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ACTION

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ST GAMES MAGAZINE

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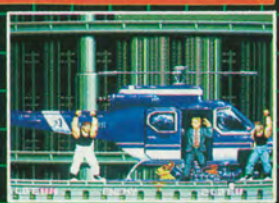
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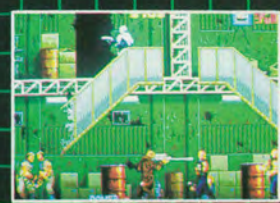
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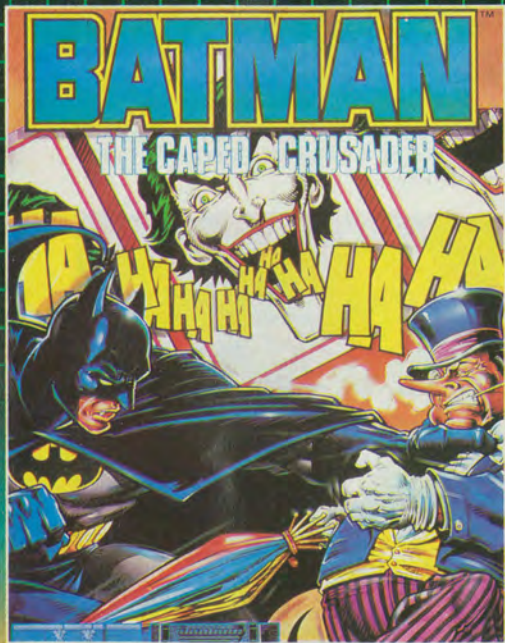
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CRITICAL LIST!

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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 Batarave 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 innovative game play for long lasting entertainment.
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DARK AVENGER

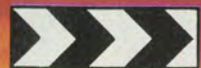
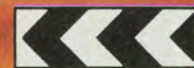
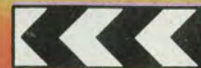
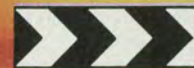
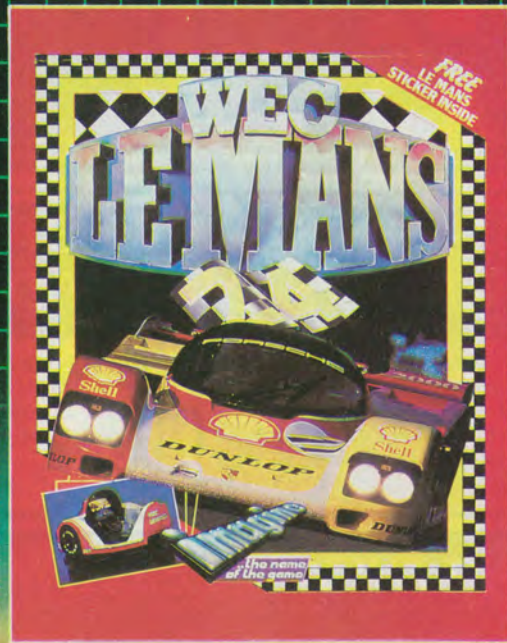
CAUTION LAZER BEAM



Poster Included

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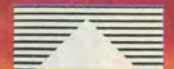
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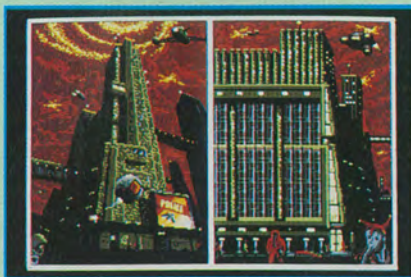


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ACTION PACKED

INTERVIEW: UBI SOFT - p. 68

Jason Spiller took time out to visit gay Paris, and more importantly, French software supremos, UBI soft. Just what have our foreign compatriots got in store for us over the next few months? Vive la difference!



GIVING THE GAME AWAY - p. 74

This month Driller, Double Dragon, Rambo III, Flying Shark, Batman and Goldrunner II all feature in Steve's Giving The Game Away tips section.

BIRTHDAY TOMBOLA - p. 64

Yes! It's our mega competition. We're offering hundreds and hundreds of lovely prizes. So, if you fancy winning a T-shirt, or a video, or a mug, or a pen, or a lead, or a cable, or a clock, or a watch, or a game, or a sticker, or a badge or a sweat shirt, then get scribbling!

CASE FOR THE CONVERTED - p. 62

Mark Smith and Dennis Hemmings take a look at some of their favorite arcade games and scrutinize their ST conversions. Just what did they think of Thunderblade, 1943, Operation Wolf and Double Dragon?

ST ACTION INDEX - p.12

Are you tired of looking back through all the contents pages just to find the review of you favorite game? Now, just to help, we present this east-to-use index.

DID THEY DESERVE IT? - p. 18

In a retrospective lookback, Steve Merrett takes a peek at the STAs of the past year. If you thought a particular game was either over or underrated, here's your chance to see whether we still thing the games have stood the test of time.



MEGA POKES - p. 77

Yes we've done it again! Hacker extraordinaire, Mark Lawrence, brings you mega pokes for Ocean's Operation Wolf and Batman and Domark's Return of the Jedi.

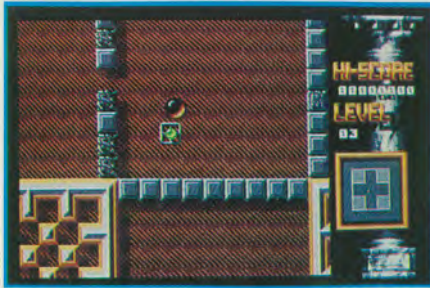
DUNGEONS AND DISK DRIVES - p. 82

Andy Mitchell lets the Troll loose for yet another month. Games featured this month include; Leisure Suit Larry I and II, Dungeon Master and Space Quest.

WHO DO THEY THINK THEY ARE? - p. 80

Do you really care who the people behind ST Action actually are? Even if you don't, as it's our birthday we decided that the unsung heroes of STA deserved a little bit of credit.

REVIEWS! REVIEWS! REVIEWS!

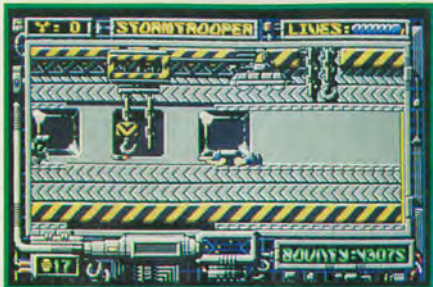


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F.O.F.T. - p. 24 ↓



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↑ *ZAK McKRACKEN* - p. 44

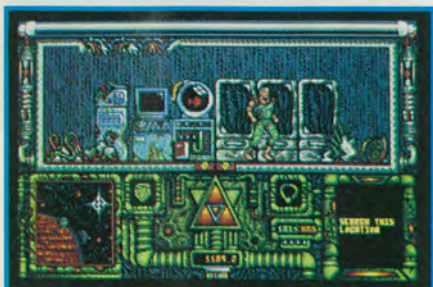
ANDES ATTACK - p.28 ↓



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← *SPACE HARRIER II* - p. 58



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ACTION NEWS

Hello, and welcome to ST Action's bumper birthday issue. Yes, we're one year old this month, and just to celebrate we're offering you the chance to enter our mega tombola competition - we've got hundreds of prizes that must be won. This month also sees yet more ST Action exclusives; Run The Gauntlet, King's Quest IV, F-16 and Titan! Meanwhile we've a report from Paris where Jason Spiller travelled to visit France's own UBI Soft. Steve Merrett takes a look back over the first part of the last year and asks, "Did the STA1 rated games deserve the accolade?". Anyway enough of this small talk it's time to read our BIG features!

BALLISTIX



Following on from last month's news feature about Psychapse's next release, Ballistix, here are some screen shots of the ST version. As you can see this futuristic football game looks as though it will be quite something. Expect Ballistix any time now, priced £19.95.



FOOTBALL CRAZY

Just received this month is a demo of Anco Software's latest title, Kick Off. As you have probably guessed, the game is a soccer program. Played in an overhead perspective view, the game provides frantic football fun. It offers a full-size, multi-directional scrolling pitch with a scanner showing the exact positions of all twenty-two players. Tactical play, including the sweeper formation is illustrated. Individual player skills each have their own levels of pace, stamina, accuracy and aggression. The teams are all different: the Danish team possesses fearsome strikers while the Brazilians are amongst the most skilful. Precise ball control is possible, players can dribble, shoot, pass, head and chip the ball, and the ball is affected by ground friction and wind direction. There are five skill levels ranging from amateur club levels to full international status. The game also allows for leagues, a range of corners, throw-ins, injury time, sliding tackles, penalties and both red and yellow cards! Kick Off will be available from the beginning of April at the price of £19.95. Watch out for next month's full review.

The Real Ghostbusters

The Ghostbuster craze seems to be having something of a revival just lately, especially with the emergence of the 'Real Ghostbusters' cartoon series. Activision's latest game is based on the little known coin-op of the same name which, incidentally, was never released in the UK. Taking on the role of one of the Ghostbusters, you must zap your way through twelve ghoulish levels in an attempt to rid the world of the evil spirits.

At the end of each level you must zap your electron beam at an end-of-level guardian ghost before obtaining a key which will allow access to the next haunted area. It won't be easy but, with the help of your invincible friend, Slimer, you just might make it. The Real Ghostbusters features a two-player facility; 8-way smooth scrolling; great sound effects; fast moving animation; a dynamic introduction screen; and bonus spooks

Ghosts and demons abound in Activision's latest arcade conversion.



with extra energy shields. The finishing touches are just being added to the game, so expect to see it soon. The Real Ghostbusters will cost £19.95.

Meanwhile, Activision's very own Software Studios mob are currently working on a number of Sega arcade conversions, keep an eye out for the following: Time Scanner, Wicked, Galaxy Force II, Ninja Spirit, Altered Beast, Attack Football, Super Wonder Boy, Dynamite Dux and Power Drift - phew!



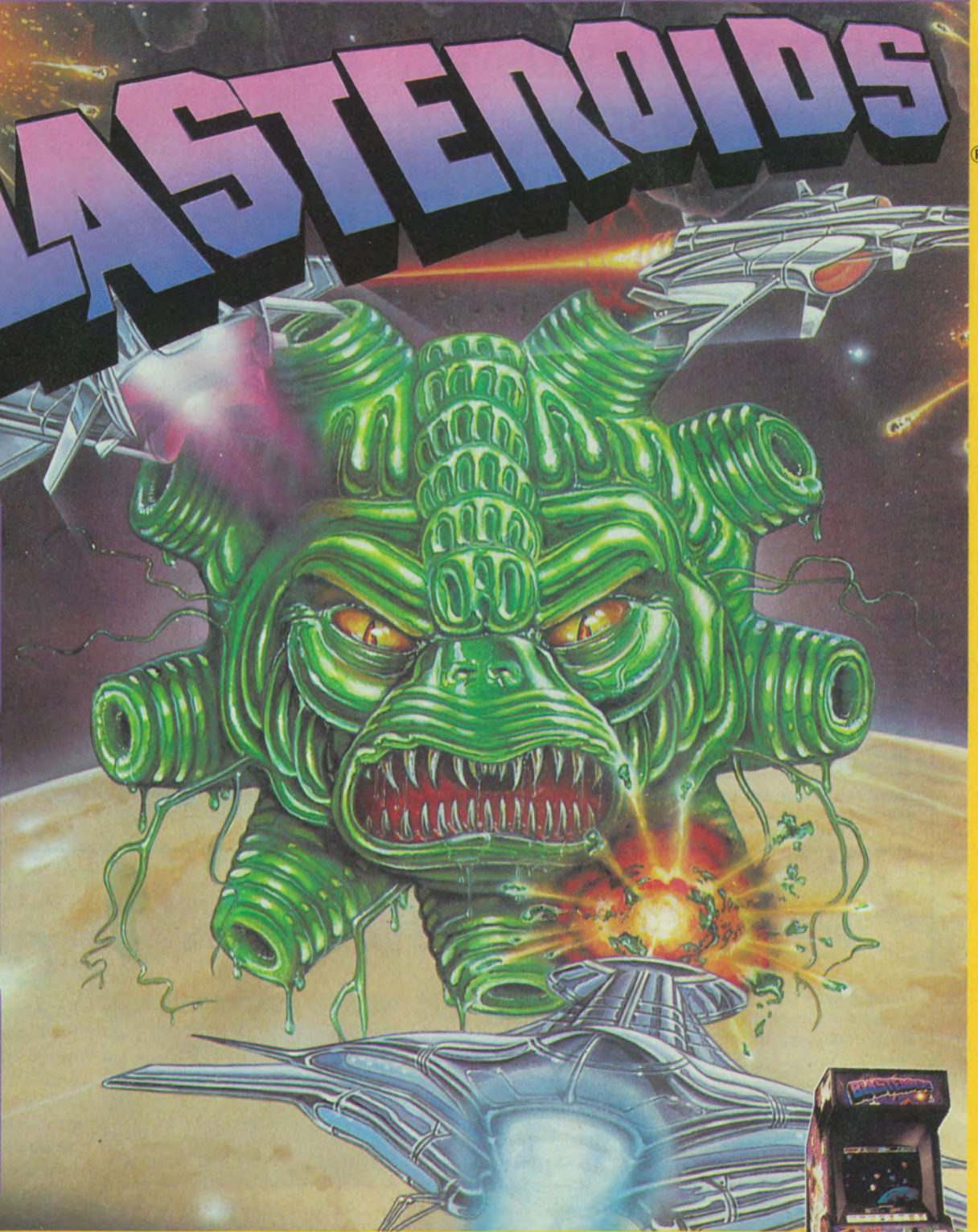
Take careful aim with your electron beam and then....

FULL WARNING STATUS: CONDITION RED

BLASTEROIDS



AMIGA SCREEN SHOTS



THRUSTER ● LAUNCH!
WARRIOR ● LAUNCH!
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"YOU HAVE FIFTEEN SECONDS TO COMPLY.."

Coming soon from Ocean is the computer game of Orion Pictures' brilliant film, Robocop. In case you are not familiar with the story, it is set in Detroit several years in the future, a run-down seedy city where corruption and murder are rife. The film begins with the brutal murder of a rookie cop called Mike Murphy. The corporation who now own the police force, the all-powerful OCP, take Murphy's body and use it in their experiments to

make a robotic policeman. Their previous attempt, named the (ED)-209, had failed, killing a member of the board, but this time, using Murphy, they cracked it. Robocop takes to the streets, cleansing the city of crime, but after a while human traces start to shine through, and Robocop/Murphy begins to remember his killers. Before long, he is tracing them and out to avenge himself.



Subject to change, this bit. The photo-fit section at the moment features someone who looks suspiciously like Garry Bracey, but this will change to Clarence Boddiker and his cronies.

Extra weapons can be collected by punching or shooting the various crates that lie in the road. The three-way firing gun Robocop has here is particularly useful for shooting the thugs that hang out of the windows.



Pete Johnson (famous for Wizball and the Arkanoid games) is tackling the conversion, and so far it is looking promising. There is a coin-op of Robocop, but the ST version enhances the basic idea, adding sections that adhere to the film more closely. For the main part, the game is a horizontally-scrolling shoot'em-up in which you patrol Detroit's villain-infested streets, killing any assailants. Armed initially with your metal fists, and later, a gun, you move along the scrolling city, shooting or hitting any thugs. The villains hang out of windows shooting you, and walk around - some even attack on motorbikes - and, if their attacks hit you,

your energy bar is depleted. Between these scrolling levels there are several sections viewed in third-person perspective. For instance, there is one in which Robocop must use the police identity kit computer to match the face of one of his murderers; this must be done against a strict time limit, and if he fails he loses a life. Also, there is a scene where a girl is held by a knife-wielding punk. The action is viewed through Robocop's eyes, and, using a cross-hair sight, you must kill the punk without harming the citizen. Hopefully, Robocop should be with us within a month, and looks well worth the wait.

"ARCHIPELIGWHAT?"

Coming soon from Logotron is a game which their publisher, Herbert Wright, describes as 'dangerously weird!' Archipelagos is a game set over a 3D landscape, and involves destruction of strange obelisks. It transpires that you are a floating entity (told you it was weird!), and you must destroy the strange-powered

stone. This can only be done by linking every stone on the island using a 'landpath'. Once all of the stones are joined, the obelisk will be destroyed and you can go on to the next island. The landscape is very impressive indeed, scrolling smoothly around under the control of your



Archipelagos is indeed a strange game, just what are those mutated palm trees?

mouse. Due to the stone's power, land is infected with a red virus and, if touched, it will kill anything. Trees rise and fall, indicating that they are dying, but by pressing a key, you can temporarily halt the disease's flow. Herbert is confident that the game is going to be 'like nothing you have seen before' and from the three-level demo version we have seen, it looks to be true! Archipelago will be launched onto the unsuspecting world in a month or two, so if you fancy some serious weirdness, take a peek.

SLEEPING GODS LIE

Entertainments International have given us news of their latest game, an adventure entitled, 'Let Sleeping Gods Lie'. An evil wizard has taken over from the old-gods, the all-powerful warlock has the future of your people in the balance. Your only hope is to awake the last remaining god, who just happens to be lying frozen in an ice tomb located at the far reaches of the lands. Sleeping Gods Lie features strategy and arcade action, and will available in May. Just to wet your appetite here is a pre-production shot of the game.



HEWSON'S BUMPER BUNDLE

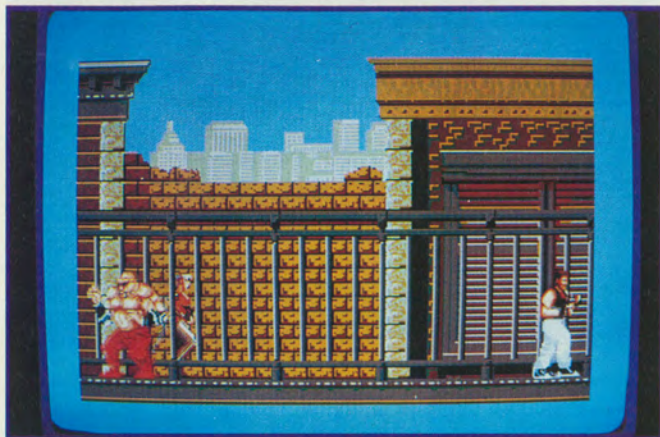
Software supremos, Hewson, are proud to announce their first ST compilation pack. Named, 'The Premiere Collection', Hewson's bundle will feature four of their greatest games: Nebulus, ST Action's favourite tower-topping game; Exolon, a spaced-out shooting platform style game;

Netherworld, a fiendish maze/puzzle game; and Zynaps, a red-hot shoot'em-up. The Premiere Collection will be available from the end of March, and will cost £29.99. Hewson have also named their next release, a role-playing adventure entitled Onslaught - more next month.

OCEAN'S SECOND COMPILATION

Yes, hot on the heels of Ocean's Five Star compilation comes 'Precious Metal', featuring Capt. Blood, Super Hangon, Arkanoid 2 - the revenge of Doh and Xenon. This mega bundle should materialize

around mid March and will carry a price tag of £24.99. Also due from Ocean are Red Heat, Dragon Ninja and Run the Gauntlet - watch this space!



Dragon Ninja is looking good and is soon to be set loose on the game-playing public.



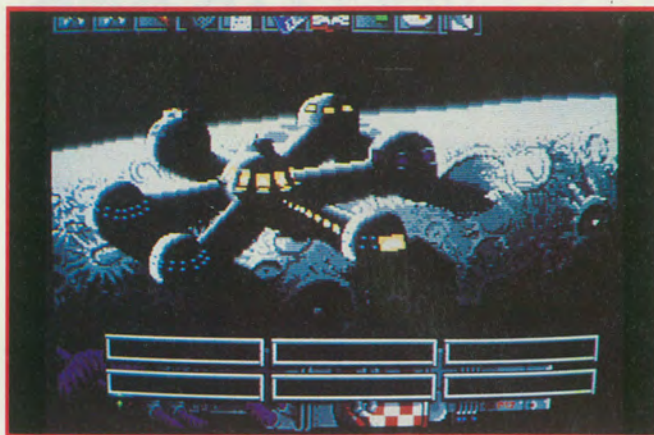
Beautifully animated sprites are the order of Ocean's Red Heat.

CLOUGHIE'S FORTUNES

Nottingham Forest's much publicized manager, Brian Clough, will soon be appearing on our screens, courtesy of CDS software. Brian Clough's Football Fortunes take on a dual role, not only as a computer game, but also as a board game. All aspects of football management are covered as you 'wheel and

deal' your way to soccer stardom. The game was written using the advice of Mr. Clough himself and has already been a best seller on the 8-bit format. Expect to see Brian Clough's Football Fortunes really soon. For the signing fee of £14.99 what more could you want?

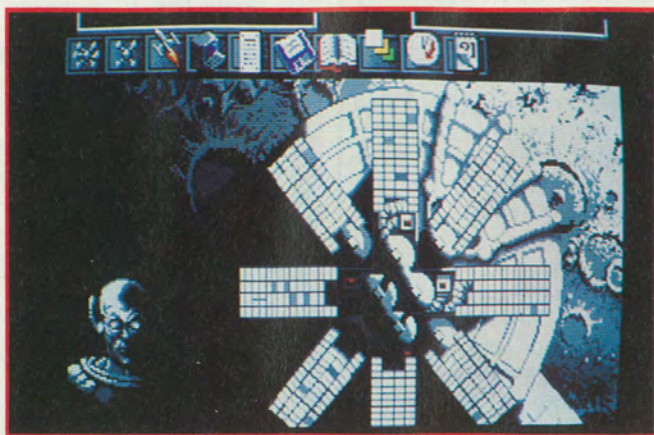
The moonbase, central command for the surviving human race.



MILLENNIUM 2.2

Activision, the Reading-based company who are normally associated with arcade action games, are proud to announce the release of their latest game, Millennium 2.2. The game is an original, exciting and complex strategy game. Programmed by Ian Bird, a 'master strategist' and programmer of titles such as 'High Frontier', Millennium 2.2 features splendid graphics created by 18-year old fine artist, Jai Redman (himself featured in our graphic artists feature STA 10). Set in the year 2200, the world has been rendered uninhabitable due to a massive asteroid that has plunged into the Pacific Ocean. There are no survivors on the Earth and the planet itself will not be habitable for at least another four years. You are the commander of not only a moonbase, but also of the last remaining group of humans. Your mission has now been drastically changed - the future of the

human race is now in your hands! Using your skills you must create new spacecraft that will enable you to colonize new moons and planets. Attention to detail throughout the game is magnificent; all the planets and their moons can be displayed on a galactic map, which moves in the exact pattern the stars follow in space. Millennium 2.2 features a wonderful blend of strategy and action and should keep even the hardest of players busy for quite some time. Millennium 2.2 boasts stunning graphics and sound; a wealth of accurately researched data to gather and explore; scientifically correct movement of planets and stars; the opportunity to colonize and travel the galaxy; and most importantly, the chance to make the Earth a habitable place for humankind to return to. Millennium 2.2 will be available from the end of March and will cost £24.99.



Using a Mk8 Solagen can create a fair wack of power - you'll need it.

POT LUCK

Rack'em up Joe! Pool features state-of-the-art 3D graphics.



Coming soon from Firebird, is a game that will appeal to all you Pool fans out there. 3D Pool has been officially endorsed by the current European Pool champion, 'Maltese' Joe Barbara, and features a novel 3D perspective that gives the impression that you can actually walk around the table! There are four computer-controlled opponents going under strange names, such as The Catford Kid and Flash Harry, and each must be beaten three times before you may proceed to the next tricky contender. Firebird boast that the game will feature trick shots and intelligent opponents, and judging by the author, Orlando (alias Nick Pelling), whose previous games include the 8-bit Frak! and Firetrack, it could well be true.

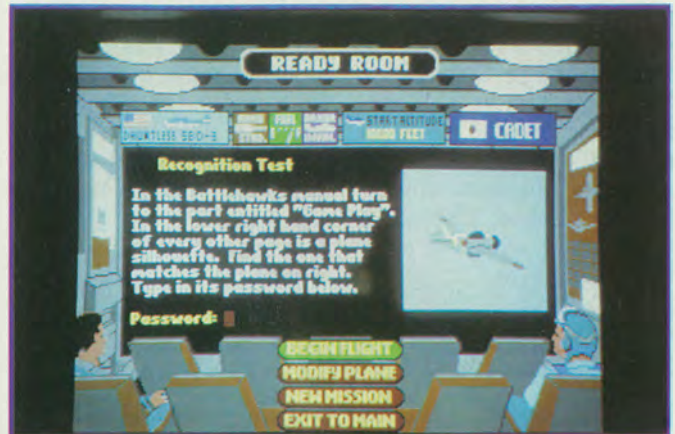


SUPERCHARGER

De Gale Marketing have launched their Quick Joy Supercharger. The Supercharger retails for £12.95 and is billed as 'the game-player's dream'. Fitted with the obligatory suction pads, two firebuttons, autofire and no less than six microswitches, the Supercharger is a very responsive piece of equipment. The Supercharger is the first of what is to be a family of four sticks from De Gale. Backed by Electrocoin, one of the UK's leading arcade companies.

ROGER, WILCO AND OUT

Hot on the heels of Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders comes Battlehawks 1942 from Lucasfilm Games/U.S. Gold. Apparently programmers used actual World War 2 newsreel footage to aid them in achieving extra realism. The game re-enacts the bitter battles between the American armed forces and the mighty Japanese Empire. Players may experience the encounters from either side and will be able to pilot a number of different crafts ranging from USAF Wildcat fighters to fearsome Japanese Val dive bombers. Battlehawks uses high resolution, digitally rendered images that are zoomed onto the screen in a most convincing manner. The game sticks closely to the historical happenings of the period and all of the planes move in relation to their technical abilities.



Every pilot should know what he's shooting at - you'll have to pass a test before take-off.

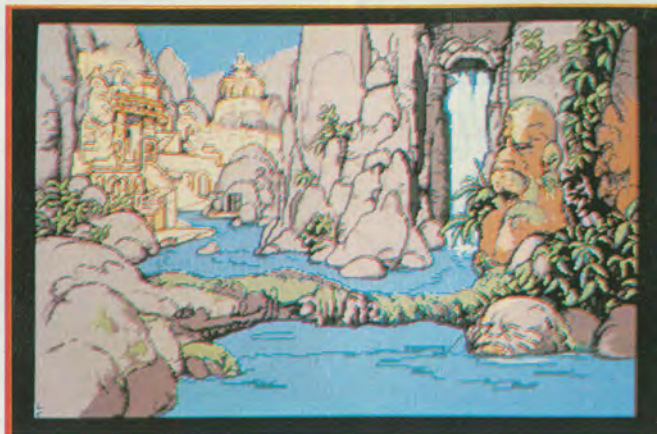


Bombing ships would be easy if it weren't for all the enemy air support.

QUEST FOR THE TIME BIRD

Infogrames are proud to announce their latest title, The Quest for the Time Bird. This time the French company's game is an adventure based on a famous French comic strip. An adventure in which you play the part of three characters: the Knight Bragon, an axe-wielding warrior; Roxanna, a ferocious whip-cracking heroine; and the Stranger, a mysterious man whose lethal cross-bow rarely fails to make its

mark. The aim of the game is to retrieve the Conch of Time from the evil monster, Ramor, thus stopping him from destroying the planet of Akbar. Along the troublesome road of your quest you will encounter unknown worlds, sacred and magic objects, riddles, wonderful legends and dangerous animals. Hopefully, the game will be available in April and will cost £24.95



COOL JULE



Jules Verne's latest novel to be converted onto the ST is to be 'Journey to the Centre of the Earth' (the last one being 20,000 Leagues under the Sea). Available from U.S. Gold, although written by the German company, Rainbow Arts, the game sees you and four other explorers travelling to the Earth's core. Along the journey your party will encounter slimy reptiles, falling rocks, stampeding mammoths and an ever decreasing supply of food and water. Of course, you may choose which of the characters you want to be, but you must remember each have their own attributes. The game features a nice blend of action and strategy and was programmed by the same team responsible for U.S. Gold's Joan of Arc.

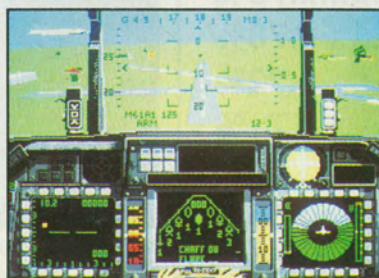


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The team responsible for Bio. Challenge.



PALACE GET DELPHINE

Coming soon from Palace are a series of games written by the programming division of French company Delphine records. The team, who incidentally wrote the main core of Elite's conversion of Space Harrier, are working on about five titles which will be distributed on the Palace label. So far, Palace supremo, Pete Stone only has news of one, an arcade game called Bio-Challenge, but he says that the games will all be

arcade-orientated. Bio-Challenge is a fast-moving platform game, with the player controlling a half man, half robot, central character. Also patrolling the screens are a number of deadly enemies who can be killed by causing a platform to squash them. There are going to be a number of sub-games in Bio-Challenge, featuring large guardians, and Pete hopes that it will be reviewable by next month.

