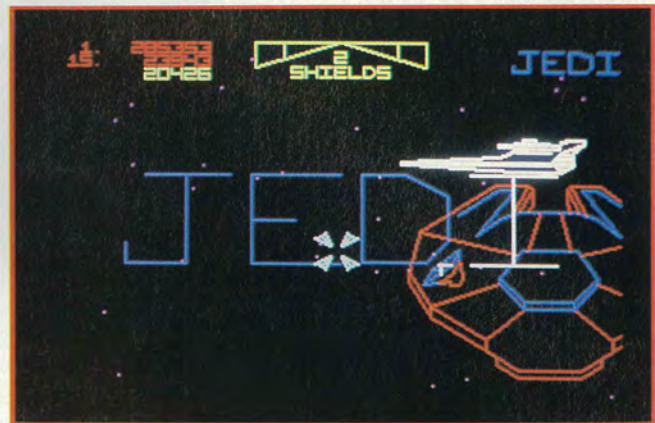
The actual *Empire Strikes Back* arcade machine was extremely rare, as it was offered to arcade owners in the form of an upgrade kit which they had to install in an old 'Star Wars' machines' cabinet. This was a fairly difficult task, requiring a modicum of technical knowledge and, consequently, very few bothered. A real pity, as 'Empire' is streaks ahead, in playability terms, of its classic predecessor. The game follows the adventures of Luke Skywalker and his rebel clan as they try to destroy the evil empire. Angry at having his precious Death Star destroyed, the dark lord of Sith orders that the rebels' base be found and destroyed.

Beginning on the ice planet, Hoth, you control Han Solo as he attempts to destroy the message-beaming Pro-bots. These nasty beasts will try to report your position to the awaiting empire, and if they receive it you will have to evacuate. This section can be extremely fast and furious as you attempt to blow up the hordes of Pro-bots. Next, we change our on-screen persona to that of Luke Skywalker, and entering your Snowspeeder you must destroy the oncoming Imperial Walkers. This is the best stage of the game, and the one when you notice just how good the vector graphics are, as the massive walkers sway towards you. Next, we have the 'Star Wars' rip-off level, consisting of using Han's Millennium Falcon to blap TIE-fighter after TIE-fighter, and after that we have the weakest part of the game - the asteroid field. Once again, Han's dexterity must get you out of this tight scrape, this time by avoiding the indestructible rocks.

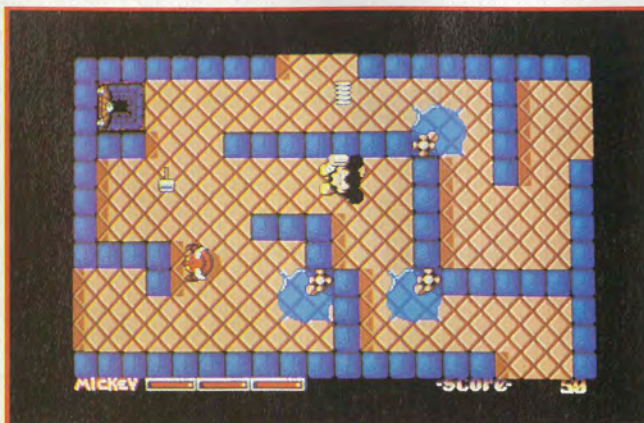
*Empire Strikes Back* is an extremely playable game, but of doubtful lasting appeal. It is very easy just to waltz through the levels without so much as losing a point of your energy bar. The sections all vary in quality, but the only one that really strikes you as impressive is the Imperial Walker level. Quite a nice game, and one that is close to the film, but I recommend that you give this some careful consideration before committing yourself.



Smooth Vector graphics but repetitive gameplay make up the second Domark arcade conversion from the Star Wars trilogy.



The endearing graphics and varied sub-games all contribute to make Mickey Mouse one of the better licences reviewed in this megatest



## Mickey Mouse - Gremlin

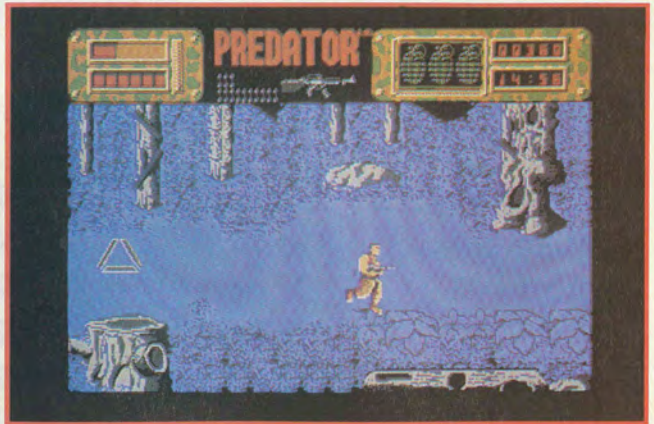
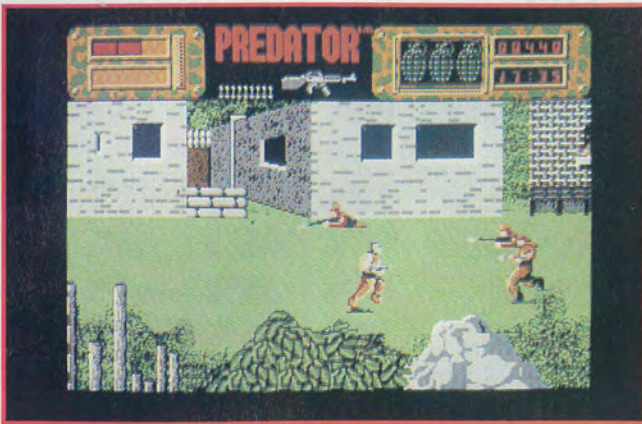
One of the few games to actually do justice to its licence is this excellent Gremlin game. Set in Disney Castle, Mickey is horrified to find out that it has been taken over by the nasty Ogre king and his hordes. So, despite being sixty-odd years old, Mickey packs a hammer and a water pistol, jumps into his car and goes to put things right.

Disney castle is set over eight, extremely well-drawn towers, and Mickey must solve all of the sub-games within each of these towers before the Ogre will be defeated. The sub-games are quite neat in their execution, although they are basically variants of old classic games, such as Donkey Kong and Pacman. When Mickey has solved a sub-game he will return to the main tower, and a nice graphical sequence sees him boarding up the door. When all of a tower's doors are sealed, our hero will be whisked to a confrontation with an evil witch. She throws spells and sundry horrible things at Mickey, and if he can avoid these and get to the witch, he will proceed to the next, inhabited tower. When all eight towers are sealed, Mickey will face his final challenge - the battle with the Ogre king himself. Our brave little rodent must attempt to squirt the king with his water pistol, and if you do this, then one of the nicest game end sequences ever will unfold before your very eyes.

As cartoon licences go, this is probably the best. The tower backdrops, not to mention the creatures that inhabit them, are brilliant, and it almost seems a shame to kill some of the cute little dragons and gopher-like things that roam around. The game offers a long-term task, and with the various sub-games, has a fair bit of variety. The game isn't the hardest in the world, but it's also far from the easiest - with the between-tower guardians requiring quick reflexes to beat them. Mickey Mouse is a credit to Gremlin, and a game that deserves to be in your collection.



Frantic, horizontally-scrolling activity captures a lot of the film's atmosphere and action



## Predator - Ocean

A group of diplomats has been kidnapped and imprisoned somewhere in the South American jungle. As Dutch Schaefer, you must take your party of troops and rescue them. However, when you get there they are dead - skinned alive - and of the kidnappers there is no sign...

You enter the fray, naturally, as big Dutch, and follow your troops as they run into the jungle. The game scrolls from left to right, and Arnold can move in any direction and fire or punch as well as throw one of his three grenades. As you progress into the game, several of the missing kidnappers appear and start firing at you. Arnie/Dutch is initially armed with a gun and must use this to sort them out. When shot, Dutch can take six hits before he finally keels over; but the enemy, being weaker and on lower salaries, only need one. As you progress, you find the dead bodies of some of your colleagues, and, alongside their corpses, another weapon. If Arnie is getting rather low on ammo, he can put down his near-empty gun and take his

mate's unused one.

Before too long, a set of infra-red sights appears, scanning the area and homing in on Dutch. This is the Predator of the title, and if his sights touch you, two bolts of energy will be released, killing you instantly. You don't actually see the Predator until level three, where it comes towards you and you battle on a log. The sprite of the monster is very disappointing and, although it looks similar to the film's beast, without closer scrutiny it looks like one of the kidnappers. Having beaten him on the log, he then runs away and doesn't reappear until the next and final level.

Predator is a nice little game, and one that I played a lot when it was first released. There are a few niggles. For instance, when a bullet hits Arnie, he pauses, so loads more hit him, depleting his already limited energy. But apart from that, Predator is a cracking little game and one that does the excellent film justice.

## Road Runner - US Gold

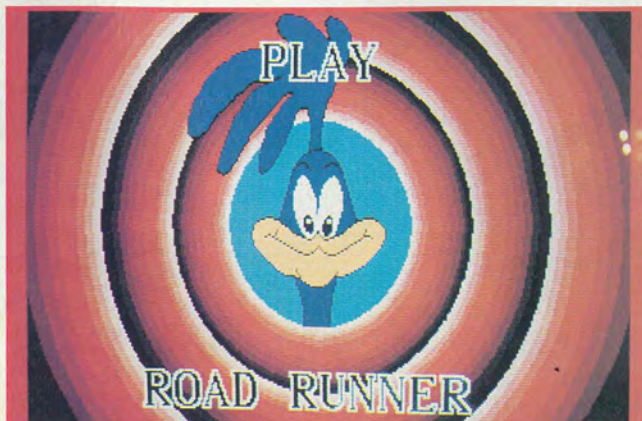
Of all the Warner Bros. cartoon characters, Road Runner has got to be most people's favourite. His madcap chases with his arch-enemy, the ever-hungry Wile. e Coyote, have had people in stitches for years, and I cannot believe that anyone hasn't laughed at Wile. e's face just before he plummets to the bottom of a chasm. So, with all of its chases and visual humour, it was obvious Road Runner would make an entertaining computer game.

The game that eventually emerged was converted from Atari's arcade machine, and your basic aim as Road Runner (run-nus likedawindus) is to evade the clutches of the omnipresent Wile. e Coyote (voracious appetitus). Your adventures are depicted against four, spartan desert backdrops, and on your travels you must collect as much bird seed as you can. Fail to get enough and you will faint from hunger, allowing Wile. e to drag you away. Because he is so dumb, Wile. e has several of his 'Acme Road Runner Catchers' lying around. These take the form of pogo sticks, rocket-powered skate boards and gyrocopters, but if he takes too long to catch you, they will go wrong with hilarious conse-

quences.

If you become quite adept at the game, bonus points can be gained in a game of 'chicken' with Wile. e. By running up to him and pressing fire, Road Runner will emit his world-famous 'meep meep!' before legging it, gaining points for his impudence. Additionally, by luring Wile. e into the path of an obstacle (a passing van or a falling rock), you can gain points by getting him run over or squashed, and these points are added to your score at the end of the level, as well as your bonus if you managed to collect all of the seed.

Road Runner is just like the cartoons, and captures all of their manic feeling and humour. The graphics are a little too small and the sound is limited; this being particularly noticeable with RR's pathetic 'meep meep'. A fun game, and a reasonable conversion of a much underrated coin-op. As a matter of interest, this and the aforementioned Indiana Jones are available on U.S. Gold's 'Arcade Force Four' compilation, and with the likes of Gauntlet and Metrocross it is well worth checking out.





## To sum up...

Game	House	Price	Difficulty	Pics	Sound	Overall
Mickey Mouse	Gremlin	£19.95	Average	72%	60%	72%
Empire Strikes	Domark	£19.95	Easy	58%	55%	68%
Platoon	Ocean	£19.95	Hard	63%	35%	63%
Road Runner	US Gold	£19.95	Average	54%	55%	63%
Predator	Activision	£19.95	Ave-Hard	49%	38%	56%
Garfield	The Edge	£19.95	Average	52%	50%	54%
Knightmare	Activision	£19.95	Ave-Hard	52%	43%	50%
Indiana Jones	US Gold	£19.95	Average	39%	45%	50%
Flintstones	Grandslam	£19.95	Hard	44%	43%	33%
Pink Panther	Magic Bytes	£19.95	Hard	49%	43%	26%

You may find that the scores in the above chart and the opinions in the reviews differ from the scores given to the games when they were originally reviewed in ST Action. This Megatest is based solely on the opinions of Steve Merrett and Nick Clarkson and it reflects both the fact that they have formed opinions of the games over an extended period of time as well as the fact that the games are being compared against each other. These scores should be used as a comparative figure which indicates the merits of each game against each other.

If you have any comments about our Megatests, suggestions for additional information to be included, or ideas for future Megatests then please write to the usual address

# Chuckie Egg

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Select your own keys or joystick. Full instructions included in the program.

## GAME PLAY

The game plays over 4 groups each of 8 screens which become progressively more difficult. Survive all 32 screens and the speed then increases to present

even greater challenges. The game will play an indefinite number of levels. There is no limit to the high score table!

This classic computer game is now being released for Amiga, Atari ST

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### **Say, yes, to licencing**

The point I wish to put forward is that of licencing. I think it is brilliant, and that people who condemn it are wrong in their views. It is good for the industry as a whole as it increases publicity.

There is nothing that pleases me more than to run around the jungles as Sylvester Stallone or to break records as Daley Thompson. Let's face it, I'm sure we all agree that buying a licenced game gives more enjoyment, makes us feel better and impresses our friends more. After seeing the film I naturally want to go out and buy the game. Long live licencing.

**Kenneth Jackson**  
Edinburgh

### **Cover disks?**

Has ST Action any plans to put a disk on the cover of the mag? The disk could contain tips, cheats, demos and small games. You could put a disk on about every three months or so. You could also increase the price of the mag by at least 50p or even a pound.

I am confused. I thought the arcade game 'Double Dragon' had not yet been released. But in one of your mail order companies' adverts, I saw it sitting there along with Operation Wolf and Roadblasters. Please explain.

**Neil Morey**  
Irchester

*We do not have any plans at present to put a disk with the magazine. However, things are always changing in the publishing world, so anything might happen. Please write in with your views on this. As regards Double Dragon being advertised, a lot of advertisers put in games that have not yet been released in order to attract advance orders. The thing to do is to check in the magazines in order to see whether or not a game has been released before ordering, otherwise it can lead to a frustrating wait. One can also end up with a frayed temper when the game that one has ordered does not make it to release and the company ends up with one's money and no game to send.*

### **Mouse problems**

I have a small problem with my mouse port. When the computer is booted up the mouse fails to respond, but when I move the cable to a certain position it works okay for a while until it is knocked out of line again and stops.

I phoned up the place I bought it from but they said my guarantee had run out and I would have to send it away - but I don't want to be without my computer for about a month, do I?

I would be grateful if anyone would tell me if they have had a similar problem, and if they have

managed to find a solution.

**Steven Minns**  
Tasburgh

*We have just had a similar occurrence in the office with most of our STs going down to mouse port failures. What happens is, due to the extremely awkward and badly-thought-out position of the mouse and joystick ports, they tend to come in for a fair amount of wiggling and yanking when trying to swap a joystick for a mouse, etc.. This leads to stress being placed on the soldered joints of the mouse port where it is joined to the PCB. The joints usually break, but can often remain in contact by judicious positioning of the mouse lead. However, things can only get worse and, if your machine is out of guarantee, there is one option that we tried: It was to open up the ST and re-solder the connections where the mouse port enters the PCB. If you're adept with a soldering iron and feel confident about doing it right, then do it yourself, otherwise get someone who knows what they're doing, because it could turn out expensive if you mess it up. After that, we recommend fitting either a mouse and joystick extender, such as one from Microdeal, or a mechanical switching device, such as Mouse Master.*

*Have any other readers had problems with their STs? Has anyone got any tips for particular problems, such as awkward mouse buttons? Please write in and let me know. Don't forget that the best letter of the month will receive a game of their choice.*

### **List of no-no's**

Thanks for presenting a great mag that has saved me from buying terrible games such as Crazy Cars. The Action News is interesting and I like reading people's views in 'The Letters Desk'. I have a suggestion: how about putting a Top Ten of the worst games out on the ST so we users can find out what to avoid like the plague?

**Alan Warne**  
Illingworth

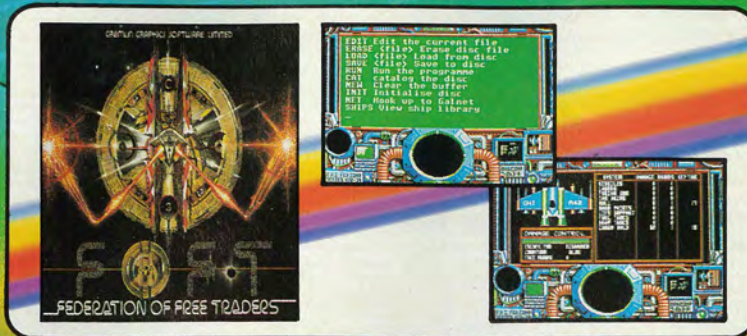
### **Vertical-scrolling blues**

Woke up yesterday evening, yeah  
I was feelin' pretty blue

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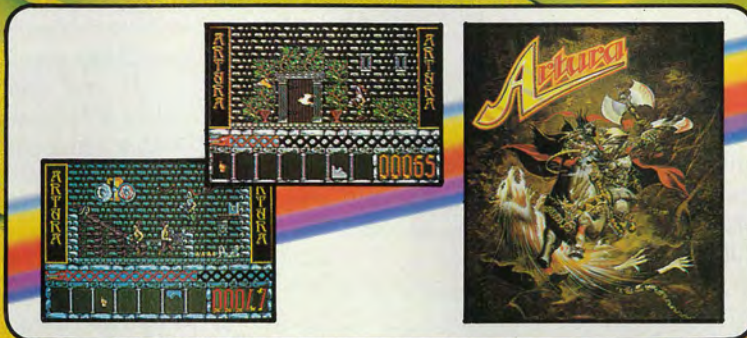


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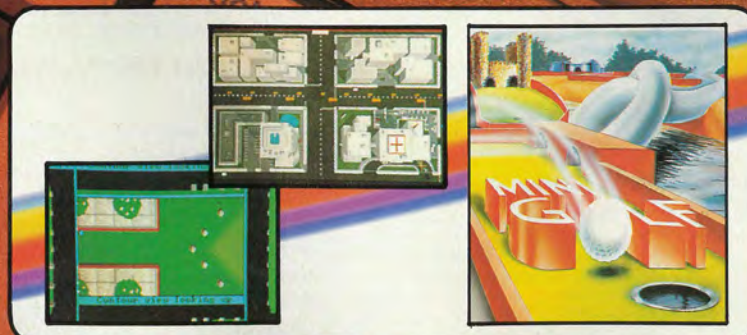


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SCREEN SHOTS FROM VARIOUS  
FORMATS

# GREMLIN

All mail order enquiries to:  
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Alpha House, 10 Carver Street,  
Sheffield S1 4FS.  
Tel: (0742) 753423



I'd gone bought myself  
Menace-ing Xenon Gold Running Shoot-'em-up, se-  
quel 52  
I'd fought the craving for quite a while  
Though two weeks ain't that long  
When, oh when, will I learn  
As far as vertical scrollers go  
There just ain't nothing new under the sun  
So, please all you software houses, help me kick my  
habit  
Stop making stale old 'Meanie Blatters from Outer  
Space'  
And give me INNOVATION (or failing that, Roger  
Rabbit!)  
Jamie (can't sing the blues but am fed up with  
hackneyed game themes)  
McClure  
Oxford

Yeah! Great, Jamie, but don't call us, we'll call you...

### **Comment controversy**

One thing that bugs me is that I quite often come across reviewers' comments for games that seem to totally contradict themselves. Why is this? For instance, in issue 3, the two comments on Roadwars are completely at odds with each other, JS stated there was 'hectic action' whilst SM said 'the game itself is totally boring'. Also, in the Space Harrier review, SM and NC said that it was great and of STA1 standard, whilst JS said that it lacked variety and staying power. Please do something about these glaring contradictions.

John Hamilton  
Dundee

The reason behind the differences is that, as pointed out in the scoring system feature, each reviewer has his own personal tastes and views when it comes to games. This, we think, lends itself to readers being able to identify with a particular reviewer's tastes, e.g. SM is a confirmed Giana Sisters addict and so games of that ilk will naturally appeal more to him than to, say, NC, who prefers something that requires a little more thought. How do other people feel about our scoring and comments? Please write in and let us know.

### **Virus problems**

Some of my disks have become infected by a 'virus' that prints a row of bombs and then crashes the computer. Is there any way to get rid of it? I have only owned my ST for two weeks and could really use some help with this.

Albu Ral  
Aldershot

We had a similar problem the day before your letter came in. What needs to be done is to switch off the machine for at least thirty seconds, insert a brand new, unformatted disk and switch on. Format the disk and write-protect it by moving the tab at the corner of the disk so that a hole can be seen. This then becomes your 'boot-up' disk. Do not put anything else on this disk. Transfer all your old files onto new, 'clean' disks. Whenever you boot the machine up, have this disk in the drive. As far as we know, a virus resides in the boot sector of the disk and so, when a 'virused' disk is 'booted up', it transfers the virus into the computer's memory (the boot sector is only accessed when switching on or re-booting the computer). This then gets transferred to any disk that is written to whilst the computer is switched on. When the computer is switched off, the virus disappears from memory. However, the components within the computer take a while to run down, so when re-booting, leave the machine switched off for at least thirty seconds, otherwise the virus might still survive. To sum up then, use a clean boot-up disk, write protect any disks that do not need 'writing to' and remember to switch off for at least thirty seconds before re-booting. Virus killers are available from most PD sources and these can be used, although NOT against commercial software.

### **Action in the Netherlands**

I am very pleased with the current ST software being released. Dungeon Master is my favourite 'RPG' type of adventure. Being a former Spectrum owner, I still miss adventures in the style of Lords of Midnight and Timanog. Programmer's awake!!

Besides ST Action and Ace, I normally buy most German ST specials. Why aren't there any English specials? Or don't they arrive in the Netherlands?

Frank Reeders  
Willemstad

### **Photo call**

Way back in issue one you printed photos of all your reviewers; Jason, Mitch, Nick and yourself. In later issues I've also noticed photos of Greg and Steve.



Now, however, a new team member has appeared, namely, the Troll. Please could you, if possible, feature a photo of this new character, I would be most interested to see what he looks like.

**Eric Shorthouse**  
Finchley

*We're currently having difficulty in getting him to pose for the camera. However, rumour has it that it co-habits with Mitch and his wife down in Maidstone.*

### **Praise-'em-up**

A few months back my brother and I noticed a bright new shiny publication on our newsagent's shelf, ST Action! However, the miserable old codger who owned the shop stopped selling your great mag. Not wishing to miss the magazine I decided to subscribe, especially in light of the free arcade game on offer. Just after the first mag arrived in the post I received "The Last Shoot'em-up" and wow! What a game, albeit it YET ANOTHER shoot-'em-up! I've actually completed it and found two cheats in the process.

1. Type "random" on the highscore table to randomly access levels
2. Type "let me cheat" on the highscore table to have infinite energy

**Tom Evans**  
Newton Abbot

### **STA1 query**

Just how do you justify giving SDI an STA1 award? And why did only two reviewers make comments about the game? I read Nick Clarkson's explanation of the score system and now feel I understand the way you compile your scores. I still think, however, that some of your scores are maybe a little incorrect; SDI being a prime example.

On a happier note thanks for a great mag, I especially enjoyed the feature about the Bitmap Brothers.

**Sean O'Brien**  
Doncaster

*I thought that SDI was a very addictive game that had plenty of playability, something that is often missing in a lot of games. However, the game did score 83%, which is a very high score by our standards and I thought that it was worthy of the STA1 title. Some games score a lot lower than this and still get the STA1 award. This is because, although the game might not be brilliantly technical, for example, it might still offer very good value for money or lasting playability.*

*Who would you like to see being featured in a*

*profile such as that of the Bitmap Bros?*

### **Where do they go?**

What do you do with the games once you have reviewed them? If you simply re-format the games I would be quite willing to take them off of your hands, even pay for the postage! No, seriously, I think a games challenge would be great fun; especially when I whip big-head Steve Merrett's hide at Great Giana Sisters. I wonder what other readers think?

**Vincent Peacock**  
Dudley

*Unfortunately, Vince, the games are kept for future reference. Steve says that you're welcome to try and beat him, but there's no point fighting a battle that's already lost! What do you think about the games challenge? Let us know.*

### **Letter rebuke**

I am glad to see the introduction of a prize for the best letter of the month in your Letters Desk. I hope that this will encourage readers to write in with something more interesting than the usual run-of-the-mill stuff I read each month. Please, please, do not start a software piracy debate. What I'd like to see is some constructive criticism of the current software scene.

For instance, do the emerging PC Engine and similar cartridge-based machines pose a threat to the 16-bit market? Why is the ST proving so popular in the UK and Europe, when in the US it's almost a total failure compared to the likes of the Mac and the PC? Why has it taken Atari so long to realise that people want a modulator in their 1040ST? I look forward to reading other peoples' replies.

**J Lawson**  
Fairford

*I won't answer your questions, I'll put the onus onto the readers to come back to me with the answers and to comment on the 'software scene'. If you want to win a game of your choice, then write in and put forward your views. Oh, and by the way, Mr Lawson wins the prize this month.*

**STA**





***Ocean have managed to gain an enviable reputation within the software industry for establishing a brand name, something***

***that a lot of companies strive for but very few achieve. Martin Moth visited their Manchester offices to speak to the people behind the company.***

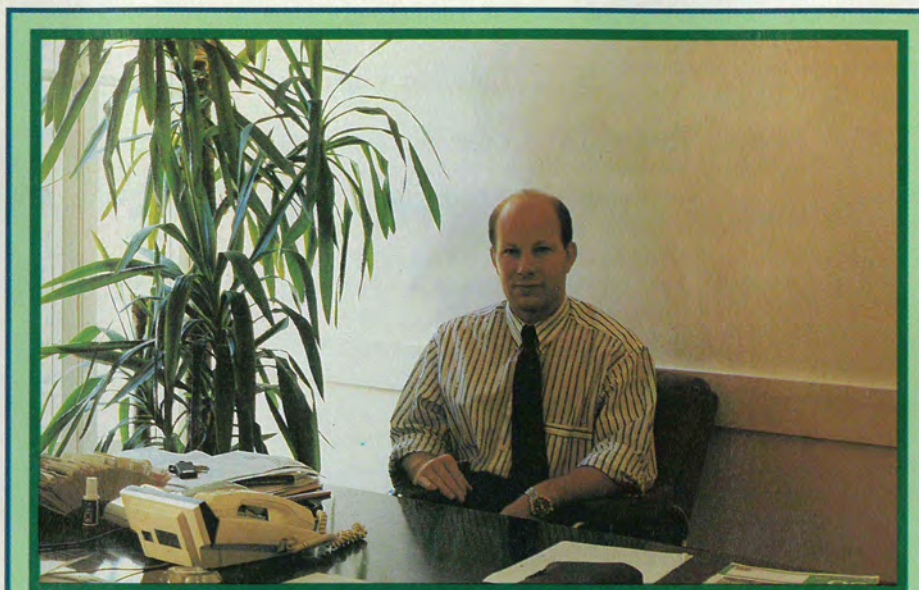
David Ward, one of the founders of **Ocean**, started off in the computer industry more by chance than design. He had gone out to the States for a while to seek fame and fortune and in 1980 was owner of a nightclub. One of the

ment, rather than tag along with the rest of the bandwagon. So he decided to start up in the UK in late 1982, and initially functioned as a mail order concern. Those were the days when an advert was put in *Your Computer* and then one waited for Tuesday's post to, hopefully, bring in the envelopes with the fivers enclosed. The tape recorders would then start working overtime, copying the games ready for dispatch.

David explained that the success of the console market in the States meant that the computer software industry started further up the age group than in the UK. The reason that Nintendo is so successful in the States is that it is addressing a market that over here is built by home computers alone, whereas in the States they have taken over the vacuum left by the Atari 2600s. The demise of the 2600s came about, not because the consumer had got fed up with them, but because the retailer had lost any opportunity of making money out of selling them for a variety reasons that include the complex nature of American hardware, retailing and distribution. Everything goes from one extreme to the other, from wanting in excess, to finding a huge glut in the market and people not wanting to see any more of the product, be it consoles, Cabbage Patch dolls or whatever. Luckily, in Europe people are more easy-going and things take time to grow and decline.

According to David, the mail order company was a fantastic idea, in that it enabled them, with the aid of tick-boxes, to carry out market research that defined what games they published and the type of machines that they developed games on. It allowed them to build up a profile of the user bases of the most popular computers of the period. At that time, most games were being sold mail order by programmers who were looking for ways of getting to the public. W.H. Smith changed all that in 1982 when they started to sell software for the Spectrum. This led the way for the market to change from being essentially a specialist hobby market to one of retailing in High Street stores alongside televisions and hi-fi systems.

It was at this time that most retailers jumped on the bandwagon and started to sell computers or anything to do with entertainment software and computers. This, then, became the right time for David to leave the mail order



**David Ward - Chairman**

As mentioned elsewhere, David decided to join the flourishing software industry after seeing the addictiveness of the arcade games in his night club out in the States. Originally in the rag trade, David admits that he has spent most of his life trying to please the public. In a sense, trying to anticipate what public taste is going to be is what entertainment is all about. It doesn't really matter whether it's music, clothing or entertainment software, it all boils down to predicting what will and won't sell. He describes himself as a publisher and **Ocean** as the means to take the creative art of somebody else and fashion it into a commercial product by packaging, marketing and selling it.

major profit centres in the club was something they called Arcade Alley. A collection of arcade machines was responsible for the second highest revenue source, apart from drink. What particularly impressed David were the queues, especially in the early evening, of the younger element, and of staff before they opened up for the night. It struck him that there was a compulsiveness to this kind of entertainment that was previously unseen. This, then, formed the nucleus of the idea to set up in computer entertainment.

David decided at the time that the UK market showed more potential than the US and he saw the chance to lead the growth in computer entertain-



business and join with John Woods to form *Ocean*. One of the main differences between *Ocean* and other companies around at the time was that most were mainly programmers who got into marketing and selling, because it was the only way that they were able to get their products to the public, whereas *Ocean* was a group of business men that were able to produce and market products in an area that was exciting and was going to grow into being 'the movie industry of the '90s'. Whether or not this will prove itself to be true, only time will tell.

It emerged later on that they had gone into something that wasn't as easy as they had at first thought. The nature of software development is not the same as that of making records; it's more like that of making films. It is a collaborative effort and one cannot, for instance, be a film producer, wait for a film to arrive and then produce it; one has to be involved in the artistic process and fund and support it in order for it to be there at all.

The decision to have such a large in-house programming team was taken a couple of years ago when the delivery and quality of the products from freelancers was so hit and miss that they were unable to make the best use of their marketing and sales abilities. It got to the stage whereby, at the beginning of '86, they had abandoned so many projects that they gave up and decided that, despite the risk of vast overheads and employing all those people, they had to take the plunge in order to gain some control over the business. However, there is a door left open for freelance people because new ideas are always needed to broaden horizons and inject new life, otherwise a company is



**John Woods - Director**

in danger of disappearing down the hole that they themselves have dug.

The increase in the number of people working for *Ocean* has meant one change of premises in the past and now they are just about ready to move again. With the emergence of the 16-bit market, *Ocean* have had to develop ST and Amiga products simultaneously alongside their 8-bit counterparts, thus further increasing the number of programmers and artists. David is hoping that 16-bit sales, especially on the ST, will increase, so that soon they will be



**Gary Bracey - Software Development Manager**

As Software Manager, Gary is responsible for overseeing all product development, allocating work to programmers, artists and musicians, and trying to get things running smoothly. He used to own a computer shop 'back in the old days' and knew John Woods and Colin Stokes. They were all talking one day when the position of Software Manager arose, and Paul was getting tired of the shop, so started working for *Ocean* two and a half years ago. According to him, it's been great ever since. Renowned throughout the industry for his braces, they are his trademark, if you like. Also well known as a sweet-tooth extraordinaire, the stories concerning three or more helpings of dessert are almost legend.

able to justify developing a game on the ST alone rather than having to do multi-format games to support the development of the 16-bits in the early part of their life.

The idea of having a product endorsed or created around some well-known game or film was entirely invented, mainly by *Ocean*. At the time, the new-born software industry had no rules about how to go about things, and so it was up to people with vision to create the openings. Coin-op conversions were the first to be used for this concept in the UK in 1983 with Hunchback. Plagiarising games was done all the time and, to a certain extent, still is, but the idea of going to the States or Japan and trying to buy the rights to a certain arcade game was not thought of until '83. The

idea of borrowing a property of one form and transferring it to another, e.g., 'the book of the film', is not new. Witness the huge range of toys that are miniatures of famous cartoon characters, such as, Batman and Mickey Mouse. *Ocean* were amongst the first to take this idea and develop it for use on computers. The first big step forward was when, instead of making a game that had a very tenuous link with the film,

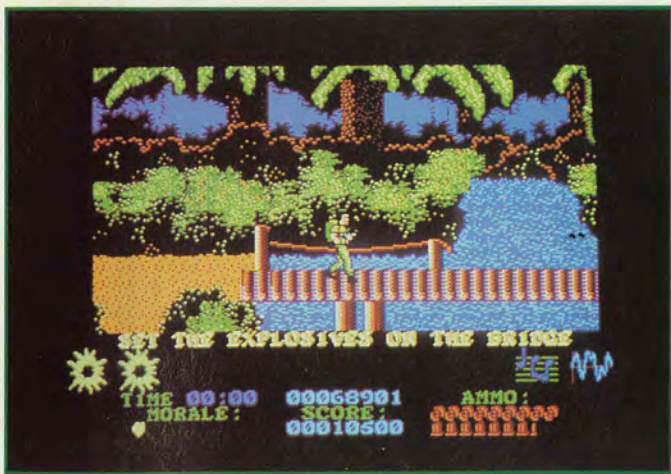
developers started converting the film, plot and all, into a computer game. Platoon is a very good example of this and this style of game looks set to continue for quite a while.

Asked about the path that licences are currently taking, Gary came out with quite a revelation. When licencing products started a while ago, virtually all the major companies were hunting for the same licence, say, of a big movie. However, it's got to the point where the major licencing film companies, or whatever, are approaching *Ocean* and asking whether or not they would like the licence to such and such a film or game.

Daley Thompson was the first personality licence with *Ocean*. John Woods negotiated the deal and it has been an ongoing licence ever since. Daley Thompson's Decathlon was released to tie in with the 1984 Olympics, Daley Thompson's Supertest and Star Events came next, and bringing us back to the present is the latest release, Daley Thompson's Olympic







### Oceans - Platoon

Challenge. Daley has a fairly high profile worldwide, and this adds credence to the fact that *Ocean* regard licences as very valuable property.

Gary explained that virtually all licences have different ways of being developed into a game, but generally, the initial starting point is gaining the rights to a licence. An original game is then put together around the licence. With a film, such as *Platoon*, the film was watched by several people and the important points of the film were picked out and transformed into small sub-games within the overall game. *Ocean* are trying to develop most film titles in this way at the moment, so that there is plenty of variation within the game, thereby increasing the timespan of a player's interest and enjoyment.

Gary ran through the sequence of events that lead to a game starting

development. First off, a 'team' is selected from the group of thirty in-house programmers, musicians and artists. The make-up of the team depends generally on who's free and who is keen to do the game. If *Rambo III* is taken as an example, the team consists of Spectrum, C64 and ST programmers and artists. All see the movie and then discuss with Gary the elements of the film that lend themselves to a good section of the

game. Notes are made and each section is discussed as how best to implement it. During development of the game, bits get added and subtracted. This is where the advantage of the in-house team shows, as Gary can check up on the game's progress on a daily basis, rather than having to wait for tomorrow's post to see the latest bit of code from a freelance programmer. Another advantage is the improvement in the time taken to develop a game.

One of the main difficulties that Gary has encountered with programmers is that 8-bit programmers have seen the ST and Amiga and decide they want a go, and all of a sudden they become

16-bit programmers. This has left the 8-bit programmers on a freelance basis a little bit scarcer than it was. Meanwhile, there are a lot of so-called 16-bit programmers that say 'I did such and such on the Spectrum and so-and-so on the Commodore, let me do Project X on the 16-bit machines'. The trouble with this is that they learn the machine at *Ocean's* expense and, in the past, it has resulted in work being delivered late and of a substandard quality. This has led to *Ocean* only taking on freelance programmers with experience in the 16-bit programming field. As far as money goes, there is not a lot of difference between 8-bit and 16-bit code, so there is no real justification for paying the 16-



### Daley's Challenge

bitters more than their 8-bit counterparts. However, the graphics on the 16-bit machines are far more complicated so, naturally, it takes more time to create graphics on the ST and this results in an increase in graphic artists' pay.

One problem that I put to Gary was that of long-term playability. With a monthly turn-round, we, as a magazine, have to review each game we receive in about two to three days. It is therefore difficult to judge the long-term playability of a game as there is only so much time allowed before one must review the next game. As developers, Gary and the programmers see the game day in, day out, for a couple of months. How then do they ensure 'lasting appeal'?

Gary explained that arcade conversions are no problem as they already have the gameplay figured out. One factor that *Ocean* did introduce inadvertently, and now stick by it, was that of multi-section games. This essentially means that one will play through one section to get to the section that you want, which should give it more long-term appeal. Basically, the value for money element of a game has become much more important to everyone.

Talking with Paul Patterson, it became obvious that, although each had their own job title, they all pull together and 'muck in' on day-to-day decisions. Whilst John and David make the major decisions, things such as programming and packaging get the once over from Paul, Gary and Colin Stokes. Once a program is finished, then all of them will go down and have a look at it



### Paul Patterson - Sales Manager

Paul is first and foremost a 'sales' man; the computer side of his story came about because of starting to work in sales within a computer software company. He completed a course that specialised in sales alongside an introduction into computing, programming, etc.. He spent two and a half years with Software Projects in Liverpool, and was then offered the position of Sales Manager at *Ocean*. Paul is responsible for making sure that all the dealers and distributors are informed about their latest releases and that they are kept supplied with the games so that when a customer goes in to buy the latest *Ocean* release, the retailer will not be able to say 'I haven't heard of that game.'



and decide amongst them whether it's okay to go ahead, or what ultimately needs changing if it's to succeed in the market.

One of their goals is to release only games that will, in their opinion, score at least 90%+ in magazine reviews. In this way, they will filter out any so-called 'marginal' games. They have found that, in the long run, it is more important to keep the consumer satisfied than to push on with a no-hope project because they have spent so many thousands of pounds already on the game. One can do it once or twice, but after that one risks getting stuck with a bad reputation that is extremely difficult and expensive to put right. As Paul says, it is better to write off a bad project than to carry on and get a bad name.

One of the labels that became attached to quite a few companies was that of the 'three month shelf life of their games'. **Ocean** have fought hard to combat this and have found that, with Platoon, they have extended this to well over six months. This is mainly due to improvements in the gameplay, most noticeably the incorporation of the multi-section games as mentioned earlier.

To get the game across to the consumer, Paul mails to every retailer in the UK, around 500. Basically, these packages consist of a description of the game, any comments or reviews that magazines have made about the game, four A2 posters, two A4 posters, some screenshots of the game and anything else that he thinks is relevant and will help the retailer to sell the game to the consumer. The next step is to go to the distributors and make a presentation about the games that they are about to



### **Steve Blower - Art Director**

Steve is Art Director for **Ocean** and, as such, is responsible for commissioning artwork and illustrators, designing and conceiving adverts, designing artwork for compilations, copy writing for the adverts as well as doing a fair amount of the illustration work. With his experience lying mainly in art & design and fine art, he became a freelance artist for a long time before starting to work for Bug Byte in their early days. He then joined Imagine and when they crashed, he went freelance again for a year before David Ward contacted him and offered a place at **Ocean**.

His in-house team of four artists and one production assistant ensure virtually everything is carried out in house. One of Steve's most important tasks at the moment is to design compilation covers and adverts that show off the five or so games without making the artwork look cluttered; not an easy task at all. For front cover designs, he uses Bob Wakelin almost exclusively, as Bob is well known for his extraordinarily lifelike artwork and this is an important factor in helping the game to sell well to the impulse buyer.

relationship is formed that enables them to drop the 'hard-sell' approach. This makes life a lot easier for everyone concerned. **STA**



### **Colin Stokes - Operations Manager**

release. Some of the most important people that Paul has to deal with are the telesales people. Telesales people can, with the right approach and encouragement, make selling the game much easier. Within the five or so distributors that **Ocean** use, there are some of the best telesales people in the country. They are in touch with the retailers virtually every day, so a real working rela-





# Dungeons and Disk Drives

**Hi there! Stuck up a gum tree? Surrounded by dragons? Don't despair, write to the Dungeon and let them help. YOU may not know the answer - 'But now you know a Troll who does!'**

Welcome back foolish one. I see from your torn leather armour that you met the Troll on the way in! He's in a foul mood at the moment, but I can't help feeling sorry for him. He only volunteered to answer readers' letters because he believed no-one would actually write. Now that letters are arriving by the sack-load, he spends his days moaning about how unfair it all is. I'm scared to read some of his replies as his temper is getting shorter by the minute.

Whilst mucking-out the Dragon's duvet cover this month, I accidentally stumbled upon his diary, and by pure chance it fell open at October 1987. Whilst attempting to close it, I just happened to notice an entry mentioning our visit last year to the

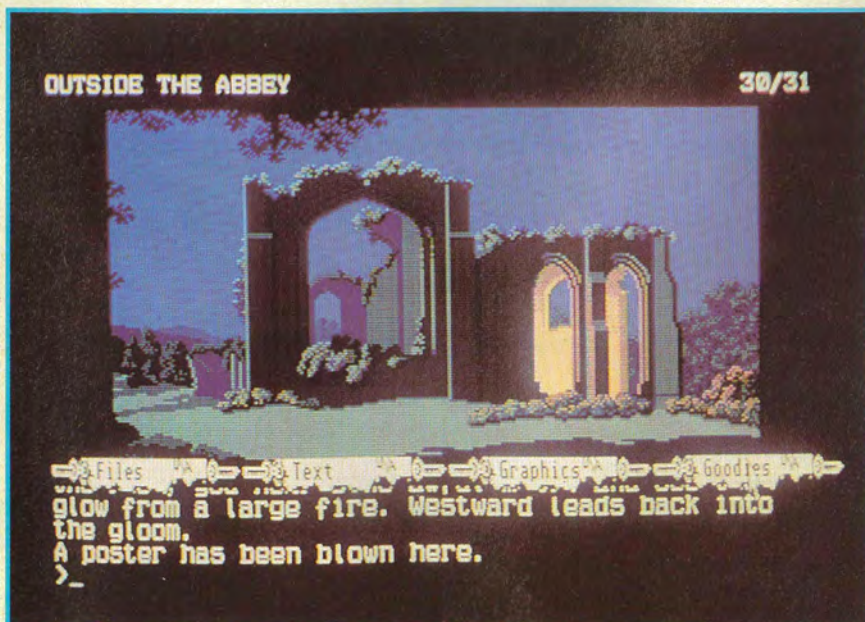
Annual Adventurers' Convention. I then realised with a start that, despite a complete lack of mention in the press, the convention for 1988 must be due. It was therefore a pleasant change to lock up the Dungeon door for the afternoon and take the crew on an autumn outing.

On October 22nd, the Civic Centre in Sutton, Sussex played host to the third Annual Adventure Convention. 'Adventure 88' saw another flood of adventure enthusiasts descend upon the Central Library for an afternoon of demonstrations, talks and lively debate. The lower floor of the hall was packed with players jostling for a free session on the various MUD (Multi User Dungeon) games on display. Mud

enthusiasts are a breed apart from traditional adventurers. In conversation with a few of them, I found that they rarely ever play stand-alone games. Instead, they return again and again to their favourite dial-in game, even when they have already solved all of the puzzles. The fascination appears to be in the social side. Meeting friends while wandering the dark corridors is more fun than the straight hack-and-slash aspect. However, as telephone bills which run into hundreds of pounds are commonplace, I decided not to allow the dragon to become too interested in it all.

Representatives of all the larger games were present, including MUD II, Shades, Federation II, AMP, Zone and Wanderland. I had already heard of some of these games, but when we heard that 'Zone' was short for 'erogenous' zone, we decided to investigate further! It transpires that the author (Gandolf the Coder) decided that what the adventure world needed was an 'adult' adventure, wherein people stopped killing each other and instead found much more pleasant diversions. Say no more! Zone is available on two numbers. 01-683-4507 8N1 (2 free lines) and 01-994-9119 8N1 (8 lines at £11.50 for 20 hours). I was told that the system is available 24 hours a day - but I doubt if I could keep it up that long!

In addition to the multi-user games, representatives from Magnetic Scrolls were to be found demonstrating their latest 'Fish' game, as well as solving the other problems which were baffling the Scroll-buying public. A familiar noise



Magnetic Scrolls were showing their latest game Fish - just one of the attractions at the recent Adventure show







drew us to a corner of the room where we found a crowd listening to the clanking gates of the Dungeon Master game. A lively debate was in progress as to what was the exact nature of the game - arcade or adventure? It was fascinating to find that all the players who possessed a copy, had stayed up at least once into the early hours of the morning. It was a relief to know that the Dungeon Crew are not the only nuts who stayed up all night with that particular game.

In the Lecture rooms, a range of speakers were expounding their views on the future of adventuring. It must be said that they had a difficult task on their hands as everyone wanted to get in on the act. Audiences at adventure conventions are not backward about coming forward. I'm not sure if it was because the local pubs were open all afternoon, or because adventure players are such fervent fans, but everyone seemed to want to have his/her say. Henry Mueller from the Adventurer's Club Ltd. found his interesting talk constantly interrupted by listeners wishing to agree, disagree or generally take over the proceedings.

Once again, the pros and cons surrounding the inclusion of graphics in adventures was discussed and, as usual, this resulted in what is best described as 'a lively debate'. In other words the floor was covered in blood! Yet again, the purists stood by their principles and declared undying hatred against every coloured pixel. Another subject which was debated was the addition of PSI (Pseudo Intelligence) characters in adventures. These are the wandering characters so beloved of the Level 9 company, which wander around 'singing about gold' or 'munching buttered fish'. A straw pole taken of the audience decidedly rejected this

phenomenon, as it was agreed that they are generally a waste of time and usually extremely confusing. That being said, I was interested to hear that the Level 9 game, Gnome Ranger, (which contains quite a few of these characters), had been voted by the 3000 members of the Adventurers Club as the best adventure of 1987. (see this month's review of the sequel, Ingrid's Back - Ed.)

Henry Mueller's Adventure Club publishes a bi-monthly magazine which is full of hints, tips and reviews on adventuring (annual subscription £17.95). If you are interested you may contact him on 01-794-1261.

### Leisure Suit Bar pass

I have been playing Leisure Suit Larry for months now and I still cannot find the password to get through the door in the bar.

**A.D. Steven, Wokingham, Berks.**

You really should have sent me a copy of your Birth Certificate to prove that you are old enough to be playing this game! While I make up my mind whether I should tell you the answer, I want you to go into the toilet at the rear of the bar and read 'ALL' the graffiti that you can see. And don't go writing anything on the walls about limbo-dancing trolls while you are in there. I have read that joke and I don't think it's very funny!

### Space Quest kill the Orat

Please can you tell me how to kill the Orat in Space Quest. And if I need a special object can you tell me where to get it?

**Kevin Clements, Edinburgh**

Kill the Orat! Isn't that typical? Just

because Orat rips the heads off spotty adventurers who come crashing into his cave, doesn't mean he isn't a sweet person. Why not try throwing him a present of your dehydrated water bottle from the escape capsule's emergency kit. On second thoughts, you had better not, knowing Orat as I do, he will probably swallow it and do himself a serious damage. Why not just buzz off and leave him in peace?

### Legend of the Sword

It was a bit of a surprise to find you in ST Action instead of ST World, but as long as you are still around it little matters to readers of both magazines. It was good to see several adventure clues, but no reviews was disappointing.

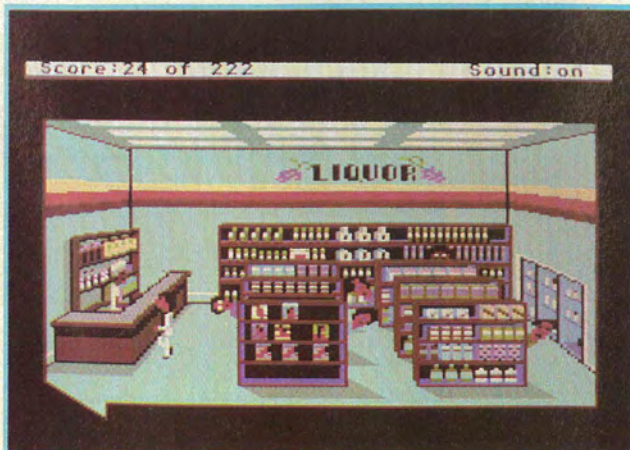
It would be good to list adventure clubs in the magazine, as a good one would be most welcome. I have finished Shadowgate, but may not have solved all the puzzles. I have almost finished Beyond Zork and have enclosed some clues for you.

In the game Legend of the Sword, where is the password to be found to allow entrance to the underground passages?

**Malcom Williams, Walthamstow.**

Flattery will get you anything and when it comes to Trolls, put it on with a trowel! The adventure reviews are still being carried out by Mitch, it's just that the front office wanted them mixed in with all the other games - instead of back here in the broken-hearts section! Look for the reviewer's comments marked 'AM' - that's Mitch's Sunday name.

I have never actually joined any adventure clubs, so I can't personally recommend any particular one. You will see that the boss makes mention of the Adventurer's Club in his ram-



Leisure Suit Larry - causing more problems



Space Quest 1 - in action



...and Space Quest 2 has more than its fair share



blings this month and I have heard that it is quite good value for money.

As to your problem with Legend, I think I know the answer to this one and I'm not surprised you couldn't solve it. At the bottom of a particular staircase there is a room whose ceiling is covered in bats. Throwing an object at these nasty critters will make them fly away and reveal something written there. No, I didn't work it out myself either!

### SP11 Acid Bath

I am stuck in Space Quest II. After having returned to Volhaul's Asteroid fortress I find it impossible to progress past a fatal acid bath. I know there's a plunger to be obtained which might be of use, but I have been unable to find it.

**Derek Bowker, Edgware, Middlesex**

Personally I never go near baths. After all, it's only dirty people that need to wash. Mitch always says that too much washing weakens the head - and he should know! You are right in that the solution to your problem is the plunger. With that useful device you can get quite 'stuck-up' and 'hang about' until the situation clears itself. In the screen depicting the landing pad of the escape shuttle, you have walked down the stairs to the acid bath; without realising that you could have just as easily walked along the walkway that runs sideways across the screen. If you go that way you will find the elevators that will take you to many levels - including the one containing the plumber's store cupboard.

On second thoughts, perhaps you need an acid bath to clean the muck out of your eyes so you can see where you are going!

### Space Quest - again!

Please help me with Space Quest I. Whenever I insert the cartridge into the computer, an alien always comes in and kills me. Also when I land on the planet I can't walk anywhere without a big monster sucking me up! I'm also stuck in Kings Quest III as I don't know where to find the Stone of Unusual Colour.

**Tracy Tattum, Portsmouth.**

That's more than one question! Mitch said I didn't have to answer more than one question per reader. I do



**Corruption at the Police Station - surely not? Or is that you just been nicked?**

like to sleep sometimes you know! OK, just because I like little girls (fried!) I'll do it just this once. The cartridge is used elsewhere, so forget about it for the moment. When you land on the planet you must travel to the right until you reach the rocks thus avoiding the welcoming committee.

In Kings Quest, the Stone is in the cave behind the Spider's Web. Now I know what you are going to say next: 'I don't know how to get past the spider!'. Well that's tough because I've already answered two questions! Alright, I'll take pity on you this time as it is a sneaky puzzle. Wait at the bottom of the mountain path and the answer should fall from the sky.

### Corruption getting the chip

I write to you because I am stuck with Corruption. When you are at the back yard, you must knock on the wooden door and then the men behind the door ask for a chip. How do I get a chip?

**Marcel Freehe, Holland**

Casino chips are worth 'loads-a-money' and would therefore be kept in a SAFE place. Now I know that there is such a place in a certain lawyer's office but it's locked! How good are you at safe-cracking? As your puny ears are not as clever as a Troll's ears, I suggest that you first find something to help you listen carefully to the combination lock.

### Bureaucracy going up!

I'm stuck in the Bureaucracy game. There are some stairs in the Brownstone building which I can't go up. Please help. I won't be able to sleep until I find the answer.

**S. Arden Timperley, Cheshire.**

YOU can't get to sleep! What about me? The stairs are a bluff and no one can climb them. What you should be doing is getting someone to open the door on the ground floor for you. Now perhaps you will buzz off and let us both get to sleep!

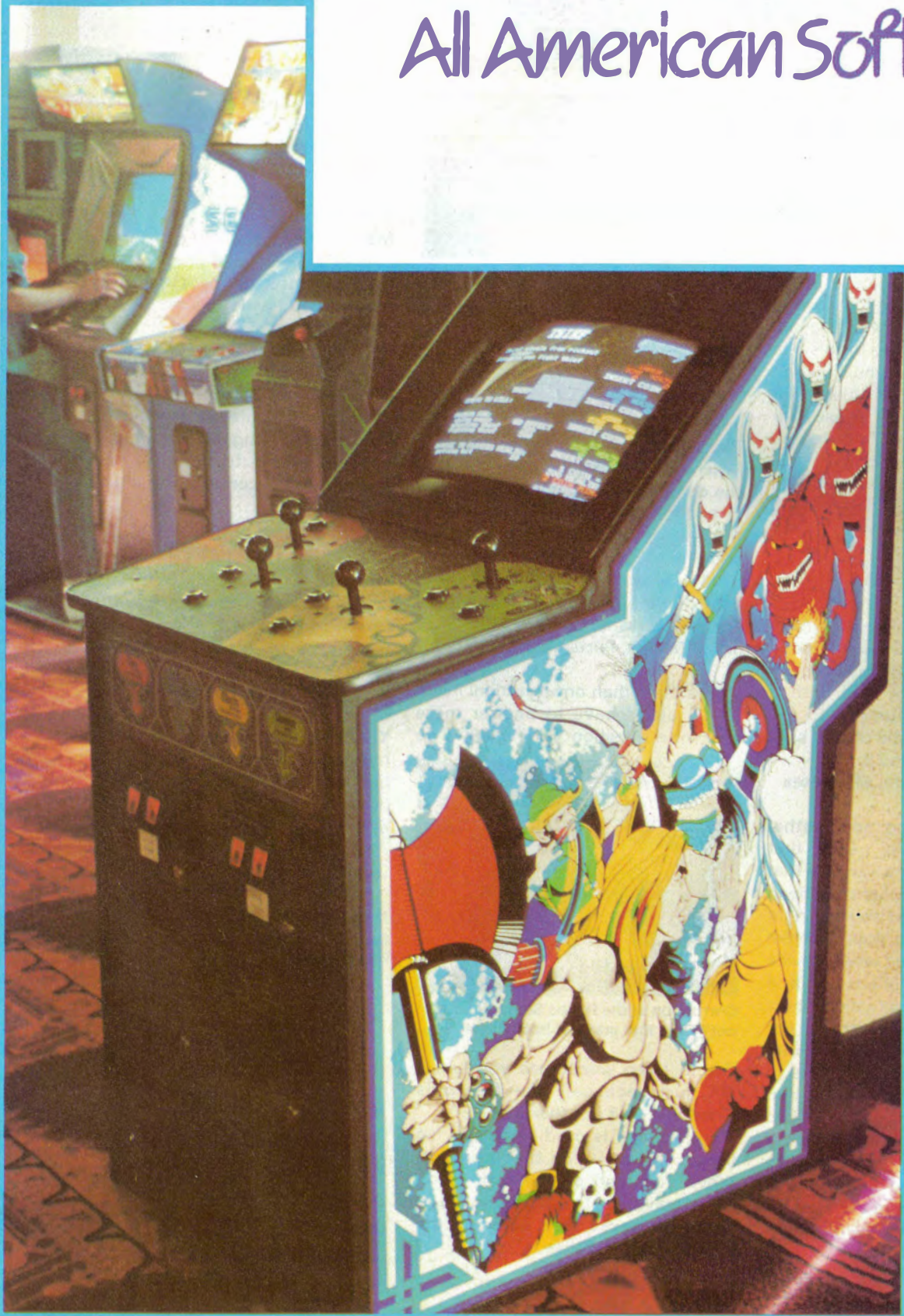
If you have any queries, hints or letters of interest for the Dungeon Crew, please write to:-

**The Troll,  
The Dungeon  
29, Blackthorn Drive,  
Larkfield,  
KENT ME20**



# U.S. GOLD

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# THUNDERBLADE

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### THE QUESTIONS PART THREE

1 - What was the title of the arcade game that gave birth to Desolator?

- a) Mr. Heli b) Halls of Kairos
- c) Altered Beast

2 - Name the first-ever U.S. Gold release

- a) Beach Head b) Raid over Moscow
- c) Bruce Lee

3 - Name the top-selling golf simulation written by Bruce and Roger Carver

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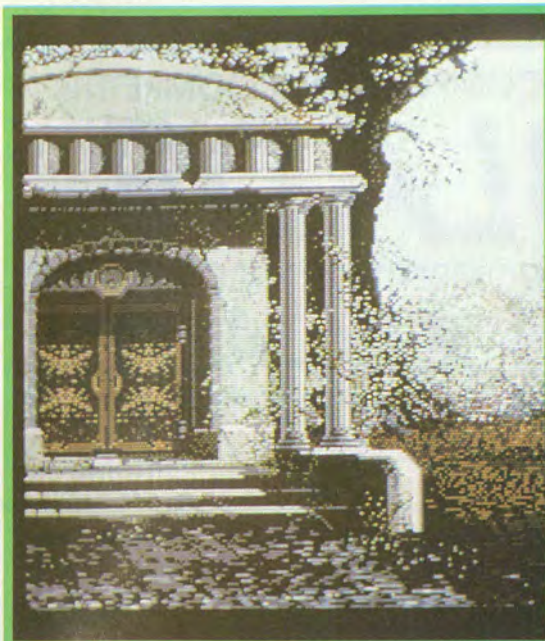
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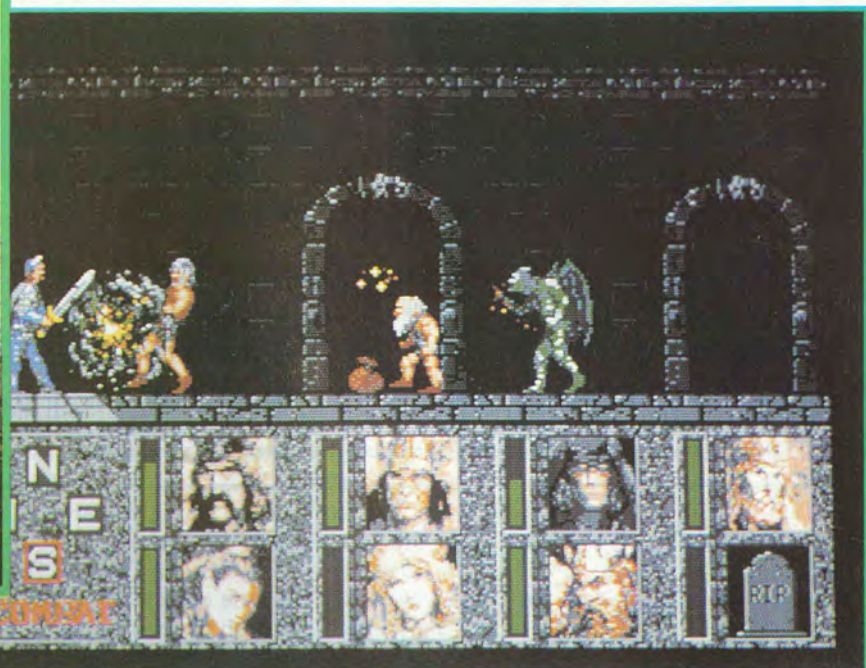
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# ADVANCED D+D

## HEROES OF THE LANCE

US GOLD (£24.95)

Based on the DRAGONLANCE saga, from the Advanced Dungeon and Dragons stable, the game is set in dark, monster-infested passageways which are littered with treasures and weaponry. Your mission is to guide the heroes to the final confrontation with the huge black dragon which guards Disks of Mishakal.

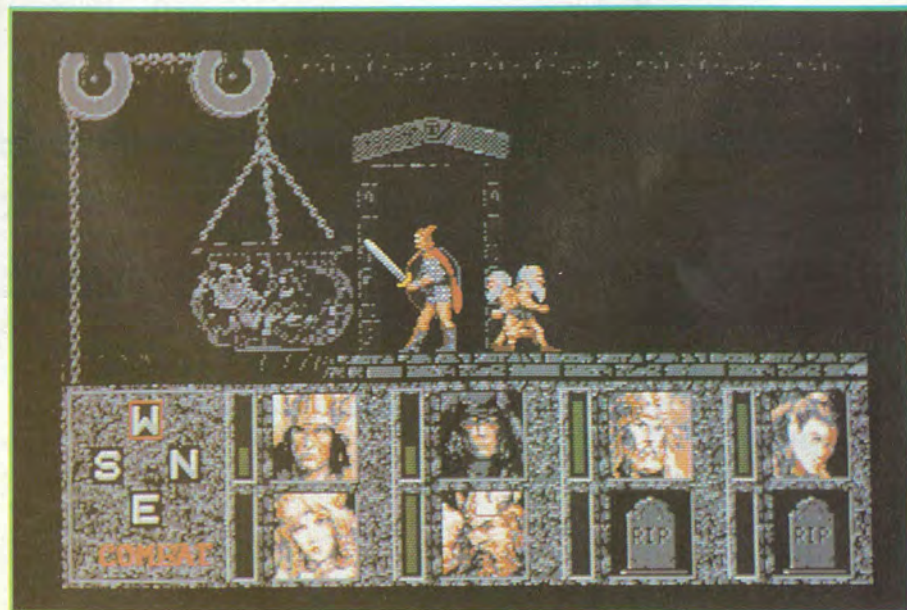
The main screen (and much of the

animation) is very similar in appearance to the Barbarian game from Psygnosis (i.e. all action takes place while travelling horizontally across the screen). Although your party consists of 8 heroes, at any one time it is only the current leader who is depicted on screen. Also, it is only the skills of the leader that may be used at any one moment. Should you need to use the spe-

cial skills of another member of the group, you must swap leaders. It is also the leader who bears all the pain when the fur starts flying, so you may decide to have someone big and brutal up front to take the first

*Although there is undoubtedly an element of strategy in the gameplay, this is very much an arcade game. The animation is first-rate and the graphics atmospheric. My initial reaction was that I was playing 'Barbarian - with bells on', but as I went lower I found that it does have a lot more depth! There is that element in it which makes you want to have a peep into one more passage before you pack up for the day. It's not Dungeonmaster, but it's a damn good substitute.*

AM



brunt of any assault. The trouble with that idea is that 'being strong in the arm' also means 'being thick in the head', and Rambo types walk into every waiting trap. Perhaps it would be better to place a magic user in front who could use his staff to seek for danger. You could also select the small trap-finder, as he always manages to avoid



the deadly pitfalls. It's your decision, so think carefully.