MICROPROSE ON THE MOVE

The latest news from the Microprose camp is of their next 'big' project, provisionally titled 'Tank'. Programmed by the same team responsible for classics such as Gunship and F-19 Stealth, Tank sees you in command of an Abraham's M1 tank. No pictures as of yet, but Tank promises to be a most detailed simulation. Pirates is at last having the final touches made to it, expect to splice the main sometime around the

middle of April. Soccer is also nearing completion and is expected on or around April 7th. As for all you budding pilots, F-19 looks cleared for a July take-off. One final piece: Microprose took on the might of Electronic Arts in a combat-zone paint shoot earlier in the month. The outcome: an outstanding victory 6 - 0! It just goes to show that Microprose learned something from their game, Airborne Ranger.

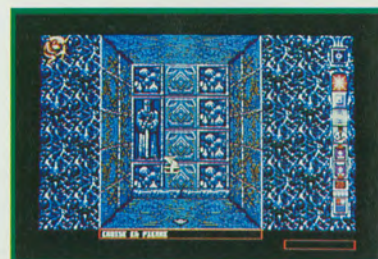


Ultima V is almost complete - will you be able to save Lord British and his knights?

TEMPLE OF THE FLYING SAUCERS

New from Exxos, the company who brought us Captain Blood and Purple Saturn Day, comes the Temple of the Flying Saucers, a stunning graphical adventure. The Earth has survived a nuclear apocalypse and is now at the end of its third millennium. Three races inhabit the planet: the Humans, degenerate and superstitious, they live in small scattered villages; the Mutants, a hybrid race who roam in nomadic tribes; and the Tuners, an exceptionally gifted and telepathic race who weave a secret communication network throughout the world. Two young Tuners, Raven and SciFi, were sent to a Network centre to begin their training but, on the

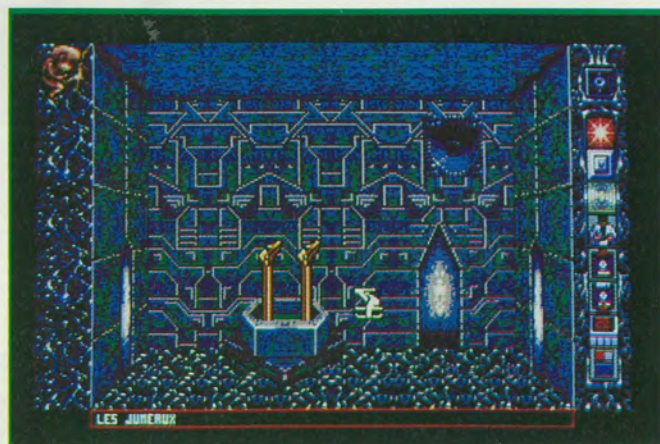
The search for your friend, Raven, is an immense task.



way, they were attacked and Raven taken hostage. As SciFi, you must not only rescue your friend, Raven, but also reveal the evil plans of his captors and unmask their master, Zorq, and his plot to create a new race with the last of the humans. The game will be available from April at the price of £24.95

TOP TEN SCORING GAMES THIS MONTH

1. King's Quest IV87%
2. Blasteroids81%
3. Talespin80%
4. F-1679%
5. Fusion78%
6. Zak McKracken72%
7. F.O.F.T.71%
8. Stormtrooper69%
9. Space Harrier II66%
10. Titan61%



Mazes abound within the temple - can you find the correct route?

BULLFROG'S POPULOUS

This month sees the review of Bullfrog's first release, Fusion. We are also proud to announce their next project, Populous. Apparently, Populous is a game like no other before it. The game is about two nations - one good, one evil - both fanatic followers of their own god and both fearsome warriors. The general idea is to invade

and populate new lands, evolve new technologies and eventually wipe out the opposing nation. Featuring an overhead view of the 'world', players will be able to instantly zoom into an area which will be displayed in glorious 3D. Of course, you will be able to play against the computer, but you'll also have the opportunity to play oppo-

nents via a datalink, either ST to ST or ST to Amiga - there's even the option to play by modem! Players will be able to battle over hundreds of different landscapes featuring four different terrains, such as arctic or desert. Players will even be allowed to create their own landscapes for use in later battles. With features such as digitized sound, floods, earthquakes, sea monsters and giant birds, Populous will certainly be a much awaited title. Again, the

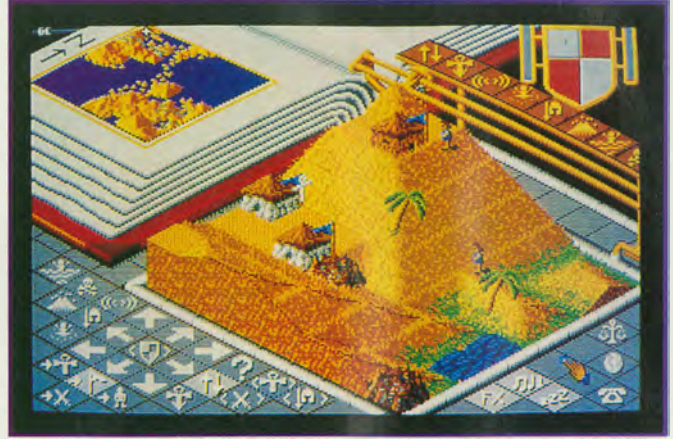
Populous features brilliant graphics - here is an arctic landscape.



game will be available in April, at an asking price of £24.95



Bullfrog look set to become a major name in ST software, just look at those graphics!



Populating the land would be easy, if it weren't for all the hidden pitfalls.

STEVE DAVIS' WORLD SNOOKER

CDS Software are proud to announce their second sporting personality tie-in. Yes, now you can take on the snooker genius of the world's number one player, Steve Davis. But wait, not only can you challenge Steve at his own game, now you can also try your luck at both British and American Pool, Billiards and Carom (a strange game played on a table with no pockets, in which the idea is to cannon the balls as many times as possible). Steve Davis' World Snooker, as the game is known, features a multitude of options. You may zoom in on the action; control the cue ball,

giving it as much spin and side as you like; and even adjust the power of your shot. Accompanying the game is the theme music, Dagnet, which is used on most televised snooker events. Steve Davis' World Snooker is aimed at players of all abilities from complete novices (like me), to full blown professionals. The computer has been programmed to think just as Steve himself would. So chalk up your cue and wish for luck - you're going to need it! Steve Davis' World Snooker will be available from sometime in March and will be priced at £19.99.



Can you beat Steve Davis at his own game? Take careful and steady aim as you prepare to break.

AND FINALLY...

Do recognise this photo? Ray and Sara Maidstone are fanatic followers of the legendary Dungeon Master game. They took this picture in a friend's kitchen, apparently they tried pressing the concealed button several times but, alas, no secret passage opened up before them. Ray and Sara went on to inquire; just when is Chaos Strikes Back due for release? Well, the answer to the question that must be on thousands of ST Dungeon Master

addicts lips is as follows. Due to FTL being such professionals, the game has taken a little longer than expected (mainly because of all the bug testing). The good news, however, is that Chaos should materialize around mid April. Until then I would recommend all DM players to keep improving their character's skills - but remember, all the objects your team are carrying are confiscated at the beginning of Chaos Strikes Back. You have been warned!

What, a hidden button on a kitchen wall in Norwich?



ARTICLE INDEX 88-89

Want to find the review of your favourite game? Fed up with looking through all the contents pages to find it? Well, now you don't need to. Just to help we've collated details from all of the first eleven issues and presented them in this easy to use index.

TITLE	SCORE	ISSUE	PAGE	TITLE	SCORE	ISSUE	PAGE	TITLE	SCORE	ISSUE	PAGE
1943	44%	8	88	Garfield	60%	7	60	Return Of The Jedi	65%	9	69
20000 Leagues Under Sea	50%	10	59	Gary Lineker Super Skills	37%	9	47	Return To Genesis	70%	2	56
944 Turbo Cup	66%	9	68	Gauntlet II	88%	4	60	Revenge II	40%	4	55
A Question Of Sport	58%	10	28	Get Dexter 2	59%	1	78	Roadwars	62%	3	78
Action Service	53%	8	84	Goldrunner II	71%	3	80	Rockford	65%	1	72
Advanced Rugby Sim	54%	11	32	Great Giana Sisters	77%	5	74	Rolling Thunder	55%	3	85
Afterburner	65%	9	42	Growth	56%	9	77	Scrabble	69%	2	78
Airborne Ranger	70%	11	48	Gunship	83%	1	66	SDI	83%	7	38
Alien Syndrome	69%	5	84	Hell Bent	52%	10	59	Seconds Out	54%	1	60
Arkanoid II	64%	6	74	Hellfire Attack	66%	8	92	Shackled	50%	4	50
Army Moves	39%	6	34	Helter Skelter	82%	6	37	Shadowgate	77%	3	76
Around World In 80 Days	34%	8	78	Heroes Of The Lance	78%	9	40	Side Arms	61%	5	78
Artura	55%	9	66	Hostages	82%	8	36	Sidewinder	65%	4	63
Asteroids Deluxe	43%	6	34	Hotball	26%	11	30	Sinbad	60%	7	68
Atax	45%	9	66	Hotshot	54%	6	62	Skrull	66%	7	74
Baal	69%	10	54	Hyperdrome	53%	10	35	Skychase	60%	7	32
Barbarian II	85%	10	30	I Ball	48%	2	80	Slap Fight	58%	1	68
Batman	73%	11	52	IK+	81%	8	70	Soldier Of Light	58%	10	58
Battle Probe	25%	7	82	Ikari Warriors	56%	2	68	Sorcery +	59%	8	74
Battleships	66%	2	54	Impossible Mission II	77%	3	54	Space Harrier	75%	6	44
Bermuda Project	58%	3	70	Ingrid's Back	75%	9	78	Speedball	75%	7	28
Better Dead Than Alien	52%	5	61	International Soccer	66%	2	76	Spidertronic	65%	2	74
Beyond The Ice Palace	58%	4	72	Jet	64%	6	60	Spitfire 40	70%	2	55
Beyond Zork	72%	1	62	Joan Of Arc	55%	9	48	Spitting Image	59%	10	32
Bionic Commando	67%	5	72	Joe Blade II	47%	10	35	ST Wars	43%	3	81
BMX Simulator	54%	2	58	Jump Jet	42%	1	58	Staff	52%	2	79
Bomb Disposal	50%	4	51	Kennedy Approach	55%	10	56	Starfleet	50%	4	78
Bomb Jack	55%	6	43	Killdozer	47%	4	68	Starglider II	77%	6	68
Bombuzal	73%	8	76	Knightmare	48%	3	58	Stargoose	71%	7	72
Bounce Out	54%	10	34	Lancelot	75%	8	68	Starquake	69%	3	79
Brainbox	58%	5	69	Leatherneck	62%	3	62	Starray	75%	8	42
Buggy Boy	83%	2	60	LED Storm	55%	10	36	Stella Crusade	60%	7	70
Captain America	56%	3	64	Legend Of The Sword	81%	5	62	Stir Crazy	86%	3	68
Captain Blood	84%	2	72	Leisure Suit Larry II	81%	11	58	Stock Market	70%	3	86
Captain Fizz	41%	11	31	Live And Let Die	54%	9	54	Street Fighter	43%	6	52
Carrier Command	91%	2	64	Lombard RAC Rally	71%	9	44	Street Gang	31%	7	82
Championship Cricket	42%	6	55	Lords Of Conquest	54%	4	54	Summer Olympiad	72%	6	64
Chopper X	52%	2	61	Luxor	45%	8	94	Sundog	70%	3	60
Chrono Quest	70%	9	80	Mafdet	44%	8	45	Super Hang On	84%	6	56
Chubby Gristle	54%	5	69	Manhattan Dealers	68%	9	56	Superman	61%	11	36
Chuckie Egg	68%	9	60	Manhunter New York	76%	11	74	Superski	73%	4	58
Circus Games	64%	10	26	Maniax	48%	10	66	Superstar Ice Hockey	51%	9	62
Corruption	68%	5	86	Masters of the Universe	61%	3	66	Tau Ceti	66%	2	80
Cracked	58%	4	68	Menace	77%	9	72	Techno Cop	66%	11	57
Crash Garrett	56%	2	48	Mickey Mouse	78%	5	76	Tetra Quest	55%	8	72
Crazy Cars II	70%	11	22	Mindfighter	58%	4	56	The Deep	63%	11	54
Crosswords	67%	11	47	Mini Golf	63%	11	60	The Games: Winter Edition	77%	11	40
Custodian	56%	11	42	Mission Genocide	56%	2	67	The Grail	48%	10	62
Cybernoid	81%	7	30	Moonbase	44%	5	60	The President Is Missing	68%	10	64
Cybernoid II	68%	11	26	Motor Massacre	47%	9	53	Thrust	48%	2	67
D.Thompson's Olym Chall	67%	8	64	Motorbike Madness	54%	8	78	Thunderblade	78%	10	44
Dark Castle	60%	2	63	Munsters	54%	11	35	Thundercats	77%	4	48
Desolator	40%	10	34	Nebulus	92%	6	28	Time And Magik	47%	2	70
Double Dragon	73%	9	64	Netherworld	65%	6	46	Times Of Lore	69%	11	38
Driller	76%	7	78	Nigel Mansell's Grand Prix	46%	9	46	Tournament Of Death	34%	1	80
Dungeon Master	90%	1	56	Night Hunter	68%	11	64	Trantor	36%	3	81
Elemental	76%	8	76	Night Raider	78%	5	66	Trash Heap	55%	1	65
Elf	37%	8	45	No Excuses	53%	10	66	Trivial Pursuit: New Begin	61%	10	65
Eliminator	80%	6	76	North Star	42%	3	85	Ultima IV	56%	1	74
Elite	78%	7	64	Obliterator	59%	2	46	Uninvited	72%	4	66
Empire	70%	8	66	Offshore Warrior	43%	9	74	Vampire's Empire	65%	2	52
Empire Strikes Back	75%	6	72	Oids	68%	1	54	Vectorball	52%	6	49
Espionage	48%	9	52	Operation Wolf	90%	10	22	Veteran	58%	7	66
Exolon	63%	7	36	Outrun	84%	3	72	Victory Road	44%	10	46
Falcon	82%	10	38	Overlander	69%	6	38	Virus	75%	5	58
Fernandez Must Die	63%	8	80	Pacmania	70%	7	80	Vixen	53%	4	64
Final Assault	69%	10	63	Pandora	60%	4	70	Wanted	62%	11	51
Fire And Forget	58%	5	71	Pepsi Mad Mix Challenge	44%	9	60	Warhawk	46%	2	61
Fish	78%	8	90	Peter Beardsley's Soccer	52%	5	88	Warlock	52%	1	64
Flintstones	49%	3	57	Phantasm	60%	5	82	Warlock's Quest	72%	2	79
Flying Shark	69%	9	76	Pink Panther	32%	2	59	Where Time Stood Still	67%	8	82
Football Director II	64%	11	30	Platoon	78%	4	75	Whirligig	62%	6	58
Football Manager II	50%	5	80	Pool	63%	2	62	Wizard Warz	55%	8	94
Formula 1	48%	1	64	Powerdrome	59%	9	50	World Darts	57%	5	70
Foundations Waste	59%	3	84	Predator	62%	1	76	Xor	73%	3	82
Freedom	51%	10	42	Puffy's Saga	64%	9	70	Zero Gravity	61%	9	77
Frost Byte	55%	1	65	Purple Saturn Day	66%	10	48	Zynaps	63%	6	40
G.nuis	60%	11	24	Quadralien	67%	4	76				
Galactic Conqueror	24%	10	60	R-Type	90%	9	58				
Game Over II	33%	11	47	Rambo III	52%	10	50				

CINEMAWARE

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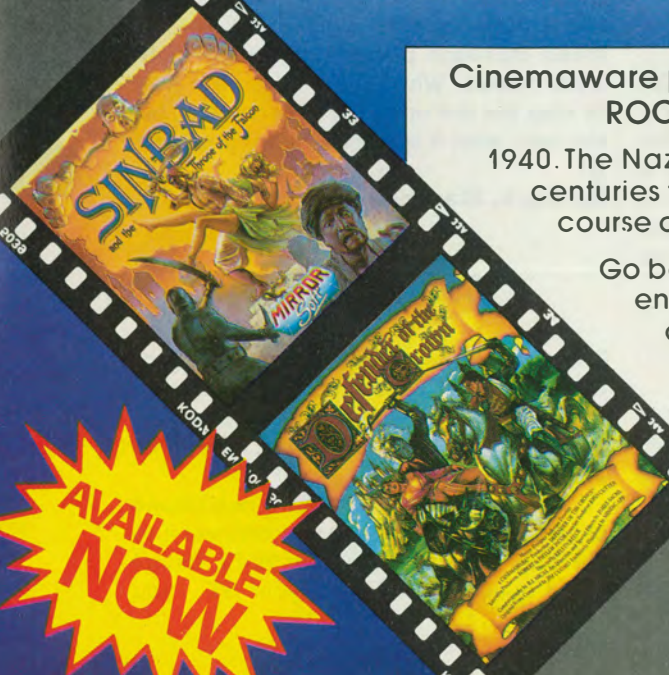
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THE LETTERS DESK

Got any interesting views about the software industry?

Want to air your anger? If so, then write to us at:

The Letters Desk, ST Action, 10 Theatre Lane,
Chichester, West Sussex. PO19 1SR.

And don't forget, we offer prizes for the most interesting letter.

Are 16-bit users getting value for money?

If it is at all possible, could someone please explain to me why it is that software houses keep on producing games that look like they are written for 8-bit machines with poor graphics, poor scrolling and poor game play. Such as; Leaderboard, Seconds Out, Super Cycle, 10th Frame, Black Lamp, Crazy Cars, Ikari Warriors and Solomon's Key - to name but a few.

How is it that software houses can justify putting a price tag of between £19.99 and £25.00 on software we can all consider as being of the budget £2.99 class of the 8-bit machines?

Why can't we see more of the type of software that really uses full potential of the 16-bit machines, such as, Barbarian, Defender of the Crown, Hostages, International Karate +, Oids, Dungeon Master and Lombard RAC Rally?

Surely it is software of this high standard that we all should expect from software houses, and not the shoddy rubbish they try to palm us off with as 16-bit software.

I would also like to take this opportunity to ask all the readers of your first class magazine to stop buying this poor quality software, in the hope that software houses will stop producing this rubbish due to poor sales, and start to produce more quality software fit to be used on 16-bit machines.

Steve Capel, Oxted, Surrey.

Steve, I'm not sure whether I agree with your list of sub-standard games - Leaderboard is one of my favourites. But, I will agree that some ST software is of a poor quality. My only suggestion is to carefully read the reviews and, if possible, test games in the shop before you buy them.

Roll call

I was wondering if you can put me in touch with Norman Winstanley of Macclesfield who wrote a letter to the Letters Desk way back in issue 8.

John Pritchard, Halewood, Liverpool.

Sorry, John, but we don't like to pass on

addresses directly. However, if you still want to get in touch with Mr. Winstanley, we will be quite happy to pass on any correspondence via the ST Action offices.

Proper play-testing?

Have you ever eagerly awaited the arrival of a new blockbuster game, and upon its arrival spent several hours coming to grips with it. Then just as you begin to appreciate it you discover something wrong. My latest frustration is 'Hostages', it repeatedly crashes during the second half of the game. "Return the game", I hear you cry. Well, I already did that. To their credit Castle Computers replaced it without a quibble, but this second copy also carries the problem. Then there was 'Annals of Rome' which also carried a program flaw, and to their credit, PSS replaced it without a murmur (and the new copy worked, it kept me occupied for hours). Before that though, there was 'Carrier Command' my first copy of which had numerous characteristics (i.e. a chain of fifteen islands could not refuel my carrier in 24 hours of continuous computer time). Thankfully, the second copy of this game was more normal and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Now if I go back to my Amstrad CPC days I could list other such faulty programs, sometimes exchanged successfully and sometimes not. My point is: why should I have to put up with this hassle? From what I have read in magazines, the software industry is supposed to have come of age. Surely this should mean thorough play-testing by the software houses. When I buy a game it may or may not live up to my expectations, but the very least it should do is work properly!

Ian Black, Stamford, Lincs.

Sound advice

It is a well-known fact that the sound produced by a TV or monitor speaker is not much to boast about. After searching around for the right bits of wire, I came up with this:

If your TV or monitor has a headphone or 'audio out' socket you can connect it to the CD/AUX socket on your HI-FI. Bingo! Good quality sound from your ST - you

can even record ST sounds and music onto tape. Your local Tandy or electrical store should have an ample supply of leads.

I have read somewhere that you can get software which allows you to copy protected games. Is this true? If so, where can I get it and how much does it cost? After all, it would be nice to know my £15/£25 software is safe from any computer viruses.

**Johnathan Dickinson,
Wetherby, W.Yorkshire.**

Letter from America

I am replying to the letter by J.Lawson in your January 1989 issue. I run an Atari sales and service store here in the States, am Systems Operator for a local Atari bulletin board system, and am President of our local Atari ST club. Mr. Lawson was wondering why the Atari ST was doing so well in England and Europe compared to the rather sluggish sales in the States. I wish I knew the full and correct answer, but I have some ideas. Atari does very little advertising in the States - this does not help the computer get known. While word of mouth is a good tactic to use in advertising, it is not going to hit the masses of people who might consider a computer if they were more informed of what is available. There may be some financial decisions regarding this decision - I have heard rumours that Atari does not do much advertising in the States because they would not be able to keep up with demand. This is partly true, as a dealer there have been several times I had to wait months before receiving a shipment of computers for waiting customers. I theorise the problem might be costs of 'improving' hardware from out of the country since Atari's plants are overseas. This also creates a problem in shipping time as well as other areas. I have heard Atari does 70% of its business in Europe. They are looking at 1989 as the year of expanding in the States, possibly with a production plant. Several such sites are being looked at in Texas and Nevada. Another item which has restricted some release of hardware has been the FCC. The Atari PC which is available overseas failed the FCC testing and needed to have some additional shielding before being able to pass. I would assume Atari's posture is; let's sell it where we don't have to modify it before pursuing all the work necessary to sell it where we have to. Finally, I think Mr. Lawson should consider himself lucky to even have choice of a RF modulator in the 1040ST. Here in the States we cannot obtain this piece of kit - again, I think it has something to do with the FCC regulations. I received an accidental shipment of them and sold them like hotcakes. When I went to re-order I

was told it was an accident that I had received them and that I could not obtain more.

This year will be an important time for Atari in the United States. No new major hardware was shown at Comdex, unless you include the foam mock-up of the Atari laptop. There are numerous new software titles available, but nothing like what has been developed over previous years. However, the support from software developers in Europe is another story. I am having to attempt to import software from Europe to remain on the cutting edge of software for the ST. Several magazines for the ST were dropped this past year: Compute's Atari ST, ST Applications, and the FaSTer Newsletter - there seem to be none taking their place. There are currently about two or three magazines supporting the ST and, once again, I am having to import magazines to fill this gap too. I would ask Mr. Lawson and all other European Atari ST users to help your friends in the States by putting pressure on Atari to increase their support to the States to allow for more support for all our users in the world.

**Mike Farrar,
Cottonwood, California, U.S.A.**

Brothers in arm

Whilst I enjoy your magazine and its reviews, I am totally frustrated that it allows itself to be dominated by the big-name releases, and seduced by the appeal of glossy colour screenshots and the games that can provide them.

As a wargamer, I am interested in the use of the computer to moderate and umpire, and even provide an opponent, for such games.

Games of this type are, I believe, available for the ST, but never seem to get reviewed. Please then, make space for war and strategy games - I just can't afford to buy games 'on-spec'.

Finally, UMS which received such rave reviews, was once again acclaimed for its graphical representations. Not one reviewer was able to spot what should have been obvious - that as a wargame simulation it is pathetic and undoubtedly hopeless. So, get a wargamer, not at computer buff, to do these reviews.

**Greg Mann,
Beckenham, Kent.**

Every month top-quality strategy/wargames come onto the market, most recently the Atari Battlescape series has begun to appear. Yet none of these games ever seem to merit a review by even the better ST magazines. We wargamers out here thus have no easy way of finding out what we're getting without having to front up with the cash.

I concede that strategy/wargames may



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PROJECTS

EXPENSES

DATA BANK

not have the popular appeal of the "knock'em-down/shoot'em-up" games, possibly because they involve heavy thought and are not cheap to buy. Yet I wonder if the situation might change if these games received at least some publicity. For example: More publicity=more interest=increased sales=more game development=possible cheaper prices?

The fact that these games are being developed proves that there is a market for the "cerebral" game, yet no publisher seems willing to even acknowledge their existence. Your magazine is now way ahead of its competition in both quality and content. Can I ask on behalf of all deprived wargamers out here that you please review at least one good "thinking" game each month. How's about it chaps - one or two pages out of about one hundred is not a lot to ask.

Chris Briggs, Woking, Surrey.

A Wolf in sheep's clothing

I feel I must write to complain about your review of Operation Wolf in issue 10. Although I agree that the game is an excellent conversion, your reviews only just mentioned the excessive amount of disk swapping.

The fact that the game comes on three disks (not mentioned) and that during the game one is continuously swapping disks, I believe completely ruins the playability. Your reviewers should spend more time informing us, your readers, on how the various games have been implemented on the ST, not a complete description of the storyline. It may be obvious to you now, but I purchased the above game after reading your review and have been disappointed.

Your review of Kennedy Approach I do agree with, but with a rating of 40%. If one gave the 8-bit version a score of 10, the 16-bit version would get 5! Compared directly with the 8-bit versions, this effort is pathetic.

Mr. W R Chapman, Porthowan, Cornwall.

Hello, Mr. Chapman, this is Steve here, the reviewer of Operation Wolf. In answer to your statement, I feel that the disk swapping didn't ruin the game - interrupted its flow, yes - but it didn't ruin the game. Additionally, with Kennedy Approach, the game should have been a lot better; granted, but it is not a totally pathetic version, as the 8-bit's playability and depth is still there. It is just that no major enhancements were made, thus the low rating.

Plagiarism lives!

While reading through the Letters Desk of the February 1989 edition of your magazine, I noticed a letter which was remark-

ably familiar, not only in content but also style and exact wording, to one that I had previously submitted to another magazine (TGM July 1988 page 119) and had, in fact, achieved the status "Best Letter". At the bottom of page 16 of ST Action (Feb 89) is a letter which you have titled status symbol. You will notice that certain key paragraphs are exactly the same.

I am not unduly perturbed by this blatant plagiarism, however I believe I would have been more upset if Mr. Sands' piracy resulted in him winning the "letter of the month" accolade (and game of his choice) from your magazine, as I am sure was his intention.

I notice, quite by chance, that at the foot of The Games Machine's title page there is a clause worded, "No material may be reproduced in whole..." ...Well, I'm sure you know the rest because a very similar clause appears on ST Action's contents page.

I do not expect Mr. Sands to be in any way repentant, in fact I expect he is feeling pretty smug at the whole affair. However, maybe he will be so embarrassed he will never try writing to anyone ever again. Largely due to his lack of original ideas. Afterall, anyone who has difficulties in successfully ordering things from mail order companies just because they once owned a ZX81 has definately got a problem.

One last idea, why don't you include a sheet of carbon paper with every Letters Desk? It would certainly make life much easier for those poor unfortunates who can't think up original letters for themselves.

John Tapper, Garway, Herefordshire.

Praise Indeed!

I have been an ST owner for about 4 months now, and have been buying both your magazine and that of one of your competitors. Both of you have different reviewing styles, the other relying on lots of glossy photos to fill space yet offering only about a quarter of a page of actual content. A perfect comparison between ST Action's reviews and theirs is highlighted in both your reviews of the Batman game. Once again they went overboard on the photos and hardly mentioned the game play; telling us all about the forthcoming film instead. ST Action, though, combined a wealth of photos together with an informative main review and three different peoples opinions. The other magazine seems to rely on the popularity of their reviewers, whereas you promote the games rather than yourselves. Needless to say yours is the only magazine I now buy regularly, keep up the good work, and long live ST Action!

P. Andrews, Aberdeen, Scotland.

Thank you for your kind letter, we will

endeavour to keep up the good work.

Catastrophic cover

In reply to S. Farnsworth's letter (X-rated games slammed, ST Action 11), just who does he/she think they are? I have been computing for just over five years now and have successfully managed to avoid sexist programs, such as strip poker games, with great ease. It is the choice of the individual as to which games they play and if S. Farnsworth's son wishes to play these games then I suggest that the fault lies with the parent and not the software company.

While in a moaning mood, just what the hell happen to ST Action 11's front cover? Batman has quite obviously been in a nasty accident since I last saw him, with his legs looking as if the Joker had filled his tights full of water! Likewise, Superman has had one of his fingers lopped off and has got one leg shorter than the other! Duval's covers are normally very good, so what on Earth happened. And whatever it was please don't let it happen again. Now this may seem a bit silly after the past criticisms, but ST Action is still one of my fave reads - so keep it that way!

Bob Murray,
Reading, Berks.

Sickened By Sierra

I feel obliged to write this letter to warn other ST owners who have had their machines for a while. I have been the proud owner of an STFM for over twenty months, so my machine has a single-sided drive built in, rather than the new double-sided type. I was not particularly bothered by this trivial fault, until the other day, as up until now I have had no problems with software. Then I bought Leisure Suit Larry II, because I'm another fan of Sierra's adventures. It was not until I arrived home that I noticed the legend, 'Dual-sided drive required', proudly embazened in minute print at the bottom of the box. I had an apprehension attack, surely it was a cruel joke - if only that were the case! It didn't work. I took it back and tried it in the shop to make sure the copy was okay but, alas, it was fine. Thankfully, the lads at The Computer Shop, Manchester, were very helpful and refunded my money. Needless to say, however, I am bitterly disappointed with Sierra for this glaring error. For thirty pounds surely extra disks could have been provided. It seems like a kick in the teeth for the users with older Ataris.

As a student, I cannot afford to pay out eighty quid on a double-sided drive just so I could play the odd game. Unfortunately this now seems the case and my favorite

Sierra games will no longer be available to me.

In reply to S.Farnsworth's letter (STA11) about X-rated games, perhaps she should realise that not every computer user is a child and there are many adults (young and old) who buy games such as Anco's Strip Poker 2+. As to them being degrading to women, I will not argue with this, but a company advertising in your magazine is selling a data disk for the above mentioned game containing nude pictures of men, so let's not use the sexist argument.

The one thing I never want to see in my life (apart from Man. Utd. winning the cup again) is a movement such as the one Mary Whitehouse is involved in with television. Afterall, it is up to us what software we play.

Paul, Salford, Manchester.

Paul, you are not alone. But, I have been in contact with Activision, Sierra's UK distributors, and am happy to report the good news. It seems that Sierra know about the problem, if you still want to play the game, you should send your copy of disk 1, together with a receipt and covering letter, to Sierra's Customer Service Department. They will then forward you a copy of the game that will work on your single-sided system. If you have any further problems then ring Sierra on 0101 209 683 4468.

Ghost Writer?

Okay, I've only really got one question. Now that Martin Moth has left you, just who is it that replies to these letters? Would the culprit please stand up!

Peter Williams,
Clubmoore, Merseyside.

Ok, Peter, it's a fair kop. It's me Nick, the poor and lowly editor of this fabulous magazine. I would like to end on that note. Thank you to all who have taken the time and trouble to write in. If you enclosed a stamped addressed envelope for a reply, please be patient I will endeavor to write soon. Until next month, au revoir.



A

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

PROJECTS

EXPENSES

DATA BANK

THE GREAT AWARDS

DID THEY DESERVE IT?

"In case you hadn't guessed, this issue celebrates our First Birthday. And as a way of a change, Steve Merrett has taken a retrospective glance through the past STA 1s, to see if they have stood the test of time."

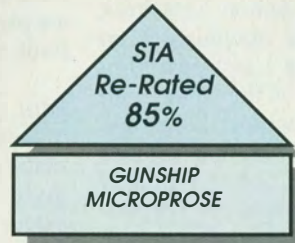
ISSUE ONE:

Right, the obvious place to begin is way back in the first issue, where a bunch of fresh-faced reviewers stepped up to take a look at the cornucopia of ST software available. I wasn't a reviewer in the first issue, and the team consisted of Nick Clarkson, Jason Spiller and Martin 'as an ex-lyer' Moth. Only two games received STA1 standard: Microprose's Gunship and FTL/Mirrorsoft's now legendary, Dungeon Master. The former was the long-awaited conversion of the 8-bit Apache helicopter simulator, and received 83%, provoking such comments as: "...the most thorough and realistic simulation to date..." from Jason, whilst Nick "Wholly recommended it to anybody", and, never one to be left out, Master Moth spouted that Gunship was, "Essential for all gung-ho 'Nam chopper drivers!" However, Martin is no longer with us, so I shall have my say on games he commented on.

"I only recently started playing Gunship properly, and feel it is one of the best games out. However, having attained the CMOH I now find it somewhat less of a challenge." - NC

"Yeah, but it took you long enough to get it!" - SM

"I think Gunship is excel-



lent, and has only just been superseded by Falcon." - JS

"Hmmm, I think Gunship has the slight edge." - NC

tion, and is commonly known as THE RPG. Controlling a chosen party as they ventured through a veritable labyrinth of monsters and magic, Dungeon Master was a superb success, causing Mitch to advise you to "Buy this today to wind up a Spectrum owner." - never one to mince his words was old Mitch!

"As you know, Mitch, I didn't get to review this game - more's the pity. From the scores awarded to other games during the year I would



"I think that the ratings should go up to around 85%" - JS

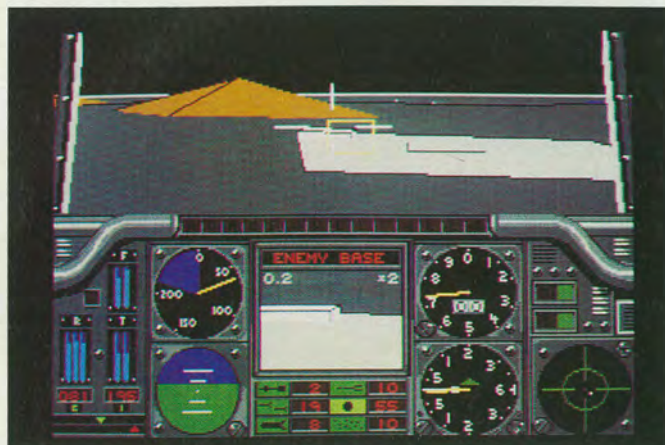
"So do I." - NC

The other STA1, Dungeon Master, needs no introduc-



have to say that this one was scored too low. In my opinion it's the best adventure game on the ST and definitely the best value for money." -SK

"This for me was also the highlight of the year. If I am ever cast away on that famous desert island with only eight pieces of software - I intend taking eight copies of this game. This is the one review I would like to rewrite



RED HEAT

The heat is on ... and the chase is in full cry as East and West join forces to hunt down a Soviet drug-dealer. The two detectives - one Russian, one from Chicago - both have different reasons for capturing their prey as they come face to face with the 'Cleanheads' gang, fist fights, gun fire and

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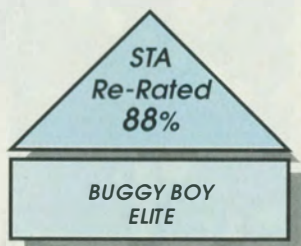
STAI



because I agree that I got it wrong. It didn't deserve a mark of 90%, it deserved 100%." - AM

ISSUE TWO:

Moving swiftly onto the second issue, we find three games worthy of STAI. An



interesting month, review-wise, considering that it contained what I reckon to be an almighty faux-pas - Elite's Ikari Warriors only getting 55%. This was a good conversion that was worth at least 70%, yet it scored lower than the dreadful Spidertronic which got 65%! Still, that's what you get for living in a democratic world. Anyway, first on the chopping block was another Elite conversion, this time, Buggy Boy. A new face appeared in the comment boxes then, a certain

Steve Merrett (me!), who went on to enthuse that, "Elite have surpassed themselves and come up with a near-perfect conversion." Strong words indeed! Nick also rated the conversion, saying that it was an essential buy. It went on to score a hefty 83%

"Well, seeing this was released almost a year ago, Buggy Boy still rates as one of the better race games." - HG

"I agree. It has that basic addictivity and 'just one more go' feel that so many lack; combine this with its crisp graphics and the whole package rates highly with me. I'd give it late 80s to early 90s nowadays." - NC

"Yeah, as with Nick, I feel that Buggy Boy hasn't aged one bit. The game plays as good as it looks, and I reckon it was a tad underrated, and deserved about 88%" - SM

"Yeah, that's about right, I'd say 88% as well." - HG

Buggy Boy's rerated score: 88%

Carrier Command was next, receiving 91%. Mr.Moth had been awaiting this game for a long, long time, and when it arrived, went suitably overboard, gushing that it was a 'Masterpiece'. Our Art Editor, Greg, for some reason had a

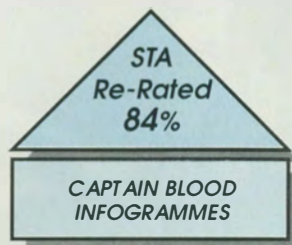


comment and went mad, telling you to "Sell your old software to get it." Hmm. A lot of mail followed this review, most of it saying how utterly wrong we were and



that it was more an exercise in graphics than a playable game. But Martin stuck to his guns...

"No way should this have



got 91%" - NC

"I agree, it seemed at the time to be just an exercise in graphics with a game grudgingly attached" - SM

"Mmm, that's a bit unfair, I mean there is quite a large task there." - HG

"It's bug-ridden as well!" - SM

"Well alright then, obviously its got to be lower, about 80% I think." - HG

"No, I reckon right down to 71%!" - NC

"Hear Hear!" - SM

Finally, the last STAI of issue two was Infogrames' novel Captain Blood. This mish-mash of pretty graphics and unusual gameplay won Martin's heart, and he said that it was "a worthwhile game." Our illustrious publisher, Hugh Gollner, had a say in this one as well, calling it "Innovative". Captain Blood eventually scooped 84%.

"Captain Blood was a nice idea that failed due to the lack of gameplay." - SM

"Yeah, another thing that bugged me was the fact that it was promoted as housing an entire galaxy. It did - but only about a dozen planets were inhabited." - NC

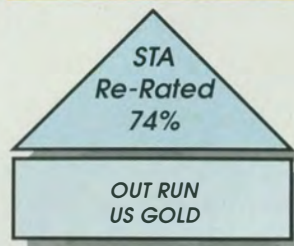
"Captain Blood was indeed innovative, but I feel it was merely an exercise in graphics. Bring its score down to about 70%" - JS

"I agree except that I feel

the score should come down to about 64%" - NC

ISSUE THREE:

STA3 marked a notable improvement in the quality of games we were receiving. Licences were becoming big business on the ST with games such as The Flintstones, Captain America and Nightmare all appearing that month. Coin-ops conversions were becoming more popular too, and this tenuous little link brings me to the



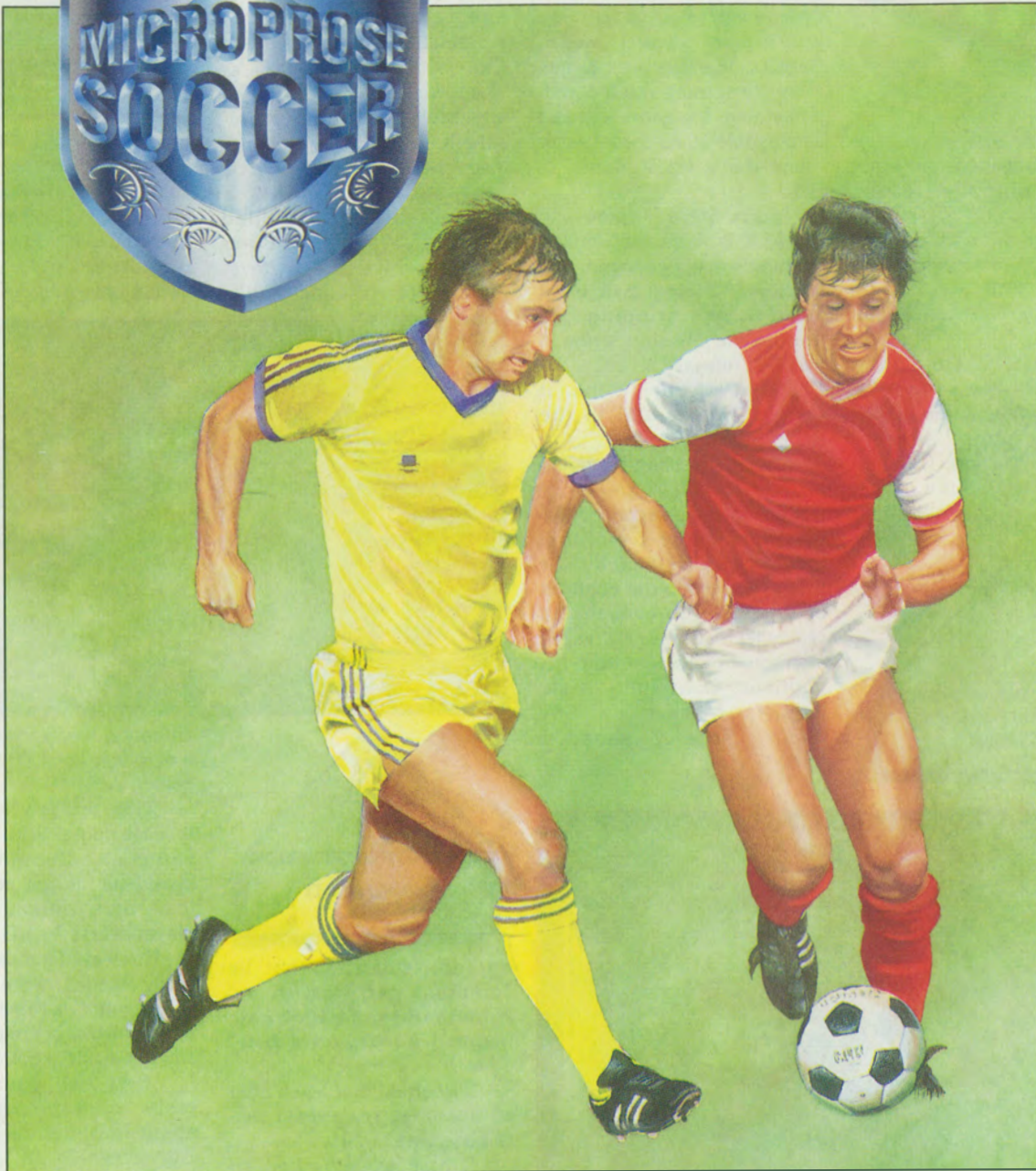
major STAI of issue three: the long-awaited Outrun. Driving your Ferrari at top speed with a pretty girl beside you appealed to the STA crew, and comments, such as, "excellent" and "outstanding graphics", were uttered by Hugh, Jason and myself, before we eventually gave it 84%.

"On reflection, I think we went totally over the top with Out Run. The graphics were poor and the sound was dire." - SM

"Yes, but it had all of the playability of its arcade parent." - HG

"Maybe, but I agree with Steve, even for a conversion, Out Run was a shoddy effort."





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STA1

- NC

"Yeah, but there are limitations to what the ST can do..." - HG

"Agreed, but all the same I feel it only deserves about 71% now." - SM

"No way, I reckon about 78%" - HG

Also from U.S. Gold that month, was the sequel to what was probably the greatest C64 game ever - Impossible Mission. Gaining 77%, it saw the return of the mad genius, Elvin

bit owners expect better graphics." - HG

"No, I disagree, the graphics were enhanced; just take a look at this version compared to an 8-bit and you'll see what I mean. Besides, the task was larger, there were more robots, and, if anything, the game was just as playable as its predecessor - and that's what counts." - SM

"Sorry Steve, I agree with Hugh, it is a bit too similar. Nothing's really changed. Ok, so there is a larger task, but it wasn't as gripping as Impossible Mission when it was first released." - NC

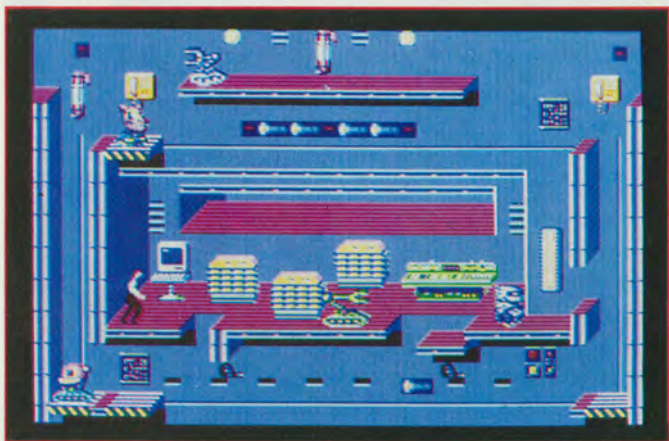
"That's what I think, it should get rerated to the upper 60s now." - JS

"Nope, I reckon it should increase to 78%." - SM

Collecting their second STA1 in as many months, Infogrames released Stir Crazy. Set within the confines of a prison, you controlled a character called Bobo, as he attempted to escape from his confines. Consisting of six humorous sections, Stir Crazy's novelty gained it 86%.

**STA
Re-Rated
70%**

**IMPOSSIBLE MISSION
US GOLD**



Atombender and his platform-laden screens. It was about four times larger than its predecessor and I thought it "had been worth the wait." Nick and Jason also thought it was a credible sequel and both said something along

"At the time I wrote that its lastability may be short, and I was right - I never played it again!" - SM

"On first sight, Stir Crazy was an excellent cartoon game, but like Steve I found its enjoyment very short-lived, and also never played it again." - NC

"No, I disagree. Stir Crazy isn't a bad game, and it is one I still play now. I think the

**STA
Re-Rated
69%**

**STIR CRAZY
INFOGRAMMES**

the lines of "get it now!"

"The thing that struck me about this was its similarity to its 8-bit predecessor. 16-

**STA
Re-Rated
77%**

**SHADOWGATE
MINDSCAPE**

original scores still stand." - JS

"No way, I'll bring its overall down to around the early 60s, let's say about 62%." - NC

The final STA1 of issue three was Mindscape's, Shadowgate. An icon-driven adventure, featuring atmospheric graphics and sound, a spooked-out Mitch could be heard to gibber, "This is undoubtedly a fun-filled cracker!" Whilst our other adventure supremo, the mysterious Steve Kennedy, dis-



that warranted STA1 were licences, and the first was Elite's conversion of those feline TV stars, The Thundercats. Essentially a platform romp, you controlled Lion-o as he set about



**STA
Re-Rated
68%**

**THUNDERCATS
ELITE**

agreed, twittering that he "couldn't get on with it." Nonetheless, Shadowgate haunted its way to a hefty 77%

"I'm afraid that, even after all this time, I still don't rate Shadowgate." - SK

"Oh, I do, it is just so engrossing. I spent ages trying to get past the Dragon's lair." - NC

"As with Nick, I feel that this was a nifty adventure. Not quite a classic, but still good. I'll stick by the original rating." - AM

"It would be unfair to lower the score simply because I don't like it, so, yes, keep it the same." - SK

"To tell the truth, I'd raise it slightly to about 78 - 79%." - NC

ISSUE FOUR:

Again, a spate of licences ruled the pages of STA, with subjects as varied as Corrine Russell and Eddie Edwards being converted into pixels! Additionally, the three games

chopping everyone up along a scrolling level. Thundercats gained 77%.

"Now this is what I call a brilliant game! When this first came in I thought it was incredible; its got ace graphics, nice music and a playable task." - HG

"No way! Thundercats has really aged! I mean the task you mention is repetitive, and the controls are sluggish to say the least." - SM

"How can you say the tasks are repetitive; what about the intermission 'rescue' screen?" - JS

"They were just more of the same!" - NC

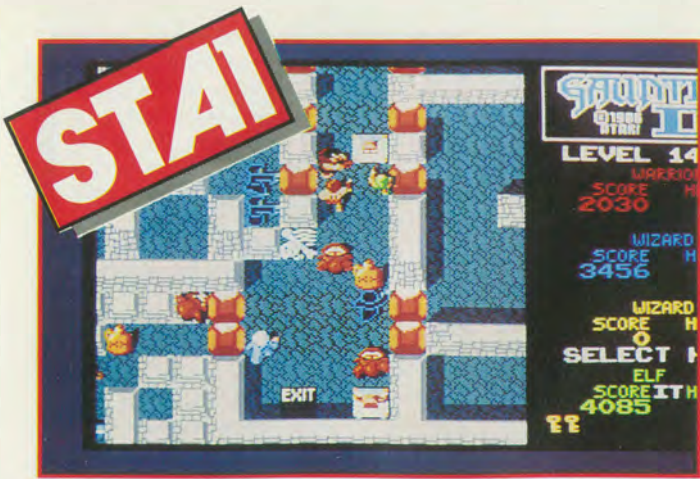
"Well I think this should score higher now. Around the 86% mark." - HG



"Never! I think around the lower 60s!" - SM

"Yeah, about 63%." - NC

Moving on from the cartoon licence, we enter the realm of film-to-computer conversions. Ocean's Platoon was eagerly awaited by the



chaps in the office, and the following game was set across six stages, each adhering closely to the film. Jason thought that: "You don't play Platoon, you experience a tiny fraction of the fear and terror", and the variety of levels and the atmospheric action earned Platoon a considerable 78%, but someone in the art department forgot to put the STA1 badge on it!

"Although over-hard, the

but I still think the original marks stand." - JS

"No, it would score 71% nowadays." - NC

Rounding off issue four, was U.S. Gold's conversion of the coin-op, Gauntlet II. Having converted the original Gauntlet rather successfully to the ST, the sequel took a surprisingly long time to arrive. When it did, the jerky scrolling of the original had been cleared up, speech synthesis added and the unique



atmosphere generated by Platoon made up for it. The gameplay was nice and varied, offering a separate game with each load." - JS

"Yes, I agree, Platoon was a worthy film licence, and one that should have scored slightly higher, around the 81%, I feel." - SM

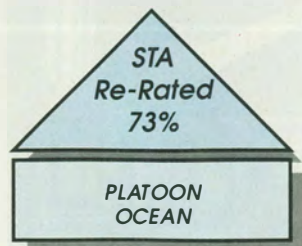
"I feel that Platoon was very overrated, the graphics are very 8-bitesque, and

four-player feature of its arcade parent was included. The closeness of the conversion and the playability earned Gauntlet II a stunning 88%.

"For some reason, the comment I wrote for Gauntlet II was never published. Still, it would only reiterate what I think now: that Gauntlet II is a timeless classic. The game is better when played with friends, but even on your own, it is very addictive. I'll stick by the original score."

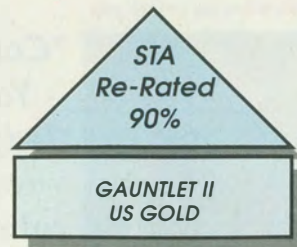
"Yes, this was miles better than the first, combining the novel four-player option of the coin-op with addictive gameplay. I'd rate it a couple of percent higher now." - JS

"Brilliant! That sums up this conversion. Everything was recreated in the humble ST. This was a conversion others should be judged by." - NC



overall it's not my cup of tea." - NC

"I disagree with what you say about the graphics, Nick,



"I couldn't have said it better myself!" - JS

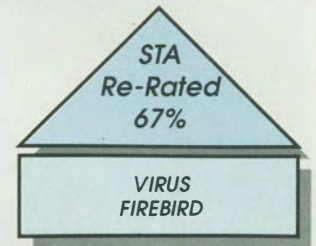
ISSUE FIVE

With autumn only just around the corner, September's STA hit the news stands, sporting Gremlin's Night Raider on the cover. Inside there were only two STA1s, but there were a couple of close runners-up. The one that created the greatest bone of contention on my part was Rainbow Art's, Great Giana Sisters which never received the famous accolade. This brilliant rip-off of Nintendo's Super Mario Brothers received a paltry 77%, when I imagined it getting at least 84%. Likewise, Mickey Mouse collected an impressive 78%, but due to its lasting appeal it wasn't deemed worthy of STA1. However, David Braben's Virus appeared and immediately scooped 75%. Converted from the co-author of Elite's Archimedes game, Virus had you controlling a highly-responsive jet as it skimmed over a pretty patchwork landscape in an attempt to halt the spreading contamination. I wrote that the graphics were "absolutely incredible" and that the "gameplay was good", whilst Nick chirped on about having his eyes knocked out by the graphics!

"Virus' main fault was the controls - they took ages to master." - NC

"I agree, and once you had mastered them the game got very repetitive. Simply involving skimming around

shooting things." - "Yes, I think the graphics' uniqueness won us over slightly, as the games' lastability is fairly low." - JS



The cover game, Night Raider, was a big favourite too - practically halting work all day! Unlike Gunship, Night Raider used simplified controls, impressing Jason because he didn't have to "wiggle his flaps". Because it wasn't my scene, Martin provided a comment and, after a lot of Air Force lingo, decided he liked it. With Nick's comment also praising it, Night Raider scored 78%.

"Night Raider was fun at the time, but it cannot really be classified as a flight sim as it features very simplistic controls." - NC

"Yes, but that made the game more accessible..." - JS

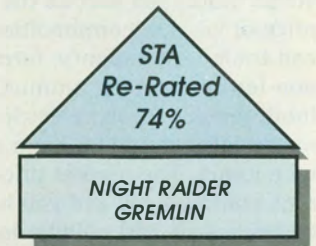
"Mmmm, but somehow it didn't really hang together that well..." - NC

"Oh I don't know, it is a very playable game." - JS

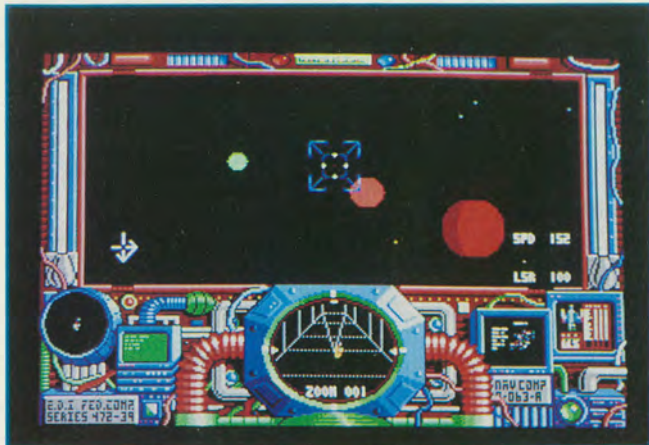
"No, I think I'll lower the percentage to the upper 60s." - NC

"I'll stick with the original rating." - JS

CONTINUED
NEXT MONTH



The planetary system and limitless trading opportunities lay before you.



"Congratulations! You're a fully-fledged federation trader.' 'Great, where's my sales area: Crawley, Milton Keynes?' 'No son, you've got the whole universe!"

Although F.O.F.T has been heralded as an 'Elite killer', I'm afraid it didn't grab me the way Firebird's game did. Once again, the 3D is fast and smooth, but the action is very slow-moving, with very little going on onscreen. Sound, however, is excellent, with around twenty tunes to choose from, all of which are good. During the time I spent with F.O.F.T, I visited planets, docked with a geometric shape and landed on a lush, green planet, with nothing happening at all. Perhaps I didn't spend enough time with it, I don't know, but for the several hours I did play it, I expect a little more action.

SM

FOFT

GREMLIN (£29.99)

It has taken two years to develop FOFT, and short of devoting half the magazine to the review, it would be impossible to do this game justice. 'Elitists' will particularly enjoy a new trading challenge, and it is a comprehensive introduction to anyone who is bored of vacuous arcade entertainment. Great attention to detail has been paid to achieve realism in space travel and the trading network is easy to use. There is also enough alien hostility to break up the monotony of space travel and business. This is a fine example that computer entertainment doesn't have to be an all-action shoot'em-up. Quite simply, FOFT offers long-term entertainment and the more you play it the more you'll enjoy it.

JS

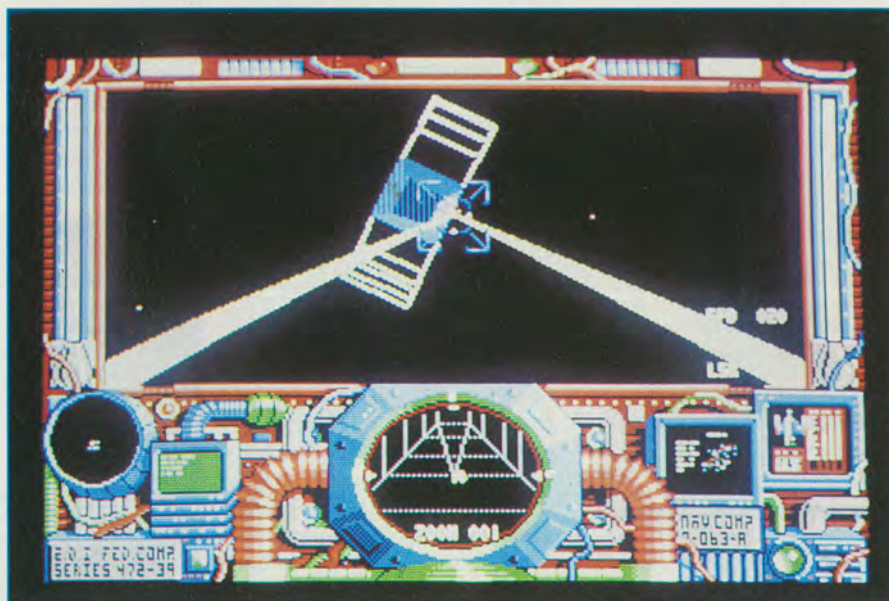
Gremlin's two-year project, Federation of Free Traders, can now offer the space trader the opportunity to log on to the Galactic trading network called Galnet. As a member of FOFT, Galnet offers swift link-up to a limitless supply of new business contacts and a massive increase of trading possibilities. You join the federation on the ground floor as a cadet, and as the company doesn't provide a vehicle, you must use your father's old Hartley Mk II spacecraft. The network contains menus and sub menus which enable you to check your cargo inventory, fuel levels, weaponry and shield status, as well as the current price of various commodities. You can trade in: weaponry; ferrous and non-ferrous metals; ammunition; food; textiles; tools; electrical goods; manufactured goods; grain and low-tech items. The market price fluctuates continuously and you have limited finance of 150 credits donated by an unknown benefactor called LB.