Your party consists of a well-balanced group of magicians, clerics, trap-finders and fighters who, if managed carefully, will blast, hack, heal and steal anything that moves. Although each hero is willing to have a bash with whatever weapons are available, it is only Goldmoon, the particularly gorgeous blonde in the fur bikini, who can wield the Blue Crystal Staff. As that artifact is indispensable, you had better keep a careful eye on her health as well as her curves!

The game is joystick controlled and with it you will quickly learn to make your hero run, duck, jump, dodge, hack, pick up and drop. The animation of the leader striding across the screen is smooth and beautifully detailed. Each rippling muscle and swirl of the cloak has been included. You can race your hero in a headlong dash towards the gap in the crumbling stone floor. A quick press of the fire button will launch him towards the far side and into the shadows of the next

unexplored passage.

Combat may be carried out at long range with arrows, spears etc. or at close range with axe, sword or staff. The various monsters encountered are also able to hack, slash and invoke magic which drastically effects the leader's health figure.

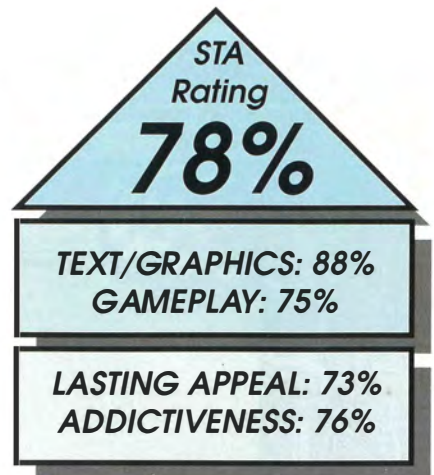
Mapping the passageways is confusing, even with the help of the in-built compass, as there are also slides and transporters which move your group to the far corners of the dungeon.

The monsters range from angry little dwarves who do their best to lose their boots up the sensitive parts of your anatomy, to dragons whose baleful glare can turn you to dust in moments. In most cases it is wiser to turn and run, as the dungeons are deep and the wise leader only fights when he needs to.

The game is very unhelpful when it comes to explaining the use to which the various objects can be put. Any scrolls which are discovered must be passed to the magician for his use, but the player is given no clue as to the purpose of the scroll. Similarly, the potions which are found must be used on a 'suck it and see'

*I've read the books, I've even played the Dungeons and Dragons Module (and survived!) and now I've played the computer version. This would seem to have given me an advantage as it only took me about 4-5 hours (playing over 2 days) to finish the game. The graphics are very good and the sound is not too bad, but on balance I think the game is a little too easy. It plays more like an arcade game, of the BARBARIAN and COMMANDO type, than it does an adventure game - the difference being that you have 8 characters instead of one to play with.*

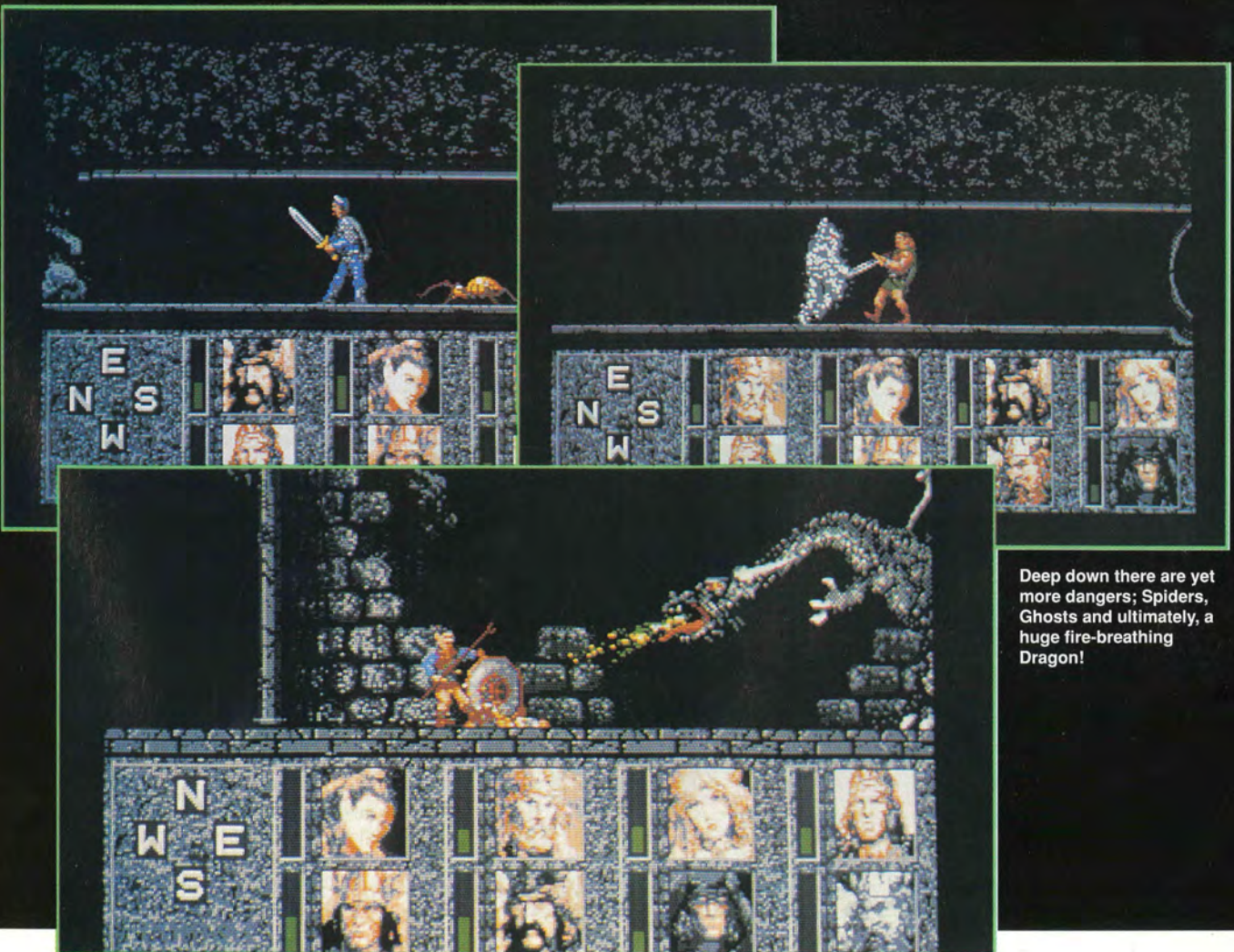
**SK**



basis. Whilst you may use any ammunition found, weapons are only picked up to increase your prowess and cannot be used separately. Treasure and the like is invariably protected by traps and other hazards and they must be found either by the skill of your trap-finder or by the use of the magician.

The magic user may cast various spells, such as Magic Missile, Sleep and Webs to freeze or destroy. These will cause small bolts of light to travel across the screen and envelop the current monster. In death, the evil fiends tend to shriek horribly and crumble into dust. The Blue Staff contains 100 charges and as each spell used depletes the power source, you had better think before you zap.

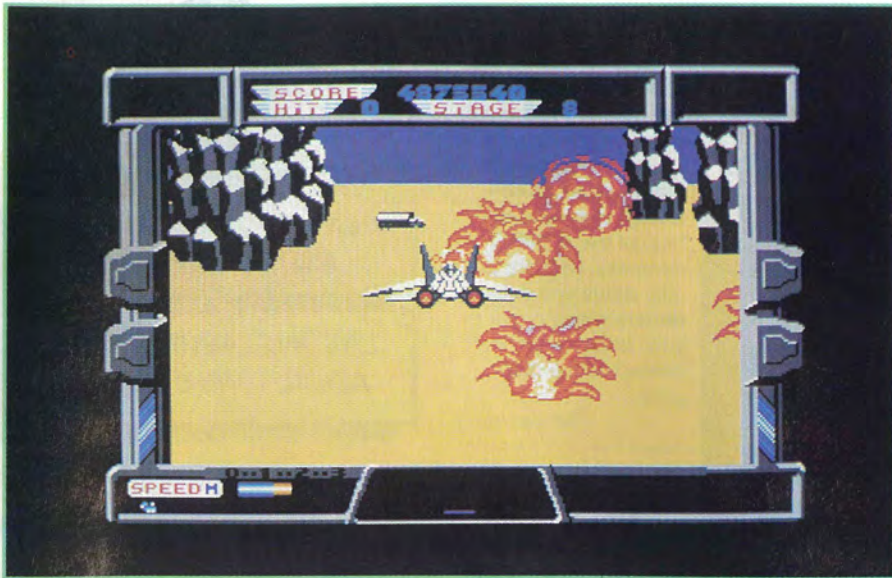
**STA**



Deep down there are yet more dangers; Spiders, Ghosts and ultimately, a huge fire-breathing Dragon!



The action is fast and frantic, as you straff the enemy from the comfort of your F14.



*Cramming Afterburner's three megabytes of code into a humble ST was deemed by most people to be practically impossible. And to a certain extent they were right. Sure enough, everything has been squeezed in, but with the small playing area and the somewhat jerky sprite movement, it just doesn't capture the exhilaration its arcade parent did. Forgetting the licence, Afterburner is still a playable, if repetitive, shoot'em-up and one that should appeal to members of the quick reflexes gang. Not bad, and a credit to the Argonaut team for attempting the impossible, but falls short of my over-high expectations.*

**SM**

*Well, here it is! The most important arcade conversion since Outrun! The question is, did the Argonauts have the skill and know-how to compensate for those 'shake, rattle and roll' hydraulics?*

# AFTER BURNER

**MEDIAGENIC (£19.99)**

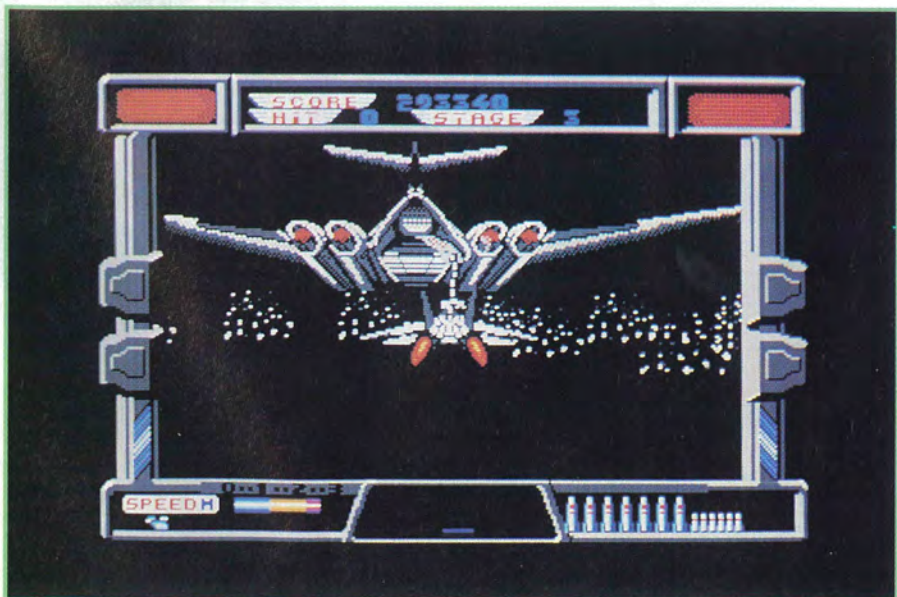
On board the massive aircraft carrier, the S.S. Sega Enterprise, the pipes are lit on your jet fighter and the exhausts are glowing red. You are literally hurtled into this no-fuss-and-nonsense shoot'em-up with no briefing, whatever training you gained whilst playing its arcade counterpart. The jet leaves the deck unaided, hovers momentarily and launches itself into the air. There's no time to master the controls in safe skies as your air space is immediately filled by enemy jets. You've left base and you're on your own for the next twenty-three levels - although the welcoming

committee make sure that you don't feel lonesome. As you pass across the sea just miles from the safety of sea base, you must learn the important skills of flying Afterburner-style - dodging flak and rapid firebutton pressing. The latter sends a volley of fire rattling out of the tubes, but you have limited ammunition and so thoughtless and uneconomic use renders you helpless and at the mercy of the enemy.

'Instrumentation? What instru...?' One jet gone, four to go - thanks for nothing! As you can see, you rarely have a chance to draw breath in this game, let

*Here it is, the long-awaited arcade conversion of Afterburner! Unfortunately, however, I don't think it was worth it. Afterburner is a tedious game with little in its favour. That's not to say Jez San and the Argonauts didn't do a good job of programming the game, it's just that the original game's content is repetitive and ultimately boring.*

**NC**



alone check your altimeter and waggle your flaps. Instrumentation, therefore, is kept to a bare minimum, an ammunition-level indicator and a speed-gauge bar. Minutes into the mission, the sea runs into land and the sky turns a sickly yellow. 'Be careful, be careful!' An over-concerned voice shouts at you: 'Enemy at three o'clock... be careful.' Air space becomes rare as the enemy ranks form on the horizon. The warning voice seems justifiably panicky as the bandits mount an attack from the rear, release a missile and pass overhead. The rogue SAM missile homes in on the white hot pipes and trying to outrun it is futile - you may as well kiss your ass good bye!

Two jets down, three to go! Level three, and a Super Fortress appears above the jet, drops the umbilical cord like a protective mother and feeds the hungry jet with fuel and weaponry supplies. This timely and welcomed aid offers temporary



respites from the fiercely menacing skies and replenishes your resources for the next few stages. Night-time spreads its black shroud across the skies and confusion reigns. Concealed by darkness, the ever-present enemy closes in unseen. 'Be careful, be careful... enemy at nine o'clock.' 'Where... where?'. Secondary gunights appear on the H.U.D. and lock on to the position of the invisible jets. Aiming the jet towards the weaponry sights, a blast from the tubes eliminates the bandits one by one - now it's their turn to sweat!

*Afterburner smashed all previous records for SEGA and even superseded Out Run as the most popular game in the arcade. Expectations of this conversion were high and nothing short of perfect cloning would please the critical computer press and the spoilt software purchaser. Have the Argonauts achieved the impossible? Of course not. The arcade version benefits considerably from the hydraulics which do their best to part you from your lunch, as well as the incredible sound which surrounds you in the cockpit. The Argonauts have achieved is a creditable approximation, which manages to capture the essence of the arcade game - what more could you ask for?*

**JS**

Out of the dark and into stage four, and in response to your new-found confidence and skill, the enemy step up their presence tenfold. Those gunights perform

land like a dose of napalm. Damn it... run out of ammo - if I can only reach the



yeoman service, tracking five, six-no, seven-enemy jets at once. But in anticipation, the blighters have concealed themselves behind strange clouds and only emerge to launch close-quarter attacks or fire flash bombs which spread across the

next stage! The sight of yellow desert sands is reassuring as you near land base. A landing strip comes into view and the jet lands safely on the tarmac. The mechanics tend to the aircraft and the attendance vehicles replenish your supplies of fuel and weaponry.

After this brief respite, the jet takes off and immediately goes vertically, cutting through the thick blanket of clouds. At once, you are confronted by squadrons of bandits - the sights lock on and once more the mindless but enjoyable slaughter continues. From high altitude, the jet drops below cloud and skims the village roofs, with the enemy in hot pursuit. Out of the village, across the plains and into the infamous 'Death Canyon', which has swallowed, chewed and spit out so many rooky pilots in the arcades. Once again the Super Fortress swoops down in level 9 offering relief and replenishment. Then a chase

across tree tops leads into the desert: 'Be careful... be careful!' Another SAM missile homes in on the engines and another jet bites the dust. The action continues above jungle terrain, through canyons and across open desert and, finally, back to sea to rejoin the S.S. SEGA where you must attend a decorating ceremony to receive your just rewards.

**STA**



Battle weary, short on fuel and riddled with anti aircraft splinters, you guide the 14 to the waiting crew onboard the yacht the government so kindly gave you.

**STA Rating**  
**65%**

**GRAPHICS: 60%**  
**SOUND: 57%**

**LASTING APPEAL: 62%**  
**ADDICTIVENESS: 67%**

**DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD**  
**1ST DAY SCORE: 5769140**



Seeing Martech's awful Nigel Mansell game didn't really raise my hopes for this, so it was with much surprise that I found the Lombard Rally game to be great fun. All the odds you expect to come up against in a rally are here: fog, mountain paths and night driving, and every one heightens the game's feeling of reality and being there. The graphics, although dull colourwise, are excellent, and the view from the back seat is a novel idea, and one that works well. This a brilliant game, and one that veers away from the mainstream of arcade licences and shoot'em-ups. If you fancy something just that little bit different, take this out for a test run.

**SM**

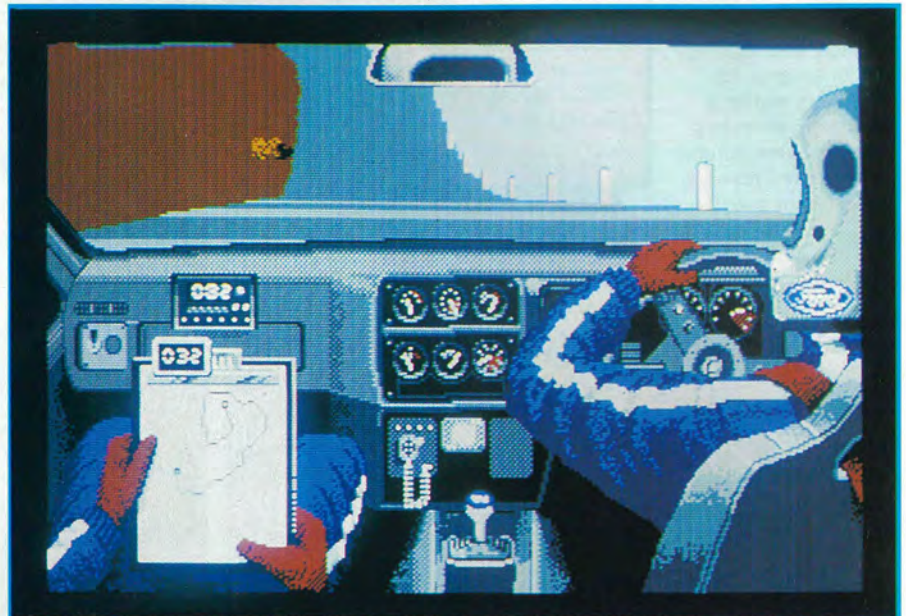
There are five qualifying legs to complete before you can enter the Lombard Rally and each of the courses introduces a variety of driving and weather conditions. You drive a Ford Sierra RS Cosworth in each race and, in order to qualify, you must complete the course within the specified time. A race itinerary enables you to select which leg you want to race first and the screen displays a route map of the course, the type of track, weather conditions and the time in which the course must be completed in order to qualify.

The first leg is a forest track between Harrogate and Telford and there are no adverse track or weather conditions, which is an advantage for the first race. The screen shows the familiar back-seat camera view, looking over the driver and co-driver's shoulders. From this position, you can see through the windscreen, and the instrumentation which indicates engine, suspension and tyre damage. An official holds a starting flag across the windscreen and counts down from three to start the race. The car is already in first gear at the start and pushing the joystick forward makes the car accelerate from the line. The joystick has remarkably responsive steering control over the car and pressing the firebutton activates the clutch which turns it into a gearstick. Moving the

*Mile after mile of bone-shaking track; hour after hour of split-second timing and total concentration - have Mandarin and Red Rat captured the essence of the gruelling Lombard RAC Rally?*

# RAC RALLY

MANDARIN (£19.95)



Realistic conditions and a unique player view-point makes this one of the better car simulators.

*If Red Rat and Mandarin's aim was to present a thorough, realistic and playable rally simulation then they have successfully achieved their objective. This is by far the finest game either company has produced and if this is the result of the amalgamation, let's hope they embark on more projects together. With its excellent interpretation, realism, responsive controls and professional presentation, this game is an absolute must!*

**JS**

joystick back and forth changes gear and as you activate the transmission, the driver's hand simultaneously moves to the gearstick. The co-driver has a route map which you can use to anticipate bends in the road and a digital timer shows the elapsed time for the stage.

The course twists, turns and undulates as you struggle with the joystick to keep the car on the track. But it is effective gear change which means success or failure in the time trials. Any stretches of straight road must be taken at full speed, while continuous gear changing is necessary around the twists and bends. Crashes result in expensive damage and, depending on the severity of the collision, you can see expensive pieces of bodywork parting company with the Cosworth. Too many crashes renders the car unfit to continue the race and in order to raise funds for repairs, you must enter a quiz on rallying, where correct answers yield money prizes. As described, the other four legs of the qualifying stage introduce driving hazards, such as fog and rain, and the tracks are as diverse as tarmac roads and precarious mountain paths. The final Lombard Rally

compels you to compete in all five legs of the race and during the fifteen stages, you will have to utilize the workshop and pay for all the new parts with the money won in the rally quiz.

**STA**



STA  
Rating  
**71%**

GRAPHICS: 71%  
SOUND: 50%

LASTING APPEAL: 65%  
ADDICTIVENESS: 71%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD  
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A



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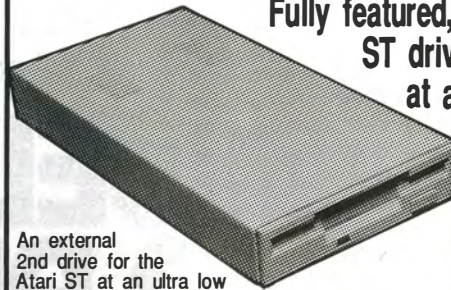
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After dominating the Grand Prix circuit for a few seasons, Mansell had a run of bad luck which culminated in his horrendous accident in Suzuka. Perhaps Martech's simulation is realistic enough to give Nigel some practice!

# MANSELL'S GRAND PRIX

MARTECH (£24.95)

Martech state that in addition to capturing the speed and danger of Formula 1 racing, they wanted to simulate the advances which have been made in car design and computerized telemetry. Thanks to technical consultation from Nigel Mansell and Peter Windsor from Williams, Martech claim that they have made this game as accurate as possible. But they admit that their interpretation of the cockpit instrumentation is far more elaborate and fantastic than the simpler, conventional gauges and dials which are still used in reality. This, they say, is to compensate for the real hi-tech developments in car-to-pit computerization, which enables the crew to keep a check on the car and anticipate what will need changing.

The screen displays all sixteen Grand Prix race circuits, and moving a chequered flag cursor, you can choose your first racing venue. Each track offers a different challenge, whether it be the nar-

row, twisting roads of Monaco and Suzuka, or the long, gruelling circuits at Francochamps or Hockenheim. You can select to try out the track and accustom yourself with the controls in a practice lap.

Additionally, this practice helps you work out the most effective gear-changing sequence and when to accelerate and decelerate. The cockpit instrumentation comprises rev-counter, fuel gauge, oil temperature and pressure, water temperature and turbo boost pressure. Although the instrumentation panel gives the impression of being in the cockpit, you actually see and control the car from the rear - a style

which fans of Pole Position and the brilliant Pitstop II will be familiar with.

The joystick steers the car with adequate response and accuracy, and moving it forward and backwards accelerates and brakes. Pressing the firebutton activates the clutch which momentarily cancels the joystick's other tasks, and

*Nigel Mansell's Grand Prix, is a typical 8 to 16-bit conversion. Instead of improving the graphics and sound, Martech have just dumped it from the Amstrad onto the ST - lock, stock and barrel. The game itself is very dull both to look at and play; the racing consists of repetitive and seemingly endless circuits. Racing games can be exciting - just check out Electric Dream's Super Hang-on, and the 8-bit classic, Pitstop II. Grand Prix is an uninteresting game that has nothing to raise it above average.*

SM

As this game was so obviously inspired by the brilliant Pitstop II, I will make some relevant comparisons. Car-racing is perhaps the best two-player participation game, and this was achieved effectively in Pitstop II with a horizontally-split screen. Mansell's Grand Prix, however, is a one player only game. Additionally, the degree of tyre wear was well illustrated in Pitstop II by a line on the tyres which changed colour and you were also in control of the pitstop crew, which increased your overall involvement in the game. Finally, the general presentation of Grand Prix could have been considerably improved and there is evidence of a lack of attention to detail outside the elaborate cockpit. For example, I can't remember there being skyscrapers and a range of mountains at Silverstone!

JS

moving it back and forth changes gear. Effective gear change is aided by a display of the six-gear transmission and a dot shows which gear you are in. The rev counter has a red power band and, as you accelerate down the straights in sixth and change down to the most appropriate gear for corners and chicanes, keeping the needle in the red band achieves optimum speed efficiency. The skill is not to slow down too much for a corner and to take full advantage of the straights.

Your fastest lap time during practice decides your starting position in the main race. The race is on and your Honda Williams, along with eight computer-controlled cars, are lined up for the start. The light turns green and the cars accelerate from the line and bad is made more apparent by the speed of the other cars. The race takes its toll on the car, and so it is important to check your instrumentation for failing parts and, if necessary, make a pitstop. The pitstop sequence is automatic and when the crew completed the refit, you are given the signal to go. Watching for the other cars as you re-emerge on the track, the race continues!

STA

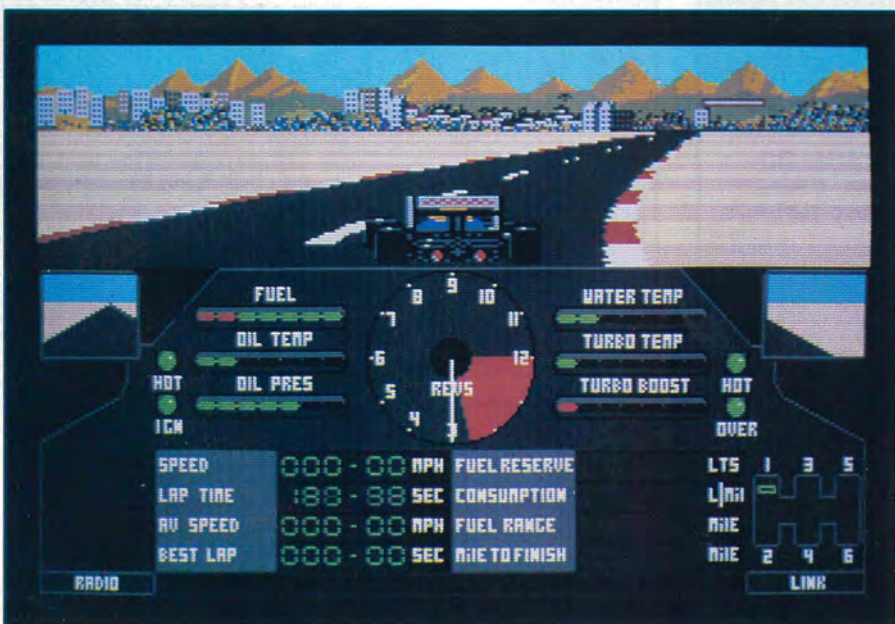
STA  
Rating

46%

GRAPHICS: 39%  
SOUND: 35%

LASTING APPEAL: 46%  
ADDICTIVENESS: 51%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD  
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A



Racing against a stripy backdrop, N.M is a definite non-starter.



*'At the end of the day, it's goals what matter, Brian!' And at the end of the day, there is one guy who miraculously gets those crucial goals with remarkable consistency! But how does 'Golden Boots' Lineker do it?*

You would have thought that the majority of the action in a soccer simulation endorsed by Gary Lineker would take place in the six-yard area. But in this game, Gary discloses the training and exercise tactics which ensure that he is always in the right place at the right time. The training begins in the gym and progresses to ball skills, which include dribbling, chipping and shooting. The game begins with an elaborate menu screen with Ron Atkinson's jewelry-adorned hand hovering masterfully above. Moving the hand with the mouse, you can select which disciplines you want to practise. One to four players can participate.

The gym section encompasses push-ups, squat thrusts, weight training and monkey bars, which all help to maintain Gary's overall fitness and stamina, while you end up with little more than a fatigued joystick and multiple blisters. Lineker stands in the gym with a barbell across his chest and pushing the joystick upwards pushes the weights above his head whilst pressing the firebutton lowers them again. Points are scored as this action is repeated, but if you fail to synchronize the lift properly, 'Striker' drops the barbell with painful consequences. Similar joystick action is adopted for the squat thrusts and push-ups, but when 'Peanuts' Lineker mounts the monkey bars, you must push the joystick up to grab the next bar, then swing and grab your way to the end. All of the gym exercises are a complete waste of time and not particularly enjoyable to play.

Juggling the ball not only looks flash, it is an excellent exercise for adroitness, ball control and coordination - Gary can actually chat to John Motson and sign autographs at the same time! We meet Gary out on the pitch with the ball at his

If all his games are as bad as this, poor old Gary's going to be as sick as a parrot!



# LINEKERS SOCCER

GREMLIN (£19.95)

*Although there are a number of events in 'Gazza's' new licence, none of them are particularly interesting; with the possible exception of the ball dribbling. They are all very 'samey', and require simple and repetitive joystick movements. One thing that really annoyed me, was the fact that every time you restarted, you had to re-type your name, and reselect your options - a problem that could have been easily remedied. 'Superskills' offers short-time, expensive fun, and, no matter how big a fan you are of Mr. Lineker, I wouldn't recommend you get this.*

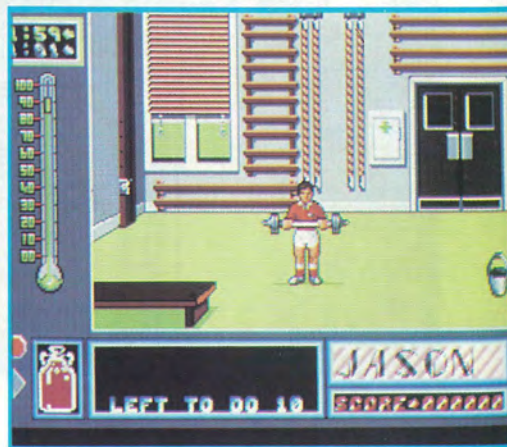
**SM**

feet, ready to demonstrate his spellbinding ball control. Points are scored by keeping the ball in the air with various joystick combinations and you can head, knee and kick your way to a veritable points bonanza. In this section of the simulation, the action and movement of our pixel-clad star resembles a crude wooden puppet, as he unrealistically and awkwardly shuffles back and forth across the field.

Of course, 'Golden Boots' is a pro-

lific goal scorer, but without the other members of the team he wouldn't score half as many. Therefore, in addition to dribbling and shooting, Gary must practice passing and chipping the ball. The screen shows an overhead view of the slalom course, and with rapid left and right joystick manipulation, you must dribble around the cones as quickly as possible, keeping the ball close to Gary's feet - what a player! If you complete the slalom within the allotted time, you progress to chipping and shooting-accuracy practice and, finally, penalty practice.