With only 150 credits in your account you are limited to how much stock you can buy, and so it is advisable to purchase small amounts of cheaper commodities rather than blow the lot on gold. Once you have bought your stock, a pre-flight check familiarizes you with the instrumentation, controls and other features. The 'function' keys initiate various facilities. For example, F2, F3 and F4 arm your craft with Primary, Secondary and Tertiary weapon systems. With the craft armed and ready, pressing

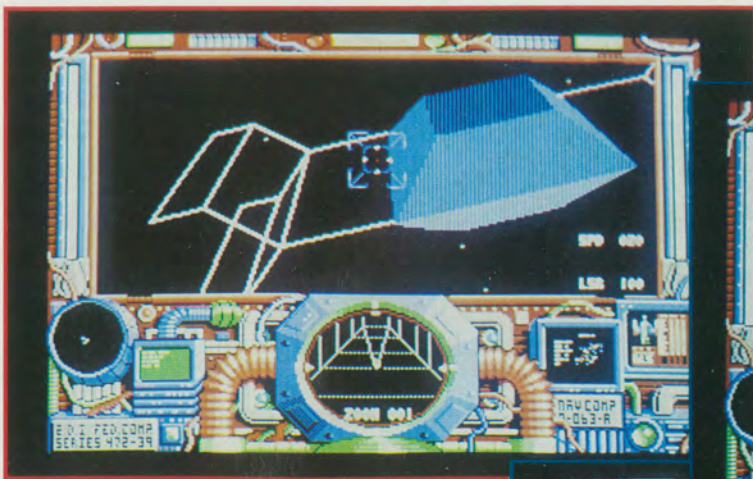
'Backspace' issues the order to launch and the huge doors slide open to reveal the cosmic ocean and limitless opportunities for an enthusiastic young trader. The craft taxis out of the doorway and clear of the mothership and the joystick assumes control. Left or right movements roll the craft on its axis and moving it back and forth lifts and lowers the nose.

If the federation has not offered you a job, you must generate business with the limited stock you have. Planets of various size and distance can be seen through the cockpit window and as the craft drifts through space it appears that you are not moving at all. According to Gremlin,

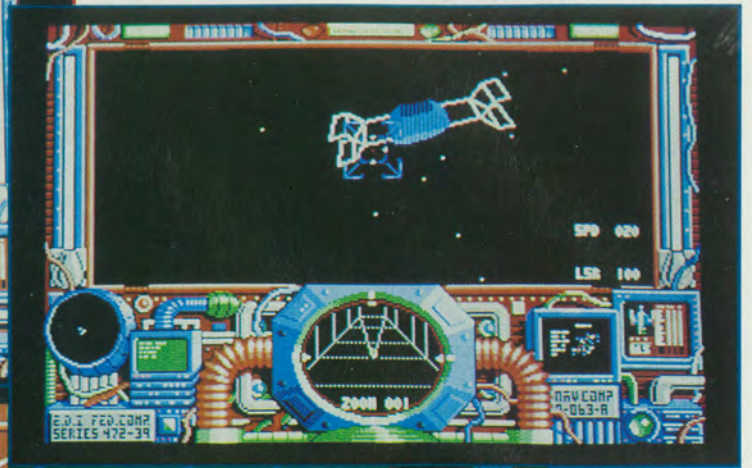
this is a realistic sensation because of the distance and speed you are travelling. But pressing the 'control' key increases your speed and a tap of the '#' key activates 'Timeskip' which shortens your journey considerably.



A warning blast from the lasers has no effect and so you have no alternative but to pull up and accelerate.

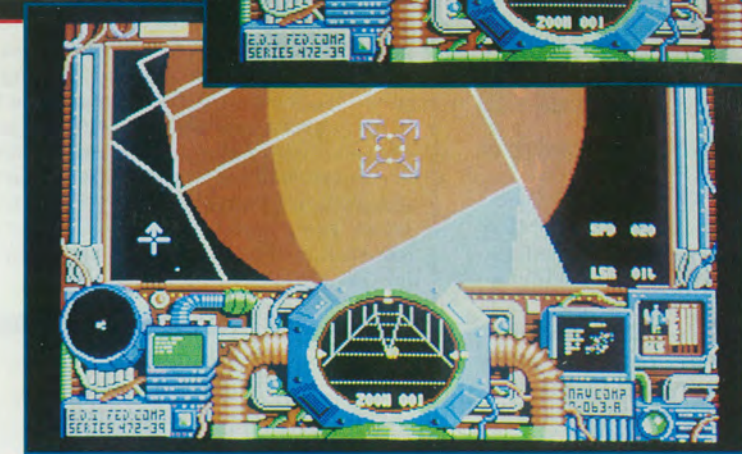


A cursory glance reveals why the ship was in such a hurry - a possible trading planet looms large and so you change plans and follow the anxious trader.



Each planet has a homing beacon for navigation, and a compass symbol in the corner of the screen turns into a diamond shape to indicate that a tracker beam has locked on to you. The craft battles through the upper-atmosphere and the ship's guidance system breaks in to guide you to the planet surface. Docking with a trading space station is much easier and the possibility of damaging the craft is minimal. Again, the long-range radar plots a course to the trading station. Engaging the docking-computer enables you to sit back and prepare for trading, as the station's tractor beam drags you safely into the docking bay.

Lucrative trading relies on your ability to recognise commodities which are priced high, as this indicates that there is a shortage and a demand for in the area. Then when you come across the same material at a cheaper price elsewhere, you can buy in bulk, return to the original market and make a killing. You can log on to Galnet at any time and check out the market. But as an honest free trader you must be prepared to protect yourself and your cargo from alien marauders. The ship's computer has a catalogue of alien craft which operate in the galaxy and if you are confronted by a vessel which the computer identifies as hostile, it is best to adopt a 'shoot first

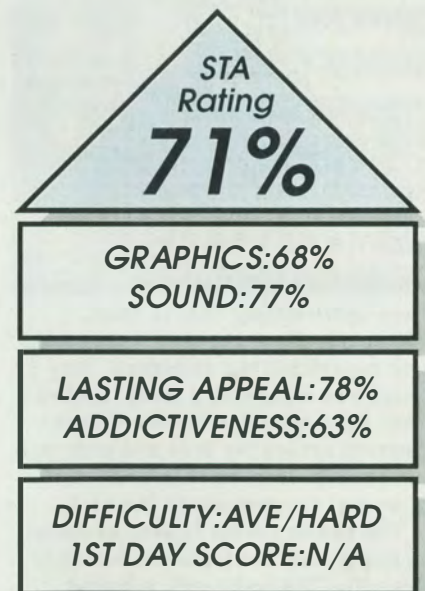


In the distance, an unidentified vessel comes into view. Avoiding the ship would mean going off course, but the craft continues towards you, seemingly oblivious to an imminent collision.

ask questions later' initiative. Tapping F2 arms the Primary armoury system and the weaponry sight appears on screen. The warning system informs you of an incoming missile and you have little time to take evasive action. Spinning the craft on its axis and pressing Timeskip is usually enough to avoid the missile. But as you realign your sights on the enemy and prepare to fire, another missile is already on its way. A press of the fire-button sends a laser blast trailing off into the inky blackness and a direct hit is rewarded by a distant explosion.

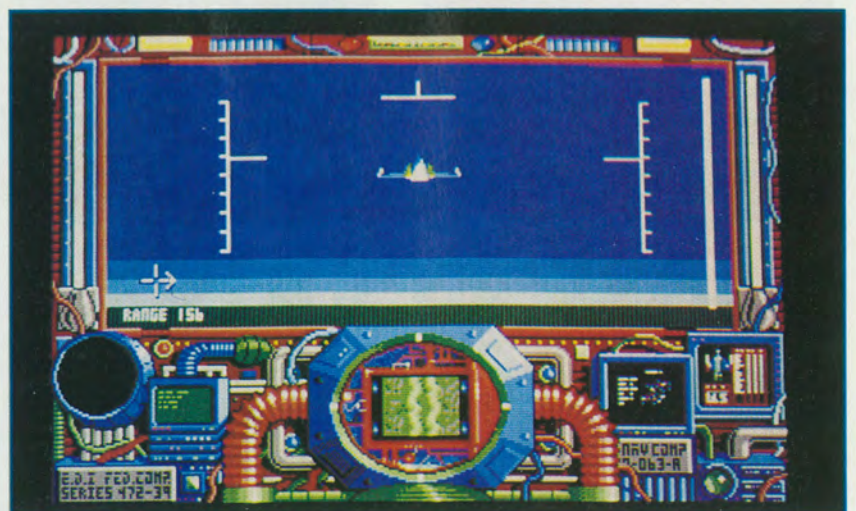
With the excitement over, you can select some classical music from the ship's catalogue, sit back and enjoy the rest of your journey, relaxed and ready to do business with the universe.

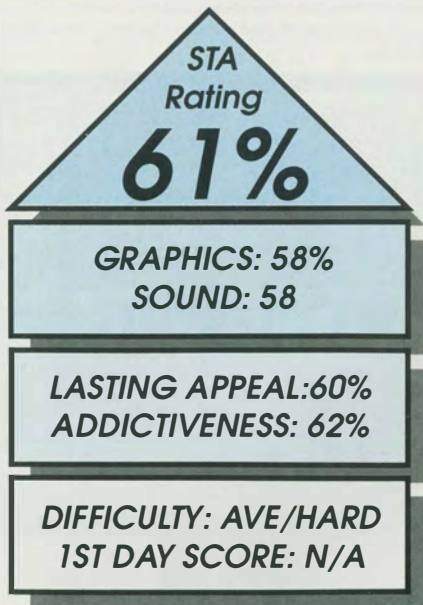
STA



Well here, at last, it is. And the burning question, was it worth the wait? Unfortunately, the answer, for me, is no. F.O.F.T. was hyped as the next Elite; only bigger and better. I found the game slow and tedious, its only saving grace, the brilliant soundtracks that accompany it. There seems to be little feeling of speed in the game, and I found myself with large amounts of time inbetween skirmishes. Having said that, however, the graphics are good and move fluently. F.O.F.T. is neither a complete failure, nor a runaway success, although I seriously question its asking price.

NC





Essentially, Titan is a simple concept, and yet its eighty or so levels indicates that its game-play has limitless variations. To describe the game is difficult, but if you can imagine a strange, orange terrain which can be scrolled in any direction with the joystick; a square cursor, or bat, which stays fixed in the centre of the screen; and an elusive ball



- then, quite simply, that is Titan. Individually, these elements may sound quite superficial, but combined, they conspire to make this a most tenacious game. Each level has blocks of bricks scattered across the area and your task is to remove every brick in each level before you can proceed to the next.

The square cursor is used to nudge the ball around the terrain in search of bricks. But the constantly scrolling

Titan is a wicked combination of the most compelling, agonizing and torturous elements of arcade entertainment, and yet the game manages to retain a totally original identity. I have not played such a gripping, obstinate and frenetic game in a long time. Thankfully, there is no time limit for completing each level, otherwise I would be wearing a rather tight-fitting straightjacket now. If you want a game which just refuses to be mastered, then buy Titan - you will either play it until you do master it or end up biting lumps out of the packaging!

JS

"The picture on the advertisements for Titan shows a man near breaking point - he must be suffering from an overdose of this compelling but frustrating game."

TITAN

TITUS (£19.95)

In a game such as Titan, smooth-scrolling should have been of paramount importance. Instead, the screen lurches as it attempts to keep the ball central, both annoying the player and causing eyestrain. The idea behind Titan is a good one, taking the basic idea of the bat'n'ball genre one step up the evolutionary ladder, but, unfortunately, the jerky scrolling ruins the implementation. The game also plays at a very slow pace, with no time-limit to urge the player to complete the level; instead, the player can take as long as he likes, reducing the amount of skill and timing needed to destroy the bricks. Despite these faults, Titan is an enjoyable effort, but if a sense of urgency and the scrolling had been sorted out, it would have been a lot better.

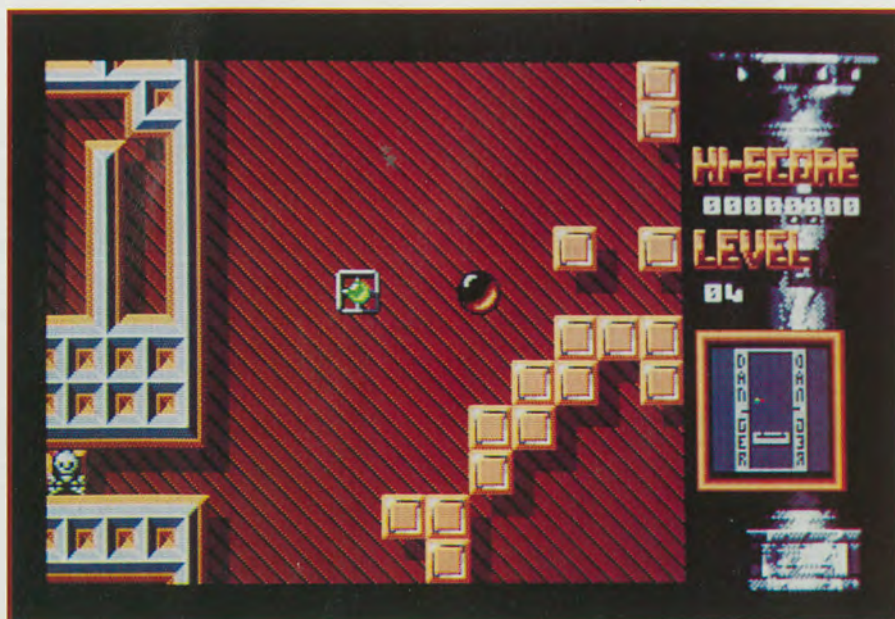
SM

screen, a ball which refuses to be tamed and a baffling maze, makes this a fatiguing task. The first level is an introduction to this unusual game, and so the bat is conveniently positioned in the centre of the screen. Suddenly, the ball hurtles towards the centre and, using the bat, you must nudge, hit and coax the ball towards the bricks. One by one the blocks disappear as the ball makes contact. As the ball rebounds you must constantly correct the position of the bat in order to intercept the ball and keep control of it. But you can only see a small section of the game-play area and so a radar which shows the bat in relation to the ball help you make the correct move. A brief respite can be gained by moving the bat over the top of the ball which momentarily traps it. But as you move the bat away, the obstinate sphere travels in the opposite direction.

When the pace gets too much for

you, pressing the firebutton slows the ball down to a more sedate pace, although even in slow motion, it is difficult to control. Each level is more exhausting, taxing and infuriating than the last. There are bricks which take a number of hits to destroy, even more skull-infested passageways and oil patches which cause the bat to slip around uncontrollably. Each level has its own fiendish theme such as; dots that slowly turn into indestructible blocks every time you pass the bat through them, which threatens to separate the bat from the ball. Eighty levels, each more frustrating than the last await you - are you feeling masochistic?

STA





ATARI ST

ATARI

ST

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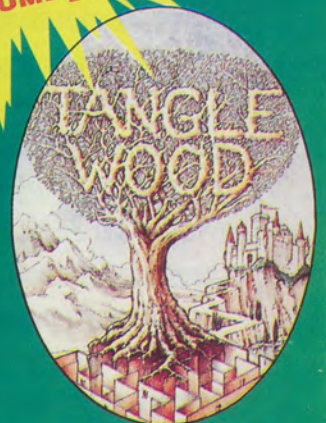
LEATHERNECK

AMIGA



microdeal
HIT DISKS
VOLUME 2

MAJOR MOTION



The defender-style game-play and keyboard-activated weaponry will remind you of the arcade.



"Alien blasting? References to Pink Floyd? South America? A cast of a thousand llamas? It must be the latest release from Llamasoft."

ANDES ATTACK

LLAMASOFT (£9.95)

Andes Attack is Llamasoft's effort to put the sparkle back into arcade games by combining those simple but addictive properties which made the old games great. The scenario, entitled: 'The obligatory background waffle', describes a time even before Pink Floyd, when an evil terrestrial force called the Zzyxians picked up the RF emissions of a severely anachronistic Commodore 64 and elected to

assault the Incas with Bioteknik mutants. What's worse, their intentions were to relieve South America of its population of llamas. This terrestrial onslaught led to the battle known as Andes Attack. The game is based on Defender and your objective is to guide a small craft over the Andes and protect herds of llamas from the enemy. These variform alien marauders have independent intelligence and attack in different ways; Spores leave traces of mines floating in the sky, while others mount a face-to-face confrontation. But while the attack craft keep you occupied with self preservation, the sinister Landers are plucking the llamas from the terrain and carrying them back to mutant-making factories.

The craft is mouse-controlled with the left-hand button acting as a thrust and the right changing the ship's direction without delay. Arcade fans will be pleased to learn that the weaponry, a rapid-fire laser and smart bombs, is key-activated. Holding down the 'Shift' key sends the laser rattling across the multi-coloured sky and when the marauders invade your airspace, the 'Control' key activates a smart bomb which obliterates everything within visible range. The success of Operation Llama Rescue relies on a scanner map which shows where herds are in peril of abduction. Cries for help indicate that a llama has been captured by a Lander craft, and

Despite some very colourful graphics and interesting sound, even at a tinner, Andes Attack is too much to pay for a blast from the past - albeit revamped. I had the same doubts a few months ago, when we reviewed Starray, and I still agree with them now. Fair enough, Minter's version is the most novel, with Acid 'smileys' and other odd-balls replacing the conventional Landers and Baiters, but the gameplay hasn't changed, and it doesn't have the pretty backdrops Starray had to support it either. Like the original Defender, Andes has very little variation but plays at great speed in an attempt to rectify this, but nowadays we expect more for our money.

SM

At a time when computer entertainment is being intellectualized, I suppose this is what they now call "mindless arcade game-play", and Llamasoft make no apologies for that. Obviously, the game-play is inspired by the timeless arcade favourite, Defender, although there are some features, such as the independent intelligence of the enemy, which compliment the game well. Coordinating the mouse and keyboard controls is confusing at first, but before long you'll feel like you're back in the arcades. Pointless, mindless it maybe... but it's great fun all the same!

JS

your delicate task is to blast the abductor, catch the animal on the back of your craft before it falls onto the terrain, and gently carry it to terra firma. Given half a chance, the Landers will take the llamas to one of the enemy's indestructible motherships to be mutated into more alien craft.

Action becomes frenetic, and as your rescue bid becomes increasingly impossible, it is tempting to waste the limited supply of smart bombs for situations which could easily be dealt with using the laser. The destruction of the entire herd of llamas is swift and as methodical as a well rehearsed army manoeuvre, and the need to scan the landscape for animals in peril and at the same time thwart the enemy forces, proves severely taxing. It is your duty to protect this wonderful animal so that it can frolic free in the Andes and spit large globules of phlegm at stunned tourists.

STA



STA
Rating
55%

GRAPHICS: 60%
SOUND: 63%

LASTING APPEAL: 50%
ADDICTIVENESS: 54%

DIFFICULTY: HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 12599

Talespin

BY MARK HEATON

ATARI ST
AMIGA
& IBM



THE INTER-
ACTIVE
PROGRAM
CREATOR

AMIGA CONVERSION BY
TIMOTHY PURVES

WHAT IS IT? Talespin is a package which allows the collecting together of drawings, texts and sounds onto a series of pages together to form an interactive story, guide or textbook, which is read purely by clicking the mouse on the drawings or texts. Variables may be used to control the flow of narrative or record progress made. Talespin itself is entirely mouse-driven and very user-friendly, requiring no programming skills for its use. It includes an art package as well as importing Neochrome, Degas or IFF picture files and also imports ST-Replay or Amiga A.M.A.S. created Digitised Sound. The use of sound is optional. Its facilities include giving full details of disk space usage, location of all pages referring to any particular page, drawing, sound or variable, completely interactive development allowing changes to any part

of a title at any time, the copying of drawings and sounds from other titles, the 'chaining' to other titles allowing the spreading of a story or textbook across several disks, and the provision of Demo mode, which allows a title to run on its own for demonstration purposes.

WHAT IS IT FOR? It can be used to create interactive adventure games, for profit, pleasure or instruction. Or in business to create a sales demonstration, or product servicing manual. Or in education: either using Talespin itself to teach the design and logic of computer systems in a non-technical way, or using Talespin as a vehicle for the teaching of any other subject. Or create an expert system with it. Or a school magazine. Or ...

Talespin is ideal in most applications requiring inter-linked graphics and text and usable by persons with no programming expertise. And it's fun!



IMPORT ANY NEO, DEGAS, IFF PICTURE FILE OR USE TALESPIN'S OWN BUILT IN ART PACKAGE



ONCE DRAWN A PICTURE CAN BE CHANGED IN HEIGHT, WIDTH & COLOUR AND CAN APPEAR MANY TIMES ON MULTIPLE PAGES



POSITION A CHARACTER BY SIMPLY CLICKING & DRAGGING WITH THE MOUSE

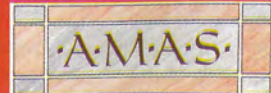


LINK TEXT BOXES TO CHARACTERS AND ALLOW MULTIPLE CHOICES IN THE BOXES



OVER 100 COMMANDS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE DEVELOPMENT MENUS

SOUNDS CAN BE IMPORTED FROM REPLAY 4 AND THEN REPLAYED AT DIFFERENT SPEEDS AND LINKED



SOUNDS CAN BE IMPORTED FROM A.M.A.S. AND THEN REPLAYED AT DIFFERENT SPEEDS AND LINKED

CREATE YOUR OWN COMMERCIAL PROGRAMS

Once you've finished developing your program whether it's an adventure, an educational program or other you can lock your program so on one can enter the development mode. TALESPIN comes with a public domain display program called "Telltale"; with this you can distribute your own programs or offer them to publishers.

COMPLETE AND COMPREHENSIVE MANUAL

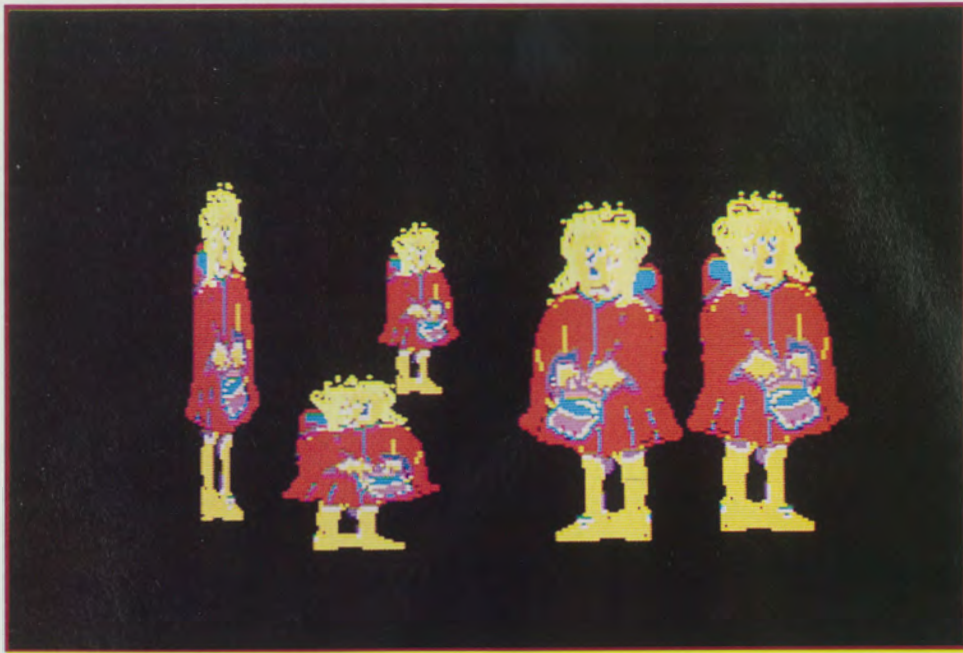
The manual comes as a complete Tutorial with a scaled down version of "The Grail" adventure and also a comprehensive reference guide.

ATARI ST
AMIGA
£29.95

TALESPIN COMMAND FACILITIES AVAILABLE

* choose/create title * save position * load position * select drive / folder * auto start * demo program * help * drawing define * page define * sound define * variable define * turn to another page * add drawing to page * modify palette * select background colour * page entry options * list conditions * list/set variables * move drawing * swap colour * shrink/reverse drawing * change drawing order * add/edit/delete text * replace/remove drawing * locate item * show disk space * show drawing/sound/page size * chain to other title * and more

Talespin can create multiple views from the original.



I think this is a very exciting package. Anyone can put this to a large number of uses. Admittedly, you need some artistic skills to make something worthwhile, but even simple cartoon characters could be used to make a game full of fun. I think we will find that this package will be used for other than adventure games as it is so easy for non-programmers to create 'books' of varying kinds.

AM

"Is this an Adventure Writer, an Educational Tool or a Business Package? Whatever it is, it's simple to use and lots of fun."

TALESPIN

MICRODEAL (£29.95)

There are a host of packages available to take the slog out of writing an adventure game, but if truth be told, it is still a long, hard business. Talespin has finally smashed that barrier and brought the task of adventure creation within the reach of everyone - everyone who can draw, that is!

Anyone with the least artistic ability can construct a game. The idea is to create a picture book, each page of which you may fill with objects to be investigated. Having 'clicked' on a suitable object, the player will be shown a pop-up menu from which he can select an appropriate action. With no typing to be done, this method of play makes games easier for both player and designer alike. Games produced by this method will tend to be simpler than traditional adventures, but they still can be great fun. A simple game for young children could be constructed very quickly by someone with absolutely no programming skills at all.

A rudimentary art package is given to help draw the pictures, but you would be well advised to obtain a copy of Neochrome or some other specialised software. Talespin saves valuable space by allowing artists to distort or reverse their original drawn shapes and store these using only a little extra memory. Each screen can be constructed from a library of pictures you have previously drawn, which again keeps the disk and memory

Graphics? As good as you want to make them. Text? As detailed and interesting as you want. Difficulty of the game? Up to you. Talespin is what you want to make of it. It has potential which will only be realized if you are willing to put a lot of work into it - drawings, text, story-line etc. You still have to work at putting together an adventure, but it is made considerably easier by using Talespin.

SK

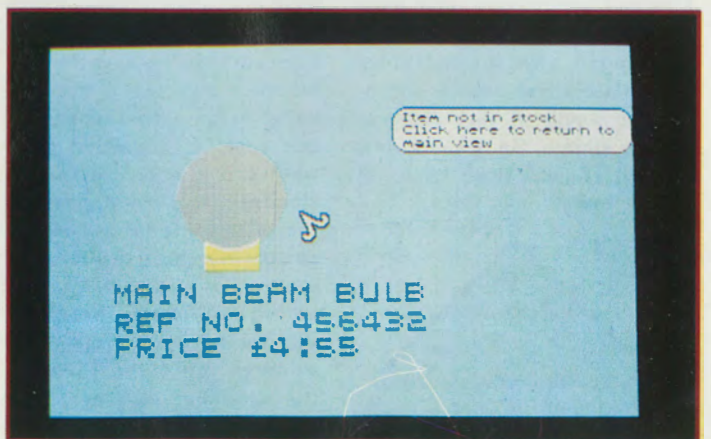
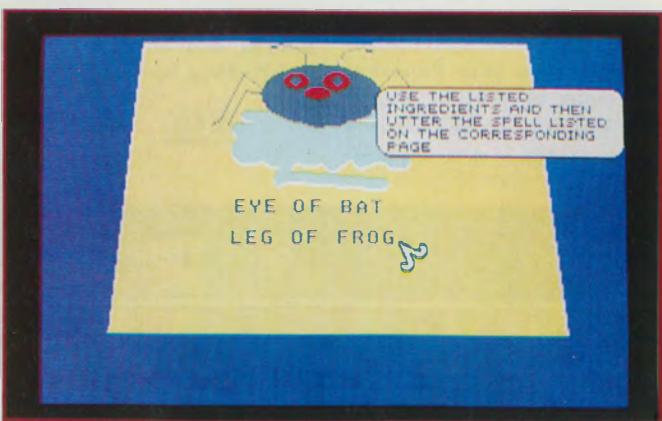
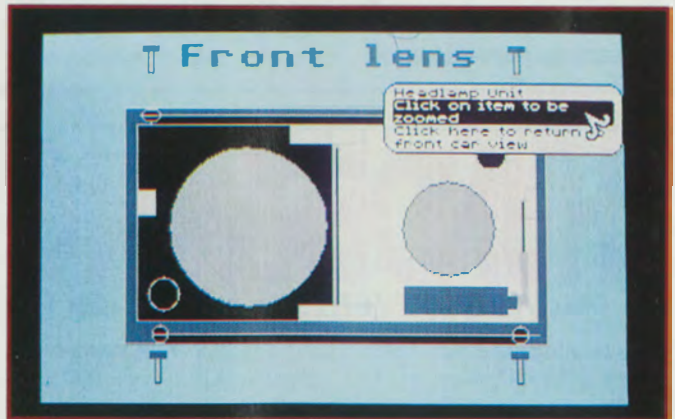
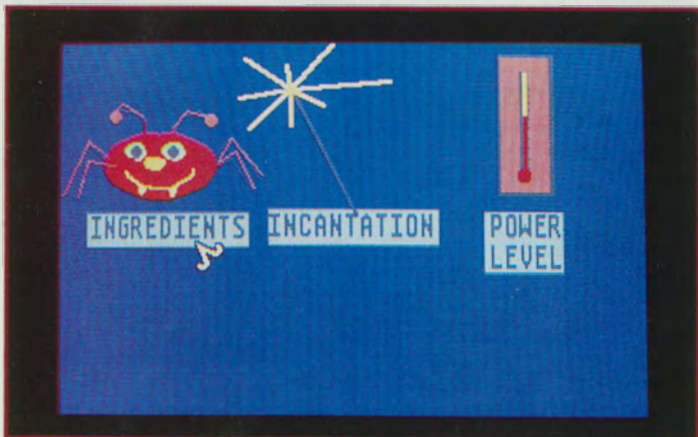
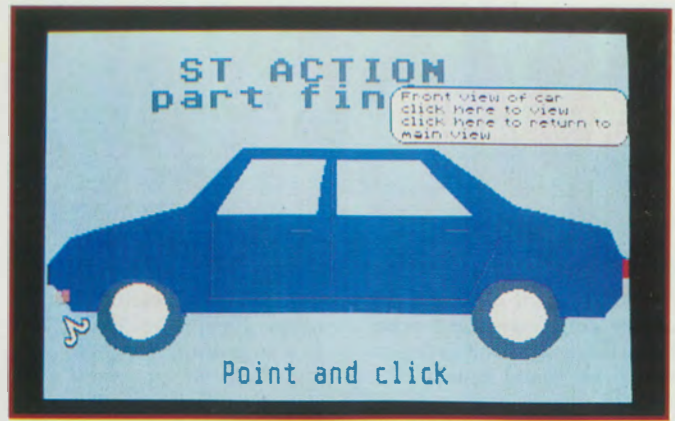
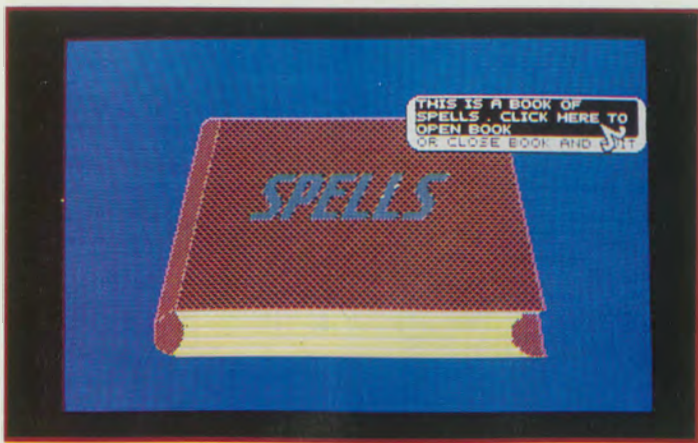
space to a minimum. The Grail adventure was created using this method and for this reason most of the game took place in a forest. Should you look carefully, you will see that two simple tree shapes have been repeatedly distorted and used time after time to create an impressive scene. Sound effects can be included with the help of the ST Replay system which is also on sale from Microdeal.

The 130-page manual is written in a simple style which will enable you to construct your first game in a matter of hours. Two exercise games are included in the package and the manual makes use of these to demonstrate the ease with which a game can be created.

The manual also makes passing reference to what may turn out to be the most important use you can put Talespin to. In addition to creating adventures, it is custom-built for educational and business use. By creating a 'book', the reader may 'click' gradually down through a series of indexes

and menus to obtain any information they might need. The book could equally be a cookery book or an infant's fun-book. This process could be practically text-free, making it suitable for any number of uses.

Another interesting use, is as a pictorial database. For example - finding the reference number of a particular part in a large complex machine. From a top diagram, the user could find the reference number of the smallest part by simply pointing at the area on the car, say, where the part is to be found. By 'zooming', in increasing detail, a user could identify with confidence the exact replacement item he requires with no need of professional assistance. Constructing this kind of parts manual is very simple with Talespin; only disk and memory considerations prevent you from constructing a database as large as you might require. An add-on option is going to be available which will enable the program to spread over as many disks as may be needed.



Talespin used as a book - open the book, select the spell, choose the first stage and look up the ingredients.



Finding spare parts - Talespin allows the user easy access to its graphic database. Here we can see the side, front, lens and, finally, light bulb of the car.

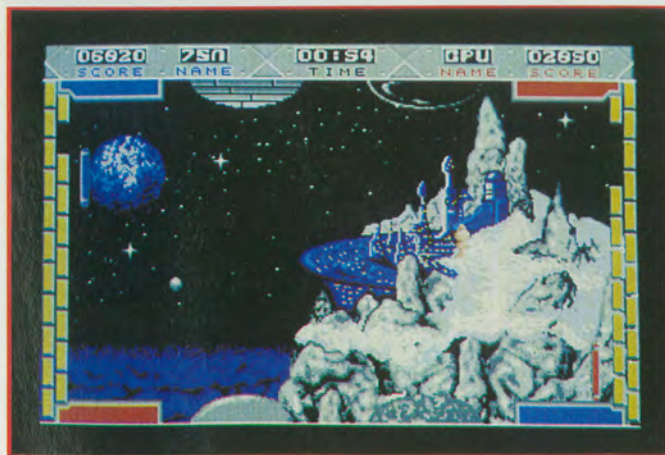
SPACEBALL

GO! (£19.95)

In these days of top-notch arcade conversions and realistic simulations, what is the last thing you would expect to be able to buy on your powerful 16-bit ST? It can't be a Breakout game because there are dozens of them. No, go back in time a little more until you get to the original

bat'n'ball games that sold a million Binatone consoles. Yes, in a surprising retrograde step, U.S. Gold have released what is a throwback to the early days of computing.

After a brief load, a fancy title screen appears, supported by some boppy digitised music. Pressing the space bar prompts the next load and a menu screen unfolds. Up until now, you have no idea of the game's style, and the options imply that the game is a futuresport of some kind. Having chosen a one or two-player game, or a knock-out tournament, there is another brief load and an attractive backdrop is shown. It is round about now that you realise that you have wasted twenty quid. To each side of the backdrop there are walls, both three layers deep, and positioned adjacent to the walls are two bats - the futuristic 'Bumperjets'. In

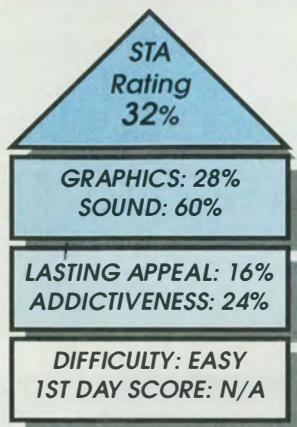


addition to these barriers, to the top and bottom of the playing area there are four round 'bumpers' which bounce the ball in random directions. Finally, there are red and blue rectangles, which affect your bat, depending on when the ball hits them. The mouse or joystick controls the 'Bumperjet/bat' and, moving it up and down you must use it to deflect the ball so that it breaks a hole through the wall your opponent is guarding. Every time you hit the ball you are given points, and if you manage to get the ball through the wall, you score an 'inter-

galactic goal' worth a thousand points and the wall is rebuilt.

Unfortunately, no amount of digitised music, flash backdrops or options could raise Spaceball from what it is - a very basic bat'n'ball game. The controls are responsive and the game is implemented nicely, but for twenty quid it represents extremely bad value for money - especially when you can buy one of the aforementioned coin-op conversions, or whatever, for the same amount.

STA



THUNDERWING

CASCADE (£19.95)

Thunderwing is a vertically-scrolling shoot'em-up in the traditional sense of the term. The screen scrolls continuously and relentlessly at a fixed speed; your assault craft is equipped with the statutory twin lasers and there is a constant supply of very dispensable aliens. So what's new about Thunderwing? Well, not a lot, really!

The joystick steers the assault craft across the usual sort of terrain and rapid fire-button pressing keeps the alien marauders at bay - I wish I had a pound for every time I've said that! Holding the fire-button down for a second, activates an extra feature and the craft is encircled by a whirlwind. But before you go blundering into the alien ranks, the brief instructions for this game stress that this is not a protection shield, but a so-called Disruptor forcefield which wipes out any alien that ventures too close. Pressing the spacebar also activates the Disruptor if the action is too hot to have the lasers out of action for even a second.

Like all aimless shoot'em-ups, the underlying theme in Thunderwing is the pursuit of points and there is a bonanza to be won in this game. Six types of airborne alien craft,

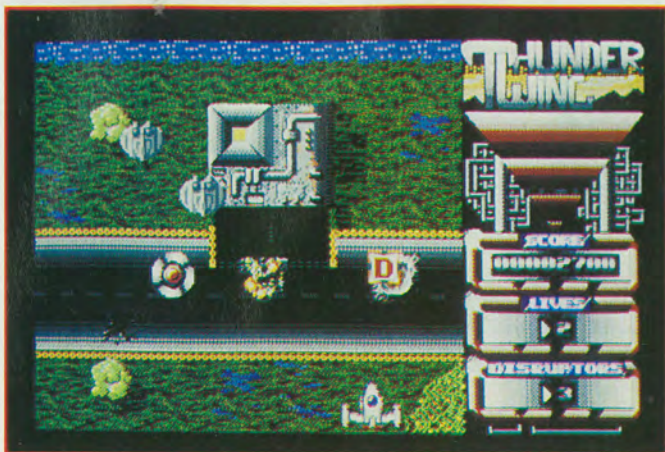
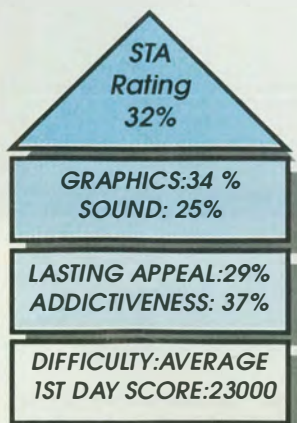
ground mobiles and rotating gun turrets defend the alien bastion and the destruction of each type of vehicle yields varying point value. The action sets your pulse ambling as the enemy fighters fly down the screen in formation; the vulnerable mobiles wait like sitting ducks and the gun turrets blaze with minimal accuracy.

The total destruction of certain alien squadrons yields an 'F' icon which when collected, increases your firepower threefold. Meanwhile, wiping out six consecutive attack waves results in a '1-up' icon.

Also, when certain ground mobiles bite the dust, you are presented the opportunity to collect a 'D' icon which awards you with one of those ineffective Disruptors.

'I'm sure I've scrolled this way before,' I kept saying to myself whilst playing Thunderwing. This is a game which lists vertical-scrolling as one of its main attributes. Quite simply, this is a very simple and untaxing game which offers limited entertainment.

STA



STA
Rating
78%

GRAPHICS: 80%
SOUND: 65%

LASTING APPEAL: 82%
ADDICTIVENESS: 82%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 15000

"Fusion - the shoot'em-up that boldly scrolls like no shoot'em-up has scrolled before!"

FUSION

ELECTRONIC ARTS (£24.95)

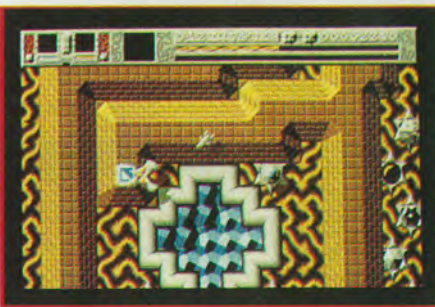
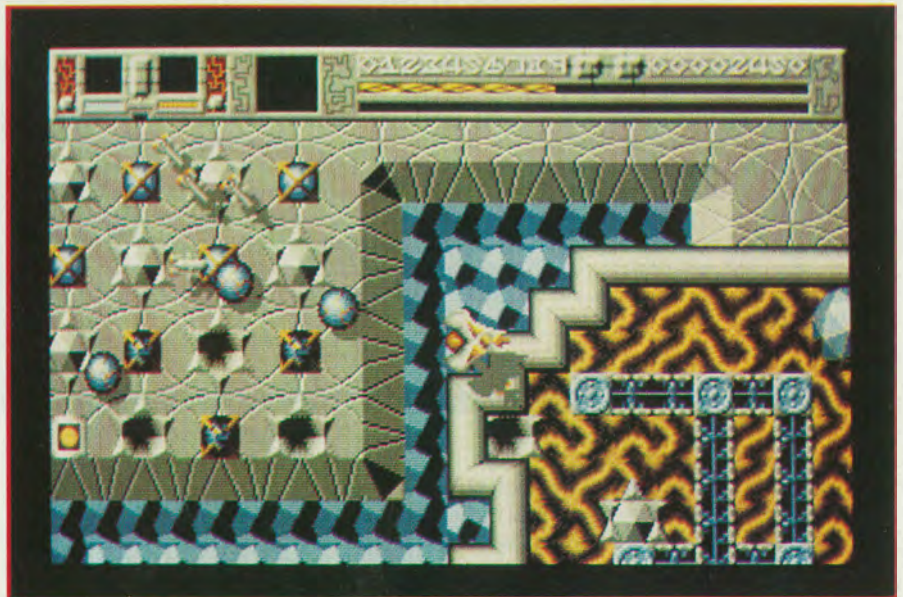
Fusion is quite simply the most playable game we've received for ages. The shoot'em-up cum thinking gameplay draws you in almost instantly, and the longterm task will keep you battling away for ages. Each level contains smooth scrolling, complete with impressive and well-designed obstacles, and the colour is carefully used, enhancing the look without being garish. The sound contains various whines and alien noises, yet is unintrusive and adds to the general atmosphere. Fusion can definitely be described as the 'thinking man's shoot'em-up', and breaks the mould for progressive shoot'em-ups. An excellent game, and an impressive ST debut for the Bullfrog team.

SM

Accompanied by digitized music, you enter the perilous and alien world of Fusion. The screen shows an overhead-view of the first section of the terrain with various pods, sliding doors and silos scattered around, and the occasional large building dominating the game-play area. Somewhere on this strange land is your first assault craft - an insignificant little module which the authors have aptly called an 'assault Crawler' - and crawl it most certainly does. As the joystick assumes control over this sloth-like craft, you are left vulnerable to a barrage of guided missiles, mines and explosives of all descriptions, as you struggle to reach salvation. Safety comes in the shape of a swift flying Trang fighter which is waiting atop a silo. You must guide the crawler up a ramp and onto the assault craft when pressing the spacebar switches control from land to flying craft.

This game is more than a senseless shoot'em-up, it has a purpose and a puzzle that is filled with disheartening obstacles. Your ultimate task, other than self-preservation, is to locate and collect a number of sections of a bomb which are scattered far and wide. Only when you have found all the parts to the explosive must you retrace your long and arduous journey through this vast and

Sweeping across the incredible terrain with cannon blazing, the parallax scrolling gives the impression of unfathomable depths.



labyrinthine game to the first section. Switches are the key to this game - literally, as they allow you to access from one level to another in search of the bomb parts. Moving the craft over the top of the switch reveals an icon which indicates that you can pass through a shaft into another level.

As you explore this seemingly limitless game, each section reveals even more spectacular graphics and parallax scrolling and you are hounded every step of the way by a most tenacious and intelligent enemy. UFOs spin across the terrain launching a stream of bullets; hom-

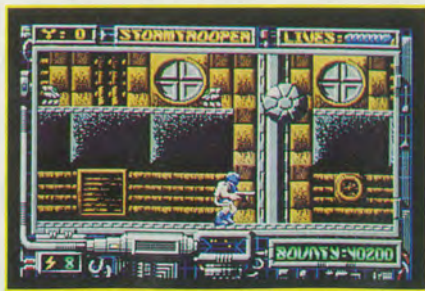
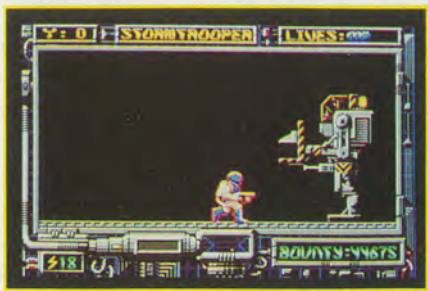
ing-missiles sweep across in hot pursuit and stationary eruptors keep up a constant barrage of missiles. Each hit depletes your shield, decreasing your chances of completing the mission. However, there is a rare icon scattered thinly around the terrain which can rejuvenate your shields and increase your firepower. It is likely that you will eventually find all the parts to the bomb. But suffering from battle fatigue, confused, bewildered and lost, and with your ship weakened by a relentless barrage, you must pilot the craft back to the beginning of the game and detonate the bomb safely.

STA



This game has rekindled my passion for shoot'em ups - Fusion is truly magnificent! The full-screen action is incredible, the multi-directional scrolling is the smoothest I have ever seen and the controls are a joy. But it is the breathtaking parallax scrolling which really steals the show - it is not so much a superficial trickery but an integral part of the game. Each screen is more outstanding than the last, and the combination of an intelligent opposition, an unfathomable maze and puzzle and the most compelling gameplay, means that you will play this game until you drop. Fusion is set to blast ordinary shoot'em ups clean out of the galaxy.

JS



STORMTROOPER

CREATION SOFTWARE (£19.95)

"You are the Stormtrooper. Dare you patrol through the alien-infested levels in newcomer Creation's race'n'shoot'em-up?"

Sporting some attractive graphics, Stormtrooper is a playable little game. Nothing is especially brilliant about it: it features weak parallax for some of the backdrops, and the main sprite is decidedly portly; but all the same, when it comes to gameplay it has more than its fair share. The backdrops for the levels are attractive without being cluttered and the layouts on some of the later screens are tortuous to say the least - some requiring pixel-perfect positioning whilst avoiding the bullets from a massive gun! That said, the layout of the levels never changes, so after a while, having to progress from the early levels is both easy and repetitive - perhaps a save game feature would have compensated. Not an essential buy due to a couple of annoying points, but worth a casual look, anyway.

SM

As a member of an elite military corp, you, the Stormtrooper of the title, have been sent to a remote planet in search of the corrupt physicist, Brayniget. Your mission is to traverse the sixteen platform-laden sectors of the planet, locate the evil professor and retrace your steps back to the pick-up point.

Having loaded, an introductory screen unfolds and the massive Vstol drop-ship rises onto the screen. It is from this mighty spacecruiser that you

are deposited, and pressing fire starts the actual game. Your podgy Stormtrooper begins positioned at the entrance to a mysterious walled city, and moving left or right causes the screen to scroll smoothly in these directions. Also shown on the screen are several platforms, and patrolling these are Brayniget's guerillas. Contact with any of these lumbering soldiers or robots means instant death for the

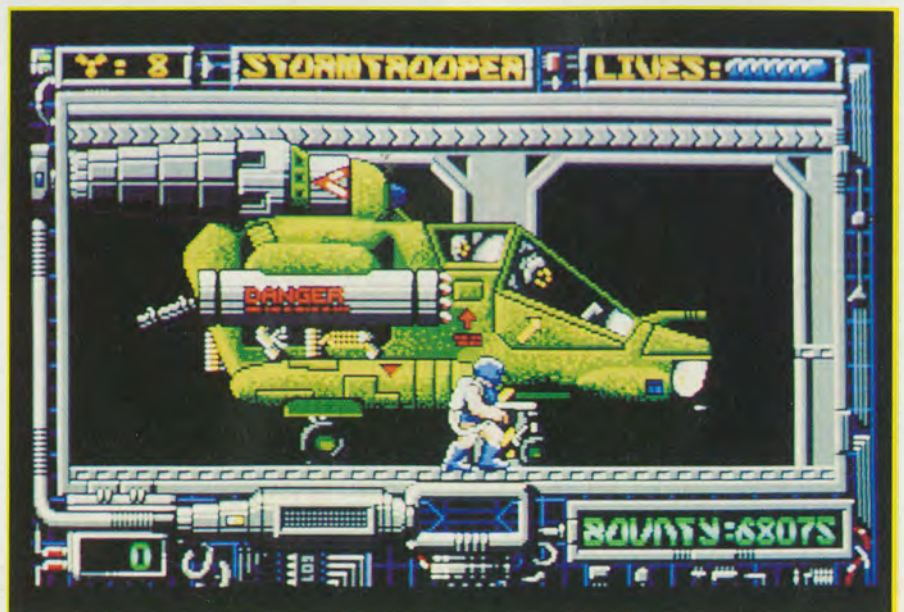
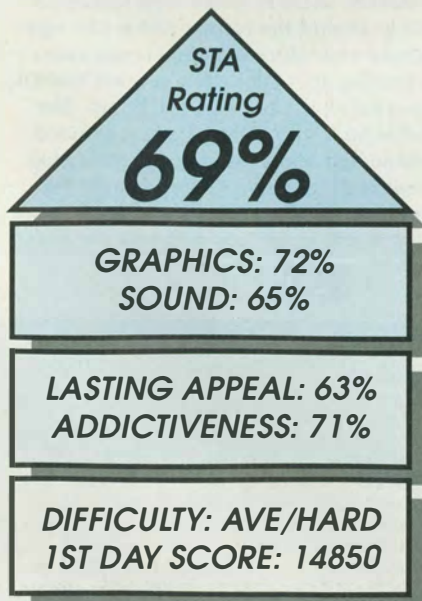
As a platform shoot 'em-up, Stormtrooper is a great game. The background graphics are beautifully drawn and help create a really atmospheric feeling. The range of characters is also of a high standard and they are also well animated. The wealth of sectors help give the game a fresh feeling as each of the new levels are encountered. The sound, whilst not being particularly brilliant, is adequate; the stormtrooper's terrifying scream being the most note-worthy. Stormtrooper offers a great depth of play, but is a little too hard for my liking. Worth looking at.

NC

Stormtrooper, but this fate can be postponed by shooting them with your trusty laser-pistol. Due to incomplete programming, though, your gun isn't equipped to kill all of the enemy, but by collecting the assorted weapon packs that are scattered along the platforms, extra functions such as lasers, heavy artillery and grenades can be added, space being used to cycle between the weapons.

Now the game would be very easy, to say the least, if it simply required you to clear a path until you reached an exit, so to interrupt your rampage and stretch your brain cells, there are power-generated gates to switch off. The controlling circuits of these gates are housed in a metallic casing looking suspiciously like a parking meter, and a single shot destroys it, switching off a generator. In addition, as you progress through the levels, they get progressively harder, becoming riddled with mines and gaping chasms that must be leapt over by the heroic Stormtrooper. When the exit silo to a level has been reached you may receive a time bonus provided you haven't loitered around too much. Following this, there is a short load, and the next level appears with you positioned outside the next entrance gate.

STA



ATARI ST	CAPTAIN BLOOD	AMERICAN FOOTBALL	DEFENDER OF THE CROWN	OIDS	TEENAGE QUEEN	MANGELL'S GRAND PRIZ	VIXEN	STARGLIDER	ELIMINATOR	XENON		
RRP	SRP	RRP	SRP	RRP	SRP	RRP	SRP	RRP	SRP	RRP	SRP	
BAAL	44.90	20.96	44.94	18.96	49.90	20.92	39.94	19.96	39.90	20.96	39.94	19.96
BATMAN	44.90	20.96	44.94	18.96	49.90	20.92	39.94	19.96	39.90	20.96	39.94	19.96
CHAOS S/BACK (FOR D.M.)	39.94	17.48	39.98	15.48	44.94	17.44	34.98	16.48	34.94	17.48	34.98	16.48
CRAZY CARS 2	44.94	19.98	44.98	17.98	49.94	19.94	39.98	18.98	39.94	19.98	44.94	18.98
DRAGON NINJA	44.90	20.96	44.94	18.96	49.90	20.92	39.94	19.96	39.90	20.96	39.94	19.96
DUNGEON MASTER	49.94	22.48	49.98	20.48	54.94	22.44	44.98	21.48	44.94	22.48	44.98	21.48
ELITE	49.90	22.48	49.94	20.48	54.90	22.42	44.94	21.48	44.90	22.48	44.94	21.48
F-16 COMBAT PILOT	49.90	23.96	49.94	21.96	54.90	23.92	44.94	22.96	44.90	23.96	44.94	22.96
F-16 FALCON	49.94	22.48	49.98	20.48	54.94	22.44	44.98	21.48	44.94	22.48	44.98	21.48
FED OF FREE TRADERS	54.90	27.98	54.94	25.98	59.90	27.94	49.94	26.98	49.90	27.98	49.94	26.98
FISH!	49.90	22.48	49.94	20.48	54.90	22.42	44.94	21.46	44.90	22.48	44.94	21.46
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GALDREGON'S DOMAIN	44.90	19.96	44.94	17.96	49.90	19.92	39.94	18.96	39.90	19.96	39.94	18.96
HEROES OF THE LANCE	49.94	24.98	49.98	22.98	54.94	24.94	44.98	23.98	44.94	24.98	44.98	23.98
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LED STORM	44.94	21.98	44.98	19.98	49.94	21.94	39.98	20.98	39.94	21.98	39.98	20.98
KRYSTAL	54.94	24.98	54.98	22.98	59.94	24.94	49.98	23.98	49.94	24.98	49.98	23.98
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PURPLE SATURN DAY	49.90	22.46	49.94	20.46	54.90	22.42	44.94	21.46	44.90	22.46	44.94	21.46
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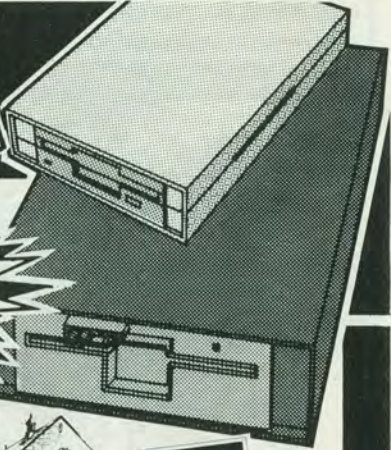
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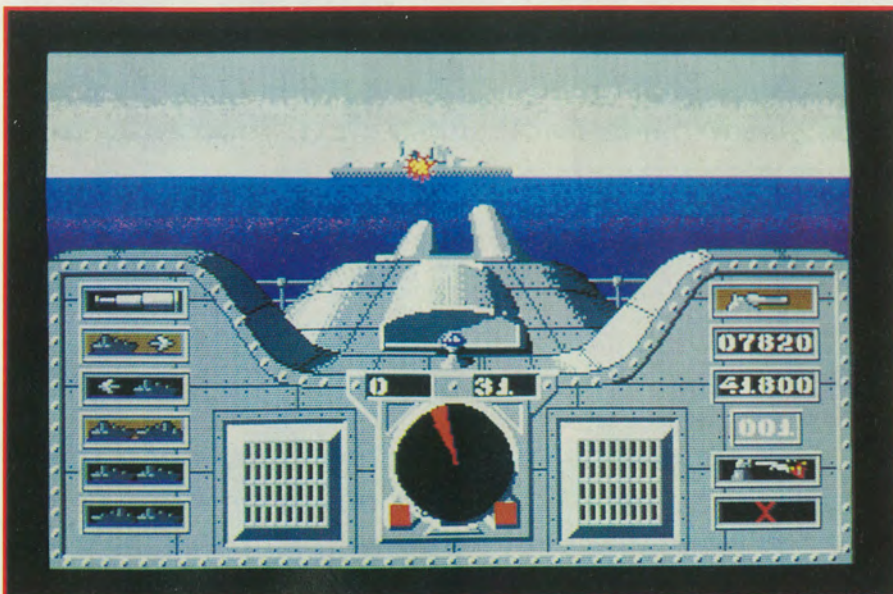
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From the gun turret on Bismarck, HMS Rodney emerges on the horizon. Full speed ahead to confront the enemy with guns aimed at the vessel.



"The Bismarck has been sunk dozens of times in various sea warfare games, and here is yet another chance to get even for the sinking of HMS Hood."

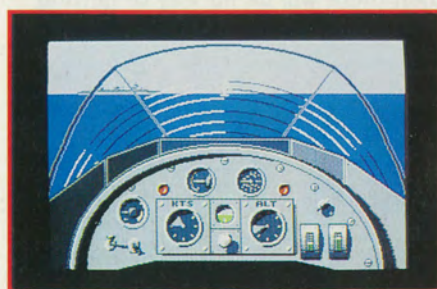
BISMARCK

PSS (£19.95)

Bismarck - The North Atlantic Chase, is a sea warfare game which re-enacts the search and destruction of the Bismarck. You can choose to captain either the Bismarck or command the British fleet. The British commander's objective is to find the Bismarck before it leaves the Atlantic, ensuring the safety of your Atlantic convoys. But, as a German commander, you must evade the British navy and cause as much destruction to their fleet as possible. Points are awarded for damage inflicted on the British naval unit and deducted for any damage incurred.

After choosing your side you are

presented with a number of scenarios which re-enact the specific battles: Bismarck and Prinz Eugen against HMS Hood and Prince of Wales; Bismarck versus HMS Rodney and King George V; Swordfish air attack on Bismarck; cruisers against Bismarck and Bismarck attacking British convoy. Moving a Combox over various icons which represent ships and air-



bases, identifies the icon and indicates whether you are in control. A second press transfers you to the command of the ship or aircraft.