**STA**



STA  
Rating  
**37%**

GRAPHICS: 41%  
SOUND: 35%

LASTING APPEAL: 39%  
ADDICTIVENESS: 41%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE  
1ST DAY SCORE: 3516

*The majority of football simulations offer great entertainment, but I completely fail to see the point of this peculiar example. Football is a great game, but football practice is a mandatory discipline which is unenjoyable and tedious - I think Gary would agree. So why waste time and energy wagging a joystick on a pixel-clad character who won't benefit from your efforts, when you could frequent your local sports centre, improve your own fitness, and maybe even participate in a sport.*

**JS**



*In great contrast to their usual style of software, U.S. Gold present a serious, accurate and rather highbrow adventure, which concerns one of history's truly incredible stories, that of Jeanne d'Arc.*

# JOAN OF ARC

US GOLD (£19.95)

After 100 years of bitter feuding with the English, France was on the verge of civil war. Corrupt French noblemen were forming uneasy financial alliances with the English, the peasants were revolting against high taxes and soldiers from both sides were plundering the villages. The throne was all but lost to the English, but in the tiny village of Domremy lived the most unlikely saviour of France, a seventeen-year-old peasant girl named Jeanne d'Arc. On instructions from the spirit of St Michael, she pledges to have Charles crowned in Reimes and lead her beloved Dauphin's armies against the English. Jeanne travels to Chinon and, after a ridiculous prank, she identifies the Dauphin in the crowded court. The Dauphin is convinced that she is sent from God, and to the dismay and criticism of his political advisors, he makes her General of one section of the French army.

The program begins with a mandatory description of the story and then the screen displays a map of France.

Surprisingly, you play the part of the unfortunate Dauphin, and your task, with the help of the Maid, is to be crowned in

Reimes and to command your armies and drive the usurping English out of France. All decisions, strategies and orders for the nationwide campaign are directed from the map. A fleur-de-lys icon, which contains a selection of political powers, can be employed to deal with different situations throughout the game. For example, 'Diplomacy' can be used to try and avoid a confrontation and if your advisors agree that negotiations could work, you must

select the venue for the talks. As usual, your bargaining commodity is hostages, and consulting a character table, you can decide which prisoners to release in exchange for French hostages. You can also ask for money for the release of an English prisoner. The Dauphin is heavily in debt, but depending on the state of the Royal Treasury, you can buy back towns and kidnapped ambassadors. But battles are very expensive and so it is advisable to negotiate for a ceasefire, an alliance or peace.

The English have taken Orleans and diplomatic talk has been ruled out. Therefore, you must muster your armies by selecting 'Starting a

*Joan of Arc isn't the sort of game I would associate with U.S. Gold; it doesn't feature the slightest whiff of an arcade machine - not that that damns it in any way, though. Presentation is very fluid, and disk swapping is kept to a minimum, though the constant accessing can prove irritating. The digitised graphics on the sub-games are a little weak, with the colourful sprites looking very out of place against the drab, brown backdrops. The game is easy to get into, and there is an initial compulsion to get further into it, but there is very little to see and the game soon begins to get repetitive.*

*Not a bad game, and one that will appeal to fans of 'Defender of the Crown', but the lack of variety raises doubts about the game's longevity.*

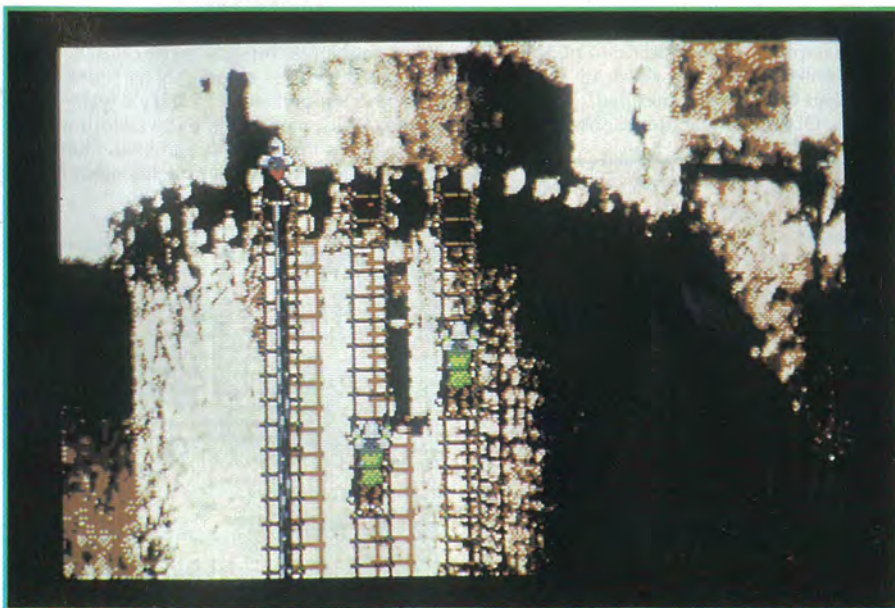
SM

*I am surprised that this adventure is viewed through the eyes of the Dauphin. Perhaps the creators thought that taking on the guise of a seventeen-year-old maid would not appeal to the majority of male egos. However, the reason that a young innocent girl brought about such a prodigious transformation in France, was that the Dauphin was a wet blanket, his political advisors were clueless and corrupt, his religious advisors pious and bigoted and his people helpless and confused. This is an accurate but rather stuffy adventure which is packaged with a weighty, detailed and comprehensive set of instructions. It will appeal to historians, battle tacticians and literature students - as well as game players who are fed up with blasting aliens to bits. This is an unusual but not unwelcomed release from U.S. Gold!*

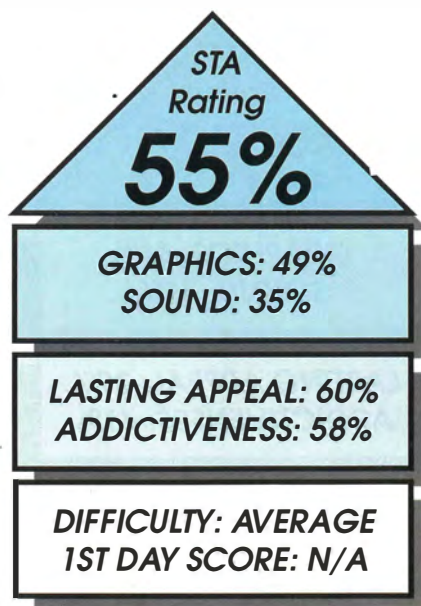
JS

Campaign' and select the 'Maid of Orleans' to lead the men. After victory in Orleans, the army must confront the English in Reimes and win back the throne. After the Dauphin has been crowned, you must free the provinces one by one by selecting the areas on the map, making the correct decisions and commanding your armies. I have outlined the basic aim of the game, but there are many political decisions to be made throughout the game. For example, if the Royal Treasury is running low, you can repossess a town and impose the Tithe or the unpopular Hearth Tax, which in real life caused a bloody rebellion. Additionally, there are judicial duties to carry out, which include capturing and convicting traitors of France and conspirators. But you must use discretion and diplomacy when dealing with French citizens as the Dauphin is unpopular and his position insecure. Finally, 'The Maid' is a national heroine and can be used to great effect, but it is advisable to check the history books to see where the real Dauphin went wrong before making major decisions.

STA



The varied sub-games and involving gameplay, lifts Joan of Arc above others of a similar vein.





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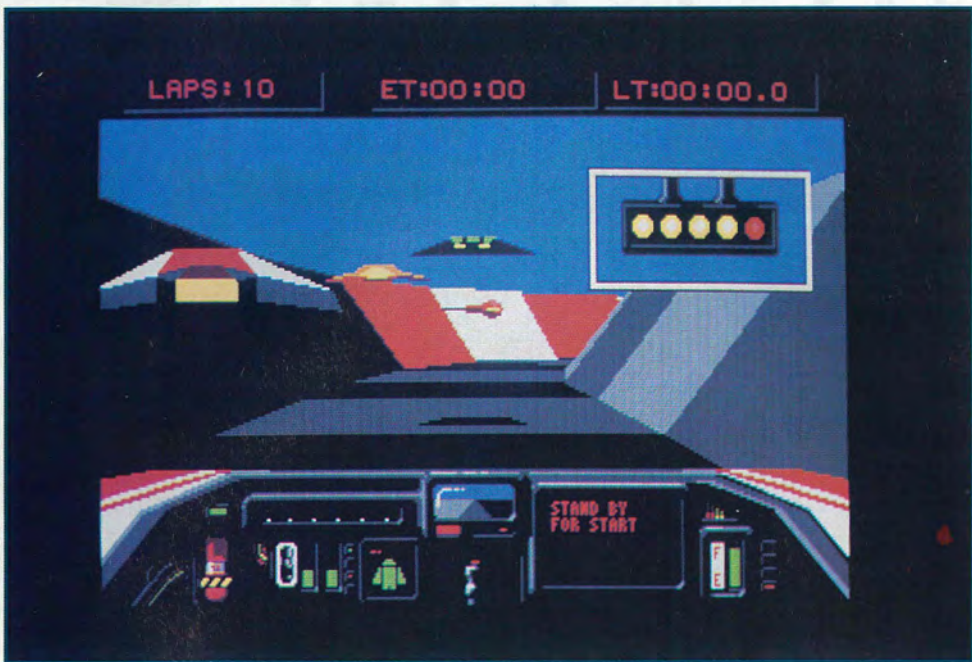
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Your engines purring, you begin to skate around the tortuous routes of Powerdrome.



*Outstanding graphics - shame about the controls! Within the austere Powerdrome are the smoothest-scrolling, perspective graphics I have ever seen. But no matter how hard you persevere with the controls you never master the game. In addition to the excellent smooth-scrolling, the rival competitors which are separately animated provide a breathtaking sight as they rush past, seemingly unaffected by, and oblivious to, the restraints of the oversensitive controls. Frustration grows as you crash from one corner to another, but if you can stand the infuriating controls, Powerdrome offers an incredible graphical experience.*

**JS**

*What will be THE sport of the future?*

*A Rollerball-style game or a series of intergalactic race meetings? Whatever the game, pundits seem certain that win or lose, survive or perish, these games will be brutal and violent!*

# POWERDROME

ELECTRONIC ARTS (£24.95)

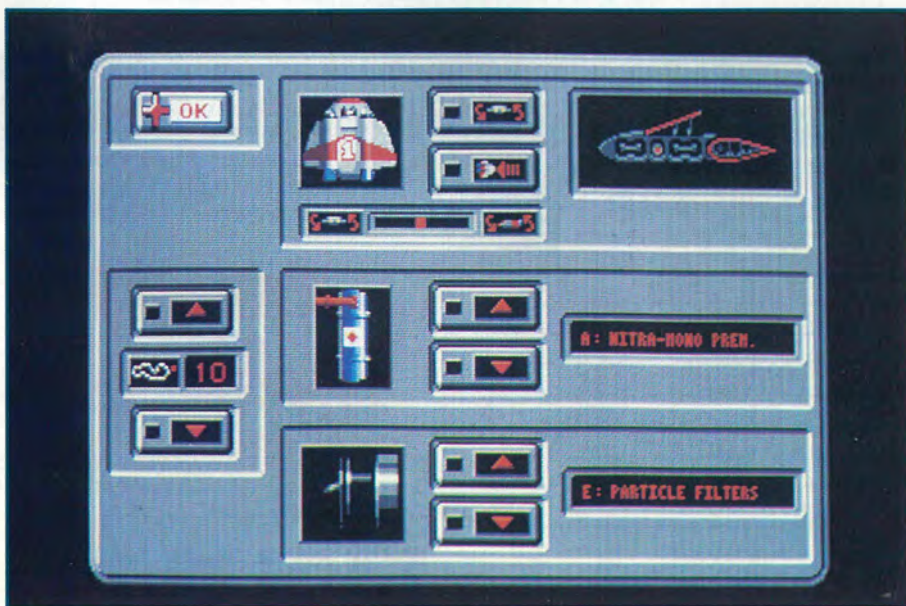
Powerdrome is the latest premonitory vision of sport in the future. It is a series of intergalactic races held in six different planets for the coveted Cyberneufe trophy, which is keenly contested by a multitude of alien races. Each host planet has designed an individual Powerdrome within massive cubes that contain a network of semicircular track. These immense cubes have their own atmosphere and the tracks which snake through them are as different as Silverstone is to Monza! Throughout the

racing calendar, you will have to overcome adverse gravitational and atmospheric conditions peculiar to each planet. From a race control panel you can access pilot information, check your position in the championship stakes and call up details on the gravity strength of a planet and its atmospheric conditions as well as any unusual track statistics.

You can choose to practise or race on any of the tracks, but with its favourable gravity conditions, oxygen

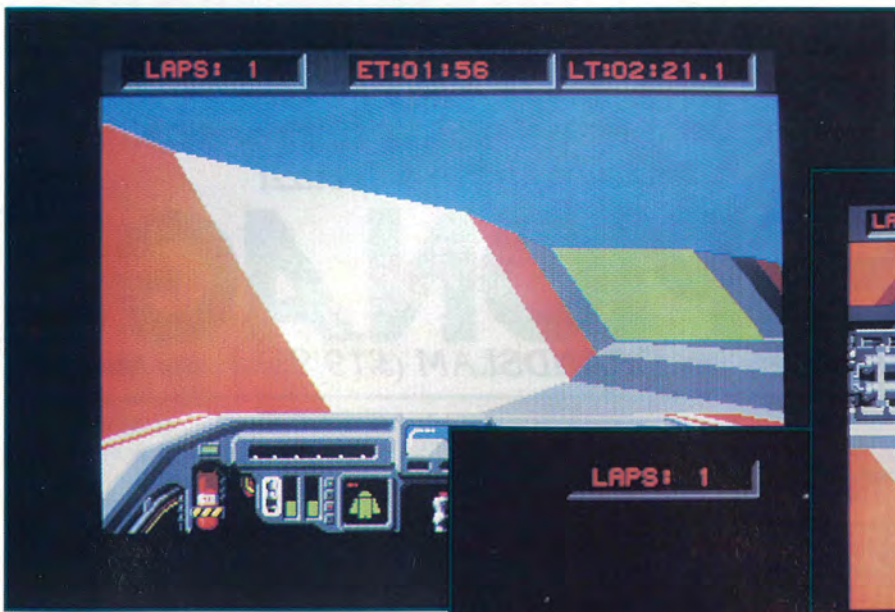
*If it were not for the over-difficult control method, Powerdrome would have been a good racing game. The whole game is slick and well presented, with the solid 3D graphics moving both smoothly and effectively. The sound is what you tend to expect from a race game - mainly whistles and revving noises - but nothing detrimental to the game. The pitstop, sorry... Robopit, works well, and is a very nice touch, breaking up the tedium of a long-distance race. As racing games go, this one is an also-ran.*

**SM**

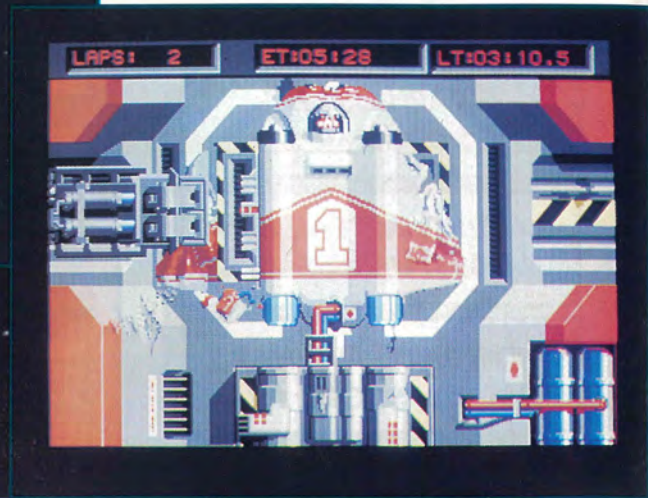


atmosphere and simple oval shape, the Terra test circuit has been designed for novices to acquaint themselves with the Typhoon racing craft and its unique controls. Additionally, the training oval has a Pitch-lock facility, which keeps the craft at a constant height, similar to stabilizing wheels on a kid's bike. The so-called Robopit is a fully automatic repair centre where you can modify and refuel and fit the Typhoon's engine with filters and aerofoil. From an overhead perspective, you can see the Typhoon in the Robopit, and pressing the spacebar launches you into the Terra track. From within the cockpit the





That green square is the entrance to the pits (LEFT). Once entered your craft can be given a total overhaul - but remember: the timer is still ticking away!



walls of the Powerdrome are as foreboding as a bobsled run, as you struggle to master the unusual controls. Mouse controls are recommended by the maker, but I found it too sensitive and prone to oversteer. Pushing the joystick forwards and pressing the firebutton, activates forward acceleration, but the firebutton must be released in order to steer the craft. Even the slight curves within Terra are unforgiving and Typhoon sustains major damage as you crash around the walls.

After this brief 'crash' course, you can choose to compete in the Cyberneufe trophy and selecting Track 2 transports you to Clorotek - location: greenhouse; atmosphere: methane. In contrast to the relative safety of Terra's nursery tubes, Clorotek is a living hell of spiralling, snaking and tapering pipes. The planet's methane atmosphere would destroy Typhoon's engines in seconds, therefore methane filters must be fitted in the Robopit and slight aerofoil adjustments made to help Typhoon cut through the thick atmosphere. The filters and aerodynamic modifications can be put to the test before the actual race and if the configuration is correct, the race is on! Typhoon hurtles from the Robopit and into the Clorotek tubes and the craft must be centralized immediately. Pressing the firebutton sends it belting down a straight,



*So, this is Electronic Arts' big release. Well, I'm afraid to say that after playing it for some time, I don't think it's up to much. Sure enough, the 3D graphics are very impressive, but after the initial excitement has worn off, the game itself is rather tiresome. The particularly difficult controls are the final straw, killing any enjoyment I might have had. Powerdrome is yet another casualty of unrelenting hype, a nice idea spoilt by unrewarding gameplay and broken promises.*

**NC**

a number of competitors continue down the track leaving you floundering on the floor. Lifting the nose up, Typhoon rises from the floor, but a burst of speed is required to catch up with the leaders and a tap of the 'Shift' lights the pipes and sends a surge of power rushing through the craft.

A Robopitstop is marked by a green square on the side of the track, and on leaving the race, Typhoon enters a tunnel which is lined with more coloured squares. Pushing forward on the joystick makes Typhoon dive into the Robopit and by tapping various numeric keys, you can replace damaged and fatigued parts and refuel the craft. But time in the Robopits is time lost on the track and so pitstops must be kept to a minimum. Leaving the Robopit, Typhoon emerges on the track as two rival racers pass overhead - the race continues. **STA**

through a slight bend, a chicane, and finally, a severe drop... crash! Decelerating to a snail's pace, Typhoon skirts around the bend and smashes straight into the chicane. The craft has sustained damage and

STA  
Rating  
**59%**

GRAPHICS: 73%  
SOUND: 50%

LASTING APPEAL: 51%  
ADDICTIVENESS: 54%

DIFFICULTY: HARD  
1ST DAY SCORE: 420





STA  
Rating  
**48%**

GRAPHICS: 39%  
SOUND: 38%

LASTING APPEAL: 53%  
ADDICTIVENESS: 44%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD  
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

Peter Wright's book, *Spy Catcher*, revealed the world of espionage as being far removed from James Bond lounging in casinos or sipping champagne in a Jacuzzi

# ESPIONAGE

GRANDSLAM (£19.95)

Let's face it, this is a yuppy game aimed at those who are bored with certain 'trivial' after dinner pursuits. However, the rules are not easy to explain to newcomers and so I question its worth as a board game. Espionage is an original concept, but aspects of the game derive from a number of other games. Initially it is a frustrating game with too many rules, but as you gain experience, it is both intriguing and beguiling. However, the computer-controlled agents play with too much intelligence and so the best results are gained with a number of players with a similar understanding of the game.

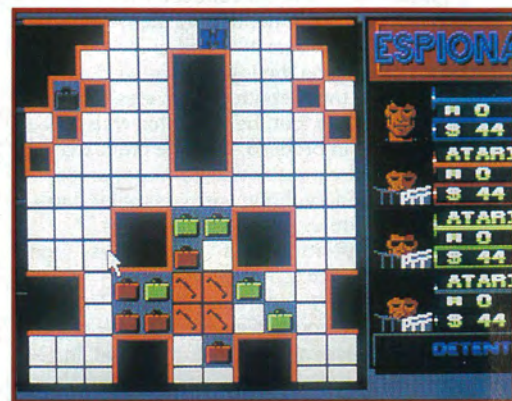
JS

The far-reaching and manipulative powers of the secret service which were revealed in the book are illustrated in Grandslam's rather highbrow board game - Espionage. Success in this game is a little more sinister than buying Park Lane or filling your circle with cheeses, as the winner attains the most powerful position in the spying fraternity, that of Master Spy. This, say Grandslam, is a game of cunning and strategy, in which your agents must set out from base and make their way across the world. The agents are represented by a group of chess-like pieces and the world is a board which is covered in grid squares. In addition to cunning and strategy, you also need a great deal of imagination. Different areas on the board represent cities, airports and deserts and your aim is to move across the board to reach four canisters containing micro-filmed details of the ultimate weapon.

*No matter how hard I try, I just cannot get into Espionage. Board games-to-ST licences are usually pretty dull, with little or no graphic sparkle to add interest. Not only is this trait present, the game is long-winded and uninteresting to play as well. Having not seen the board game, it wouldn't be fair to say whether this game is a true reflection of it, but if the game was so dull in the first place, why bother converting it? Ardent fans of board games might wish to consider it - but why bother buying this if you already own the board version?*

SM

white playing squares and black ones which are no-go areas to all spies. You have twelve spies under your control, which include six Courier Agents that can only move diagonally, two Surveillance Agents that move horizontally and vertically and Secret Agents who can travel in any direction. You can move your agents any number of squares in these directions and the ultimate aim is to gain possession of the micro-film - the espionage begins! Agent exchange is a devastating manoeuvre which can turn the game to your advantage. An exchange can be achieved from a standard move, except that the squares selected for the move already contain agents. A more sinister



move is the ability to terminate the opposition by following them along their line of travel and, providing there is a square to move to afterwards, you can terminate the opposing agent. Finally, the Sanction option described earlier comes into effect if you miss the chance to terminate. However, you can use Sanctioning by selecting an agent's opposing number and answering 'yes' to the Sanction option. If the sanctioned agent possesses micro-film it will pass to your agent.

STA

A time limit can be set for the entire game as well as individual moves and you have the choice of Sanctioning, which is reputed to add a cutting edge to the game. Up to four players can play, but if you are playing solo the computer assumes control over the other three spies. Before the espionage commences, a random selection mechanism chooses the spy to make the first move and the others take their turn clockwise. The screen is divided into two with the board area and a status and option panel. The area of the board is larger than the screen but it can be scrolled to reveal the whole area. The game is predominantly mouse/icon controlled and the status display gauges your spy's financial status and a zoom facility enables detailed analysis of the game. Additionally, you can ask for help and hints on the game and even ask the computer to suggest a move.

The board is made up of red and



I doubt very much that Espionage, the board game, will set the pulse racing like the real thing.



A strange mish-mash of Supersprint and Shackled, Motor Massacre fails to impress on both counts.



# MOTOR MASSACRE

GREMLIN (£19.95)

*Take some cars that look as though they have just driven off a Mad Max set, combine Spy Hunter-style road-racing with intermittent, overhead, Shackled-style game-play, and what would you get? Either an exciting and changing game, or a confusing mishmash!*

Motor Massacre is a strange combination of fender-bending car racing and overhead maze-style game-play. The first part of the game takes place on treacherous roads where you are introduced to your aggressive-looking vehicle. Equipped with spiked

wheels and foremounted cannon, this Mad Max automobile is a formidable wagon, but the other road users are not exactly Sunday drivers. You have the choice of hitting the road equipped with your basic weaponry, or you can check into Pandey's Pork Palace to stock up on a few essential provisions.

Novices to the game usually disregard the large arrow pointing into Pandey's and venture on the roads, where they embark on a brief suicide mission. To enter Pandey's you must manoeuvre your vehicle through the entrance. Once inside the warehouse you continue the game on foot, and equipped with no more than a pistol, you must fight off swarms of so-called mutants during the search for provisions, weaponry and ammunition for the ensuing road wars. Pandey's warehouse is a maze of rooms filled with boxes and crates, and during the course of the search you find a Red Cross pack, a radar and various forms of sustenance. Additionally, collecting keys enables you to gain entrance to locked rooms. Contact with the mutants depletes your energy levels and so it is advisable to ransack Pandey's as quickly as possible and hit the road.

You rejoin your vehicle on the road and venture tentatively into the crazy city.

*Not bad! This game has just enough action and variety to keep you occupied for an hour or so. But the uneasy combination of Shackled and Spy Hunter-style game-play sometimes makes you wonder if you are still playing the same game. Out on the road, the joystick controls are beautifully responsive and the action inside is equal to Shackled. But what the game lacks is character - once played, easily forgotten! Motor Massacre is an ideal budget software candidate therefore, I am confused as to why Gremlin have released it at full price. At £9.95, the game would deservedly sell like proverbial hot cakes, but at £20.00, I seriously question its value for money.*

JS

*I'm not sure what to make of this strange Shackled/Super Sprint hybrid; it's like one of those games you find in a compilation - you know, the ones with bland graphics and sound but they keep you playing for an hour or two. It has nothing to make it sparkle, and the gameplay is repetitive and ultimately boring - so why is it that I quite liked playing it? Well, wait until it does appear on a compilation, then you'll find out what I mean.*

SM

The radar, which was acquired at Pandey's, has already been installed and proves to be invaluable as you can anticipate trouble two blocks away. A blast from the fore-mounted cannon clears the road ahead, but collisions are unavoidable. In addition to the manic road users, the streets are lined with heavy artillery and so your chances of survival are slim. Brief respite from the mad traffic can be sought in the warehouses where you can stock up on provisions and you must also locate a gas station where you are met by a garage attendant with a cheesy grin who asks: 'Whadda ya want mister.' The food collected in Pandey's can be used as currency and you can trade various amounts for fuel, a tune-up and ammunition. Stocked up with provisions, you can return to the roads and create more mayhem and devastation.

STA



STA  
Rating  
47%

GRAPHICS: 44%  
SOUND: 48%

LASTING APPEAL: 46%  
ADDICTIVENESS: 55%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE  
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A



STA  
Rating

59%

GRAPHICS: 61%  
SOUND: 43%

LASTING APPEAL: 53%  
ADDICTIVENESS: 65%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD  
1ST DAY SCORE: 16369

Of all the spectacular stunts from the James Bond films, which one would you choose to convert into an exciting computer game? Undoubtedly, many people would suggest the incredible speedboat chase from Live and Let Die and Domark would be in full agreement with them. After their success at converting Lucas films, Domark are continuing to make the business of license software their own, with Live and Let Die, The Computer Game.

In this particular saga, Bond is up against the infamous and evil Prime Minister of San Monique, Dr Kananga, or 'Mr Big' as he is known to his minions. Behind a seemingly legitimate freight and cargo business, Kananga is shipping unrefined heroin to processing plants in remote locations. In typical James Bond style, this is a cosmopolitan game which takes place in the jungles of South America, the Norwegian fjords and the deserts of Egypt. But these multinational locations do not hold different types of game-play, they merely present the player with different backdrops; whether you are racing up the Nile or the Amazon, the game-play is much the same. The screen displays a map of the globe, and moving a cursor with the joystick you can choose the first location.

Selecting the rivers in 'jolly old Blighty' enables you to master the speedboat controls and its weaponry. You control the speedboat from behind by means of the joystick which gives you reasonably good response. The object of the practice includes firing at red targets in the water using your fore-mounted machine gun. Additional black targets have been set up for missile launch practice by pressing the 'shift' key. After target practice, you are free to leave the relatively safe waters in England and embark on your global mission. In the snowy wastes of Scandinavia, you must pilot your boat around icebergs and mines and blast enemy speedboats out of the water.

Completing each section of the

'James, this is a Carlson special, perhaps the most expensive speedboat in the world - don't break it 007!' 'You worry to much M!'

# LIVE + LET DIE

DOMARK (£19.95)

*Live and Let Die would have benefited from being based around all of the film instead of just the boat chase. Whilst at first the game is fast, furious and fairly playable, after a while both boredom and frustration rear their familiar heads; the first thanks to the game's repetitiveness, and the second due to the ever-decreasing fuel level. The latter is a real pain, as the game is a lot better when played fast and if you miss a barrel you've had it - which means the game must be played at a slow speed in order to catch the required fuel - thus defeating the whole object. A disappointing release, and another that adds to the pile of failed Bond games.*

SM

mission depends on your ability to replenish the boat's fuel by collecting every barrel that floats on the water, and if one barrel is missed, the boat will not have sufficient resources to reach the end of the level. At a distance, it is impossible to differentiate between these barrels and the many other objects in the water, and so lightning reflexes are required. Moving to the Amazon jungles, the game continues with the inclusion of logs floating in the water, which can be used as ramps to catapult the boat over rocks and mines. In

the Middle East you can slide up slopes on the side of the river in order to avoid obstacles, but as you progress across the globe, Kananga retaliates with his own pocket army of gun emplacements, dive bombing



helicopters and planes - not to mention the occasional submarine. Suddenly, what seemed like remarkable weaponry for a pleasure boat seems ridiculously inadequate against Kananga's might!

STA



Shaken, but not stirred! 007 continues his repetitive mission.



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DTP



Another consignment of narcotics has slipped through customs and made its way onto the streets. Drug abuse has reached epidemic proportions, something has to be done.

# MANHATTAN DEALERS

SILMARILS (£19.95)

Take on the role of Inspector Harry, a streetwise New York narcotics detective. Despite his somewhat camp appearance, Harry is a tough cookie. At the beginning of the game, after all of the necessary options have been selected, you must visit the chief of police. Your boss will inform you upon which drugs you must seek out and destroy. The missions range from the somewhat weak caffeine raids, through the more obvious cocaine and heroine busts, and finally to the highly addictive, though a little suspect, Arcadoine haul. Having received the briefing you must guide our man onto the streets.

Harry starts his mission in a seedy main street. A number of thugs can be found in this part of town: chain-wielding punks; knife-bearing skinheads; chainsaw maniacs; and crazed bikers. All of these low-life dealers are intent on one thing, your swift demise. However, Harry, being an unarmed combat expert, has other ideas concerning his future. Using the joystick or keys you must defeat the pushers.

*Manhattan Dealers is a novel game. On the surface it seems to be nothing more than a straightforward beat'em-up and the lack of fighting moves making it a pretty poor one at that. It is the game's scenario, however, which saves it. Cleaning the streets of drug dealers is great fun and the variety of colourful characters enhance the game immensely.*

NC

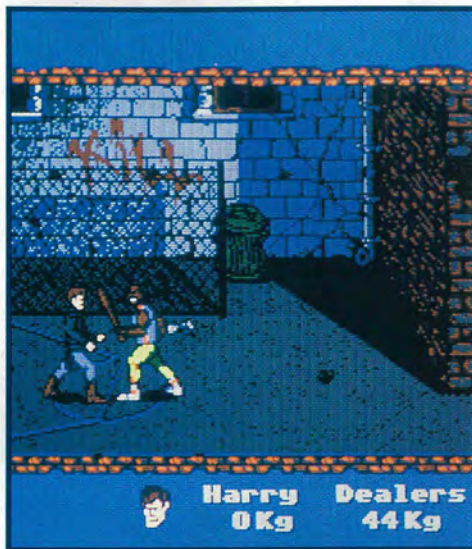
Should you manage to render your assailant unconscious, you may proceed to confiscate his consignment of drugs. Once in the possession of an illegal substance you should make your way across

town to a makeshift bonfire. All of the narcotics seized should be destroyed in the flames, and a health bonus will be given on completion of this task. Beware, however, because should the dealers get the better of Harry, they will steal back any of the drugs he is carrying.

Of course there are racketeers all over the city and in his travels Harry can meet some very shady characters. A visit to the wharf will see Harry come face to face with a ferocious whip-cracking female. Whilst stepping into Chinatown Harry will meet some of the meanest fighters around: star-throwing Ninjas, Karate experts and a sword-wielding Samuri. The hardest area, however, is the dark backstreets around Harlem. Here, Harry is confronted not only by knuckledusting Mr.T lookalikes and baseball bat-swinging hoods, but also by the residents.

Poor old Inspector Harry really puts up with a lot! From the moment he appears on screen, chainsaw-wielding and knife-throwing punks plus whip-cracking women appear to give him a hard time. The range of moves he can dish out to fight them off is fairly limited and although they work adequately, require pixel-perfect positioning - not easy when you are being attacked. There isn't a great deal of variety, and I imagine if you complete one mission you won't really have a lot to go back to apart from increased difficulty. A playable game which is let down by both the limited amount of screens and the intrusive multi-load between them.

SM



Appearing in first floor windows, the locals take careful aim when bombarding you with bricks, flowerpots, spanners and the like.

Both the weights of drugs held by Harry and the remaining quantity still in the hands of the dealers are shown on the status panel. Only when Harry has disposed of all the narcotics can he return to the chief for yet another assignment.

STA



Inspector Harry, ever the trend setter, sets out against innumerable odds to halt the flow of drugs.

STA Rating

**68%**

GRAPHICS: 61%  
SOUND: 50%

LASTING APPEAL: 61%  
ADDICTIVENESS: 66%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE  
1ST DAY SCORE: 1117



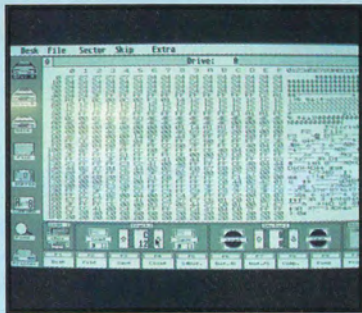
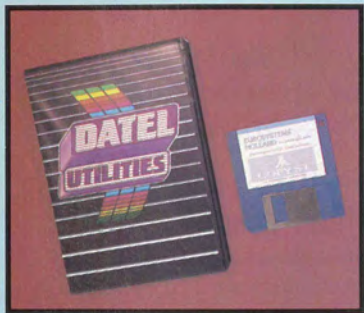
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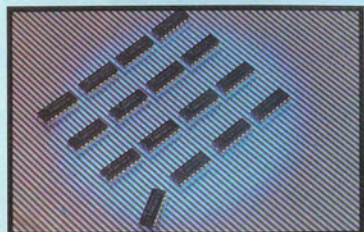
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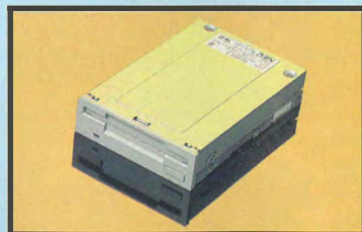
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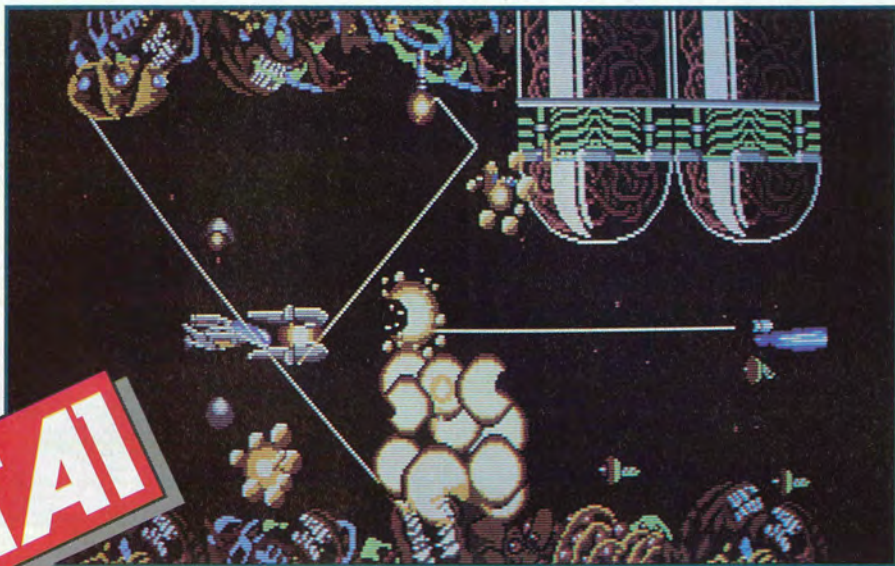
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*It was only the other day that someone mentioned the lack of horizontal-scrolling shoot'em-ups on the ST. This month, however, with the emergence of Menace, and now R-Type, that voice has been well and truly silenced. R-Type is a first-class arcade shoot'em-up full of adrenaline-pumping action. Mediagenic's Software Studio crew have done an A1 job in converting the game. My only niggle is that it's so damn difficult; still, as money's no object I'll have another go.*

**NC**

Armed with deadly reflective lasers, the R9 blasts its way through the second of the eight levels.



**STAI**

# R-TYPE

*For the umpteenth time in the history of computer games, mankind is under attack. So, strap yourself into the latest, super-duper spaceship and go and kick some alien ass!*

**MEDIAGENIC (£24.95)**

The Bydo race were one of the most technically advanced of their time. They were experts in the field of cybernetics, the bonding of machinery and flesh, and soon became one of the most admired races in the galaxy. Before long, the Bydons began to realise their strength and power, and left their planet to attack their weaker neighbours. Initial attacks were repelled by the combined forces of the planets, and the Bydons returned to their home to rethink their strategies. Realising they couldn't stand up to another attack, the combined governments ordered the remaining factories to build a sophisticated fighter-ship to enter Bydo and annihilate them before they had a chance to return. The ship, called simply R-9, was duly built and launched, with you as its pilot, into the atmosphere of Bydo - the fight had begun!

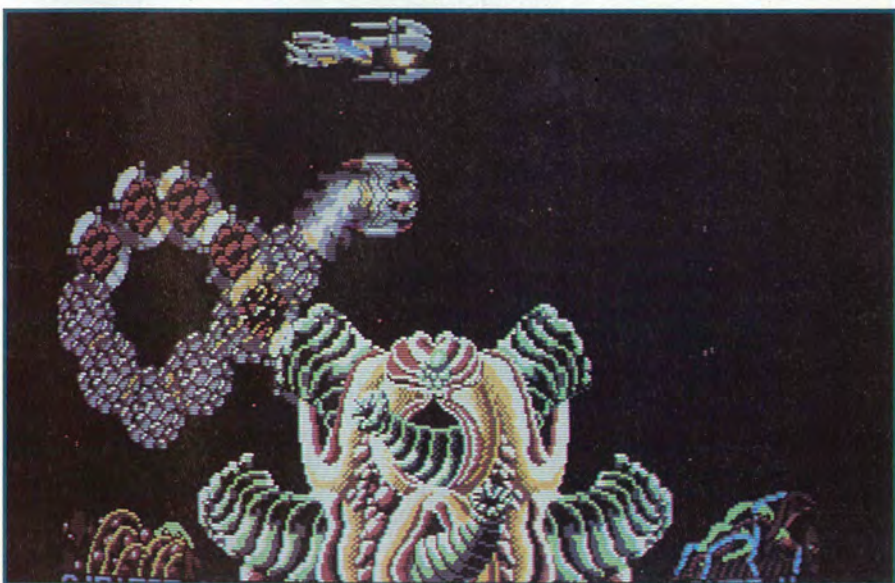
Bydo is split into eight, horizontally-scrolling levels, each inhabited by a strange variety of deadly, mutated creatures and Bydon spaceships. You appear from the left and must travel continually right, avoiding contact with these unpleasant beings. Your R-9 is initially armed with a front-mounted laser and a beam weapon. The former is activated, as in most of this type, by repeatedly hitting fire, but the beam weapon is charged by holding down fire, which increases its potency, and releasing the button to fire. As Bydo's inhabitants come in all sizes and strengths, continual switching between these is the key to progress. Skimming through the planet's defences, shooting wave after wave of aliens, will

*Now how's this for the definition of a top-notch arcade conversion:*

*Until recently I had never played the arcade version of R-Type, I had seen it on many occasions but never actually played it. After practising (with much success) on the ST version for approximately one day, I made a visit to a local arcade and after only one credit was able to get nearly half way through the arcade mean machine. The gameplay of the ST version is spot-on arcade perfect and the graphics aren't that far behind, either.*

*This conversion really does push back the frontiers of what is regarded as possible on the ST and will surely make a record-breaking STA rating. The only slight mar on this near perfect conversion is the sound (isn't it always!) which is far below the ear-shattering arcade offering.*

**HRG**





*I honestly thought that Irem's classic coin-op would be nigh-on impossible to convert, but Software Studios have emulated it right down to the attack wave formations. The graphics are colourful without being garish, and the sound follows this high standard with a choice between a decent tune or some noisy 'zap, bam!' effects. The only noticeable omission from the original is the lack of parallax backdrops, but this has the advantage of making the enemy's bullets easier to avoid. A very close, not to mention excellent, conversion, and one that no shoot'em-up or arcade fan should be without.*

**SM**

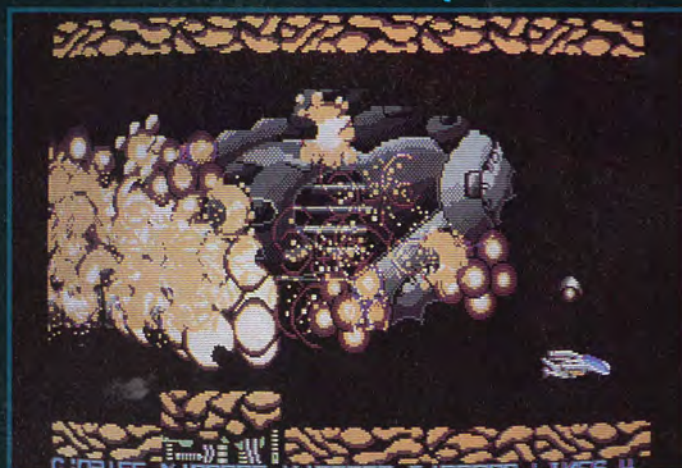
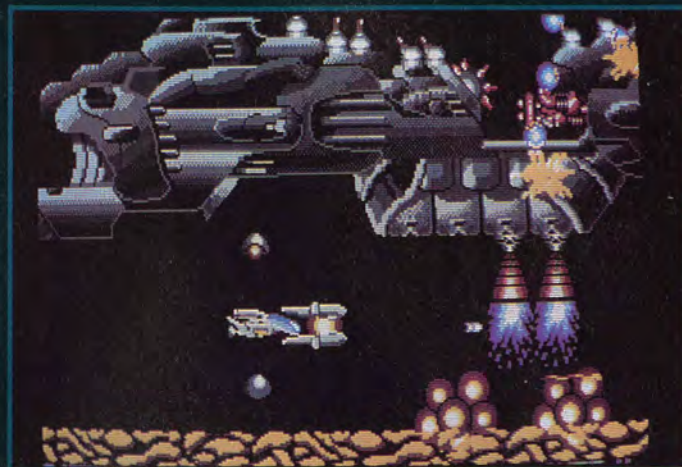
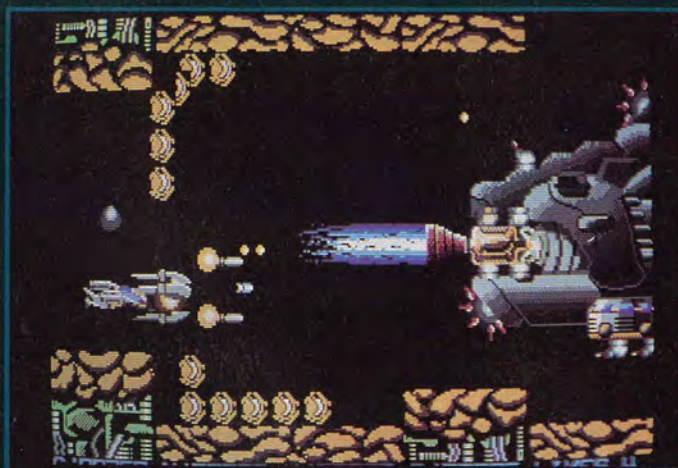
occasionally release a gem, and when these coloured crystals are absorbed, an enhancement is added to the R-9's complement. The items available are, for the most part, enhancements to its weapons: reflection lasers, which are pencil-thin and bounce around the screen killing all in their path; anti-aircraft lasers which are the most destructive - though not necessarily the most effective; ground lasers, which hug the contours of the planet's surface; homing missiles; a spinning satellite which circles your ship, destroying anything that gets too close; and, finally, extra



speed. As you continue collecting laser units, the shape of your craft will alter in relation to its power until you collect a set number, then the computer will designate which weapons will be most efficient. However, don't get complacent, as if so much as one bullet penetrates your defences, you will explode and lose everything.

Most useful weapon of all is the orb. This ball-like device also hides within a gem and when collected can be used as a shield and to improve fire-power. The orb is detachable and, by pressing space, you can move it into the action, firing as it goes. This is extremely useful for shooting the larger nasties and blasting your way through any barriers. Additionally, after you have cleared the obstructions, by manoeuvring around it, you can position the orb either at the front or at the back of your R-9 and continue onwards.

Blocking your escape towards the end of each level is a huge mothership. These massive beasts are really impressive and most of them stand a whole screen high! Each level has its own 'look' - whether it is organic or metallic - and the guardian/mothership is based on this. The end of level one is guarded by a huge foetus; level two, a large one-eyed being which spews a bullet-shooting snake out of its various orifices. Level three deserves a special mention - it consists totally of a mothership! This huge ship floats all over the screen, leaving very little space to manoeuvre, and parts of it must be blown off to make room. Level four's exit is guarded by a ship which splits into three pieces, and is only vulnerable when



Level 3 features what must be the largest sprite ever to appear in a computer game. As you approach this colossus (TOP) you must blast parts from its undercarriage, allowing you to manoeuvre past (MIDDLE). Having safely reached the other side, your orb must be positioned adjacent to the ship's vulnerable probe. Shoot this enough times and..... well, see for yourself (BOTTOM)

separated; level five houses a brain-covered ship; six, is a maze where you are attacked by huge robots; and level seven's end sees you having rubbish dropped on you. Eventually, we reach the end level - eight. As you scrape through to the final bad guy, you find yourself face-to-face with a huge head which is surrounded by a strange amorphous jelly. He is only vulnerable when this is open, so careful use of your orb is the key to his destruction. Kill him, and you have saved your planet. If not, there is always the continue option so you can have another go...

**STA**

STA  
Rating  
**90%**

**GRAPHICS: 93%**  
**SOUND: 70%**

**LASTING APPEAL: 93%**  
**ADDICTIVENESS: 91%**

**DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD**  
**1ST DAY SCORE: 82066**



# CHUCKIE EGG

PICK & CHOOSE (£19.95)

Back in the mists of time, when new games were eagerly awaited and then played to death for whole days at a time, one game was solely responsible for my addiction to computerised entertainment - Chuckie Egg. Has it withstood the test of time?

The game loads

quickly, storing the whole game in memory, which is much appreciated as it saves repetitive disk accessing. After the load up screen, the player is presented with the high score and options screen. Here one can re-define the playing keys, toggle the music on/off and commence the game.

The object of the game is to collect the dozen eggs present on each screen. By also collecting birdseed, you can temporarily halt the clock at the top of the screen. Movements are straightforward and effective using either joystick or keyboard. Doing their best to hinder your progress are ducklings that roam in set patterns and, on later levels, their mother flies around the screen, homing in on your frenetic little egg. Yes, somewhere along the line, the little

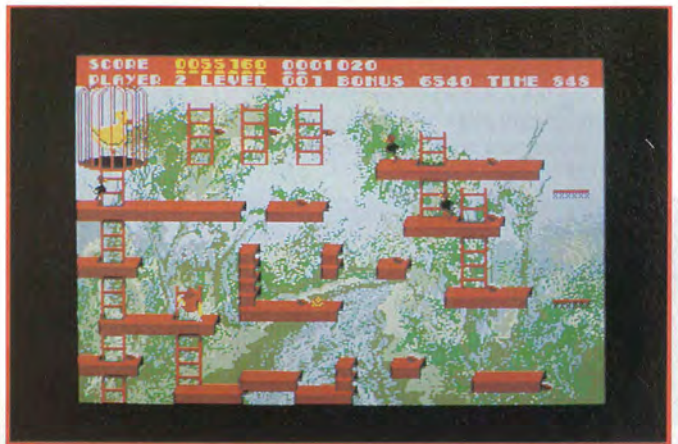
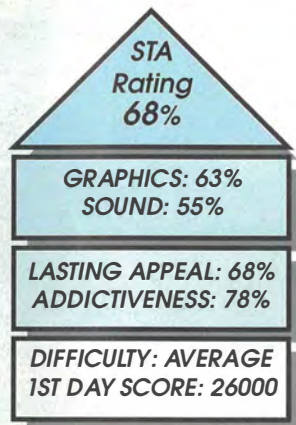
man with a boater has changed into a two-legged egg with a baseball cap that goes by the name of Hen House Harry. On colliding with either duckling or mother, Harry dissolves into a fried egg before beginning another life. You have five lives to start with and bonus lives can be gained later.

The levels consist of ladders, platforms and elevators in a false perspective set against some farmyard and countryside backdrops. The screens are set out in four groups of eight. Once these are completed, it's back to screen one for a faster game.

The action never actually ends, it just continues to get faster every thirty-two screens. The object of the game, then, is not to finish it, but simply to improve on your best score.

Chuckie Egg is one of those games that became a classic because of its playability. This version is no exception and, with the unfussy and tasteful graphics, it represents long-term frustration and enjoyment for any games player.

**STA**



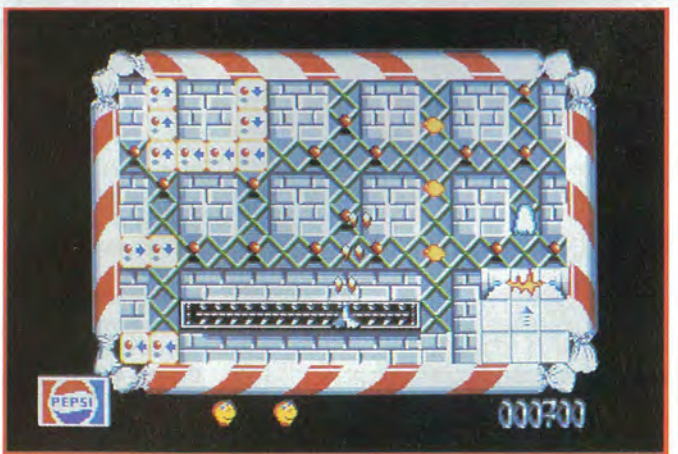
# MAD MIX

US GOLD (£19.95)

Once upon a time there was a little 'thing' called Mad, and he was part of a major licencing deal between a big software company and an even bigger fizzy drinks firm. Mad's dad had told him all about his grandfather who was known as the Great Mad Elder - master of the Pepsimen (I bet he was a

real gas!). A Pepsiman, apparently, is the same as a ghostbuster and must run around his maze-like house, catching any wandering spooks. And now, his dad (also a Pepsiman) told him, it was Mad's turn to prove himself. It had been all quiet on the ghost front recently, so Mad thought he would be OK, but, just before he was due to enter the maze, a whole host of ghosts began to appear, wrecking the town. All the villagers turned to Dad Mad, hoping he would get rid of the spectres for them. But, to everyone's surprise, he said, "I can't, I'm afraid of ghosts!". Shamed by his father, and idiotically brave, Mad took his life into his hands and entered the Pepsiman challenge...

It is here our game



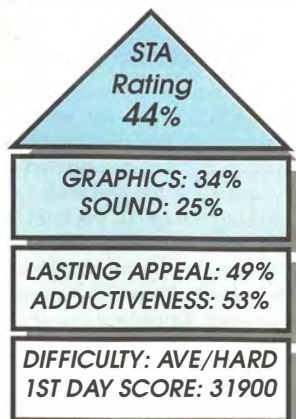
begins. Mad is pictured in the centre of a maze of dots, and must run around collecting them, avoiding ghosts and things as you go. Several extras lie around the course and these, when collected, will transform Mad into something the ghosts will run away from, i.e. a ghost-killing tank. As well as these various ghost repellents, there are a couple of bonus squares lying around the two-dimensional scenery. These are either arrow squares which make

Mad follow a predetermined route or trapdoors which allow you to evade ghosts.

When you have completed a level by collecting all of the dots within, you will be transcendently warped to another similar one, and so on. That's about it really. As games go it's decidedly average, but fun. One for the younger gamer perhaps?

P.S. Did you notice I wrote this review without mentioning Pacman once? (oops!)

**STA**





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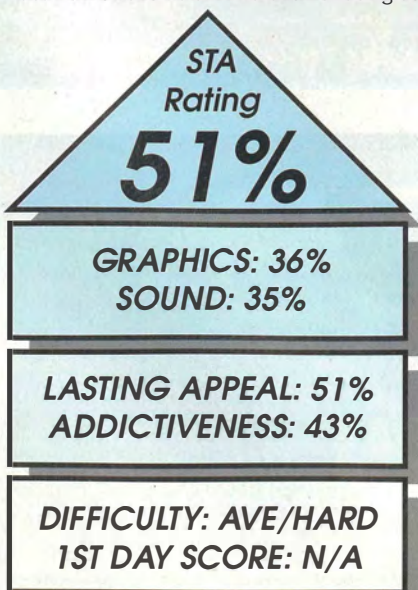


*Ice Hockey is widely respected as the fastest and most exciting team sport in the world. But the icy atmosphere does little to cool the tempers of the players and this excitement and speed often turns into frustration, anger and a bloody brawl.*

Superstar Ice Hockey was a long time in the making and so I was expecting nothing short of spectacular graphics and thorough simulation and strategy. Have Data Byte lived up to my expectations?

The game is more strategy than game-play, with emphasis on league statistics, team management, training, selection and trading. You can choose to compete in the regular league division, the championship, or the Sport Time cup series, and in the capacity of owner/manager, you must trade and recruit your team and manage the accounts. Therefore, if you just want to get on the ice and have a quick slap around with the puck, this may not be the game for you. Two players can participate in the game or you can pit your skills against the computer.

Having selected a team to manage, a selection and statistics screen allows you to access information on team and league history and, based on this information, you can advise extra team training, sell old players and recruit new ones from minor and junior leagues. Each player has a skill rating and, naturally, the higher his rating the more he costs. You can make these team amendments during the course of the season and you can view other team line-ups and modify your team to combat a particularly strong defence or offence. In a game situation, you take on a dual role as player and coach and, using the coaching screen, you must substitute tiring players and initiate defensive or offensive strategies. Each player is designated an offensive and defensive rating as



The thrill of the speed.....The sound of stick against puck.....



# ICE HOCKEY

DATA BYTE (£24.95)

*If you just want a quick knock-about with the puck, then this is not the game for you. This is a detailed and thorough management and strategy game which is similar in many ways to the popular Football Manager games. However, unlike Football Manager, which is 100 per cent strategy, Ice Hockey contains elements of hands-on game-play - although the general presentation of the game could have been improved considerably. In short, the many fans of Football Manager will enjoy the trading, team management and league-strategy ingredients contained in this game.*

**JS**

*Superstar Ice Hockey could be a very playable game if it were not for one glaring error - you don't control the man nearest the puck. Instead, you keep control of the same guy, and if he is scrolled off the screen, he can be extremely hard to bring back into the action. Even if that had been rectified, Ice Hockey would still be a sub-standard sports sim. The graphics are tiny, and limited to four colours: blue, red, white and black. The sound also follows this bad example, being restricted to various burps and whistles. A poor simulation of a very exciting sport.*

**SM**

well as an 'Effective Power' rating, and all these statistics must be considered when making modifications. If this all sounds tedious and confusing, you can elect the computer to manage your team, while you concentrate on the game-play.

Unlike most multiple-player sport simulations which employ the 'nearest man on' technique, you only control the goalie and centre in this game, while the rest of the team react according to your coaching strategies and game-play. When the puck comes into your centre's possession, you can control his movement with the joystick and wind up for a shot by

pressing the firebutton. A quick tap of the firebutton enables you to pass to other players, or you can fake a shot by holding down the firebutton and releasing it before the player hits the puck. Tackling, or checking as it is known in the ice-hockey fraternity, means that you must shadow your opponent and press the firebutton to shove the player away from the puck. When the opposing team moves near your goal, you must turn to the team control centre and transfer control to the keeper. Again, the joystick moves the keeper and pressing the firebutton and wrenching the joystick forwards and backwards achieves a high and low save.

Success in this game depends on effective team management, substitution and line-up modifications. But the task of manager and coach does not end with the final whistle. At the end of the game, the results are entered in the league table and, based on these statistics, you must buy and sell players, study the league results and initiate amendments.

**STA**



Ere! what's Gregory doing in the game!!!!







In a novel entrant to the fighting genre, Melbourne House don their streetwise clothes and smash all opposition out of the way.

# DOUBLE DRAGON

MELBOURNE HOUSE (£19.95)

*There seems to be an influx of arcade conversions just lately. Thankfully, Double Dragon is one of the better ones. The game's graphics and sound aren't quite arcade quality and the difficulty level is much easier than that of the original. Double Dragon, however, still manages to retain its addictive appeal. I can only fault the game on its lastability; having played (and finished) the game for some time, I am now a little bored with it.*

NC

Converted from a coin-op, Double Dragon has the player attempting to free his kidnapped girlfriend from the clutches of Mr. Big. One or two players can play, fighting together. Each fighter has three lives, and the loss of these is dictated by a health bar becoming exhausted. A section of this bar is lost every time your player is knocked to the ground, and, when a life is lost, the player reappears, temporarily invincible. Likewise, the opposition need several hits to fell

them, and they will only stay down when KO'd several times. A lot of these henchmen carry weapons - baseball bats, whips and the like - and these can be collected when you stun a thug. All of the sections are played against a strict time-limit, and if you fail to reach the end within this limit, you will instantly forfeit a life. When you lose all of your lives, there is a credit system which allows you to restart from where you died, up to five times. **STA**

STA  
Rating

73%

GRAPHICS: 58%  
SOUND: 55%

LASTING APPEAL: 70%  
ADDICTIVENESS: 78%

DIFFICULTY: EASY  
1ST DAY SCORE: 97520

*Although graphically and sonically a pale imitation of its arcade parent, Double Dragon maintains all of the original's addictivity. Fighting games, apart from IK+, have all been one-on-one combat, but DD goes one better, and pits you against up to six opponents. The moves available are limited but effective, and the idea of picking up handy weapons is brilliant. Ignore the weak aesthetic front, and you have one of the most playable conversions in a long while.*

SM



Double Dragon has all the levels and features of its arcade parent, but the conversion is flawed somewhat by being a bit too easy.





Level 1:

We begin our fight in a backstreet behind a cemetery. Mr. Big's henchmen apparently have no respect for the dead, and appear from the shadows almost as soon as you move. To get you warmed up, they appear one at a time, but, as you get to the end of the level, you will have to grow accustomed to taking on several at once. You shouldn't have too much trouble on this level, the only problem being the whip-cracking ladies who appear from lifts. Towards the end of the level, a huge giant smashes through the wall, and it requires many hits to kill. Pass him, and you make it onto the climax of level one. Several knife and baseball bat-wielding thugs appear, and after despatching them, another giant will appear.



Level 2:

You have now gained entrance to a warehouse and are immediately attacked by two guys, one of whom throws a lighted stick of dynamite. After a minor skirmish with these two, you must leap your way up some crates. On the top of this wooden mountain awaits a bloke with a bat - defeat him, and prepare yourself for the onslaught that arrives in a lift. Once you have struggled past the five or six lift-dwellers, there is only an encounter with a 'Green Hornet' fan to survive. He arrives on a conveyor belt, and, with a modicum of skill, can be punched off the platform. With this level, your greatest enemy is the ever-shrinking time-limit.



Level 3:

We now enter a dark wood, and your troubles really begin. The forest path is full of gaping holes, all of which kill you or an enemy if fallen into; past these, lies a collapsed bridge. Either side of the bridge awaits one of the big oriental blokes, but, like you, they can't swim and can be kicked into the water. Rushing through the forest as quickly as possible, we pass a huge rock face. Suddenly, two oriental giants appear, and must be despatched before we can enter level four.



Level 4:

Entering Mr. Big's base, we jump over the edge of a small cliff, and land on a metal platform. Making our way to a rock-face, we climb its steep incline and take out the two guys lurking on top. The summit is the end of this level, and access to level four is gained after killing the green Yamo.

#### Level 5:(LEFT)

We now enter the hardest section of all - Mr. Big's lair. As we walk along a seemingly empty corridor, huge slabs of rock jut out, killing you on contact. Successfully pass these, and you must avoid the jabbing spears of huge, wolvine statues. These spears, although hard to pass, can also be used to kill any of Big's cronies. Having scraped past the initial obstacles, we then enter into combat with two more oriental ogres. But once past them, we enter the hardest section - Mr. Big's throne room. No sooner do you poke your head around the door and see your girlfriend, you are attacked by half a dozen weapon-swinging brutes. All of these, and the 'Green Hornet' clones that follow, must be killed before Big himself makes his entrance. Entering through a huge pair of gates, the machine-gun-toting colossus starts firing at you. You must get right up close and KO him many times, before he actually dies. Having done this, your girlfriend frees herself and... well, that would be telling!





'You are Artura, son of Pendragon the Saxon', says the scenario with some conviction, and your task, if you're not doing anything for the next ten minutes, is to stem the tide of Norse invaders and unite the kingdom of Albion - shouldn't take too long! But before embarking on this mission, you must find the sacred treasures of Albion, and only Merdyn, the wise one, knows the location of the treasure - and being wise, he skipped the country as soon as those long-boats appeared on the horizon. However, Merdyn's not-so-

# ARTURA

GREMLIN (£19.95)

clever apprentice, Nimue, also knows where to find the treasure. But she has been kidnapped by your evil half-sister Morgause - well you know what they say: you can choose your friends, but you're stuck with your family.

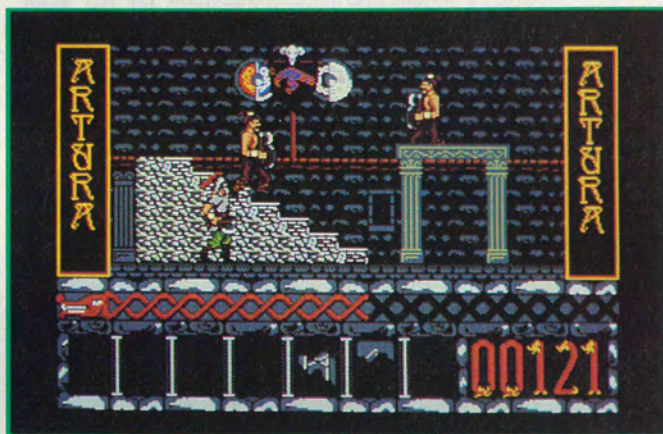
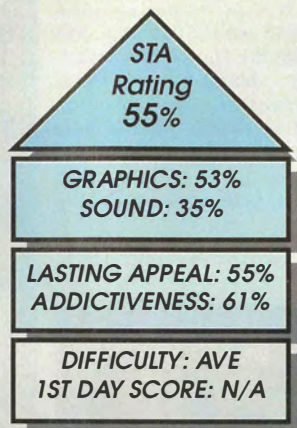
The game begins inside Morgause's stronghold where you must fight your way through Sis's prolific army of morons and minions in search of Nimue. The screen scrolls horizontally as you direct Artura through Morgause's place. The joystick has pleasing control over our hero and a press of the firebutton makes him throw hefty-looking battle-axes at anyone unfortunate enough to stand in the way. The corridors of the castle are filled with rats and birds which chip away at our hero's energy, but the seemingly endless supply of battle-

axes is a pretty effective deterrent. Guess what? That mischievous relation of yours has also stolen the Rune Stones, which must be found before you can return home. The majority of the game play amounts to searching through the castle for the Rune Stones and various other articles, keeping Sis's guards and various vermin at bay with a constant flow of battle-

axes and looking for Nimue. Only then can you join the kingdoms and defeat the vikings.