Whether you are in command of a battleship, carrier or cruiser, the screen shows the view from the gun turret. The various directional controls and weaponry are selected with icons and activated with either mouse or joystick. Selecting the guns enables you to turn the turret and survey the area for enemy vessels. Once you have spotted a ship, selecting a telescope icon identifies the craft. If it is the enemy, selecting a directional icon moves you closer to the vessel, but as you draw near, the enemy will identify you and will launch an attack. The guns blaze, and at

Despite some attractive graphics Bismarck fails to impress. Naval strategy has been done before and games like Microprose's Silent Service offer more challenge. Nothing really inspired me to continue playing, and the only redeeming section was the gunning part - something that had been done in Access's Beach Head years ago - and more successfully. I can see this appealing to the more devout wargamers, but I cannot really recommend it to those interested in taking a look at the genre.

SM

Considering PSS has gained the reputation as wargame simulation experts, Bismarck is rather simplistic and leans further towards arcade game-play than faithful simulation. Although the icon system is easy to use, it is not very realistic and the game-play, both in the air attack and sea battles, is enjoyable but limited. Other screens, such as a view from the bridge with more direct control over the vessel, would have provided more involvement and greater realism. So much more could have been made out of this perilous sea chase.

JS

first, the missiles drop harmlessly in the water just yards from the bow. Each volley of fire is more accurate and so you must prepare the guns, aim and retaliate. Pulling back on the joystick brings the two guns up and pressing the firebutton sends two missiles hurtling towards the vessel. As the enemy return fire, the vessel shudders as it sustains a direct hit and a cut-away diagram of the ship pinpoints fires blazing in the hull. You have no alternative but to select fire extinguisher and put out the flames.

The Swordfish air strike on Bismarck is an alternative to being a sitting duck in the water. The screen shows a cockpit view. The aircraft has simple instrumentation comprising an altimeter and airspeed indicator. The Swordfish is armed with one torpedo and as you close in on the target the plane must drop to 100 feet in preparation for the attack. Aiming a target cursor at the vessel and pressing the firebutton drops the torpedo and the missile hurtles towards the Bismarck - will you manage to repeat history?

STA



Swordfish aircraft ended Bismarck's war and here is your chance to repeat history.

STA
Rating
55%

GRAPHICS: 53%
SOUND: 48%

LASTING APPEAL: 57%
ADDICTIVENESS: 48%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

What - not another game from Sierra! Boring. Well, not really. In fact, quite the opposite. The graphics are excellent and I loved the attention to detail. Watch the way the hair swings from side to side. This is the latest in Sierra's stable of graphic adventures and is probably the best in terms of graphics and animation - the adventure isn't too bad either. If they get much better, it'll be like watching a film in which you direct the action.

SK

KINGS QUEST IV

"If you are one of the many thousands of game-players who sacrificed their youth and their eyesight to save Princess Rosella in King's Quest III, then I have news for you. She's in even worse trouble now!"

— — — | SIERRA ON-LINE (£29.95) — — —



Once safely home, Rosella quickly returned to the important things of life, like embroidery and brushing her golden hair. But these things were not to be and, again, the fates forced their way in through the palace door. Struck down by a sudden illness her father, the King, was at death's door and only a miracle could save him. It was then that the image of Genesta the fairy appeared

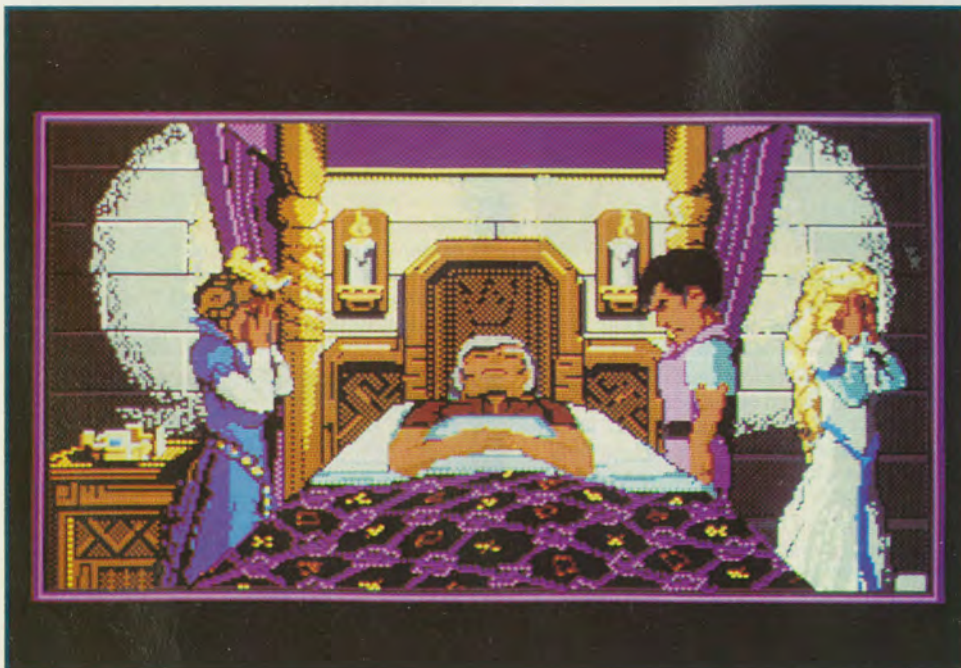
in Rosella's magic mirror and told her of the fruit which grows on a magical tree in the faraway land of Tamir. The fruit would certainly cure the king and kindly Genesta would be only too happy to magically transport the heartbroken Rosella to Tamir in the twinkling of an eye. Well who could refuse an offer like that? It was only upon Rosella's arrival in Tamir that Genesta happened to mention a slight complication to the plan.

Tamir is currently under the thumb of an evil witch called Lolotte. Unless Rosella can recover the magical talisman which Lolotte holds, Genesta will die in 24 hours - and then there will be no way of getting

home. Oh yes, and one other small point: the magical tree whose fruit we have such urgent need of, happens to grow in the middle of a swamp on the far side of the mountains! Not your day is it?

With a quick flick of Genesta's wand, your beautiful palace gown is transformed into the clothes of a simple peasant girl and you are set upon the trail which leads into the enchanted land of Tamir where problems come in jumbo-sized packages. Lolotte obviously employed the same architect who built wizard Manannan's castle in King's Quest III, because she too has had her castle built at the wrong end of a twisty mountain trail. Add to that the fact that she employs a band of bat-winged guards, who will snatch you up and deliver you to the dungeons if you dare set foot on the rocky path, and you will see why this is not the best route to begin with. Before attempting that perilous journey, I would suggest that you spend some time getting to know the inhabitants of the surrounding forest. Having just arrived, Rosella has no idea where she is or what she is going to find in this strange land; but wherever it is - 'It sure ain't Kansas Toto!'

The graphic backdrops to this adventure have more than a touch of the magical about them. The forest scenes abound with small animated characters reminiscent of old Disney movies. Twittering birds, a magnificent unicorn and sparkling waterfalls combine to create pictures which can only be described as charming. The game's creators have



Poor King Graham lies seriously ill in bed - who will save him?

Yes, yes, yes! This is the one I've been waiting for. Sierra's epic follow-up to the fiendish King's Quest III. The first really noticeable detail is the improved graphics: not only are all the scenes and characters beautifully drawn, but the night and day sequences help give the game a real sense of time. The sound, too, is the best yet from Sierra. The gameplay is also very good and I particularly like the way in which all our favourite fairy-tale characters have been included. King's Quest IV is a knock-out, a real gem and, more importantly, well worth the wait.

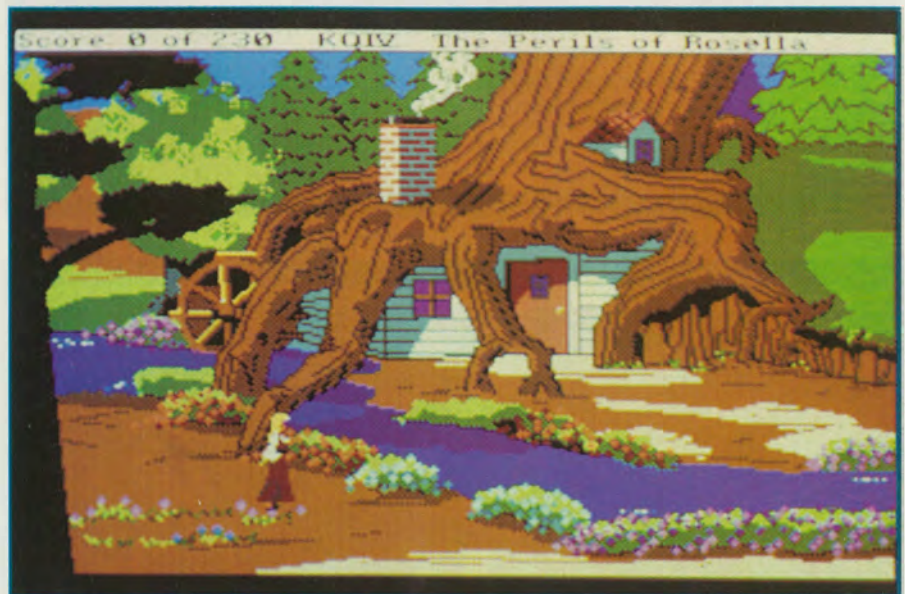
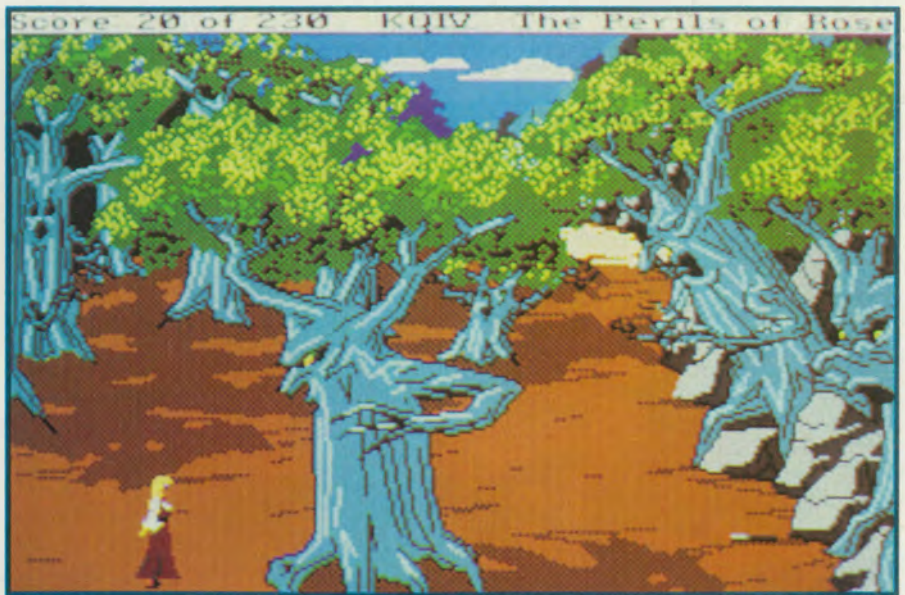
NC

trawled their fairy tales for ideas, and with the addition of their own off-beat humour have produced scenes which should please everyone. A lily pond, complete with a large frog wearing a crown, awaits your investigation. Close your eyes, screw up your courage and pucker-up for a lip-smacking, stomach-



churning smackerroo of a kiss.

Tucked away in a corner of the forest is the final touch - the home of the Seven Dwarfs. If you enter the dusty, old cottage and issue the command 'Tidy Up' you'll soon see our would-be Snow White make the dust fly. Who knows, when the dwarfs get home from their diamond mine there may be a sparkling reward for her good deed. Other homes which nestle in and around the forest include a fisherman's shack, an Ogre cottage and a creepy old mansion which is surrounded by a graveyard. The mansion also houses a magnificent organ which luckily Rosella appears to be more than at home with. Once guided to the wonder organ, Rosella will manage to



Aha! The seven dwarf's home and their place of work

blast the cobwebs from the organ pipes and let you hear just some of the music which is to be found throughout the game.

The graphics are definitely another step forward for the Sierra games and one can only wonder at the time and effort required to achieve this

Score: 7 of 230 KQIV The Perils of Rosella



I played this game while an audience of hard-nosed engineers peered over my shoulder, and I think I can make no better comment than to repeat the remark that I heard from one of the crowd. In an awed voice I heard someone say: 'OK, I'm sold. What computer system do I need to buy to use this software?' No complaints, it's a great game which is bound to be a best seller.

AM

standard. Rosella is beautifully animated and as she walks, her long, golden tresses bounce behind her.

The King's Quest series must be amongst the most popular of the Sierra adventures. The combination of colourful animated graphics, the humour and the wonderful puzzles have captivated players of all ages. Sierra alone seem to be capable of blending adventures with sounds and pictures to create a mixture which is satisfying to the whole spectrum of ST gamers. Children have marvelled at the delights of the Three Bears' Cottage in King's Quest III, whilst the older audience giggled at the evil tricks played by the wizard upon our luckless hero. All the expertise of the Sierra team seems to have come together to produce what must now be their crowning glory: 'King's Quest IV - The Perils of Rosella'.

STA

Score: 46 of 230 KQIV The Perils of Rosella



This cemetery certainly looks spooky, maybe if I wait until dark.....



STA
Rating

87%

TEXT/GRAPHICS: 89%
GAMEPLAY: 80%

LASTING APPEAL: 85%
ADDICTIVENESS: 83%

erils of Rosella



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"Newcomers, Krisalis, present their look at the future - a bleak world where everyone is in fear of The Prison."

PRISON

--- KRISALIS (£19.95) ---

With crime reaching epidemic proportions, the ruling government of Earth decided that capital punishment wasn't the answer. For too long the elderly had been too frightened to leave their buildings, and the constant stream of murders and thefts must be terminated.

The ruling classes realised that a prison was the solution, but Earth was over crowded, so where could they put it? A planetary search was ordered, and within the month, a perfect site chosen. The planet was a remote, moonless dump called Altrax, a planet that had only a handful of desperate colonists, and within the month the domed prison was built. Time passed, and the prison of Altrax was hyped as the 'ultimate deterrent', a place where no-one comes back from - little did the public know, but it also provided the government with a place for embarrassing scapegoats.

Jag was a scapegoat. Framed for a

crime he knew nothing about, he was sentenced to end his days couped up on Altrax. Having witnessed the corruption and brutality of the guards, Jag had to get out. Rumours were common amongst the prisoners, but one particular tale permanently raised the

hopes of the inmates - the story of a working spaceship that was left when it crashed. Clutching at this microscopic straw, Jag plotted his escape, and waited until night fell.

The game begins with a short sequence showing Jag escaping from the dome as dawn breaks. Clutching only a rucksack and a stolen wrist-computer, he enters the nearby town. The town and all of the areas surrounding are viewed from the side, and Jag can move freely between the flick-screens. Below the main action, is a view of his mini-computer,

and this can tell the time, indicate if a usable object is present in the room or be

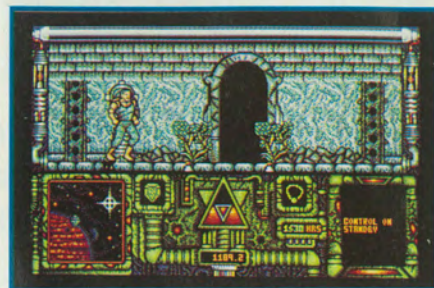
Prison is one of those infuriating maze games that you will either love or hate. Its game-play relies on you getting hopelessly lost in a complex labyrinth and having to try numerous ways of progressing in the game. This is all very well as long there is something else to keep you occupied and amused, and in Prison, this variety is in collecting various objects and having to work out where and how to use them. Add to this some opposition in the shape of some ugly big sprited aliens and that is Prison. The graphical presentation is distinctive rather than inovative and the controls are adequately responsive. But the overall objective of the adventure doesn't change from game to game and so you have to go through the same process of object collecting and path finding every time you play the game.

JS

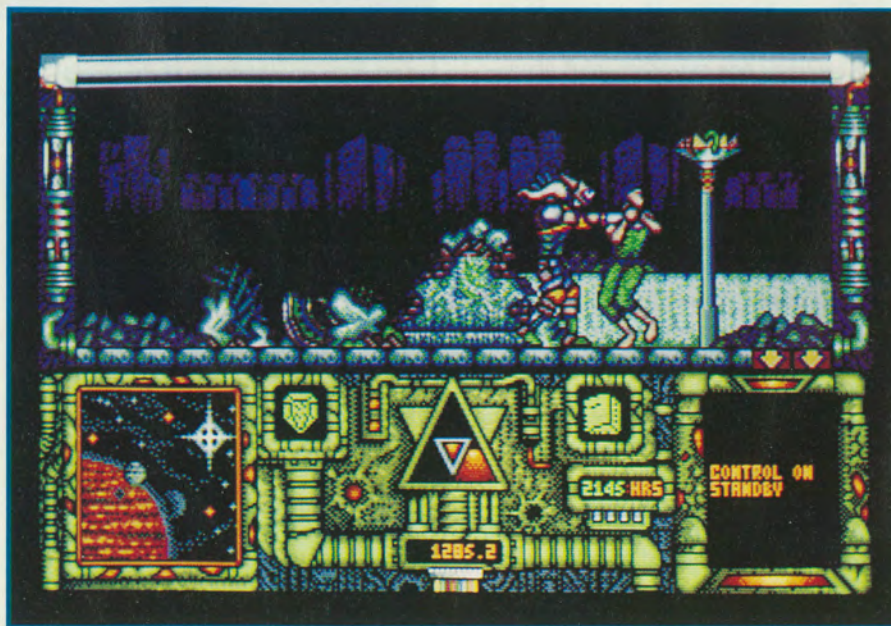
Although Prison looks good, featuring dark, atmospheric backdrops, the gameplay is of the standard we tend to expect of an arcade/adventure - nothing more, nothing less. OK, so the genre's scope is limited, but there is nothing new or original in Prison that makes it an essential purchase. Little quirks, such as night turning to day, are nice, but with the repetitive action, Prison has very little to offer the discerning gamer. Not bad, but it could - and should - have had a little more variation.

SM

As in real life, night falls. Jag's watch warns of this and he can sleep if he wants, but remember that there are still people prowling around.



used to manipulate any objects. Additionally, this status panel shows how many of Jag's three lives are remaining, and an inventory of what he is carrying. Movement around the strange land is controlled by the joystick, and Jag must keep his eyes peeled for any useful objects or deadly obstacles such as mines on the floor. To combat the odds - along with any enemies he may come across - Jag can jump, crouch, and has an array of fighting moves. Securi-bots present the most problems, but can be rendered scrap by a repeated succession of kicks and punches - and don't forget to search the debris afterwards! Jag's ultimate aim is to find his way through the unforgiving city and escape Altrax using the mythical craft, but only after he has solved all of the object-orientated puzzles can he do so.



Before gaining access through the locked door, a pass must be found. Perhaps it lies within the wreckage of that destroyed securi-bot.

STA

STA
Rating

60%

GRAPHICS: 56%
SOUND: 50%

LASTING APPEAL: 62%
ADDICTIVENESS: 58%

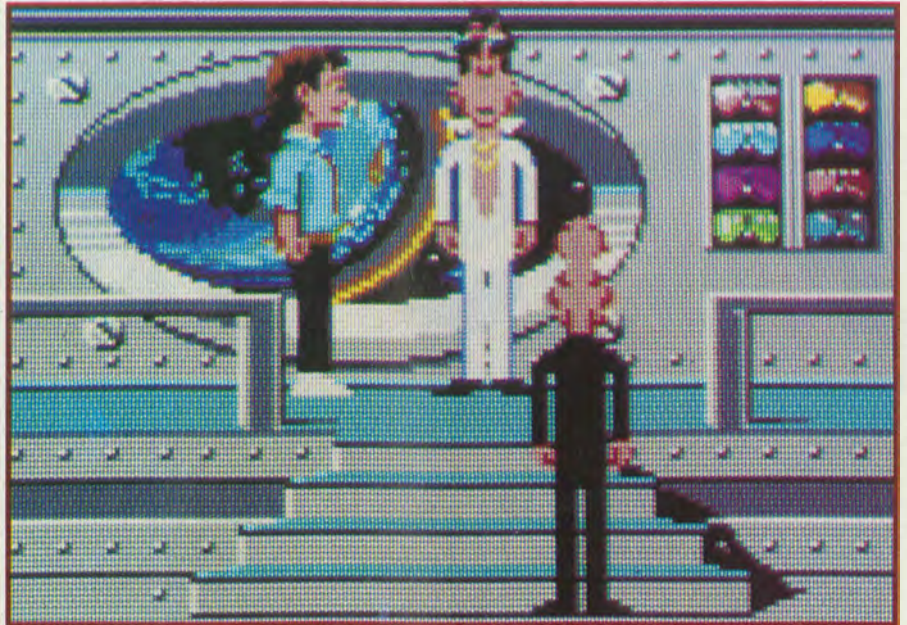
DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

As adventures go, Zak McKracken isn't too taxing. Having said that even the most hardened adventurers won't finish it too quickly. The feature I found most welcome was the way in which commands were input: I never had to re-type a command because of a fussy parser.

The game's graphics are very colourful and well presented; the animation isn't the best I've seen on an ST but that doesn't really matter in this type of game. There are a number of rudimentary sound effects and these are well executed, attention to detail being observed at all times. Overall, Zak McKracken is a wonderful little game - not too hard, but not a complete walk-over.

NC

"Take me to your leader." - Wow, it's the King!



"A strange phenomenon is sweeping across the globe. For some reason the phone lines are linked to an international stupidity epidemic. But just who or what is causing this weird occurrence?"

ZAK MCKRACKEN

U.S. GOLD (£19.95)

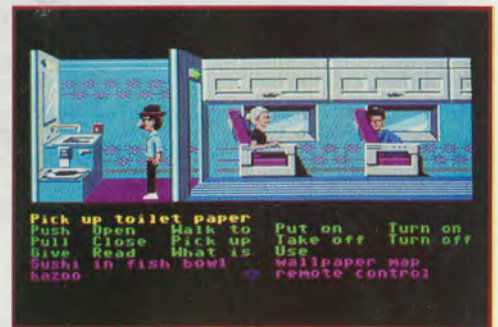
Step into the shoes of Zak McKracken, a downtrodden newspaper reporter. Poor Zak felt as though life was passing him by: dreaming up stories about Sasquatch kissing contests, alien amusement parks and the like was all very well, but Zak felt he had to do something more worthwhile. After all, how could he possibly win a Pulitzer prize working for a

sleazy tabloid like the National Inquisitor?

Our hero's adventures begin the morning after the night before. Having gone to bed, Zak tossed and turned until he finally managed to get to sleep, then... Wow, what a weird dream! An extraterrestrial plot to take over the world. It was so lifelike, it could have almost been real!

The problem was, however, that the dream was indeed real. Zak McKracken, ace reporter, had stumbled upon an alien race's attempt to take over the World. Furthermore, these meddling meteor mutants, or Caponians as they are really known - were using the telephone system to make all mankind go mad. Something had to be done and, unfortunately, it seemed as though Zak had been chosen as the human race's saviour. Our hero, however, although he didn't know it, was not alone. An archaeologist named Annie also knew of the aliens' spaced-out plot. Together with her help, and that of two college girls who had somehow landed on Mars, Zak must put a stop to the Caponians' fiendish plan.

You, as you may have already guessed, are Zak McKracken. Using your cunning, wit, wisdom and what-



Zak McKracken seems to be the perfect introduction to the world of adventuring. The control and input system is well designed and easy to use, and the main graphics are passable. The fault I find with Zak though, is that the puzzles are a bit illogical to say the least, requiring you to collect everything and cycle through them on a trial and error basis. Unfortunately, this system is also very unforgiving, and if you miss an object you must retrace your steps and go back and get it. Lucasfilms have produced a playable game here, it is just a pity that the puzzles let it down. If this problem had been rectified, Zak McKracken would have been up to the standard of the Sierra quests.

SM

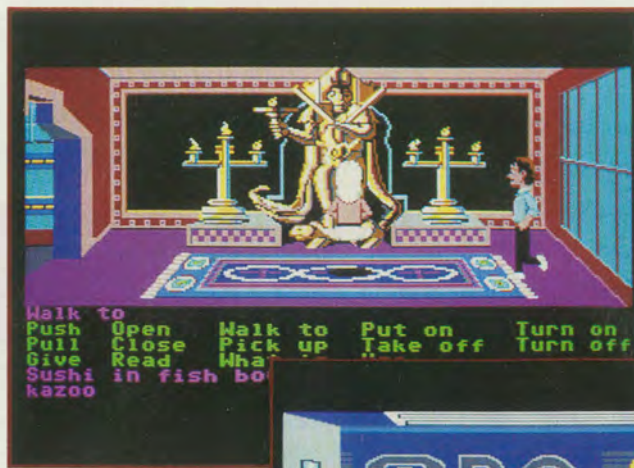


Ok, the machine is complete. All that's left to do is flick the switch.

ever else you may find, you must thwart the evil plans of the Caponian invaders. It certainly won't be easy - Earth is getting sillier by the minute - but if you try... well, you never know.

Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders is essentially an adventure game. But, before you turn the page and read about the latest multi-layered scrolling shoot'em-up, wait! Unlike other adventures, be they text or graphical, Zak McKracken is different. You need no typing skills to play this game; there is no wrestling with uncompromising parsers; and no real heavy thinking, either. All the action is mouse-controlled; simply move the cursor to the appropriate verb from the list displayed, then point at the required item - the computer will do the rest. To guide Zak around, or any of the other characters which you may control during the game, you simply point to where you want to go. The character will then walk to the desired point. Using items from your inventory is also very simple. For example: if you had a gun and wanted to use it, you would point at the verb 'use' and then at the word 'gun'. Simple, eh?

Humour is very prominent throughout the game and Zak gets to meet some very strange characters: two-headed squirrels, golfing gurus and an odd gentleman who wears Groucho Marx glasses and a ten-gallon hat, to mention a few. As I already mentioned, the puzzles aren't too taxing either: clues, graphical or otherwise, are usually scattered everywhere. Another noticeable feature of the game is the way in which the puzzles don't have to be solved in any specific order; it is usually possible for you to retrace your steps if you forgot to take something somewhere the first time. As you progress into the game you may find the ability to 'dreamshare' with other characters. This process is important for

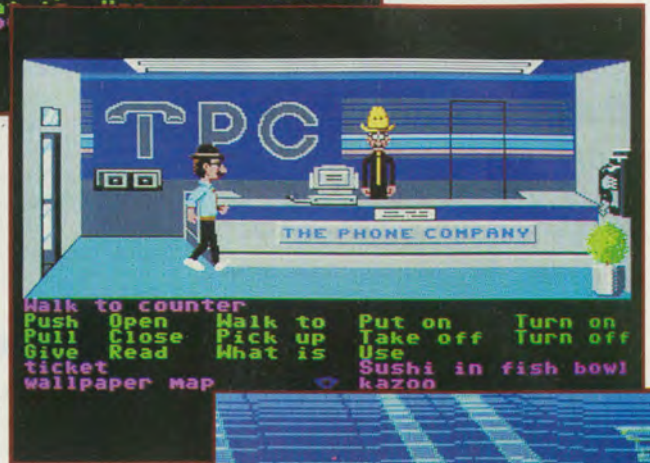


Yeah, you've got some nifty moves chief, but I don't think you'll make it to TOTP.

puzzle-solving later on in the game, especially where one pair of hands can't manage.

Another feature of Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders is the way in which you would have to go out of your way to actually kill off a character. The programmers have deliberately made the game like this so novice players will not become too disheartened. Oh yes, one final point - Zak McKracken also runs in monochrome.

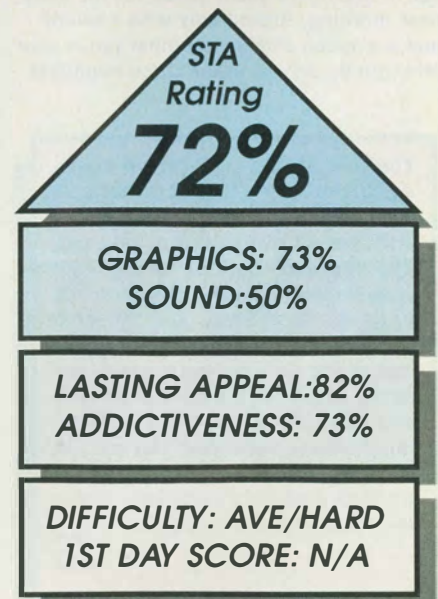
STA



Having dream-shared with a friendly dolphin, Zak explores the undersea world of Atlantis

Remember when adventures were uninspiring still-screens and stuffy text? With its easy-to-use point-and-click control system, terrific interactive animation, hilarious plot and quirky humour, Zak McKracken is designed with fringe adventurers in mind. From the moment Zak leaves his apartment, his destination and adventures are up to you, and there is no limit to the daftness of the plot. From San Francisco to Katmandu, England and Mars, Zak could encounter two-headed squirrels and reincarnated rockstars in his journalistic enquiries. Don't just sit there - the world is waiting for you!