Artura is fairly representative of the majority of quest adventures which were popular on the Commodore 64 a few years ago. The game has adequate graphics and sound, but it falls far short of more recent quests, such as the brilliant Skrull.

**STA**



If you yearn for the simple things in life, such as the traditional, archetypical arcade shoot'em-up, then why on Earth have you spent all this money on a sixteen-bit machine? However, a new budget software company, called Eclipse, intends to cater for incurable shoot'em-up fans. They have launched a series of typical bargain software candidates and the first game under the microscope is the imaginatively titled Atax, which even has the obligatory, ludicrous scenario to set your pulse ambling. In the darkest years of the Government's oppressive reign, one man

# ATAX

ECLIPSE (£14.95)

dares to oppose the system - I'll bet you can guess who that is? Yes, you are the rebellion leader, and armed with your trusty joystick and a minuscule assault craft, you must take on the might of the evil government. But first you must endure six levels of irritating little alien nasties before the ultimate confrontation with Mrs Thatcherplasm.

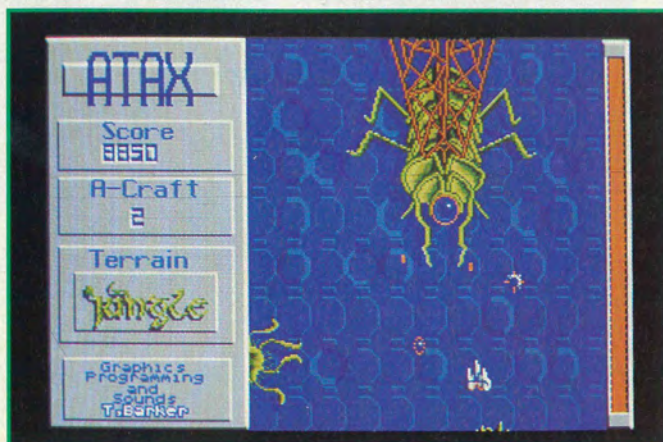
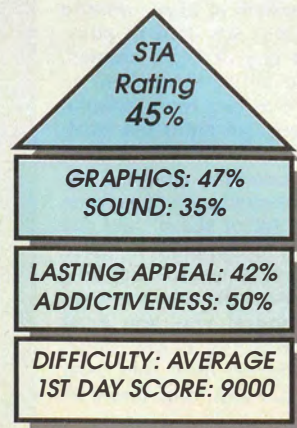
Each level has a different theme which determines the environment that you will have to fly through, and contact with the terrain and any obstacles results in the loss of a life. Slowly and relentlessly, the screen begins its aimless journey over the first terrain, which is simply called Ice. If you squint, you can just make out your tiny craft at the base of the screen, as various alien blobs begin to gather. As usual, rapid firebutton-pressing eliminates the scoundrels, although contact

with their little alien skins results in the loss of a life. Extra fire-power can be gained by absorbing weaponry capsules along the way - 'slurp yum yum, I love energy capsules!' This being the Ice level, you must guide your craft between two ice mountains, and at the end of the level, shadowed by zealous guardian blobs, you must

blast your way through a little gate in order to reach the next level. A 'Jungle' terrain leads on to an architectural screen, then a circuit level, then curves and, finally, an almighty attack of the blobs - what more could you want?

Atax sounds more like a cure for holiday tum than an arcade game! My idea of budget software are games which are priced at £1.99. For me, £14.95 would be a more long-term investment, and I am not certain whether Atax is worth the risk!

**STA**





**I've had my say, now for your views.**

World of Soccer "Ranks with "Elite" as a milestone in computer game design." F. Stokes, Brighton.

"World of Soccer is my 6th ST soccer game. It's worth the other 5 put together." Brian Yates, Bolton.

"It's simply brilliant. I don't know much about American Football but send me Headcoach anyway." G.S. Harris, Leeds.

Head Coach V3 "It's arrived two days ago. We've lost 24 hours of production already." John Watts, Watts Engineering, Coventry

"This is the American Football game I've been waiting for. Congratulations, it's terrific." Harry Lyons, Barnet.

"Send me World of Soccer. If it's half as good as Headcoach it's worth twice the money." Dave Formby, Solihull.

Both "One game of this standard was good, but two is brilliant. Let the others into your secret." Dave Formby, Solihull.

# WORLD OF SOCCER

International management is the ultimate challenge in soccer. To build a squad of players to defeat the ball playing skills of Brazil, the fluid play of Holland, the organisation of West Germany, the counter-attacking of Italy, and the many varied styles of many others, demands an insight into the game rare amongst managers let alone fans. Do you exploit a team's weaknesses, or play to your own strengths? Do you attack down the flank with wingers, or pierce the centre with powerful midfield running? Do you play a flat back four, or use a sweeper or libero?

In "World of Soccer", players are not just attackers/defenders/midfield but goal poachers, play makers, ball winners, wingers, left, right and centre backs, sweepers (19 types of player in all). The results of matches are determined by simulated soccer matches controlled by the skills of the opposing players. Strategy is determined by the skills you build into your squad, and tactics by the particular skills you use to defeat particular teams. Substitutions and tactical moves can be made during the match to change or reinforce your plans.

For four years, through the Qualifying and Final stages of the European Championship and the World Cup, you will guide the European team of your choice. You can prepare for the competitions with friendly matches of your choosing, developing your strategy to match the in-form players at your disposal. Success is there for the taking, but it will need earning.

Choose from 33 European squads. The 4 UK home countries have 16 man squads which can be increased to 36 with players of your own. A customisation program will allow squads for any of the 33 countries to be created.

# HEAD COACH v3

On the field 220lb blocks of concrete-on-legs collide, while a small man in a suit paces the touchline stroking his chin. He's the Head Coach. He has more tactical skill in his little finger than the MCC can muster in the entire club. Third down and 9, he signals to his quarterback. The quarterback takes the snap back into the pocket dummies to his star running back, wheels to the right skirting two defenders, motions to throw to his rightside wide receiver and then swings his pass back over the pack to his open Tight End. He catches and makes another five yards before being grounded. An eleven yard gain and another first down, thanks to 2 hours of rehearsal the previous Thursday afternoon. The crowd cheer the quarterback but the head coach knows that his Right Guard really deserves the credit. This is American Football, Chess with mobile human pieces.

It's your first season as a Head Coach in the NFL and you face two pre-season games. You must give as many of your 45 players a run out to see how they've come through the close season. Through these matches and the time spent at training camp you must devise your game plan to face your first NFL game. Over the next 16 games you will meet the likes of the Chicago Bears, the Washington Redskins, the Dallas Cowboys, the LA Raiders (hiss). Each game will need a new plan to exploit the weaknesses and nullify the strengths of such teams, and in the game you will probe their defense and try to stifle their offense. Success over these 16 matches will put you into the playoffs and in sight of the Superbowl. Failure will give you the best of the college draft, which will allow you to make up for the deficiencies you must by now have discovered in your side. Providing of course that the club keeps you on . . .

Let us be straight, Head coach v3 is NOT an arcade game. It's a sophisticated game based on American Football. For those who already understand something about the game, it's a chance to find out just how much they really know. For those to whom the game appeals but is something of a mystery, then Head Coach v3 is the ideal way to find out what the game is all about. In the match itself, you have a choice of 27 offensive plays and 21 defensive plays, and so you can bias your plays to suit the skills of your squad and negate those of the opposition. The training camp will give you an insight into the current performance of your players, even checking their speed in 40 yard sprints. There's only one thing that can prevent your team from eventually achieving a Superbowl place; YOU! But we warn you, this game is ADDICTIVE.

"World of Soccer" and "Head Coach v3" are only available from QUALSOFT at £17.50 and £19.95 respectively. Both games are immediately available and will be sent by return post. ACCESS orders can be taken over the phone.

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With no less than three car-racing simulations released this month, the race for pole position is hotly contested. So have Loriciels produced a racing certainty in 944 Turbo Cup?

# TURBO CUP

LORICIELS (£19.99)

I'm sure that you will be pleased to know that the Rene Metge fan club is thriving at Loriciels. Rene who? In an accompanying leaflet, Loriciels give a rather condescending description of Monsieur 'M', which is entitled, 'All you need to know about Rene Metge'. They also list his string of victories in a career which spans nearly twenty-five years. Like many of their contemporaries in the computer industry, Loriciels participate in car racing and sponsor their own team in the Andros Turbo cup. This hybrid formula has been contested at a high level by such eminent drivers as Laffite, Bartoise and, of course, Monsieur Metge. The Andros cup is unique because all the cars that compete are standard unspirated Porsche 944 turbos. Naturally, the professional drivers have dominated the event, but that hasn't dampened the spirits of the amateurs and it is their enthusiasm for the sport that Loriciels wanted to capture in this game.

You have a choice of four tracks the Magn Course, Paul Ricard, Dijon Prenois and Nogaro. The event is held at the weekend with the whole of Saturday used for practice and you can test out the

track and get used to the handling of the car before racing. All the Porsche 944 turbos are standard 250 bhp, but there are modifications to the suspension and roll bars. After choosing manual or automatic transmission for your Porsche, the car is positioned on the grid for the start of the practice.

Turbo Cup uses sampled sound of a Porsche 944 engine, which very quickly proves that good sound effects enhance the realism and enjoyment of a game considerably. You race from behind the car and slightly above the track, which gives you a great view down the track. As the car revs up on the grid, the light changes to green and pushing forward on the joystick makes it accelerate away from the line. If you have selected automatic gearbox, the computer automatically changes gear as you accelerate and decelerate. However, while automatic transmission enables you to concentrate on keeping the car on the road and achieving a fast lap time, it detracts from an important part of road racing, effective gear change. Your performance in practice determines your starting position for the main race.

*Turbo Cup is my sort of car game: it's not over-complex, and it's a game you can just pick up, play and enjoy. Nothing about it is particularly impressive, with graphics and sound being average and the car behaving somewhat erratically, but still the game draws you back for more.*

*There have been three car games reviewed this month. If you want realistic control and conditions, take a look at Mandarin's Lombard Rally; but if instant, albeit short-term, playability is your scene then you could do a lot worse than this. A good, if not outstanding game, and one that is worthy of careful consideration*

**SM.**

Considering the number of racing simulations which have been released this month, Loriciels had to come up with something special. The result is a game which is more entertainment than realistic simulation. The sound effects are great, the presentation of the race is thoughtful and effective and the joystick steering and transmission controls are pleasing. But Loriciels' main objective was to show the enthusiasm that they and the other competitors have for the Andros Cup and this would have been better demonstrated if the game had simultaneous, two-player participation.

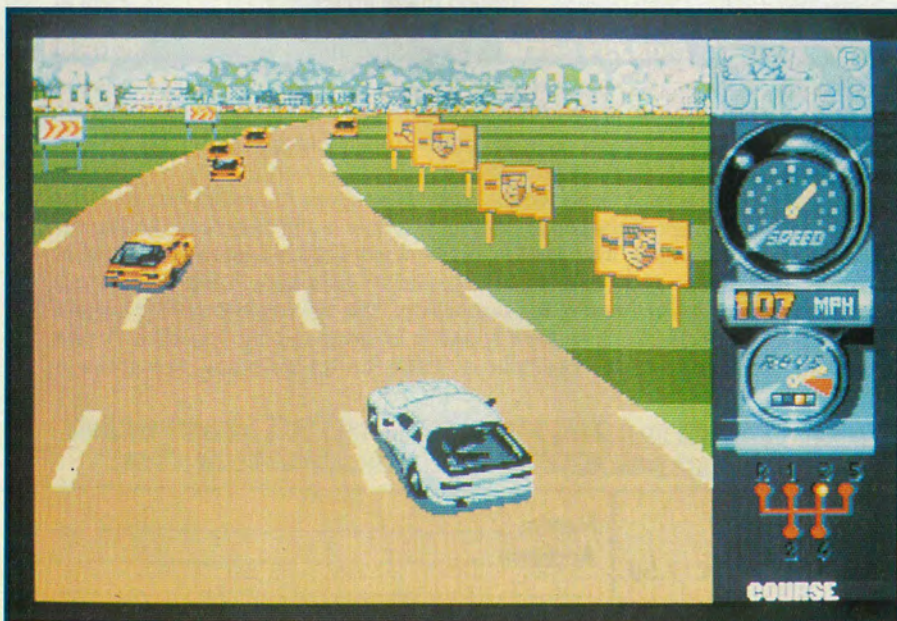
**JS**

The cars are lined up for the start of the race and all of the computer-controlled Porches are identifiable by their garish yellow paintwork. In reality, the road holding of the 944 has few equals, but in this game it often handles like a series 2 Capri on a patch of black ice. Collisions with the other cars and roadside objects are unavoidable and result in a rather dramatic crash sequence. Contenders for



Monsieur Metge's Laurels should try the more rigorous challenge found in the professional mode before claiming to have taken the Great One's crown.

**STA**



Turbo Cup - not overly brilliant, but plays very well!

STA  
Rating

**66%**

GRAPHICS: 56%  
SOUND: 55%

LASTING APPEAL: 60%  
ADDICTIVENESS: 76%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE  
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A



This is by far the best Star Wars licence game of the three released for the ST. Each individual level offers completely different gameplay which, to my knowledge, is quite unique. This variety in the gameplay is complemented by incredible speech synthesis, beautifully responsive controls and a slick, professional presentation with great attention to detail. From the race on speeder bikes to the destruction of the Deathstar, this game epitomizes great arcade entertainment.

**JS**

After losing heavily to the rebels in the first two films and games of the 'Star Wars' trilogy, the dark empire begins building a second, deadlier Deathstar. On locating this, the rebels decide they must destroy it before it is fully operational. Time is against them, so they must act fast...

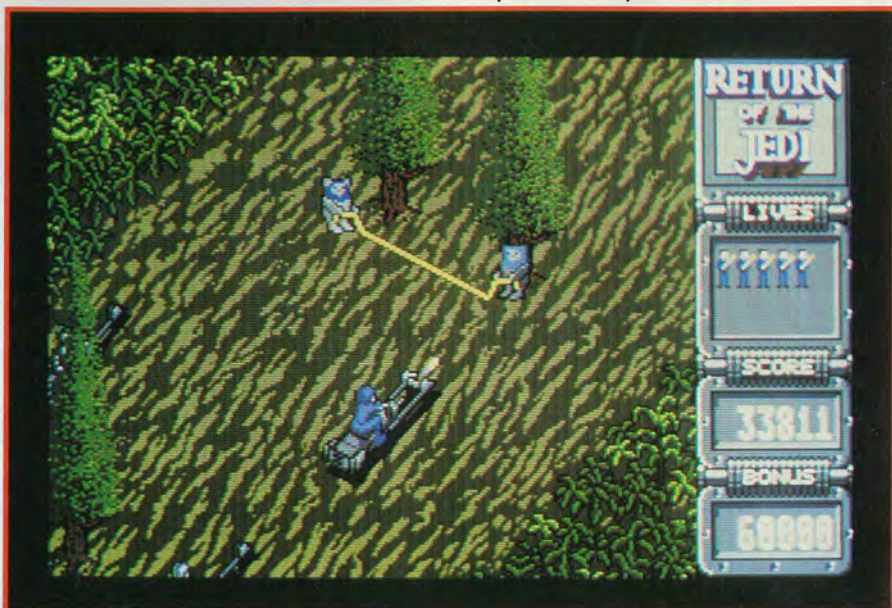
You begin on the forest-planet Endo, and controlling the speederbike-riding Princess Leia, you must guide her through the maze of trees, avoiding the speeder-riding Imperial Stormtroopers. Each level's action is shown scrolling diagonally, and Leia's eventual aim is to reach the safety of the Ewok tree-village. Your bike skims at a set pace - fast - so an eye must be kept out for any oncoming trees or Stormtroopers. But if a Stormtrooper gets a little too close for comfort, a burst from your front-mounted laser will kill him instantly. Additionally, the troopers can be killed by ramming them into trees, or if they run into the various trip-wires and traps the Ewoks have laid. When you reach the end of the forest a typical Ewok greeting tune will be played, and, after you have received a bonus, a message sent to Han Solo who is waiting for the all-clear so he can attack the Deathstar.

The action now switches to Han in his trusty Millennium Falcon, and you must negotiate the intricacies of the Deathstar's maze-like interior. TIE fighters dog your every move, and care must be taken to shoot these and avoid the metal, space-ship-mangling walls. At the centre of the

Abandoning the Vector graphics of the first two chapters in the 'Star Wars' trilogy, Domark release the final instalment. Will they have to use the force to make us like it?

# RETURN OF THE JEDI

DOMARK (£19.95)



Leaving the Vectors behind, Domark offer more variety and action in the final episode of the Star Wars trilogy.

Well, Domark round off the 'Star Wars' trilogy, and they do it in fairly good style. The graphics, although abandoning the brilliant vectors of the first two, are quite nice, as is the diagonal scrolling. But the game feels somewhat disjointed, as you blow up the Deathstar, turn off the force-field so that you can go and destroy it all over again! Like the first two, the game is fairly easy; but the action is more varied so you won't get so bored so quickly. A nice game which isn't quite up to the standard of the first two, but good fun all the same.

**SM**

**STA Rating**  
**65%**

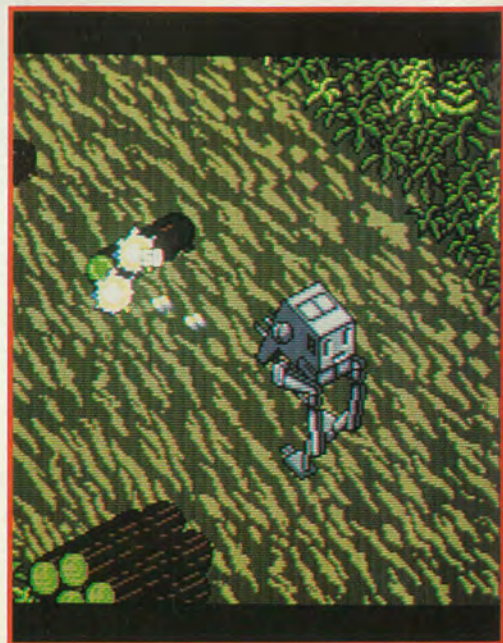
**GRAPHICS: 67%**  
**SOUND: 68%**

**LASTING APPEAL: 62%**  
**ADDICTIVENESS: 68%**

**DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE**  
**1ST DAY SCORE: 57429**

Deathstar lies your target - the exhaust port - and you must shoot this, turn back, and escape before the whole thing blows up. Completing the exercise sees the partially-completed Deathstar explode, and the action returns to Endo. After completing a second, harder, speederbike course, the player takes control of Chewbacca the Wookiee as he attempts to destroy a force-field generator in his stolen AT-ST walker. Rolling logs, rock-slides and Imperial-inhabited walkers try to knock over or destroy the AT-ST, but can be shot with the walker's laser. Get so far into this level, and the action switches to that of Lando Calrissian and two rebel X-wings as they attempt to strafe an Imperial mothership. The action then continually swaps until Chewie reaches the generator and Lando has finished his raid.

**STA**





*In the first stage of their British invasion, UBI Soft launch an odd amalgamation of the Pacman/Gauntlet themes.*

One day, the cute, bouncing Puffy and his also bouncy girlfriend, Puffyn, were out for a bounce. All of a sudden, the ground opened up beneath them, and they rolled and rolled until they landed with a bump in a strange-looking room. Puffy opened his eyes and looked around - Puffyn had gone, but had left a note saying she had gone exploring. Puffy, realising she could be in danger, gathered his wits and began his search.

As Puffy explored, he found he was in a maze of some sort. He searched for a long time, finding nothing, until, all of a sudden, the most horrid monster he had ever seen lurched around the corner. The dreadful thing leaped at Puffy, knocking him backwards. But gathering his strength, Puffy spat one of his special bullets at the monster and, after a few hits, it evaporated. Puffy noticed that when the creature touched him, he had felt strangely hungry and, whats more, if he didn't get some food soon... well, he didn't know what he'd do.

Continuing with his brave adventure, Puffy found something on the floor. It looked like a little bronze ball, but on picking it up, Puffy felt an odd disorientating feeling. Before he knew it, he was in another maze. 'Aha!', exclaimed our rubber hero, 'if I collect every little ball I find, perhaps I'll eventually escape!'. So with this jolly thought, off he went again. Before too long, he found another ball, but on collecting it, nothing happened. Upset, he meandered on, fighting off the advances of the odd eyeball and ghost, and getting rapidly hungrier. To his amazement, as he rounded the corner, he found some meat. Rushing to eat it, he found himself feeling a lot better, and continued onwards. After a while, Puffy found a chamber full of monsters. And these nasties were hovering around something - a ball! Spitting for all

Searching the mazes for Puffyn, Puffy faces some scary dragons.



# PUFFY'S SAGA

UBI SOFT (£19.95)

*Puffy's Saga is a strange cross-breed between Pacman and Gauntlet, but a fairly playable one at that. The first thing that struck me was the sound: although effectwise it is sparse, several clear samples are used to warn of Puffy's impending doom as he spits his way through the devious levels. Graphically, it is a little on the small side, but Puffy is fine, and there are a few nice nasties and collectable items - although, at times, the screens tend to look a little empty. A nice game, but not one I can see myself going back to that often.*

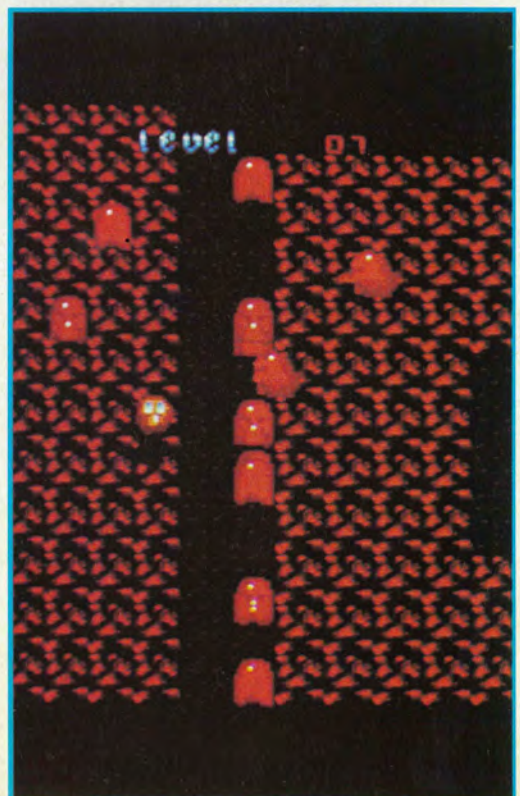
**SM**

he was worth, Puffy despatched the foul beasts and, as he got the ball, felt the strange sensation of moving again...

It was getting late now, and it was past Puffy's bedtime. He did not like this strange world, and dearly wanted to go home. He had fought many monsters and gained lots of extra powers, such as speed, faster spitting rate, and, funniest of all, invisibility. However, he had also been made hungrier by tiles that stunned him, walking into invisible walls, and, even worse, electric fences. All of a sudden, there she was - Puffyn - and so was the exit! Only one thing could stop Puffy now, and that was the gross, fire-breathing

dragons. Undaunted, Puffy bounced for all he was worth, avoiding the flames breathed at him. Then, grabbing Puffyn, they escaped into the dark evening and, holding hands, went home to tell all their chums of their adventures.

**STA**



STA  
Rating

**64%**

GRAPHICS: 55%  
SOUND: 63%

LASTING APPEAL: 61%  
ADDICTIVENESS: 67%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE  
1ST DAY SCORE: 1749

*'Will you run out of Puffy?' Take two cute and endearing little characters called Puffy and Puffyn, give them the most incredible and amusing voice synthesis and you have a game which will sell on its cosmetics alone. But place them in dungeons which contain hazards, pitfalls and monsters that rival Gauntlet II, and you have a game which is well worth checking out. UBI Soft are finally releasing their long-awaited games and if the quality of Puffy's Saga is anything to go by, we have a lot to look forward to from Chateau UBI.*

**JS**

--- STA 70 STA ---



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Leaving their Icons behind, Psygnosis enter the shoot'em-up battleground. Does it rise above the rest of the space flotsam?

# MENACE

PSYCLAPSE (£19.95)

*Although not as colourful as its Amiga counterpart, Menace is quite simply one of the best shoot'em-ups to appear on the ST. Psygnosis/Psyclipse have taken the best ideas from various arcade horizontal scrollers and come up with a real monster of a game. The graphics are extremely well done, with some of the most imaginative aliens for a long time; but the sound is a little weak, with a tinny tune accompanying play - not that you notice it in the heat of the action. I was beginning to yearn for a really good shoot'em-up, but Psyclipse has adequately filled that gap. A classic game, and one that proves Psygnosis can do something else apart from tedious icon-driven games.*

SM

Six of the galaxy's most wanted criminals, having been exiled from their respective planets, have built a vast, deadly planet - Draconia. To protect their creation, they have covered the planet, and the other five in its constellation, with the most vicious creatures they could find. Because so many died as their planets were ravaged by the six, a revenge craft is despatched to cleanse the five planets and eventually destroy Draconia itself. Rumours are rife of the beings that inhabit these worlds: snake-like beings which wrap around your ship before crushing it; plants that spew heat-seeking, shield-burning spores; and massive skeletal guardians. It is with these stories ringing in your ears that you, a seasoned space-fighter, embark on your journey to destroy the hateful world.

After you have chosen the difficulty of mission on the title page, you

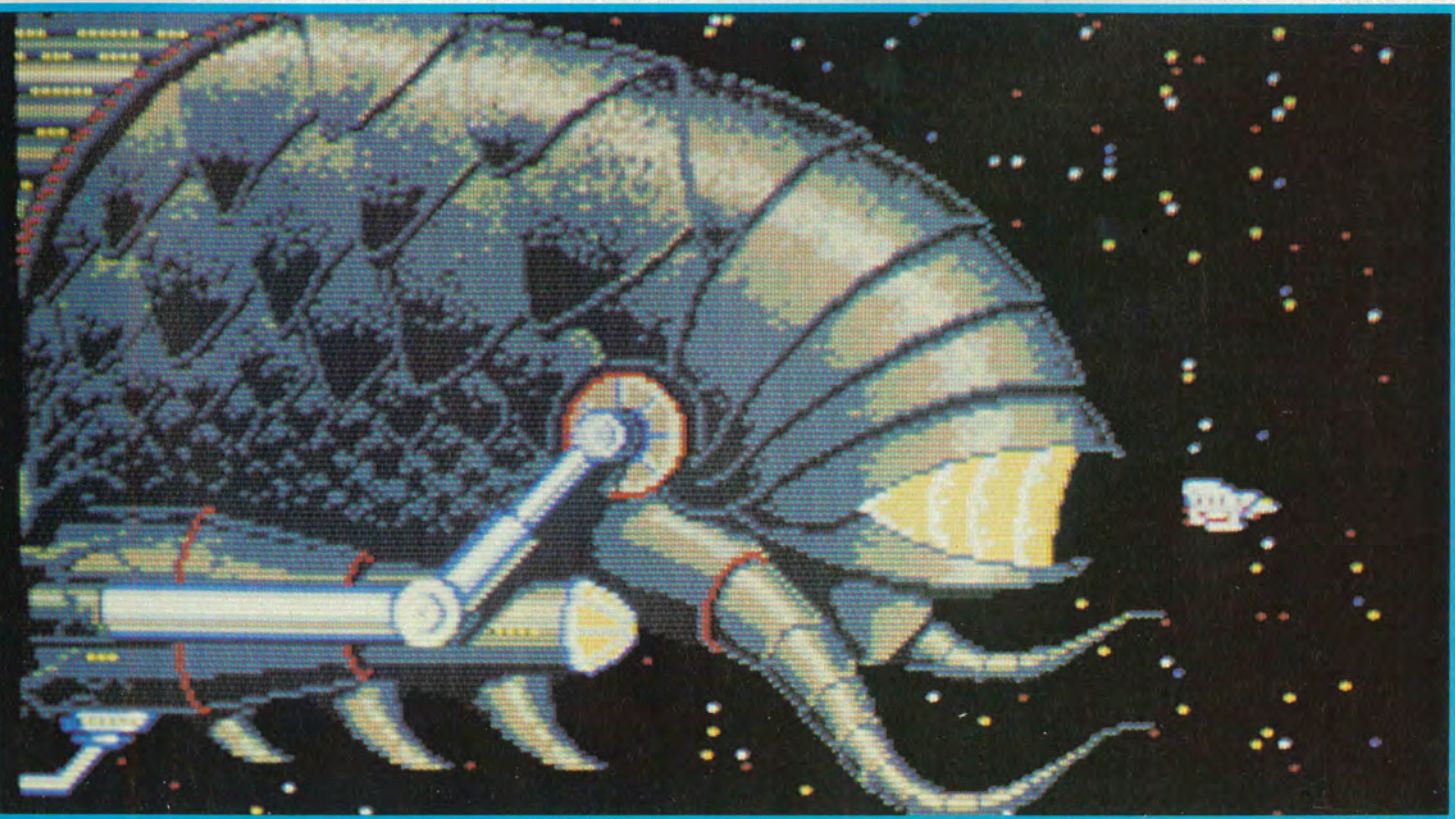
*Having played Menace solidly for about an hour, my first thoughts were concerning my wrist and fingers: the constant tapping on the firebutton certainly took its toll on me. Menace is yet another horizontally-scrolling shoot'em-up from the R-Type school of fashion. The game's pretty backdrops and nice sound complement it well, although they soon become forgotten amidst the frantic action. On the whole, Menace is nothing new, but, in releasing it, Psyclipse have filled a large gap in the myriad of shoot'em-ups currently available.*

NC

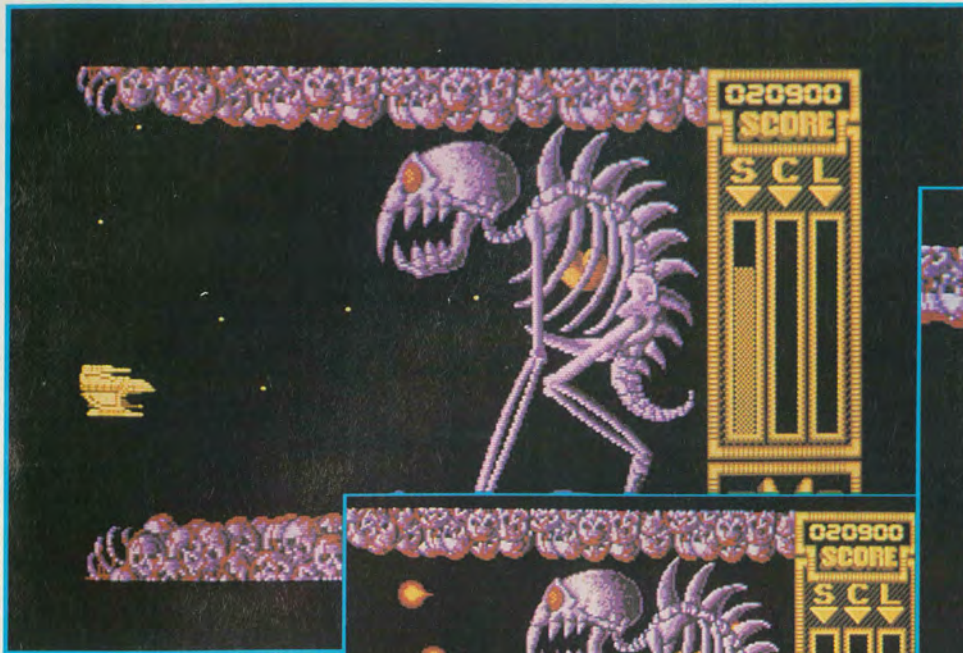
are dropped just out of the planet's defence system's range by your giant mothership. This impressive beast,

looking like a huge, metallic woodlouse, burns down onto the screen, and your craft speeds from its 'mouth'. You enter your mission, scrolling from left to right, with the aliens appearing in formation from the right. You are initially armed with a standard, low-power laser and it is with this that you shoot the waves in order to receive an enhancement icon. These icons are granted when an attack wave is totally wiped out and the size of the weapon granted is dictated by the number of times the icon is shot, and when collected, some raspy speech synthesis tells you what has been added. These weapons, though essential, are limited in supply, so more icons must be shot to replace them.