JS



STA
Rating
52%

GRAPHICS: 66%
SOUND: 50%

LASTING APPEAL: 42%
ADDICTIVENESS: 51%

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



Working in an arena, clearing up after the lions isn't the best of jobs, and Ludicrus hated it. In fact, the only thing Ludicrus looked forward to was going to the 'Caesar's Arms' tavern for a few goblets of the local brew. And, by golly, did he find solace in it! Every night Ludicrus was in the 'Arms', and every night he had a skinful, followed by the customary annoying of the gladiators. Normally, the gladiators would leave it at that, but one particular chap, Biggus Musculus, had had enough, and made sure that word got to Caesar about this 'noble warrior'. Caesar was so impressed by the stories told, that he sent a couple of centurians out to find Ludi. This should make good entertainment, he mused...

Naturally enough, you are that drunk-en scallywag, Ludicrus, and it is up to you not to become a shish kebab for the lions next morning. Armed only with a sword and a wooden shield, you must prove your strength by defeating the three mightiest

The title of this gladiatorial comedy promises a game which is abundant in hilarity and hijinx, and that is exactly what you get. The characterizations of the hapless Roman, I Ludicrous, and his unlikely opponents, are big, bold and comical, and considering the size of the figures, the controls are fairly responsive and the animation smooth. But when the belly-laughs have subsided, you are left with a game which simply lacks variety and this seriously questions its long-term appeal.

JS

"Ludicrus the gladiator must fight against numerous opponents in order to get the 'thumbs up' from Caesar. More importantly, will he get the OK sign from us?"

I LUDICRUS

ACTUAL SCREENSHOTS (£19.95)

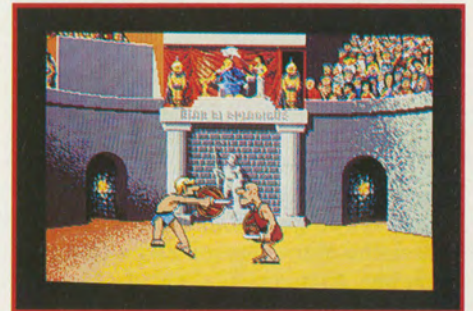
After the extensive programming time, I was expecting a lot more from I Ludicrous. True enough, the graphics are of cartoon quality, but the game itself is restricted by the lack of moves and repetitive action. All of the opponents seem impossible to beat, but can actually be beaten by a set pattern of moves. However, even using this method, the fighting is very hit and miss and it is difficult to tell who is losing due to the lack of an energy bar. Basically, I Ludicrous seems to be an exercise in attractive graphics, and it passes the test. Regretfully, the gameplay doesn't.

SM

gladiators in Caesar's army. After a humorous loading sequence, which shows Ludicrus collapsing with a fit of the giggles, you are asked to choose from a one or two-player game - the two-player mode being particularly useful to acquaint yourself with Ludicrus' movements before you begin the actual tournament. As mentioned, there are three opponents: Herr Liss, the bald German; Bon D'age, the voluptuous female fighter, and Bud Vyzer the beer-drinking disemboweller. The first you meet is Herr Liss, so donning your metal helmet you enter the arena.

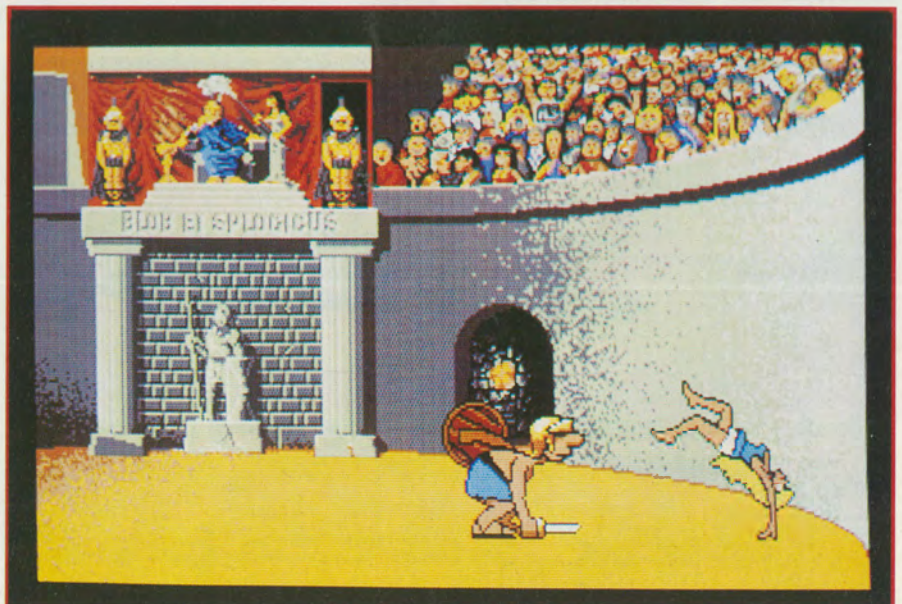
The action is viewed sideways on and is depicted in cartoon-quality graphics reminiscent of those used in the BC and Wizard of Id cartoons. The moves available to Ludicrus are all accessed via the joystick and include attack, crouch, round-house and, best of all, his famous 'Big Wobbly' move, which sees him swing his sword violently. Additionally, Ludicrus can roll, jump or simply move out of the way of any oncoming sword-wielding combaters. Both Ludi and his opponent can sustain five hits, but should this limit be

Herr Liss and the crowd can only watch as Ludicrus uses his 'Big Wobbly' move.



exceeded, the character will fall to the floor, only to be rejuvenated for the next attempt. You must knock out your opponent four times before you can go on to the next, but should you fail you will be thrown to the lions. Once again, the lion must be hit five times, and if you manage to kill it four times, you will be allowed another crack at the previous warrior.

STA



Bon D'age is the most agile of the fighters. Here we see her somersaulting out of Ludi's range.

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"Computer athleticism can be almost as demanding as the real thing. Is your joystick arm strong enough to withstand the exertions of Run the Gauntlet?"

RUN THE GAUNTLET

OCEAN (£19.99)

The computer version of Run the Gauntlet is split into three events: one land-based in which you must complete a number of circuits in a buggy of some sort; a water circuit, requiring skilful manoeuvring; and an obstacle course, designed to test your physique. The game opens with a digitised rendering of the show's theme, and pressing fire exits this screen. You are now asked to choose the country you wish to compete for. Up to three people can take part, but, if there are only one or two people playing, the computer assumes control

of two pacers. The basic object of the contest is to attain more points than your opponents, thus gaining the coveted 'Run the Gauntlet' trophy.

Seated within the confines of your buggy, we prepare to begin the off-road obstacle course. The track, along with your vehicle, is randomly chosen by the computer and you are shown positioned



on the starting line. To the right of the main action, there is a map of the intended route, and your vehicle (represented by a glowing dot) must follow the dotted line indicating the set course. The buggy is controlled by pushing forward to accelerate, with left and right turning the vehicle in the required direction. The muddy terrain is punctuated with bumps and tight hairpin bends, and just to make your race harder, controlled explosions constantly go off beside you. Should you end up last, you are disqualified. Succeed, and you can continue to the next event.

Next, we have the water-based equivalent of the off-road racing. Once again,

Run the Gauntlet is an all-action programme, giving us the chance to gasp in awe as manly blokes whizz around in expensive toys accompanied by loud flashes and bangs - something that could be captured perfectly in a computer game, perhaps? Obviously not. Ocean's version of Run the Gauntlet is a collection of three games, two of which are virtually identical Super Sprint clones, whilst the third is a cast-off from Konami's Combat School. The graphics are passable, though very 8-bit in their execution, and the sound also just makes the grade. Overall, Run the Gauntlet is a missed opportunity which just doesn't live up to any expectations. Disappointing.

SM

Take the car racing classic Supersprint, flood the track, change the little racing cars to hovercrafts and called it Run the Gauntlet. The game-play is very similar to the aforementioned classic and really comes to life when two-players are racing against each other. The Joystick control is a believable interpretation of the uncontrollable hoverboats that drift and turn around the bends. The graphical presentation is adequate for the game and the overhead radar/map of the course works relatively well. However, the game-screen just does not show enough of the action and the scrolling always seems to be struggling to keep up with the race. Nevertheless, entertaining two player action.

JS

the course and vehicle are chosen from random, only this time there are jet-skis, hovercrafts and inflatables to choose from. Once again, the top right corner features a map of the route, and the same controls apply.

Finally, we encounter the assault course. Without the safety of a buggy or boat, it is up to you to run up the vertically-scrolling screen, leaping walls, traversing rivers, and avoiding the sweeping motion of the powerful water-cannon. Holding down fire and using the age-old skill of joystick waggling prompts your tracksuited man into action. Replacing the map of the other two sections is a picture of a seven-stone weakling. However, as you build up speed, the wimp's picture is gradually replaced by that of a bronzed muscleman. To clamber over the walls and obstacles, a combination of pressing fire and up is used, and on doing so, your character is seen leaping over them.

STA

STA
Rating
56%

GRAPHICS: 50%
SOUND: 53%

LASTING APPEAL: 55%
ADDICTIVENESS: 52%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

Having cleared this sector of asteroids, the portal to the map screen appears, and you are dragged, spinning, to its epicentre.



Blasteroids only serves to remind us that the old themes of arcade entertainment are invariably the best, and this is a welcomed variation on an old favourite. The mouse controls eliminate the uncontrollable thrust mechanism from the original Asteroids, and the lack of a cowardly hyperspace facility means that you must confront the enemy at all times. The solid colour graphics and slick presentation enhance the appeal and enjoyment of the game even further. If Imageworks intend to up-date the classics to this standard, then we could be in for a real treat.

JS

"Venturing into space and shooting aliens is nothing for most of you

hardened space Captains. But for Imagework's Blasteroids, only the 'boulder' ones need apply!"

BLASTEROIDS

IMAGEWORKS (£19.95)

Back in the early days of computing, amusement arcades were going through something of a revolution. Video games had begun to appear in most arcades, and at this time they were split into two factions: the raster graphic machines such as Space Invaders, and the vector graphic machines such as Atari's Asteroids. Neither offered much colourwise, but the latter offered a lot more in clarity; you



could even see your little triangular ship's ray traces, as it blasted the geometrical boulders into oblivion! Now, as computer games seem to be going back to their roots, it seemed about time that Atari's boulder-busting classic was given a new lease of life. Converted by Teque from the Atari/Tengen coin-op, Blasteroids takes the basic form of asteroids and adds a more varied challenge. The vector graphics of

It's easy to see where the idea behind Blasteroids came from. Tengen have taken the original Asteroids theme, added a few new ideas, and come up with this. In my opinion, Blasteroids is classic arcade fun and Imageworks have converted it brilliantly. The sound is very atmospheric; the pounding tones helped keep me transfixed. The graphics, too, are presented well - Mukor's facial expressions being my favourite. It is, however, the gameplay that is the game's strongest feature. Blasteroids is such a simple game that just keeps drawing you back for more. I really enjoyed it.

NC



Once you have battled through the solar system and cleared it of all the asteroids, you can face the evil Mukor. This foul creature must have all of his surrounding lugs blown away before he is vulnerable - no easy task!

the original have been dispensed with and have been replaced with solid boulders that look as if they really could smash you to bits.

Blasteroids can be played by one or two people, both of whom have one life. The length of this is dictated by an energy bar, and any collisions with the floating space debris reduces it considerably. If it expires, your game is over, but it is possible to restart by using the helpful credit system. However, before you can begin blasting rocks galore, you must choose the required difficulty level. Your ship waits by four warp gates, each of which offers an increasing challenge and a higher bonus. Having chosen, your craft is shown in front of a grid. This is a chart of the planetary system, and you can travel to any planet you are adjacent to. The number of planets a system holds is dictated by the level of difficulty chosen, with

nine to fight your way through on the easy levels, and sixteen when you feel brave.

Having chosen your starting area, you are dumped into orbit around the planet. Almost immediately after your arrival, the onslaught of boulders appear and you begin the fight for your life. Your small craft is controlled by using left and right to rotate, and fire to thrust into the direction you are facing. Conspicuous by its absence is the lack of the hyperspace option; instead, pulling back on the joystick causes your ship to transform into a different form. By repeating the movement, your ship will change into one of three possible combinations, offering an enhanced feature of weaponry, shields or speed. However, there is a disadvantage: choosing one of these features causes the other two options to become weaker - for instance, you lose speed and fire-power if your craft is heavily armoured.



Your ship is armed with the traditional single-fire blaster and can move anywhere on the screen, 'wrapping' around to the same position on the other side. Likewise, the boulders appear from all directions and, when shot, split into several smaller rocks which branch off into separate courses. There are several types of asteroid which attack you, each containing a special property. There are grey boulders that are essentially cannon fodder; red ones that release an energy-restoring

It may be based on an 'oldie', but it sure is a 'goodie'! Blasteroids brings back all the fond memories of steering your highly-responsive ship through wave after wave of death-dealing boulders. The graphics are great, with the background planets adding another dimension to the hectic action. Presentation is top notch, with the boulders moving smoothly and the craft just as sensitive to the controls as I remember. Sound is limited to the obligatory shooting noises, but a decent tune accompanies the main action without getting irritating. Blasteroids is nothing new, but it does present an old favourite in a new, challenging formula. Recommended.

SM

crystal; Seeker asteroids that attack you at high speed when you shoot them; and the unusually-named 'Popcorn' rocks which, although indestructible, can be stopped in their tracks by peppering them with bullets. As well as the floating flints, assorted space ships and artefacts float around, shooting you. There are eggs that shatter when shot, releasing a life-sapping leech, and the flying saucers of the original are back. When these saucers are destroyed, they relinquish a special add-on for your craft, and these can be higher-potency weapons which make boulder-bashing easier, or extras such as speed and shields.

Once a sector is cleared, a portal flips onscreen. Your craft is magnetically attracted into this, and when you are on its dais, you are spun back to the map screen. When all of the sectors in a galaxy have been cleared, you are sent to deal with a monstrous creature called Mukor. This evil being constantly harangues your ship, draining energy rapidly, but can be killed by shooting the lug-like tendrils that surround him. Each 'lug' requires several shots, and all the time you must avoid being trapped by the rotund monster. Once Mukor is killed, you are then given access to the next solar system.

STA



With a sun blazing in the background, our ship transforms into 'Armoured' mode. This will make it more resilient against collisions, but has the unfortunate side-effects of slowing down both its acceleration and shot speed.



Uh-oh! You have made the mistake of casually shooting a seeker asteroid. If you don't shoot it quickly, it will ram into you, depleting your energy severely.



The map screen. Using your joystick or mouse, you can plot your next destination. Each is individually named, and our craft is heading towards Zaniah.



STA
Rating
81%

GRAPHICS: 72%
SOUND: 68%

LASTING APPEAL: 69%
ADDICTIVENESS: 85%

DIFFICULTY: EASY/AVE
1ST DAY SCORE: 209543

"Miniature Golf games are experiencing something of a revival at the moment. So 'putt' your hands together and bid welcome to Electronic Arts' computer version of the crazy pastime!"

ZANY GOLF

ELECTRONIC ARTS (£24.95)

If you like nothing better than trying to hit a golf ball through ornamental gardens, then you will find Zany Golf delightful. Computer crazy golf enables the course creators to go further than ornamental windmills and gnomes, and subjects as diverse as pinball machines to handburgers have been turned into course hazards. The mouse pull-back power control enables you to play the game with the minimum of fuss, and the graphical presentation is pleasing. But as real life crazy golf is designed to kill half an hour during a trip to the seaside, I seriously doubt the lasting appeal of Zany Golf.

JS

Electronic Arts' latest release features all the ups and downs of a miniature golf course - with a few additions! Up to four people can play, each taking their shots alternately, and the basic idea is very simple: get the ball down the hole in as few shots as possible. There are nine holes in all, each featuring the most varied and unusual courses you are ever likely to see. Obstacles attempting to divert the ball's route take the form of jutting walls, windmills and hamburgers, which will blow, deflect or generally obstruct the player's shot - no wonder it's called Zany Golf!

Preceding play there is a short load, which shows a stylised picture, naming the next course. They all go

by strange names, such as Magic Carpet, Fans and Castle, the title reflecting the main obstacle of the course. The game is entirely mouse-controlled, gauging speed and direction. Positioning a cross-hair cursor on the ball, you must click the right button to prepare to putt. An elastic line now extends from the cursor and must be positioned in exactly the opposite direction in which you wish to hit the ball. Additionally, the length of the line dictates the strength of the shot - ranging from a gentle putt to a mighty thwack! The number of shots allowed for each hole is shown above the play area along with the course's par, and if this is exceeded the game is over. Between you and the hole there are the aforementioned obstacles. Fans can be activated by moving the mouse rapidly from side to side, thus blowing the ball in the required direction; walls rise and fall, deflecting the ball; and a hamburger must be made to jump by continually clicking the left-hand mouse button until it is high enough for you to get the ball under! Other courses also have different features, and can take the form of a pinball table, complete with ball-reflecting flippers, and a maze-like castle. Sometimes, before a putt begins, a screen will appear informing you of a bonus. This will involve successful navigation of a route or hitting a fairy with your ball, and you will receive extra shots for your trouble.

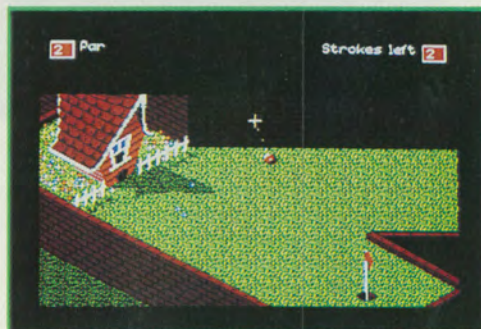
STA

Following hot on the heels of Gremlin's Mini-Golf last month, Electronic Arts' game has about the same par rating. The ball movement isn't quite as good as in the Gremlin game, but it offers more challenging greens. The courses look extremely nice, and a different ditty accompanies each hole, adding to the general 'jolliness' of the game. The variation in the courses is also good, offering sub-games, such as the Pinball level, and each is well laid out with no room allowed for mistakes. Graphically, Zany Golf wins the war of Crazy Golf games hands down, but I feel it may prove a little too frustrating for some people. Take a look at both before you decide.

SM



When the ball is on the chequered carpet it can be guided with mouse.



The line extending from the ball is used to plot the direction and strength of the shot



To get your ball into the hidden hole, that hamburger must be raised off the ground. By clicking the mouse button repeatedly, the 'burger rises and falls slowly. Get your timing right, and you can slip the ball under it!



Looking a bit like a screen out of Marble Madness, the Fan level involves wiggling the mouse to get the fans to blow the ball into the direction required.

STA Rating
57%

GRAPHICS: 61%
SOUND: 43%

LASTING APPEAL: 52%
ADDICTIVENESS: 64%

DIFFICULTY: HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

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At the end of each sector you are confronted by a large guardian. Here, it is a three-headed mechanical dragon. Two heads appear at once, bombarding you with flak, and must be blown off, one by one.



LAST DUEL

U.S. GOLD (£14.95)

"Releasing another Capcom conversion, U.S. Gold slap you around the face with their corporate glove. Dare you accept the Last Duel?"

The twin planets, Bacula and Mu, had lived in harmony for thousands of years, their peace only tainted by the devious machinations of Bacula's Golden tribe. This warmongering group had been trying to provoke a battle for years, and by the year 2012 they succeeded. Gathering all of their resources together, they built

huge warships and gradually wiped the Baculans out. Re-equipping their own armies with the Baculans' technology, they built an armada of space ships and their attention turned to Bacula's sister planet, Mu. The planet could offer no resistance to the Golden's attack forces, and could only watch as their Queen, the beautiful Fheeta, was dragged into their ship and taken away. They traced the ships' progress to the other side of the planet, and prepared a rescue force using the fastest vehicles they could find.

Piloting one of these vehicles, it is up to you - and a friend if you so wish - to travel through Mu's six levels, destroying all that stands in your way, until you reach Fheeta. Each level is vertically-scrolling, and your three-wheeled vehicle can move in four directions, the screen scrolling to centralise it. The action swaps with each alternate level from a car to a space ship but, apart from the graphics, the action remains the same. The causeways you travel are pitted with giant holes and guarded by the remnants of Mu's security droids - except now they are under the Golden's control. Your ship is armed with the latest in pulse lasers and can shoot any obstructions, and, in addition, by pushing the joystick forward and pressing fire, you can leap over the yawning gaps. Also lying in the road, along with the debris

As arcade games go, the Last Duel didn't. Even so, I would have expected a better conversion than this. The actual game-style isn't too bad - it's just the silly little mistakes that should have been ironed out that ruin it. Things appear that I imagined I would never see again, such as, getting stuck in the landscape until I had lost all of my lives. The controls aren't particularly good either, and jumping across the yawning holes in the road was achieved using more luck than skill. Combine these daft mistakes with factors such as the annoying wait between games as a droning tune plays and the jerky horizontal scrolling, and you have a very substandard game.

SM

If you hanker for the simple things in life, and your requirement for a game is no more than a mindless and untaxing brawl with some very dispensable aliens, then look no further than The Last Duel. This step-by-step shoot'em-up has obviously been designed to be playable, with its swift and responsive controls, limitless firepower and an enemy that seems quite content to be blasted again and again. As a shoot'em-up, The Last Duel meets the very basic requirements - the vertical scrolling is smooth and relentless etc. but don't expect anything new or surprising from it.

JS

of the shot weapons systems, are little pod-like crystals. Shooting these reveals a collectable icon, and passing over this enhances your weaponry, allowing you to collect up to three times more shot power and sideways-firing guns.

At the end of a stage you will reach the one last barrier between you and the next area. Consisting of a giant guardian of some sort, this alien requires hundreds of shots to be pumped into him before he finally expires. A different nasty occupies the end of each stage, and they vary from skeletal dinosaurs to the ultimate fiend - a giant mechanical crab. Once one of these creatures is dead, the words 'Nice Fight' appear, and you scroll up to the next level.

STA



The action takes place both in space and on the ground, swapping alternately with each level.

STA
Rating
46%

GRAPHICS: 46%
SOUND: 33%

LASTING APPEAL: 37%
ADDICTIVENESS: 56%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: 39975

"We became blase to progress in space exploration, but the tragic Shuttle crash served to remind us of our mortality, fallibility and insignificance."

ORBITER

MIRRORSOFT (£19.95)

Spectrum Holobyte were developing Orbiter at the same time as the fated Shuttle space program, in an attempt to simulate Shuttle flight and the sort of satellite maintenance tasks that this reusable space craft would perform. They claim that Orbiter is based on the actual commands and procedures used by NASA and that the instrumentation panel and display are a close approximation.

The program is supposed to simulate the experience of launching, landing and engaging in the missions, and you must overcome the complications, mechanical failures and errors of judgement which will arise. The first view inside the shuttle shows the Forward Main Station and clicking the mouse reduces this full screen to a quadrant. An inset screen enables you to change the configuration of the program which includes experience of the launch, orbit and landing phases and you can opt to receive fewer prompts from mission control. Next is mission selection beginning with a walk-through training mission called Operation Hubble.

Operation Hubble deals with putting telescope into orbit. The event time is

compressed and pre-launch begins at T50:00, and audible speech synthesis relays the messages and directions from NASA Mission Control. NASA checks to see if communication channels are open and you must pull down a communication menu and reply, 'Roger'. You are then advised to make system and cockpit checks by entering an alpha numeric combination on a control panel. Mission

control confirms that the system is okay and directs you to initiate APU, (Auxiliary Power Unit), pre-launch procedure. Following control's commands until just before final countdown, you are prompted to close the External Vents and set the APU and Main Engine Auto Shutdown buttons on. You now have the choice of initiating auto-pilot or attempting a manual launch.

Mission Control confirms that all systems are go, counts down the last seconds and the Shuttle is launched. Control will continue to talk through the launch stages and you can monitor the G-Force change and acceleration on the landing panel. The Left control panel displays the automatic roll manoeuvre and

I think that the problem with Orbiter is that it is too close to the real thing for its own good. Everything is done at a snail's pace, with no sense of urgency, and there are no brilliant planet scapes or alien worlds to brighten up the dull display. Having to pilot the thing in what seems to be real-time is a bind, and you don't get a chance to look out at the galaxy until you have been up there for about twenty minutes. Like its display panels, Orbiter is dull. And, although it indeed may be the next best thing to going into space, the real thing must be at least a hundred times more exhilarating than this.

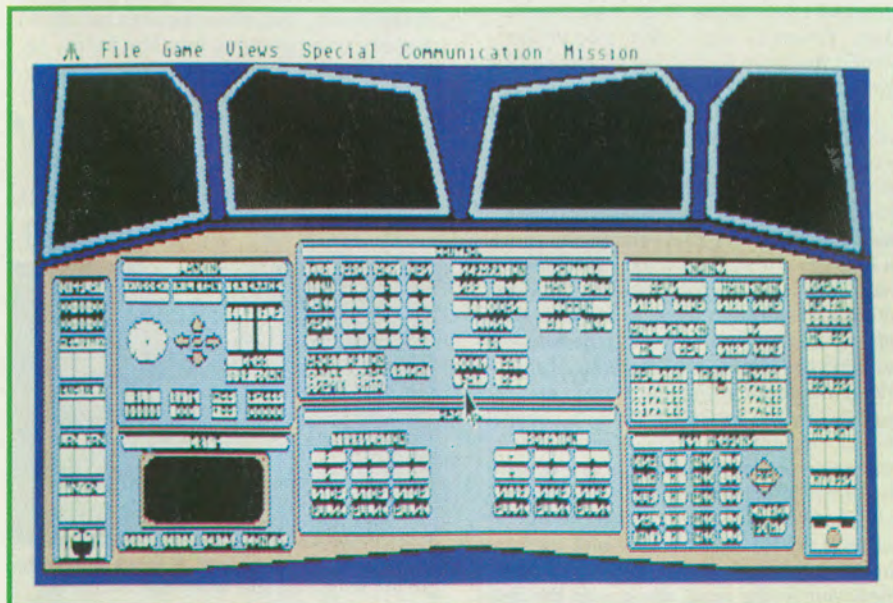
SM

Orbiter is a space flight simulation designed with purists in mind. It is a closed-face program which concentrates more on thoroughness and accuracy than graphical presentation. Of course, I cannot comment on its accuracy, but I can on its attention to detail which is second to none. The speech synthesis from Mission Control is audible and the dialogue is very technical and detailed which indicates that a great deal of study went into the development of the program. But although I acknowledge the thoroughness of the simulation, I found it rather bland and uninteresting and there is just not enough tangibility to the game-play for my liking.

JS

launch trajectory and Control then acknowledges that the SRB (Solid Rocket Boosters) separation is complete. Selecting Map from the views menu shows the Earth and a black dot representing the shuttle. Finally, at T+10, clicking on the shuttle windows reveals views outside the shuttle. At T+53 you must select Aft view from the menu and view the cargo bay which holds the Hubble telescope. Now you select 'Orbit' from the menu and enter the correct angle from equator 28, and orbit height 300 km. With the correct angle and altitude, you are ready to launch Hubble. Mission Control issues instructions on speed and altitude which must be followed. After checking that the telescope is operational, the launch is achieved with the Remote Manipulator System. Selecting 'Arm' from the display, and then pressing the 'Power On', 'Unlock' and 'Hand Open' options, will cause the 'Arm Grabber' menu to appear on screen. You can then select 'Tele-scope' and the arm automatically grabs Hubble and takes it clear of the Shuttle. Clicking on the shuttle windows you may see Hubble leaving the cargo bay and drifting away from the Shuttle. With the mission accomplished, you can follow NASA's instructions to return and land.