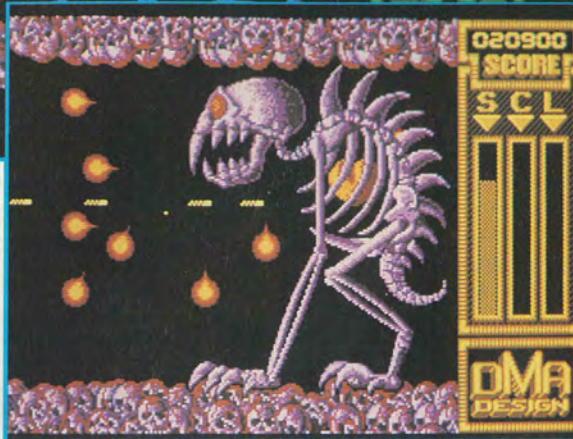
After you have blazed your







Approaching the end of the third level, carnage rift, we catch a sight of an apparently dead creature (LEFT). Horrifically its heart begins to glow, and it unleashes a volly of fireballs (BELOW LEFT) Recovering, we let rip and the beast lives no more (BELOW).



way through most of a planet's population, you will come up against the, what now seems to be obligatory, end-of-level guardian. These beasts take the form of amoeba-like beings, huge cannons and laser-spitting plants, and when one of them is destroyed, Draconia will be just that little bit more vulnerable. When you encounter them, they seem to be already dead, but a glowing heart starts to pulsate, and they begin to spew huge volleys of projectiles at you. The glowing disk-like hearts are these creatures' only weak points, and it is at these you should aim your fire. Every time this

*Yeah, this is what we want! Okay, so there are enough horizontal-scrolling blast'em-ups to sink a Mothership, but there is still room in the cargo bays for quality like Menace. There is nothing more satisfying than blasting chunks out of big, ugly aliens, and this game is wall-to-wall alien fodder. At times the screen is sprite-filled, with adversaries as diverse as shoals of jelly fish and giant squid to screen-size battlecruisers and an indescribable amorphous green blob. This game is non-stop action all the way - miss it at your peril!*

**JS**

disk is hit the creature will glow, indicating it is getting steadily weaker, and finally it will disintegrate in a number of extremely satisfying explosions.

During the lull in the action as the next level loads, a screen comes up showing the now barren landscape of the world you have just left and what to expect at your next

destination. As you travel to each planet, the attack waves become more and more hostile and attractive to look at. All told, Menace features some sixty species of alien over its six planets, and on later levels these can sport homing missiles or may even be invulnerable - requiring quick manoeuvring to avoid them. If the sheer number of these aliens totally deplete your shields, your ship blows up and your mission remains incomplete. When this happens there is a very handy option which allows you to continue on the level on which you last died. **STA**

STA  
Rating  
**77%**

GRAPHICS: 76%  
SOUND: 65%

LASTING APPEAL: 73%  
ADDICTIVENESS: 78%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD  
1ST DAY SCORE: 73296



One of the larger enemy from the Jungle level.



*Off Shore Warrior is Titus' third release and, perhaps unsurprisingly, involves zooming along shooting anyone you meet. Is it just 'Crazy Cars' meets 'Fire and Forget' in the bath?*

# OFFSHORE WARRIOR

TITUS (£19.95)

By the year 2010 a group of extra-terrestrial pacifists had taken total control over our planet, banning wars and anything remotely violent. The society, though a well-behaved one, was discontent, and yearned for the days when a modicum of danger added spice to sports and the like. After a while, in 2040, it had got too much, and several illegal groups of speed-freaks emerged, the most infamous of these being the Off Shore Warriors of the title. These men and women chose powerboats for their thrills, instead of the cars most inlanders used, and raced around specially built circuits for huge prizes. The sport, being a welcome break from the tedium of tranquility, was an instant success and, before long, everyone knew of the dates of races beforehand.

Enter you, a would-be contender for the Off Shore Warrior crown, ready to pit your wits against some of the most

devious powerboat racers in the world. To win this coveted title, you must race your brightly-coloured boat against an increasing number of opponents, aiming to come either first or second, so that you can proceed to the next circuit. These courses get

harder as you progress, with extra obstacles like rocks and raised areas - destroying or slowing you down. Additionally, your opponents improve too, and start attempting to ram you off the course and into a deadly obstacle. They don't all get it their own way though, as you too can bash into them, but care must be taken not to hit them with the nose of your boat or you will explode into a ball of flame however, although it

says in the manual that you can ram providing you don't damage the front of your boat, nine times out of ten it was my boat that blew up. You can also blow up anyone foolish enough to get in your way, with one

**BORING!** Who do Titus think they're kidding! The tide has come in on Fire and Forget and so we must take to our speedboats in order to continue the tedious, unchanging and predictable game. 'Off Shore Warrior is the ultimate test of manhood, can you overcome the enormous psychological pressure of a do-or-die situation?' Ask Titus with their tongues firmly in their cheeks. The question is: could you possibly stand a game that is inept and lacking in every aspect - not to mention the ridiculous scenario? Off Shore Warrior would be more aptly named Not Sure Warrior.

JS

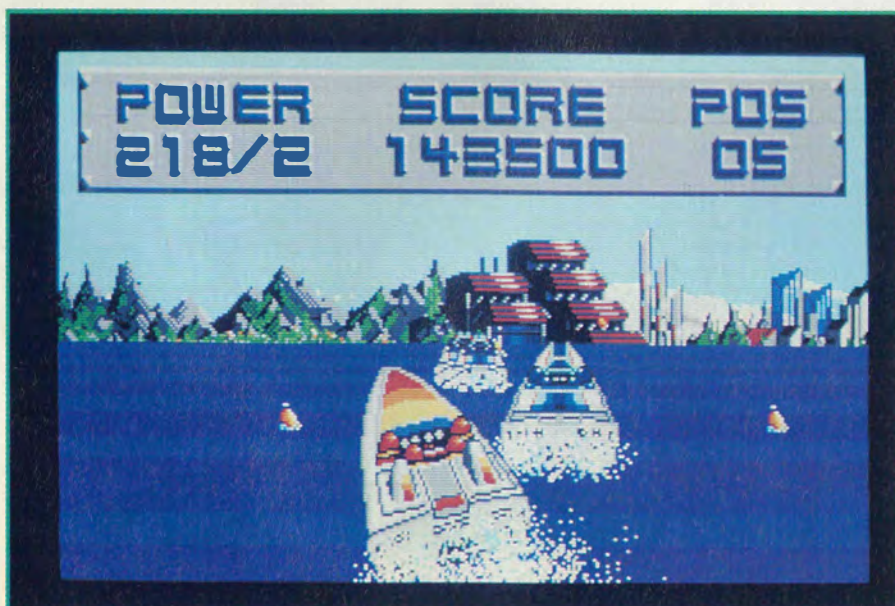
As soon as I first clapped eyes on 'Off Shore Warrior', I knew what to expect: pretty backdrops, with dull racing and shooting gameplay - and how right I was! Graphics and sound, for the most part, are average, with only a few nice touches, such as the bobbing of the boats as they speed up. The gameplay is extremely limited, consisting of racing over the same course over and over again. Nothing about Off Shore Warrior particularly shines, and, at best, the whole package barely scrapes above average.

SM

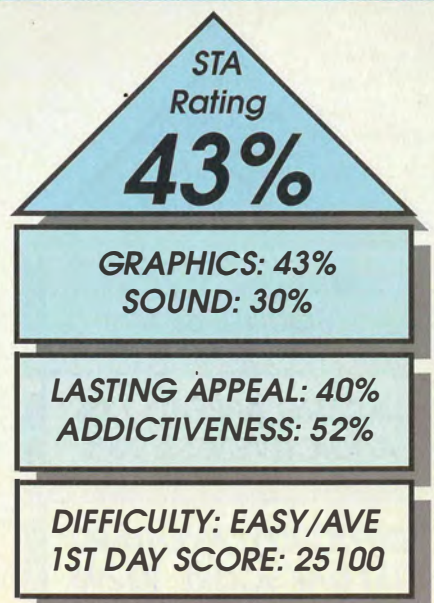
of your on-board missiles. These are very limited in supply and you usually only get two or three a race, so careful aim must be taken so that you don't waste them.

If you arrive at the finishing post first, a considerable bonus will be added to your score, and you will proceed to the next course. Initially, you begin in the year 2049, but for every four races you win, you will be able to take part in the next year's championships.

STA



Featuring Titus' infamous bouncy vehicles and stripey courses, Offshore Warrior deserves to sink without a trace.





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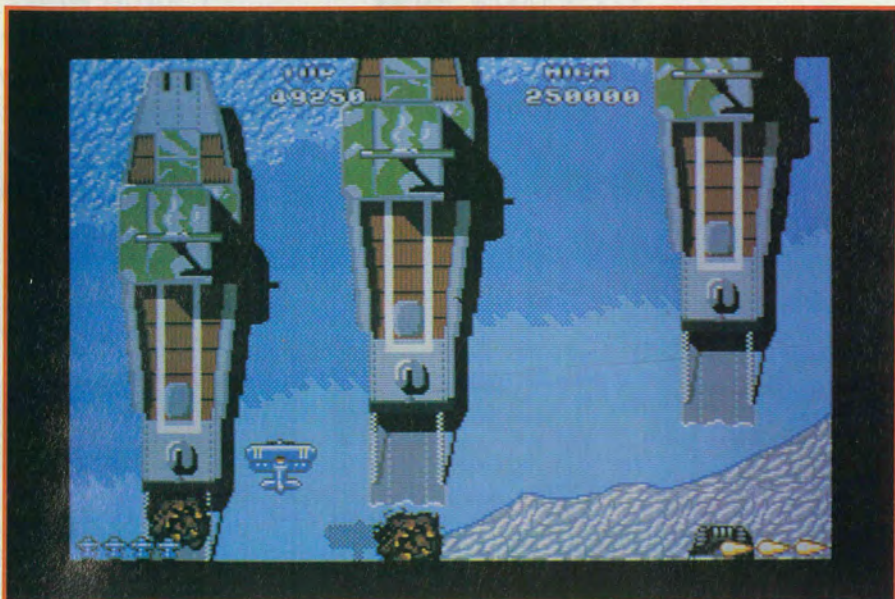
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Featuring five levels of unrelenting World War II action, Flying Shark proves to be one of the better vertical scrollers.



# FLYING SHARK

FIREBIRD (£19.95)

*After what seems an eternity, Firebird release Flying Shark. Put on your Biggles goggles and wind your long scarf around your heroic neck, as we take to the air. Was it worth the wait?*

Seated in the cockpit of your blue biplane, Taito's Flying Shark involves flying up five, vertically-scrolling stages, over jungles, seas and deserts, whilst shooting up the enemy's defence installations and storage depots. Naturally, the opposition aren't too keen on this idea, so they send out wave after wave of death-dealing tanks, air-planes and boats to try and stop you.

You begin your aerial onslaught leaving the safety of your hangar. After a lengthy wait whilst the plane reaches a decent height, you take control and await the waves of the attacking enemy. To see off your attackers, you are armed with a front-mounted cannon and three - decid-

edly before their time - smart bombs. Your cannons are initially fairly weak, needing several hits to destroy tanks and boats, but faster, deadlier weaponry can be gained by the successful annihilation of a red attack squadron. When shot, the last plane will relinquish a yellow disk marked with an 'E', and, when flown over, this will double your firepower. Additionally, extra smart bombs can be picked up by passing over the red, 'B' - initialled disks that occasionally appear. Smart bombs should be used whenever your biplane gets into trouble, and are launched by either clicking on the left mouse button or by pressing the space bar - for this, I recommend that you put the mouse on the floor, take your shoes off, and use your tootsies; that way, lives aren't lost so frequently during the dash from joystick to mouse! When activated,

*The one thing conspicuous by its absence in Firebird's conversion, is the slight horizontal scroll of the original. Still, apart from that minor blemish, Flying Shark rates as one of the better shoot'em-ups. The graphics are very nicely done, and when the screen fills with enemy planes, it doesn't slow down one bit; sound also follows this high standard, with a racy tune accompanying each level. The game is initially very hard to play, but after a while you begin to remember the attack waves and position yourself accordingly. A good game, if not an accurate conversion, but, with so many on the market, I recommend you play it for a while before committing yourself.*

**SM**

*Whoever told me that Flying Shark was like Red Rat's Screaming Wings and Capcom's 1943, can't have seen the game, let alone played it, as any similarity ends abruptly with the basic theme. From take-off to landing this first-class arcade conversion is pure addiction. Both the graphics and gameplay are equal in quality to its popular arcade counterpart. But just what puts this game several cuts above the aforementioned flying turkeys? Quite simply, everything!*

**JS**

the smart bombs create a huge shock-wave of explosions, destroying everything within its radius.

Towards the end of a level, you will encounter larger, harder-to-kill installations. These giants, whether they be massive tanks, inhabited aircraft carriers or camouflaged bases, fire volleys of hard-to-avoid bullets, and will require multiple hits or a couple of smart bombs before exploding - normally revealing another, smaller enemy - such as a tank. When you have successfully fought your way through the attacking hordes, there will be a lull in the action, and your plane will slow on its approach to the runway. Having landed, there will be a short load and you will continue on the next, harder level with a fresh supply of smart bombs.

**STA**

**STA  
Rating**

**69%**

---

**GRAPHICS: 71%**  
**SOUND: 55%**

---

**LASTING APPEAL: 68%**  
**ADDICTIVENESS: 75%**

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**DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE**  
**1ST DAY SCORE: 60800**





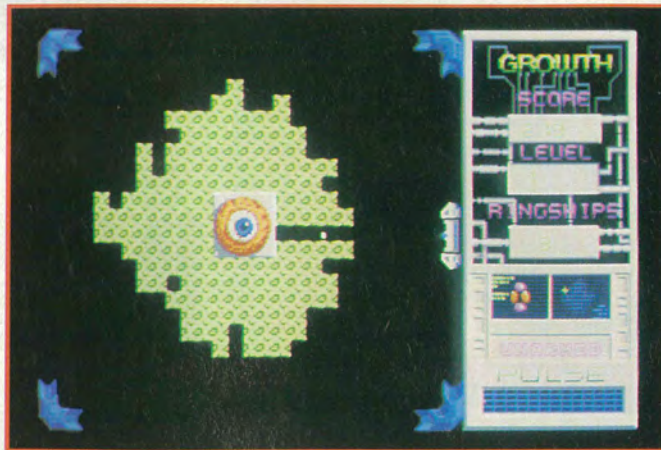
# GROWTH

ECLIPSE (£14.95)

Just when you thought the Breakout theme had been exploited to the point of exhaustion, along comes a budget software company with a miraculous variation. The game is rather unpleasantly entitled Growth, and the tasteless

title reflects the equally tasteless game-play. In this unusual game, the mouse controls a laser gun which can be moved all around the perimeter of the screen and in the very centre, a tumour throbs sickeningly. There are 25 levels to complete, and due to intergalactic health cuts, you only have three lasers to complete the operation. The tumour in the centre of the screen is different in each level, but they are all malignant and grow more rapidly as you progress through the levels. The left-hand button activates the laser and moving the mouse from left to right sends it travelling around the screen.

As it throbs, the

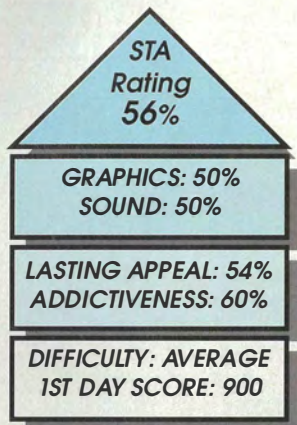


tumour expands in all directions and your task is to retard the growth by blasting it with the laser. However, if one strand of the cancer reaches the edge of the screen and blocks your path, you lose a laser. In addition to halting the expanding tumour, you must try to penetrate the wall and blast it with continuous fire. Explosive capsules appear in the growth and destroy larger chunks of the tumour. As you progress, you are confronted by protective

guardians which attempt to collide with the laser and, occasionally, a capsule appears on screen which must be kept in play.

This unusual game has all the addictive properties of brick-busting, but the menacing tumour makes you play the game with more urgency. Growth is a first-class budget-software candidate.

**STA**



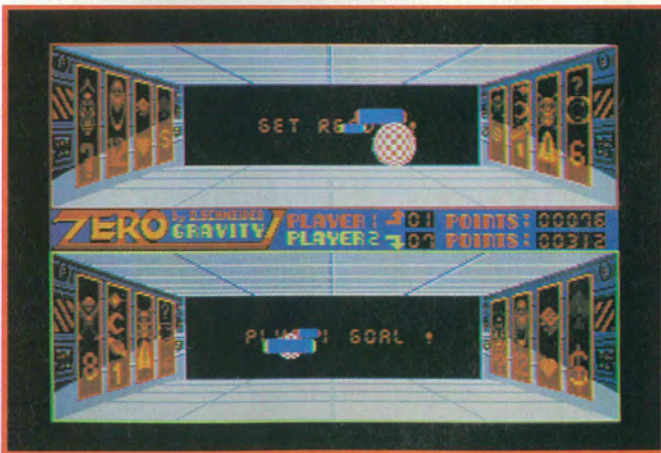
# ZERO GRAVITY

EAS (£19.95)

There are games which claim to be the greatest adventure, while others profess to be the ultimate shoot'em-up. Of course, the majority of these declarations are conceited, fanciful and completely untrue - after all, there can only be one greatest and one ultimate game. However, there is one title which can truthfully claim something more fantastic than all of

these. This simplistic little game is called Pong and it did nothing short of launch an entire industry. In the pursuit of stunning 3D graphics and digitized sound, software developers have lost sight of the meaning of computer game entertainment. But this simple bat-and-ball game unpretentiously and unknowingly got the formula just right.

There have been many clones of another vintage game, Breakout, but the venerable Pong has been practically forgotten - until now. EAS Software have paid lip service to the game by trying to combine the addictiveness of the original theme with the latest graphic and sound techniques. This contradiction is called Zero Gravity. The game is played at ground level with each player's bat floating across the centre. The screen is split horizontally in two and each



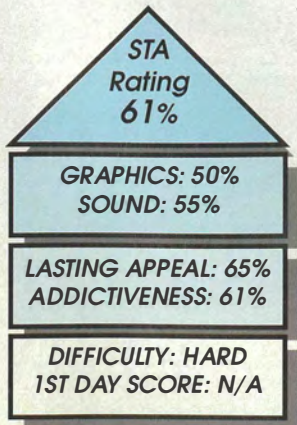
section shows the different end of the court. There is a choice of one or two-player participation, but there is a sacrifice for this privilege - joystick control, instead of the mouse which is far more suitable for this type of game.

The ball is adhered to your bat ready for service, and pressing the firebutton sends it bouncing down the court. The other player must anticipate the direction of the ball and intercept it with the bat. There are five panels along either side of the court and if the ball hits one it changes the character of the

game. These features include fast motion play and computer help, where the computer momentarily takes control of your bat. A screen at the end of the court informs you which feature is in play and a ghostly voice synthesis commentates on the game.

There are two major faults with this game! The joystick controls are hopeless and due to a lack of perspective on screen, it is impossible to judge how far the ball is away from the bat. Nice try, but the original was far more playable.

**STA**





I enjoyed this game more than I did Gnome Ranger, and a lot more than I did Lancelot. The humour rings true and the puzzles are fair. It must be said that there are a few bugs, but nothing that can't be forgiven. The RUN TO and GO TO commands, plus all the other useful goodies, make these new games much nicer to play. The graphics are great and they ensure that this game is a worthy successor to Gnome Ranger.

AM

Let's face it, Ingrid means well, but anything she has a hand in tends to go terribly wrong. Today the inhabitants of Little Moaning have woken to find that their village has been scheduled as bulldozer fodder. Who can save the day and foil the plans of Jasper Quickback to turn the peaceful village into a yuppie ghetto? Normally, anyone with a good idea would be welcomed with open arms, but when it's Ingrid, the local gnomes are not so sure.

This adventure is split into three tasks which may be played in any order. In each game you may command the other characters to help Ingrid carry out her mission.

What we need, of course, is a petition, and your first task is to convince everyone to sign it. However, the locals have learnt to their cost that the best way of avoiding disasters is to have nothing to do with Ingrid and her crazy schemes, so your task is not so simple.

In the second task you will find that a group of evil trolls plus a bulldozer turn up at the farm. Petition or not, Jasper plans to raze Gnettlefield Farm to the ground and you must somehow stop them. You may gain time if you recognise that the setup is a spoof on the 'Hitchhiker's Guide' incident.

Despite all Ingrid's efforts, the plans to demolish the village are still going ahead and your third task is to sneak into the enemy's camp and dig

Last year GNOME RANGER was voted the winner of the Golden Chalice Award by the members of the Adventure Club of Great Britain. Can the Level 9 team repeat that success with their latest fun game?

# INGRID'S BACK

LEVEL 9 (£19.95)



Little Moaning - a pretty little village who's only hope lies with Ingrid Bottomlow - Gnome Ranger.

up the dirt on the Jasper. Taking on the job as a kitchen maid will allow you to wander through the mansion and find any skeletons which may be rattling around in the cupboards. If you find evidence of enough underhand deals, you will be able to unmask Quickback for the villain that he certainly is.

This game contains the new-look graphics from Level 9. Gone are the digitised screens to be replaced by

clearer and fresher pictures which show off all the colour and detail of Little Moaning. The artist responsible can be rightly proud of the result. Magnetic Scrolls had better look to their laurels!

This adventure is played for laughs and the text is full of puns and jokes. It would also appear that the difficulty level has been turned down, as the puzzles seem much easier - a good move in my opinion. **STA**

STA  
Rating  
**75%**

TEXT/GRAPHICS: 85%  
GAMEPLAY: 70%

LASTING APPEAL: 80%  
ADDICTIVENESS: 70%





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
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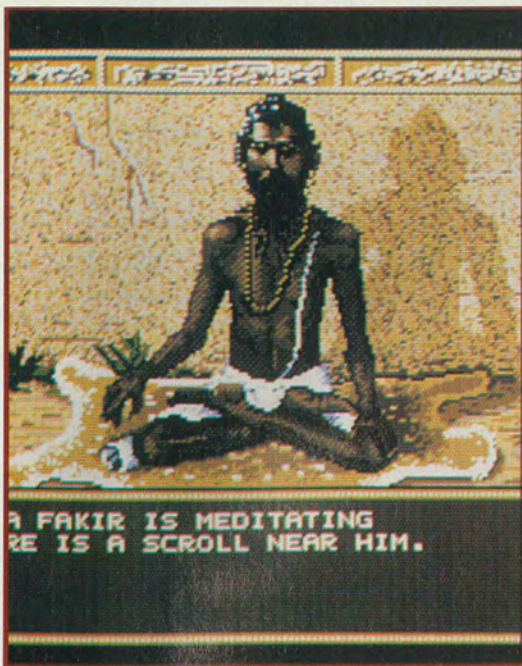
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**ST  
ACTION**





So far, PSYGNOSIS have achieved great success with their arcade games. Will their new range of graphic adventures also rise to the top of the best-sellers list?

# CHRONO QUEST

PSYGNOSIS (£24.95)

Your quest begins in your father's chateau circa 1920, where you will find (or should find) your father's latest invention: a fantastic time machine. Your father has been murdered and you are the prime suspect. However, we know that the butler did it before using the time machine to escape into the future.

You will need to travel through time to collect the equipment which will enable you to follow the murderer into the future and unmask him. Your first problem is: find the time machine... Sorry, a more immediate problem is to find the room containing the time machine. But it's dark.. Very sorry, an even more immediate problem is to get some light to see where you are going!

You can forget all the other graphics you have seen so far on the ST. Chrono-Quest contains some of the best artwork which has appeared in any game. French game designers take a pride in pushing forward the search for graphic excellence and this is no exception. The game consists of four disks packed with

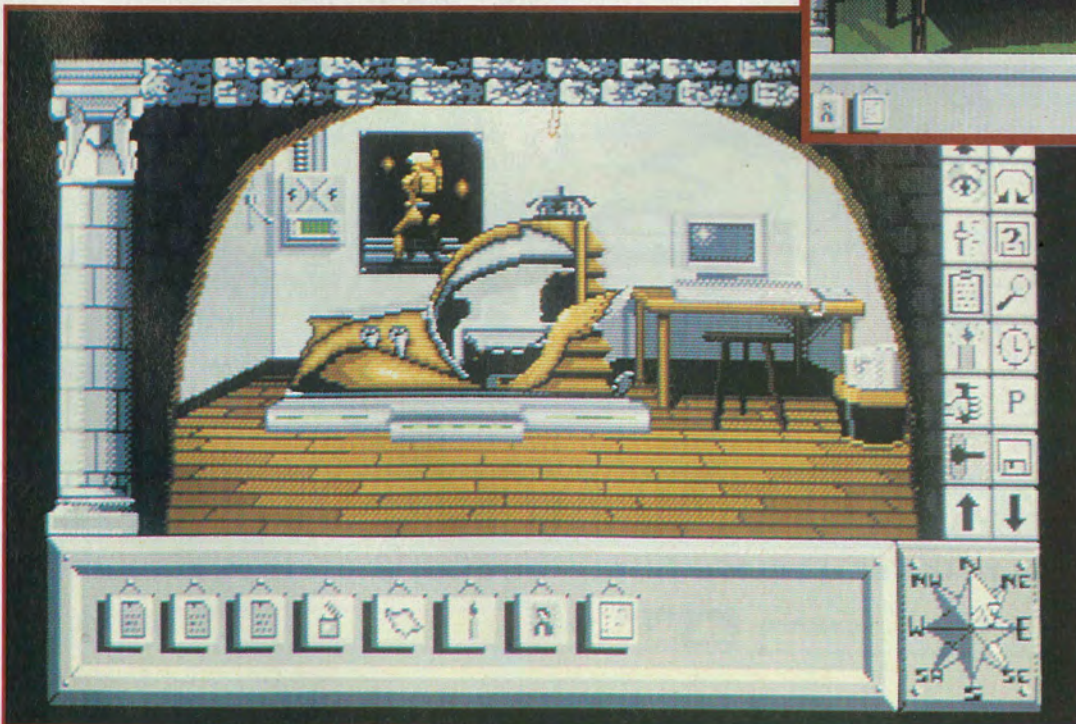
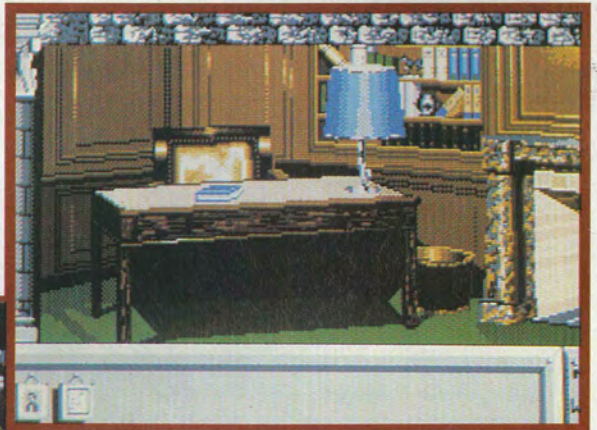
*I am really impressed by the graphics and the set animation pieces as they are probably the best I've seen. I also loved the music and actually turned it up instead of down. Solving the puzzles isn't very difficult once you find the hidden objects, but finding the objects can be very frustrating. The game suffers from a badly designed user-interface which I'm sure could have so easily been put right if it had been more thoroughly play-tested.*

AM

detailed screens. Coupled with these are a number of catchy tunes which tinkle in the background as you blunder through time and space.

Armed with a number of computer punch-cards (well it is 1920) you must feed these into the machine to be whisked into any one of four dangerous destinations. How would you like a stroll through the primordial jungle of the Stone Age where the 'hand' of man hasn't yet set 'foot'? Try and make some sense out of the strange cave paintings which are to be found, but whatever you do, don't go swimming!

Arriving in India in the year 1605 gives you the opportunity to view the temples and tigers from the safety of an elephant's back. However, the land is living under the pestilence of leprosy, so whatever you do, be careful what you touch.



The fabled time machine, around which your quest takes place.

Remember the golden rule: Never play pooton with a leper. He may throw his hand in!

Mexico 750 AD. was the era of the Maya civilization's vast temples to the Sun Gods. These vast pyramids are topped by blood-drenched stone altars which look out over the dangerous surrounding jungle.

In ancient Egypt you will wander around the sand dunes until you die of thirst unless you manage to find and enter the maze-like passages of the mysterious pyramid.

Finally, armed with all the necessary equipment found in the past, you will





be able to set off on your final journey to Paris in the year 2125 AD. Here you will be able to confront the evil culprit and avenge the death of your father.

The game is fully icon-driven with no text input required. You may open, close and use the various objects on screen by simply pointing with the mouse. Objects being carried are shown in the inventory window as small icons. Making the game fully icon-driven means that the player need no longer wrestle to find the correct command to

perform an action, but as you will find out, there is a snag. Like other games which have swum the Channel before it, Chrono-Quest suffers from an annoying flaw. The software which detects the position of the mouse pointer seems to have been written by a cross-eyed programmer. This causes more than its full share of problems. Attempts to examine a stone pillar are liable to result in a description of the nearby

staircase. In a situation such as that, you are aware that the game has missed the

point and you can try again, but at other times you can be easily misled by the game's responses.

A further lack of attention to detail revolves around the Save and Load options. You may save and restore your game state, but should you 'die' (and you will!) there is no option to restart. Instead, you must select the 'Replay' option and wait with growing frustration while the game sets up the initial game from disk 1, and

only then will it permit you to select the 'restore' icon and go through the whole

*The graphics for this adventure game are some of the best I've ever seen. The accompanying sound is pretty good as well and I liked the idea of using the mouse and icons to carry out commands. What a pity it was to find that the use of icons is what lets this game down. The graphics, sound and story line are all good, what a pity that implementation of the 'user interface' spoilt it. I would have rated this game but I found the inconsistency of the mouse and icon system made it hard to play.*

**SK**

**STA  
Rating**

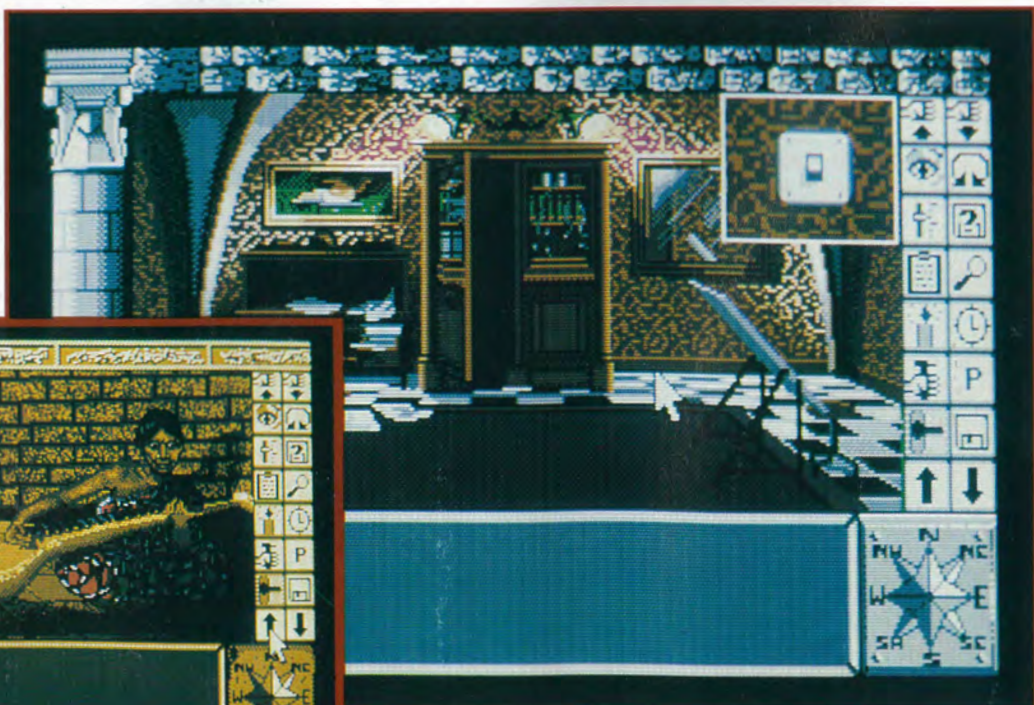
# 70%

**TEXT/GRAPHICS: 90%**  
**GAMEPLAY: 55%**

**LASTING APPEAL: 69%**  
**ADDICTIVENESS: 67%**

set-up again. The game is permeated by trivial omissions by the game designer and they result in much aggravation to the player.

**STA**



The search continues; Having found a light switch should you press it?



# GIVING THE GAME AWAY

There now follows an important announcement: As from next month, the person who sends in the best tip will receive TWO games of their choice, while two runners up will get one. So, when you send in your tips, write your two choices, in order of preference, and your address. Well, what are you waiting for? Get hacking!



## Starglider II - Rainbird

I bet quite a few of you could do with infinite energy. You could! Well, slow down completely (your Icarus, not you!), and press F5 then Delete. Now type in: WERE ON A MISSION FROM GOD1 (N.B: With spaces). Now press K everytime you run out of weapons AND you get the aforementioned infinite energy. Kool Kev from Glasgow sent that in.



## Virus - Firebird

Load up this impressive little game, press space to start and do the following:

Hold down Enter on the keypad, at the same time press P to enter the pause mode. Whilst keeping the Enter key depressed press the O key to get out of the pause mode. When you have done this the game will seem to continue normally, albeit with a red bar beneath the altitude bar. This tells you the cheat is active. Now press:

- C - for special effects on/off
- D - demo on/off
- F - refuels you completely
- L - adds one missile to your stock
- N - turns cheat off

Thank you to Mark Clavering from Northumberland for that excellent cheat mode

## Stargoose - Logotron

Load up this undulating shoot'em-up and start to play. Now, when you get in trouble, press the keys from F1 through to F10, and, voila! Infinite shields. Ta very much to George Bradshaw, from Lanarkshire, Scotland for that one.







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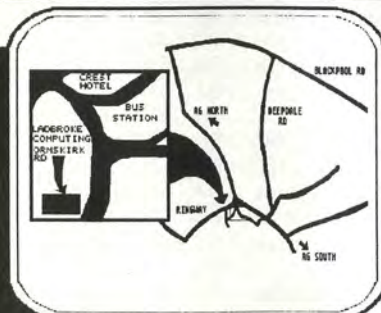
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## Elite - Firebird

Well, you lot really seem to be into telecomsort's classics don't you? This time Richard Kierman from Cockermouth, Cumbria, and Christian Payne from Otterton, Devon have sent in this guide for struggling Elitists.

**Docking:** Extremely tricky this; stop dead and climb until the green blob appears in front of your sights. Position yourself so the slot is exactly in the centre of the cross-hairs. Go full speed, rotating in relation to the slot, keeping it horizontal.

**Trading:** The key to making money, so pick two planets that differ in technology, then trade two or three commodities which can be bought cheap on one and sold at an extortionate price on the other. For instance: computers from an industrial planet to an agricultural one. Drug trading is profitable, but try not to have to shoot any Police or you won't be allowed to dock.

**Buying Hardware:** The first thing to buy is a larger cargo bay, then you can carry a lot more merchandise and make a larger profit on your deals. Next, buy a decent laser, after that it's up to you. I always go for a docking computer and fuels scoops, but it depends on your preferences.

**Combat:** As soon as something appears on your scanner, identify it, and if it is unfriendly, line it in your sight when it is still quite a way away, and let it have it. If combat ensues whilst near a space station, approach the station and they will flee. You will be deemed a fugitive if you shoot innocent traders, police and ordinary vessels.

**General info:** Save the game every time you dock. To build up your rank, go to a planet with a feudal status and make as many kills as possible. As a guide, you receive a 'Right on Commander' for every 256 ships you destroy.

A little bug: If minerals, gold, platinum and gems are cheap, buy all of the stock and save your position. Reload it, and the stocks will be magically replenished. This also works with other items.

Meanwhile, whilst on the subject of Elite, Mark Lawrence, our Basildon hacker, has been taking it to bits...

When you are asked to enter a word from the novella, enter the name SARA. Now enter the proper word and enter the game's status screen. Now press the '\*' key on the numeric pad and you will enter Hacker, Elite's inbuilt memory editor. It's a bit technical but worth it. Use it as follows...

At the bottom of the screen you will see an input line requesting for the byte to be changed. Enter a value in hex, between 0 and FF and you will be requested to enter a value to change this byte to. Below are the useful addresses.

Values 0C-0F represent your credits. Try 'poking' 0C with 1 to give yourself a heck of a lot of credits. Values 12-13 represent your fuel, and poking these with higher values increases your fuel. Value 15 determines the number of missiles you have, but only take four as any more may crash the game.

The locations listed below all work the same way. If the location has a value other than 0, you have that particular piece of equipment. So, if for instance, you poke 1F with 1, you will be given a fuel scoop.

- 17 Large Cargo Hold
- 1F Fuel Scoop
- 23 Energy Bomb

- 27 Docking Computer
- 2F Retro Rockets
- 33 Cloaking Device
- 19 ECM
- 21 Escape Capsule
- 25 Energy Unit
- 29 Hyperdrive
- 31 ECM Jammer

The following values effect how many lasers and what type they are. To equip yourself with four lasers of one type, you must poke the first value with 0 and the second value with 0F. The first bytes of the other locations must then be poked with 80. As an example: if you want four military lasers, poke 2C with 0, 2D with 0F and locations 1A, 1C and 2A with 80.

- 1A - 1B Pulse Lasers
- 2A - 2B Mining Lasers
- 1C - 1D Beam Lasers
- 2C - 2D Military Lasers

Location 85 contains your legal status. 0 is clean, 01 - 20 is offender, and greater than 20m is fugitive.

Location 8B is your rating:

- |                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| 0 is Harmless        | 5 is Competent |
| 1 is Mostly Harmless | 6 is Dangerous |
| 2 is Poor            | 7 is Deadly    |
| 3 is Average         | 8 is Elite     |
| 4 is Above Average   |                |

Last, but not least, the locations below determine your cargo. Each item has four bytes to represent the amount you possess, so if you increase any of the values, you will increase the amount you have of that item.

- 34 - 37 Food
- 38 - 3B Textiles
- 3C - 3F Radioactives
- 40 - 43 Slaves
- 44 - 47 Liquor
- 48 - 4B Luxuries
- 4C - 4F Narcotics
- 50 - 53 Computers
- 54 - 57 Machinery
- 58 - 5B Alloys
- 5C - 5F Firearms
- 60 - 63 Furs
- 64 - 67 Minerals
- 68 - 6B Gold
- 6C - 6F Platinum
- 70 - 73 Gems
- 74 - 77 Alien Types
- 78 - 7B Medical Supplies
- 7C - 7F Refugees
- 80 - 83 Important Documents

Remember: if you want to experiment, OK. But just make sure you have got your Elite disk write-protected, just in case it crashes.



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### Afterburner - Mediagenic

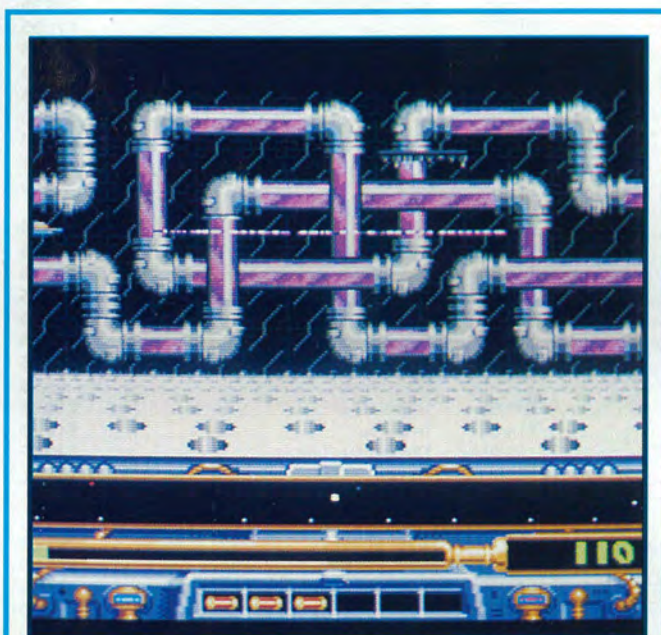
Wow, now this is an up-to-date tip! Norman Winstanley from Macclesfield has sent in this hot tip for Argonauts' 'best-they-could-do' conversion. Start playing as normal, press backspace to pause it and enter AGES (SEGA backwards!). The game restarts automatically after a digitised 'hooray!', and you are now granted a level-skip feature which is activated by pressing the < and > keys.

### Powerplay - Arcana

Lots of you have sent this daft tip in; still, here goes...  
 Play the game, and instead of a data disk, stick in a blank. Now, you get the same question repeated again and again!

### Empire Strikes Back - Domark

Another batch of you sent in this cheat for the second of the Star Wars trilogy. On the credits screen, hold down TAB and type VEKTORGRAFIX. Now, by pressing L, C, or D you will get awfully nice pictures of Luke, C3PO and ol' Darth himself. Oh, you also get infinite energy.



### StarRay - Logotron

This up-to-date Defender clone is good for a quick blast. But if you want your blast to be longer, type in the immortal name: AL YANKOVIC (remember his appalling records?). Now all you have to do is to press F5 for infinite shield and F6 to complete a wave. You've got Mark Lawrence to thank for that one.

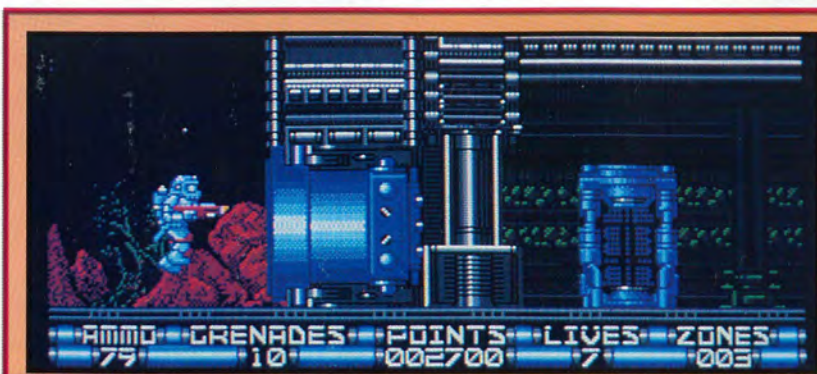


### Manhattan Dealers - Silmarils

Nigel Roust from Gillingham, Kent, has sent in some pointers for this nice 'Renegade' imitator. Take it away Nigel...  
 Always repeat a punch, kick, punch, kick method. When a dealer finally falls down, move as close to his feet as possible to get the next kick in. This method is particularly useful when you trap them against a wall. Use the stairs to your advantage; at the first screen, move down to the middle stair and fight them from there (that way their weapons go over your head). This method can be used on the guy with the chainsaw. Get him to follow you, and go up a couple of steps. His chainsaw will now miss, but your hits won't. Moving on to the basketball pitch; wait by the drain pipe, and kick the dustbin to the left three times. Move back to the pipe, and wait for a dealer to arrive. When he is between you and the bin, he can be kicked etc. without running away.

### Exolon - Hewson

If you want infinite lives for Hewson's stomp'em, and shoot'em-up 8-bit conversion, then simply type in 'ad astra' (in lower cases with the space) on the high-score table. Once again, ta very much to Mr. Lawrence, from Basildon.





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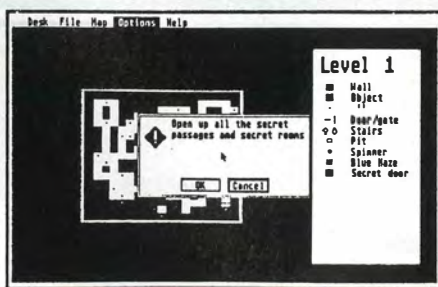
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# UNIVERSAL CHEAT ROUTINE FOR ST BASIC

```
10 REM *****Universal Cheat Routine*****
20 OPTION BASE 1: DIM A%(128):CHEAT=VARPTR(A%(1))
30 DEF SEG=0: REM Remove this line if new ST Basic is in use
40 X=CHEAT:READ B
50 WHILE B<>99999
60 POKE X,B:X=X+2
70 READ B
80 WEND
90 REM This code is common to all cheat routines. Type in this listing
100 REM and save it for future use. To use a cheat routine replace the
110 REM lines of code in this program with those in the new listing.
120 DATA &H601A,&H0000,&H00E4,&H0000,&H0000,&H0000,&H0000,&H0000
130 DATA &H0000,&H0000,&H0000,&H0000,&H0000,&HFFFF,&H4FFA,&H01FE
140 DATA &H2F3C,&H0000,&H0300,&H487A,&HFEF4,&H4267,&H3F3C,&H004A
150 DATA &H4E41,&H4FEF,&H000C,&H487A,&H0064,&H3F3C,&H0009,&H4E41
160 DATA &H5C8F,&H3F3C,&H0007,&H4E41,&H548F,&H4267,&H487A,&H004A
170 DATA &H3F3C,&H004E,&H4E41,&H41FA,&H0068,&H3018,&HC0FC,&H0006
180 DATA &HD1C0,&H487A,&H0037,&H487A,&H0033,&H2F08,&H2F3C,&H004B
190 DATA &H0003,&H4E41,&H4FF9,&H0007,&H7FF0,&H2F40,&H0004,&H2240
200 DATA &H43E9,&H0100,&H41FA,&H003A,&H3018,&H5340,&H2458,&HD5C9
210 DATA &H3498,&H51C8,&HFFF8,&H4ED1,&H2A2E,&H2A00,&H1B45,&H496E
220 DATA &H7365,&H7274,&H2067,&H616D,&H6520,&H6469,&H736B,&H2061
230 DATA &H6E64,&H2070,&H7265,&H7373,&H2061,&H206B,&H6579,&H0000
```

# ST BASIC CHEAT DATA FOR BUBBLE BOBBLE

```
280 REM INFINITE LIVES FOR BUBBLE BOBBLE
290 DATA 5,&H0000,&H0210,&H426E,&H0000,&H0212,&H6658
300 DATA &H0000,&H0214,&H426E,&H0000,&H0216,&H6670,&H0000,&H01AE,&H6160
310 DATA &H6175,&H746F,&H5C62,&H7562,&H626C
320 DATA &H652E,&H7072,&H6700,99999
330 BSAVE "AUTO\BUBBLE.PRG",CHEAT,256
340 REM THE ABOVE PROGRAM MUST BE PLACED IN AN AUTO FOLDER.
350 REM TO USE,INSERT THE CHEAT DISK IN DRIVE A THEN RESET THE ATARI.
360 REM WHEN PROMPTED INSERT BUBBLE BOBBLE DISK AND PRESS A KEY
```

# ST BASIC CHEAT ROUTINE FOR GARFIELD

```
280 REM INFINITE TIME FOR GARFIELD
300 DATA 2,&H0000,&H19D8,&H606E,&H0000,&H17B0,&H6058
310 DATA &H6175,&H746F,&H5C67,&H6172,&H6669,&H656C
320 DATA &H642E,&H7072,&H6700,99999
330 BSAVE "AUTO\GARFIELD.PRG",CHEAT,256
340 REM THE ABOVE PROGRAM MUST BE PLACED IN AN AUTO FOLDER.
350 REM TO USE,INSERT THE CHEAT DISK IN DRIVE A THEN RESET THE ATARI.
360 REM WHEN PROMPTED INSERT GARFIELD DISK AND PRESS A KEY
```

# ST BASIC CHEAT ROUTINE FOR ZYNAPS

```
280 REM INFINITE LIVES FOR ZYNAPS
300 DATA 1,&H0000,&H2520,&H0000
310 DATA &H7A79,&H6E61,&H7073,&H3137,&H2E70,&H7267,0,99999
330 BSAVE "AUTO\ZYNAPS.PRG",CHEAT,256
340 REM THE ABOVE PROGRAM MUST BE PLACED IN AN AUTO FOLDER.
350 REM TO USE,INSERT THE CHEAT DISK IN DRIVE A THEN RESET THE ATARI.
360 REM WHEN PROMPTED INSERT ZYNAPS DISK AND PRESS A KEY
```







# COMPETITION WINNERS

## SDI Competition

*The winner of the SDI competition is John Leonard of Craigavon in County Armagh. He wins the huge model of the Space Shuttle and a copy of SDI and a poster. The runners-up prizes of an SDI game and a poster go to Simon Sims, Whitchurch; Dai Roberts, Andover; Chris Ellis, Westhampnett; J Fleck, Slough; Cambell Wilson, Erskine; Scott Wallace, Plymouth; E M Dron, Sutton; Mark Fairweather, Selby; Mike Lacey, Retford; S P Candler, Dringhouses; Geoff Winton, Rhosymeore; C A Widdup, RAF Lyneham; C J Simpson, Richmond; Gareth Blades, Porstmouth; Joseph Santosl, Holloway; K Turnham, Bexley; Nicholas Dales, Lyminster; Peter Bradley, Gerrards Cross; Gary Frostick, Southsea and Paul Mitchell of Balerno.*

*The answers were:*

- 1. b) Strategic Defence Initiative*
- 2. A duck appears on the high score table and performs a dance*
- 3. a) 3*

*Well done to all the winners, the prizes are on their way.*

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As well as providing the best ST digitising that money can buy, S.A.M can also act as a standards converter allowing you to use American video cassettes here in England - a feature that costs thousands of pounds using conventional techniques. S.A.M is built here in England and costs £249.95 and is available direct from Silicon Solutions.

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
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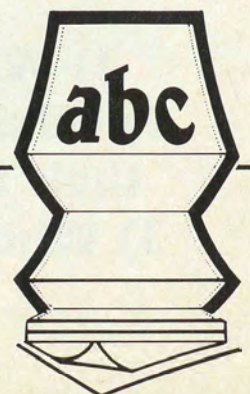
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*All you have to do to win one of the five prizes is to answer the questions below and send them to us at the usual address to reach us by first post*

*January 14th 1989.*

## Questions

- 1) What was Ocean's first personality licence?
- 2) What company, taken under Ocean's wing, had their first release named World Series Baseball?
- 3) Who is the artist responsible for virtually all of Ocean's front cover designs?





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Send answers to:  
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Since the creation of MUD (Multi-User Dungeon), the play-by-modem adventure game, many people have written Multi-User Games. Until recently, most of them were based loosely around the same theme: collect all the treasure, solve a few puzzles and, finally, become an immortal wizard. However, a new style of MUG exists. It's called Federation 2 and is available through the Compunet network

# FEDERATION 2

## What is Federation 2?

'It is an economic simulation', explains Alan Lenton, the multi-user games administrator for Compunet and author of Federation 2. The basic idea is to make as many Imperial Groats as possible, moving up the ladder of success as and when you can afford to.

You start off at the level of Groundhog with 13000GCRs in the bank. This sounds a lot, but when you consider you must purchase a space-ship, it isn't. My ship cost me approximately 150000GCRs, thus I had to pay a visit to my bank manager! All the interest is put on the loan at the beginning, consequently I owed nearly 250000GCR within five minutes - not a very encouraging start! Once you have a ship, you are promoted to the position of Commander. The loan is paid off in stages: 10% of all your earnings go straight to the bank! Later on, when you have enough money, you can repay the rest of the loan and thus become a Captain.

After a while, you will be given a trader's licence. This will enable you to trade with other planets and players.

When you reach this stage of the game, you are given a chance to set up your own planet. To start with, the planet will be rich in mineral resources, then, as you get used to running it (and hopefully richer), it becomes an agricultural economy, then industrial, technical and, finally, leisure. The richest economy is a leisure one and because of this it will be a very expensive business becoming one.

The penultimate level

is called the Political layer. You already control a successful planet and have a steady income. At this point in the game, you will be able to snoop on people using the

'How did the name Federation 2 come about?'

'Rumour has it, that it was



The Compunet modem bank: at 6pm the lights flick on like a Christmas tree.

Spynet system. This level is equivalent to a wizard in MUD; however, you're not immortal. The only immortal person in the game is Bella, Alan Lenton's own character. There is a form of immortality available which involves going to the insurance broker and insuring yourself. This is easy to do once you know where the insurance office is, but it is fairly hard to find. If you are insured when you die, you are placed back on earth with your credits and status still intact, but without your ship.

The final level is Emperor (or Empress for the ladies). Only one person may be Emperor at a time. Certain responsibilities come with the exclusive title, including the unpopular tasks of setting the amount of tax people pay and funding the Galactic navy! As you are not immortal, you stand a chance of being overthrown. This is why an Emperor may wish to make a deal with his senators (the Political Layer players), which would make him Emperor for a couple of weeks before abdicating from the position.

because I wanted to create a federation', laughs Alan, 'in fact, I got the name from a picture that a Compunetter uploaded, called 'FEDERATION 2'. As soon as I saw the picture, I knew that was the right name for my game'.

'When was Federation 2 first thought of?'

'It was while I was playing M U D, somebody called John

Krezinsky, who worked for Compunet at the time, approached me and asked if I was interested in writing a space-based multi-user adventure game. That was about 4 years ago', says Alan, 'The idea was that he would program it and I would design and write the locations. Along the way though, he dropped out and I had to teach myself how to program.'

'How many locations are there?'

'At the moment there are 700 locations. When it is finished there will be a bank of 7000 locations, although only 1500 will ever be working. That gives us plenty of scope to switch them in and out when we like.'

'With all those locations, won't people find it lonely?'

'To start with we thought the same, however there are several communication commands. People have found them quite suffi-



Installing a new version of the software is really easy!



# SKRULL

... Plus aucune lueur, plus aucune chaleur, plus la moindre étincelle:  
Le monde de la lumière va s'éteindre à tout jamais... Vous seul,  
SKRULL, l'incroyable fruit bâtarde des amours contre-nature de la  
femme-soleil et de l'homme-ombre, pouvez libérer à nouveau la lumière.  
Mais le monde glauque  
des ténèbres n'est pas  
sans risques...



**1632**  
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six-hundred Imperial Groats!

To deter players from typing Accept at any job offered, a large fine is incurred for wasting the company's time when they cannot handle the job! If you are quick with the job you can pick up a fast delivery bonus, then again, being too slow will make you lose money!

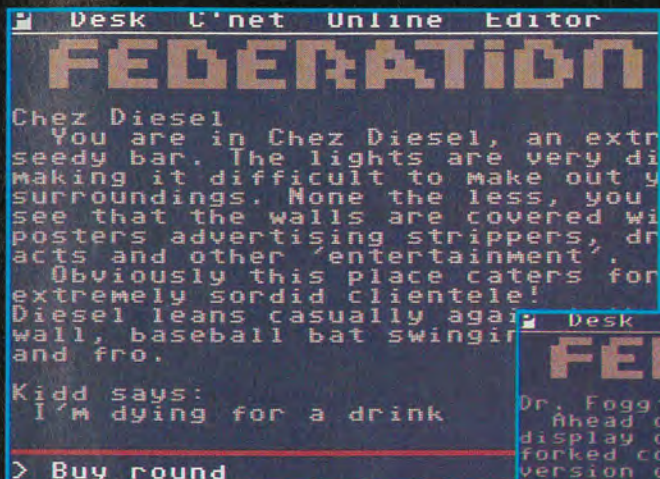
Before every journey it is a good idea to check that your ship has enough fuel. Running out in mid-space costs you fifty credits per ton of fuel; on the ground it only costs ten!

One feature that I can't recall seeing before is a tube train that actually arrives

cient, and can arrange a meeting somewhere if they need to.'

### Federation 2 - setting new standards?

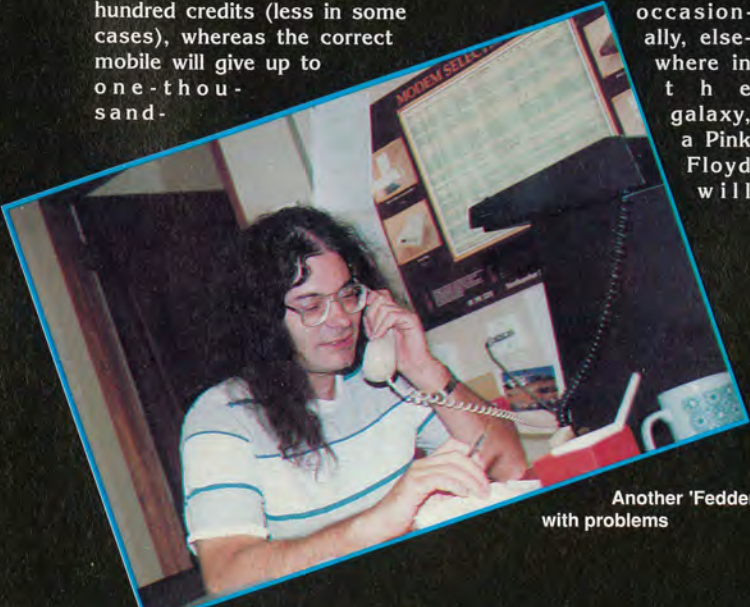
Federation 2 also differs from other MUGs because most of them need to be reset after the objects have gone. Federation never needs to be



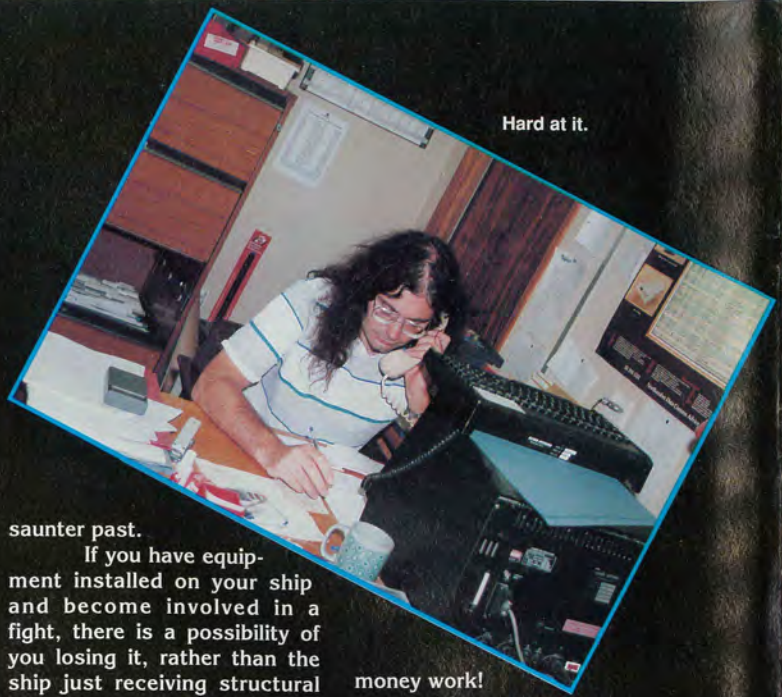
reset. All the used objects and dead mobiles come back after a period of between 10 and 30 minutes. As there is always something to do, be it trading or collecting objects, you can play by yourself. The number of jobs offered is related to the number of players on the system, so if you are on your own, the number of jobs offered will be few and far between. Rather than collecting objects and dropping them in the swamp, Federation makes you give them to a mobile. If you give it to the wrong mobile you only get one hundred credits (less in some cases), whereas the correct mobile will give up to one-thousand-

at a station, lets you get on and then moves to the next station, allowing you to leave when you arrive at your chosen destination. It's great fun just playing on it!

Two of the wacky characters wandering around the galaxies in Federation 2 just happen to be named after the best rock groups around. A Marillion flies past on the planet Titan and occasionally, elsewhere in the galaxy, a Pink Floyd will



Another 'Feddler with problems



Hard at it.

saunter past.

If you have equipment installed on your ship and become involved in a fight, there is a possibility of you losing it, rather than the ship just receiving structural hits. If the snooping equipment is destroyed, that's a cool one million credits up in smoke! (literally!).

### Evolving gameplay

Because the game never resets or terminates, Alan has

money work!

After playing the game for several hours - it was research, honest! - I found that the trendy place to be seen in is a rough bar called Chez Diesel, affectionately named after one of the Compunet 'celebrities'. Another place named after a Compunet celebrity is Fogg's Marital Arts Emporium! I will leave the description to your imagination!

One of the more pleasurable parts of Federation 2 is the ability to kiss, grope, cuddle and even snog other players!

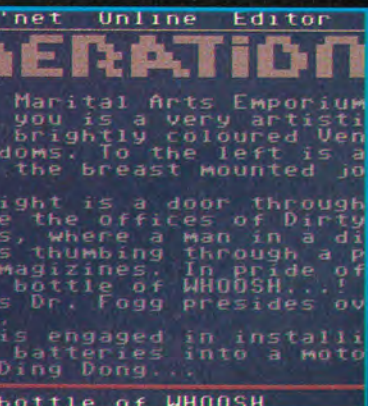
### Federationaholism

Federation 2 has gone down very well on Compunet, with a Fedders Anonymous club already up and running! It includes hints, tips and maps, including a warning that might save your life! The advantage of having the game on a network is that Alan can get some really useful feedback from the players.

In fact, the only thing linking MUD and Federation 2 will be the swamp (it will be put in at a later date). Even this location will have a sign up reading something like this: 'MUD swamp location used by kind permission'. Just to make Mudders feel at home - you will even be able to drop objects in it!

To access Federation 2 you must have a modem and a subscription to Compunet. Federation 2 costs £1.50 per hour. For more information, contact:

Compunet, Unit 26, Sheraton Business Centre, Wadsworth Road, Perivale, Middx, UB6 7JB or telephone 01-997 2591.



attempted to make it self-regulating. By this I mean, if somebody makes a nuisance of himself you can put a reward on his head. Then, when somebody kills him, the money goes straight to the bounty hunter. Unfortunately, this allows immature people to put 1GCR on your head. You can put a reward on anyone's head (with the exception of Bella - you get fined for that!). Due to this reward system, you can only have one persona per Compunet ID.. If you could have two, it would be possible to arrange it so one persona is such a nuisance that it builds up a high reward value. Once a large reward has been accumulated a friend could come along and destroy it, at the same time picking up a nice bonus!

Due to Federation 2's structure, it is possible for two or more people to go into business deals, funding new planets and reaping the rewards - truly making their



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