STA



STA
Rating
48%

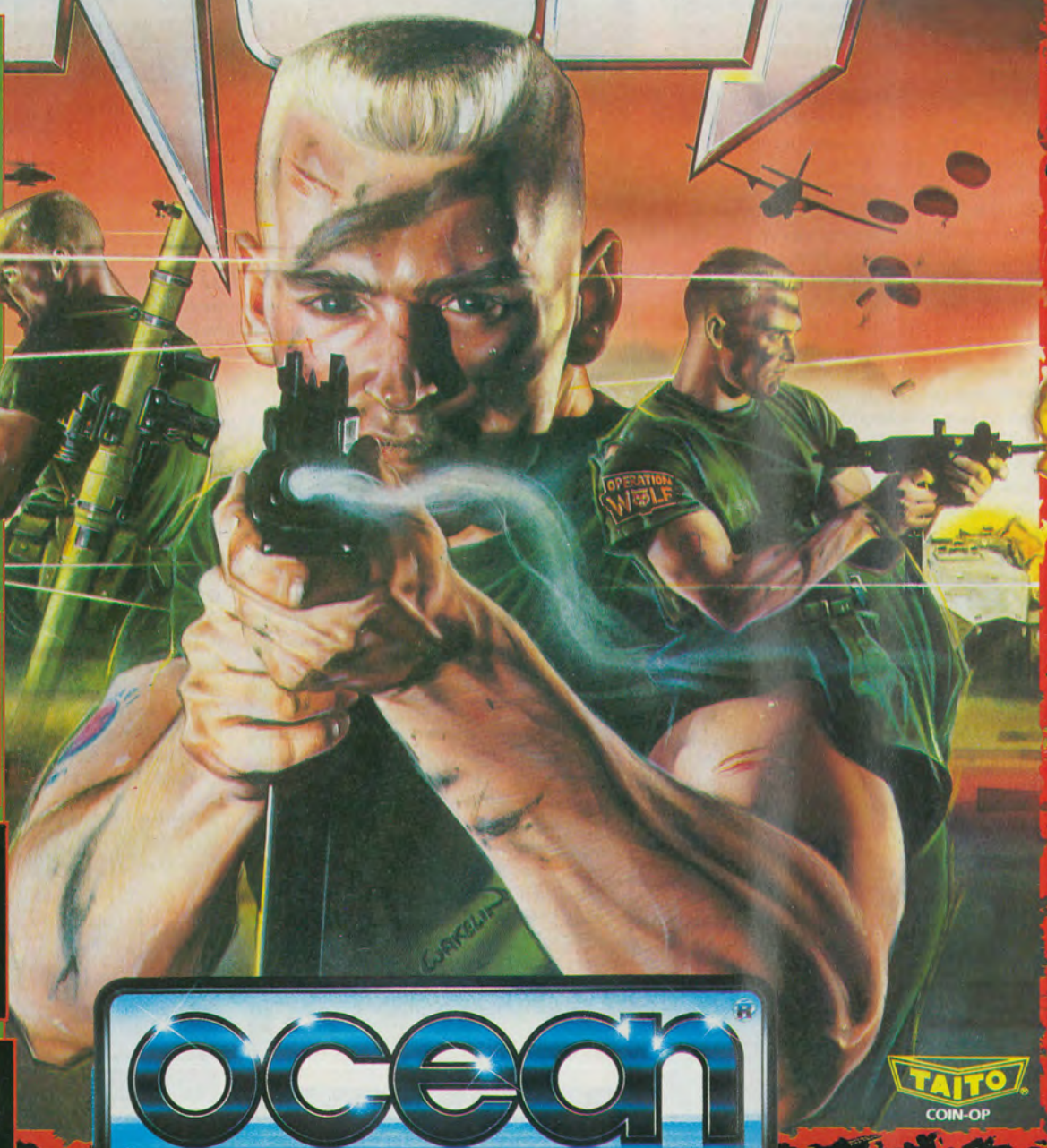
GRAPHICS: 33%
SOUND: 50%

LASTING APPEAL: 59%
ADDICTIVENESS: 37%

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

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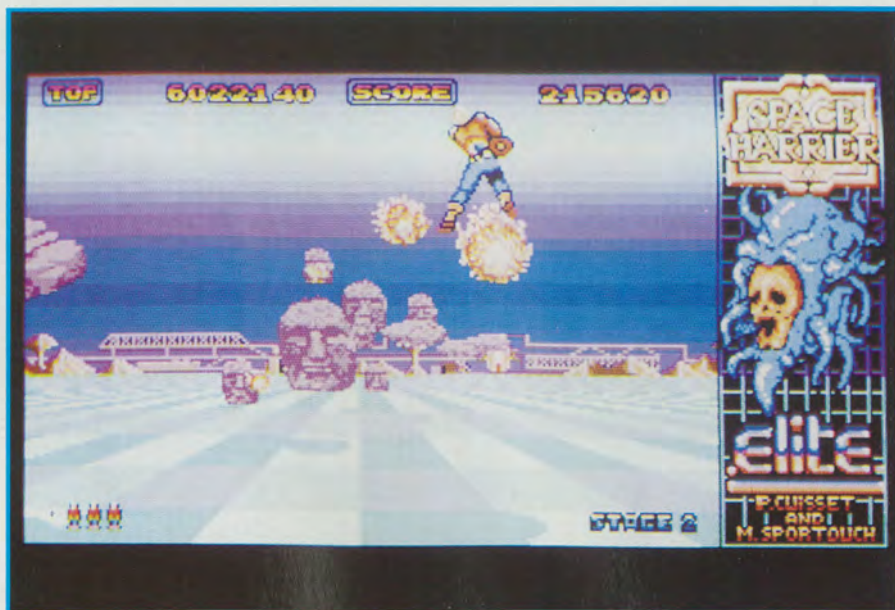
OPERATION WOLF

"To enhance the original Space Harrier, Elite have released this pseudo-sequel, offering extra levels for less money. Are you up to a bout of bare-back dragon riding?"

Resuming your role as the hardened leader of the legendary Space Harrier corp., you have once again been drafted in to clear the galaxy of Dragonworld from the aliens that are controlling it. Armed only with a rapid-fire pulse laser and a pair of jet boots, it is up to you to travel through the sectors of the planet, shooting any of the deformed creatures that appear on the horizon.

A crackly, digitised 'get ready' precedes play, and the onslaught begins. Our red-jerseyed hero is controlled by either the joystick or the mouse, and can move in the customary eight directions and fire. The chequered landscape of the planet scrolls smoothly towards you and, with it, brings the first barrage of aliens. The obstacles are both air and ground-based, with the planet's fauna and rocks proving as deadly as the aliens. Our hero is initially given four lives, but contact with any of the scenery, the aliens or enemy fire reduces them one by one, causing your man to buck backwards and release a digitised scream. However, on losing all four lives, there are three 'credits' which allow you to restart from where you died - complete with a replenished set of lives. As mentioned, though, a member of the Space Harriers is never unarmed, and your carried gun is more than a match for the seemingly endless waves of monsters. Your weapon isn't totally reliable though, as later sectors feature jutting pylons that deflect your fire but, for the most part, anything it hits is reduced to a ball of flame.

Once you have blasted a large enough trail of devastation through a sector, it is time to face the enormous end-of-level demon. These are as varied as the actual 'in game' creatures, and require numerous



SPACE HARRIER II

ELITE (£19.95)

Space Harrier is still one of my arcade favourites, but it is a game which relies a great deal on the hydraulics which shake and shudder as you leap across the terrain. I was impressed with the original conversion of the game, but doubted that a sequel could be made out of a relatively limited theme. In my opinion, I was right. The controls are still as responsive and, again the graphical presentation is accurate; with even larger sprites on the screen, but it is too similar to the original. This is a spectacular game but its lack of variety seriously undermines its longevity.

JS

Space Harrier II is every bit as frenetic as the first, and incorporates the same colourful graphics and racey sound. The trouble is that it is too similar to the first. Admittedly the idea was meant to enhance the original by adding extra levels - it's just that I would have preferred more original monsters and more variation to the levels, perhaps not sticking to the wave-after-wave then end-of-level guardian format would have helped. Basically, Space Harrier II succeeds in its attempt to add further interest to the original but, unfortunately, I think its asking price is much too high.

SM

your lives more rapidly, as they offer very little room in which to manoeuvre. A group of four or five aliens circle the screen, firing laser bolts almost continually and you must sneak through their defences and shoot them when vulnerable. Only when each of the group has been destroyed can you progress to the next, individually-loaded level.

STA



STA
Rating
66%

GRAPHICS: 70%
SOUND: 60%

LASTING APPEAL: 58%
ADDICTIVENESS: 70%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 4005645

hits before they will die. They come in two forms - the snake-like beasts and the cluster aliens. The former weave in and out of the screen releasing fire like a medieval dragon and can only be destroyed by being continually shot in the head. Doing so causes them to change colour, indicating they are weakening, before they eventually explode, each segment igniting as it whizzes past you. Secondly, the cluster aliens tend to reduce

AGAIN AGAIN (£19.95)

Tracksuit Manager is the latest addition to the surprisingly successful theme of football management simulation. You have the choice of managing any European team, or you can opt to manage the built-in England squad. It is July and your first task is to prepare the squad for the forthcoming

Nations Cup finals in two years time. The first qualifying match is in October and first you must pick a team from the players in the national league. The game runs on a four year term which includes two years for the national cup and two for the World Cup, and all the other countries in the tournaments are computer-managed.

A team selection screen shows a list of English players, and using the joystick you can scan through the list, scrutinize their current individual form and make your decision. A knowledge of football is necessary to place the players in their most favourable positions. For example, Shilton in goal, Hoddle mid-field and Butcher in defence. You must choose a minimum of thirty players to last for the tournaments and you can access a scout report at any time during

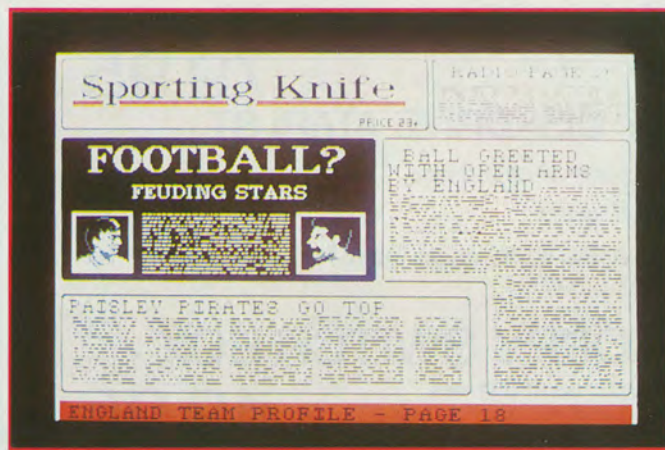
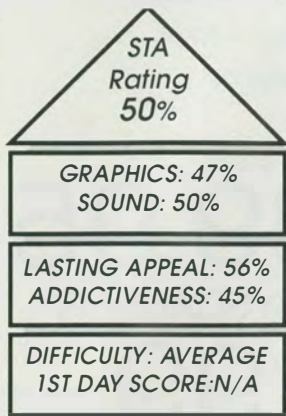
the game.

The next stage of the game is to analyze the qualifying matches running up to your first game and scrutinize the performance of individual teams and players in preparation for the match. The matches and results running up to your fixture are described with brief details of the game, and you never actually see any game action on the pitch. However, when England plays, you must read a running commentary and form your tactics, decisions and substitutions on the commentator's description of play.

I am amazed at the popu-

larity of football management simulations, mainly because of their intangibility. Like all the examples already available for the ST, Tracksuit Manager concentrates entirely on the decision-making behind the game. I acknowledge the thoroughness of Tracksuit Manager and its comprehensive structure, which makes it more straightforward than other titles I have played. If the statistics and logistics of football management interest you, then Tracksuit Manager is as good as any.

STA



DISK 15

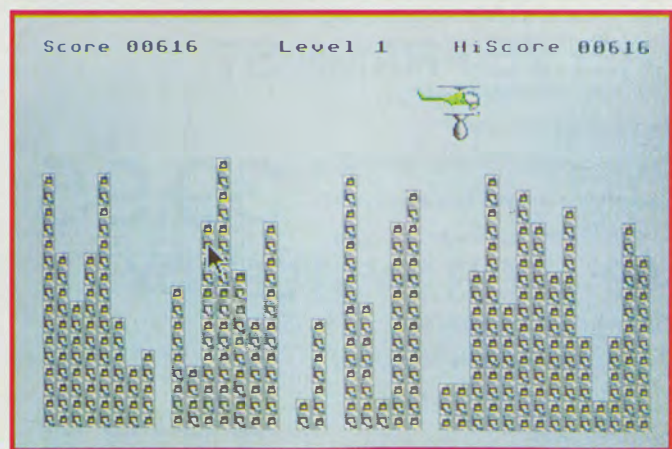
CASCADE (£19.95)

Cascade are certainly living up to their name with Disk 15. This compilation offers the seemingly unbeatable offer of fifteen games for £19.95. The fifteen in the collection range from simplistic interpretations of board and card games like draughts, solitaire and Mastermind, to simple and hackneyed-looking arcade games. Each game is alphabetized from A to O.

The first thing you notice

about 3D Noughts and Crosses, is that it is not in 3D. You simply click on a square with the mouse to place a nought or cross and the computer makes its challenge. Second on the list is Sliding Blocks in which you must slide twelve squares into numeric order. Following on, Draughts has an alpha-numeric gridded board and you have to enter the coordinates of the draught you want to move and then the square that you want to move it to. An amusing Hangman game comes next, in which you must guess a word set by the computer and each wrong letter moves the stickman closer to his death.

Based on Space Invaders, Astro Dodge replaces the aliens with a cascade of boulders. You must avoid the rocks and blast them for points. Then after a bout of vacuousness, you might feel inspired to draw a picture, and so Cascade have kindly provided ST Doodle. This very simple package allows you to scrawl lines of various thickness

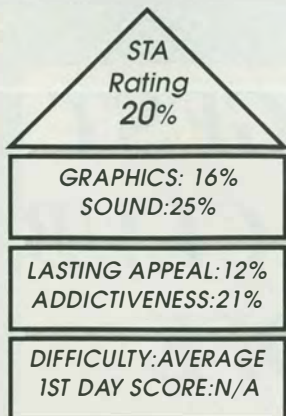


using the mouse and then erase them. Next, Sub Hunter may sound a bit more engaging, but it isn't. A little boat moves along the surface of the water and beneath the waves are dozens of enemy subs. Pressing the spacebar drops a depthcharge and the subs retaliate with torpedoes. Likewise, Rally Driver could be misconstrued as a more absorbing game. The screen shows a maze with two little racing cars moving round and round. You control one of the cars and collect lots of yellow dots, and a computer controls the pace car. My favourite is Heli Bomber in which a helicopter constantly flies over skyscrapers and each fly-pass

is lower than the last. You must avoid a collision with the buildings by dropping bombs on them. The list of insipid titles continues, with Diamante Sid, Balloon Crazy, Othello and 49'er, which all follow similar lines to the games I have briefly described.

When you consider that all fifteen games fit very comfortably on one disk with room to spare, you can imagine the sort of programs that feature in this compilation. This is more an unwelcome trip down memory lane than an unbeatable offer for sixteen-bit users.

STA



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STA12

A CASE FOR THE CONVERTED

This month Dennis Hemmings and Mark Smith compare ST arcade conversions with the original arcade licenses. Just how did our favourite games live up their expectations?

Operation Wolf Converted by: Ocean

"Operation Wolf" was featured in Case for Conversion way back in issue five and the ST version reviewed in issue ten of ST Action. We reckoned that Operation Wolf was a pretty hot game, and waited for the conversion with some anticipation.

There have been no major changes in gameplay, with the same idea of blasting everything in sight (except the nurses) being followed. However, instead of the mock sub-machine gun found on the arcade

item.

Even though we did expect a competent conver-



sion, we were still surprised at just how well the ST version turned out. In many parts of the game, it's hard to distinguish the graphic differences between the two versions. Fast and effective controls are complemented by the detailed sprites and smooth scrolling, with the atmosphere even making



you now use an on-screen sight, controlled by the mouse, to shoot and bomb the enemy. Extra ammo and grenades can be found and collected by shooting the appropriate

you break into a sweat when the action gets a little too tough. Some of the speech from the original, as well as most of the inter mission screens have been included too, giving a polished finish to a first class conversion.

It's very difficult to fault Operation Wolf - the swapping of three disks can be a bit of a pain, but it does allow all the features from the original arcade game to be



included. As there are so few differences between the ST and arcade version, Operation Wolf fans (and anyone else for that matter) will go crazy over it!

1943 Converted by: Go!

Another victim of issue five's Case for Conversion was 1943, Capcom's high-



flying, low-scoring arcade 'hit'. We didn't think there was any point in converting such a boring game - Go! did. We were right.

The basic idea behind 1943 is to shoot your way through wave after wave of World War 2-style planes, fending off the aircraft until you reach the end target. It's then a matter of dodging a screenful of bullets whilst shooting at the end-of-level target (usually a large battleship). Hardly inspiring!

However, Go! were obviously impressed, and set themselves the task of converting 1943 to the best of their abilities. They did pretty well too, with both similar graphics and gameplay, but



the game itself still stinks. Graphically, there is very little difference, except some detail on the sprites and the awful representation of what is supposed to be the sea (looks more like a load of squiggly lines to me). The gameplay is much the same as the original, for, despite the nice scrolling and aircraft variation, it's all too predictable and dull.

1943 might have been the turning point for the allies in the war, but it does nothing for arcade or computer entertainment.

Double Dragon Converted by: Melbourne House

To tell the truth, I had never seen the 'Double Dragon' machine in the arcades before the ST version dropped through my letter box, courtesy of Melbourne House. I had seen the Nintendo version and was very impressed, so I had a fair idea of what I wanted to see. It actually turned out





quite well, but has lost a little in translation.

Double Dragon is a karate game of sorts with a number of hoodlums to beat using a variety of attack methods. The enemies come in all shapes and sizes, occasionally brandishing baseball bats or whips, but most relying on their martial arts skills. Two



players can play simultaneously, lessening the odds a bit, but not making the game too easy either. Double Dragon proved quite a hit at the time of release, and spurred quite a few clones, including Vigilante which we have reviewed in a past Case for Conversion.

Melbourne House have done a commendable job in converting the game to the ST, managing to include most of the features of the original. The graphics are a little different, some sprites



to the point of looking odd. The scrolling, although not really too important, is fine, and the backgrounds effective.

The arcade game has three buttons along with a joystick to control Billy Lee

(the 'star' of the game), yet Double Dragon on the ST just requires a normal joystick. Pressing fire with a direction will perform an action, but it did prove awkward at times because of Billy's abilities to move to any part of the screen. A little more time making the controls a bit more effective would have given us something really special instead of something adequate.

Something worth mentioning about the Nintendo version is that it isn't exactly the same as the arcade or ST versions- various parts have been altered to suit the NES better, allowing for a more enjoyable and playable game. Maybe our software houses could learn something from this.

Thunderblade by U.S. Gold.

Well, we prayed, we really did. We prayed for a really decent version of

Thunderblade, one that lost none of the appeal of the arcade original. Unbelievably, our prayers were answered, thanks to U.S. Gold.

Thunderblade (which, incidentally, also appeared in issue five's Case for Conversion!) is a superb shoot'em-up involving two different perspectives (from above and behind), super-fast gameplay and outstanding graphics (well, that's the arcade cred anyway!). The idea is basically that of progress - another 'save the world' if you like - blasting as many hostile vehicles as you can before you meet your own demise.



U.S. Gold have done wonders in converting Thunderblade, using just two disks to bring you all the atmosphere from the arcade machine into your bedroom (or wherever you use for such purposes). Almost everything has been crammed into the conver-

sion, and, although part of the screen is lost to a pretty border, much of the exhilarating gameplay is still present.

The graphics on the ST Thunderblade are as good as one could hope for. They obviously don't rival the original for speed and detail, but they perform superbly. It's still difficult to dodge those bleedin' skyscrapers!

As we thought in our arcade review, the hydraulics are more of a novelty than a necessity, and their absence in no way effects the game. The controls help reproduce the excitement caused by Thunderblade in the arcades

and add the finishing touch to what was already an excellent product.

Thanks to Leisure World, Torquay, Devon for the use of the arcade machines.



BIRTHDAY TOMBOLA



In the way of a change, we thought that, instead of having a competition where only about a handful of you can win, we would run one where everyone had a chance to get something. So, then we thought: "Why not run a tombola, where practically anyone who enters and gets the answers right wins a prize!" So, lo and behold, here it is... the ST Action birthday tombola - our way of saying thanks a lot to you, our loyal readership! Many thanks also go to the generous software houses without whom this competition wouldn't have been, and let's take a look at the prizes...

AIRBORNE RANGER

'Airborne Ranger is a move away from the simulation side of MicroProse releases but is still a step above the normal Rambo/Commando style of shoot-'em-up. An effective combination which should attract those looking for a thought-provoking game'

— TGM

Not content with the purely lifelike, militaristic simulations that MicroProse have brought out in recent times, Major Bill Stealey decided to take a step out of the line and introduce some of the Strategy and quick reaction thinking that MicroProse simulations are renowned for and pump them into an 'action strategy' game. The result? Airborne Ranger, an addictive game combining the best of MicroProse strategy with fast arcade action where you control one of the troops belonging to that crack American combat unit who have earned the privilege to wear the exclusive black beret.

Once packed you are flown to your destination in an Osprey aircraft. Having parachuted safely down to terra firma, the action really starts to hot up as you run, walk or crawl your way towards your objective, picking up the dropped supplies as you go. The difficulty can be altered before each mission, thus affecting your chances of survival. However, those with experience can go for higher risk and the greater glory that ensures on return from a successful mission.

Although providing popular with simulation die-hards, seasoned arcade players will also enjoy getting to grips with Airborne Ranger. The game can be played as a fast-moving, hit-and-run action game, but players will soon find that it will require some thought and pre-mission planning if one is to succeed in achieving each objective. This is where MicroProse's reputation for excellence in strategy and simulation games comes in. Often it is a matter of getting to your objective in as quiet a manner as possible, thereby ensuring that the enemy remains unaware of your presence.

RATING OUT OF TEN

GRAPHICS 8

SOUND 7

STRATEGY 9

PLAYABILITY 9

OVERALL RATING 915

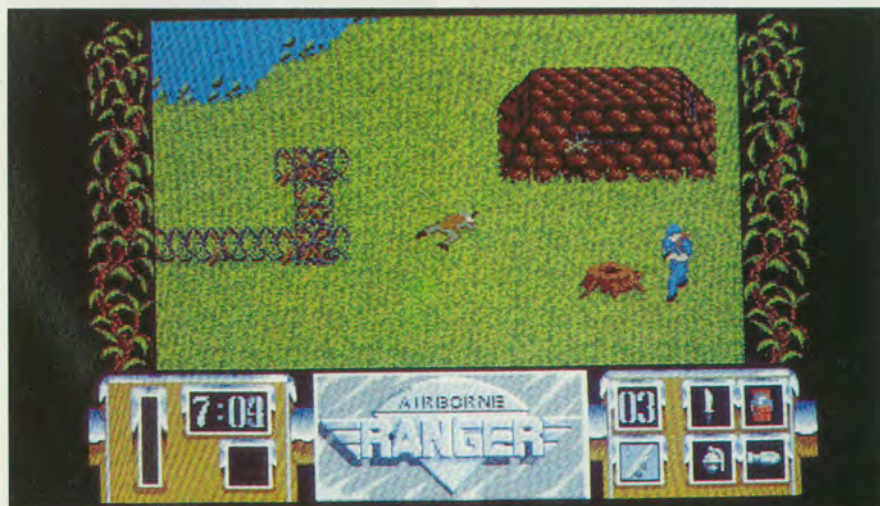
The action is real – the suspense triggers the adrenalin rush that starts your senses working overtime. Airborne Ranger is an addictive strategy game in an effort to complete the next mission and get back in one piece.



'Basically, Airborne Ranger is a straight forward commando-style game. It is the added extras, however, that make it something special.'

'Airborne Ranger will appeal to those who enjoy games that require a modicum of quick reflexes.'

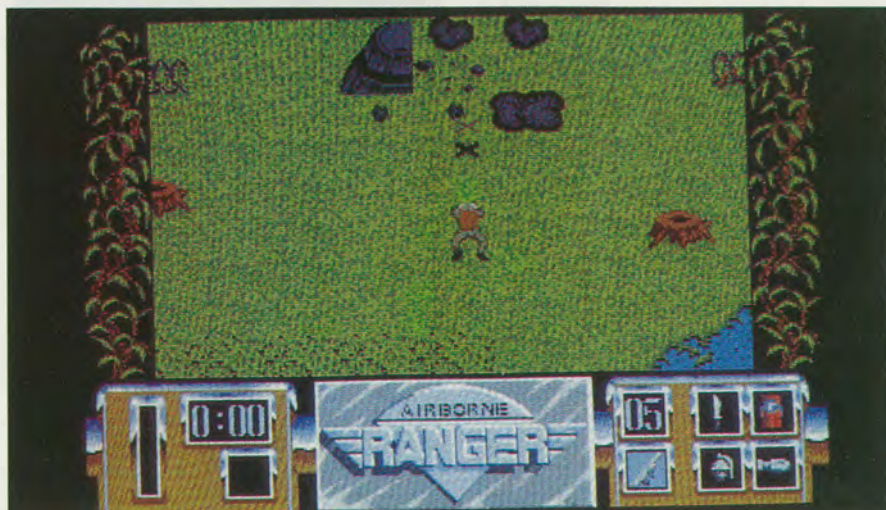
— ST Action



As the best of the best, you are chosen to single-handedly accomplish twelve missions, set in the three difficult parts of the world.

Amongst the frozen wastes of the Arctic, you must beware the pitfalls of walking on thin ice. In the more temperate climate of Central Europe, you are faced with the prospect of coming up against the best frontline troops that the massed Communist hordes can produce. Alternatively, you could end up somewhere in the Persian Gulf taking out a fuel dump where, if the enemy doesn't get you, the heat and fatigue almost certainly will.

On each mission, you can choose from an impressive array of weaponry and supplies that will form the contents of three supply canisters that will be your lifeline on your mission. Grenades, magazines for your carbine, LAW missiles, knives, time charges and first aid packs can all be selected to best suit your needs for the coming mission.



MICROPROSE

First of all, we have five groovy sweat-shirts and five likewise groovy T-shirts from Electronic Arts to make you look dead cool this summer. Also from EA, we have five EA-embossed mugs so that your tea will never look better; fifty stickers to adorn the fronts of your bedroom doors; ten posters to cover that embarrassing crack in the wall; and five copies of their futuristic racing game, Powerdrome.

Right, what's next? Oh yes, from those awfully nice chappies at Domark, we have two pairs of royal slippers to celebrate the release of their Spitting Image game, along with two Empire Strikes Back videos for you to watch in the safety of your own home.

Next, we have a massive prize from Logotron. How would you like to own one of their games? You would! Well, they've put ten of each title up for grabs, so you could be zapping aliens in style with Starray, solving puzzles in Quadralien, undulating in Stargoose, or taking someone's Queen in Sargon III chess!

Oh blimey, O'Reilly! Those mateys at Microdeal have been exceptionally generous! In fact, they are offering one of practically everything in their range, from useful four-way joystick adaptors and joystick extenders, to monitor sockets. So what I'll do is bundle a few together and let you win a set of various leads. Also from Microdeal, we have three very tasty disk holders that are worth a few bob, disk-head cleaners, and ten very handy disk wallets that are standard issue in our office!

Hewson next, and they are offering you the chance to win one of ten tower-topping copies of Nebulus; one of ten copies of their 83%-rated shoot'em-up, Cybernoid; and one of ten copies of their zoom'n'doom Eliminator! Not content with this neat selection, they have also sent in squillions of posters.

From those chummy brummies at U.S. Gold we've got ten copies of their STA1-rated Thunderblade, so that all you lot out there can earn your wings; ten massive big'n'baggy T-shirts of the said title; five copies of their 'World's Greatest Epyx' compilation; five Bionic Commando AND five 1943s - not to mention lots and lots of Thunderblade posters and badges that will wow your friends and relatives!

If you want to get ahead - get a hat! And that's one of the prizes Ocean are offering. The Mancurian wonders are offering five bullet-riddled Operation Wolf hats and five normal Ocean hats - and don't worry if your head's massive, 'cos they are all adjustable! Ever caring, they have also bunged in five T-shirts: two featuring the Lucozade-guzzling wonder, Daley Thompson, the other three ol' Sly himself as Rambo the third! Also, to boost any flagging software collections out there, you can win one of five copies of Daley's Olympic Challenge, Operation Wolf, the FiveStar compilation and Victory Road.

Ooo la, la! Our French friends, UBI



Soft, are next and they are offering two table clocks set in the trendiest see-through perspex; two massive clocks that look absolutely brilliant; five pen sets; five T-shirts; and lots of posters. Merci bien!

Next we have Melbourne House, and they are putting up for grabs five copies of their fightin'n'fumpin' game, Double Dragon, along with two copies of their Tolkein epic, War in Middle Earth, and three copies of the Bitmap Brothers' classic shoot'em-up, Xenon.

From Grandslam we have five nifty little clocks, so that you can keep an eye on how long you've been playing.

Those wonderful evr'ybod peeps, Activision, have also been really gener-

ous, and are offering ten copies of their conversions of R-Type and Afterburner. So, if you fancy destroying Bydo or clearing the sky of bandits, get answering.

Another French contingency, this time ERE, have also put some software up for grabs: ten copies of their two-section game, Staff.

Bouncy bouncy wheeeeeeee!!! Those bright and bouncy chappies at Audiogenic are offering ten copies of their hair-tuggingly addictive platform game, Helter Skelter. So, if you receive one, you can bounce on cute monsters whenever you feel like it!

Digital Integration next, and they are offering four hip'n'trendy ATF sweat-



shirts to keep the wind from your back.

With all the posters on offer, I don't think a single wall in Britain will have a crack showing! So, in an endeavour to help the 'hide the cracked walls fund', Krisalis have lots and lots of luvverly Prison posters on offer.

From those luvly Liverpoolian chaps at Psygnosis, we have one of each of the following: arhaeological mayhem in Baal; horizontally-scrolling destruction in the brilliant Menace; two-player antics in Captain Fizz; and, finally, muscle-rip-

pling action in Barbarian.

If you saw the review of Lombard RAC Rally a couple of issues back, and wanted to try it - wait! Because those ever-so-nice people at Mandarin are offering ten copies. So there is still a possibility that you can whizz your Sierra around corners at 180mph, after all.

Titus tickle our fancy next. Famous for their break-neck speed action games, they are offering ten copies of both Crazy Cars II and the space shoot'em-up, Galactic Conqueror. Not only that, but

there are dozens of badges waiting to find homes.

Our old news editor, Martin Moth, has been extremely kind on behalf of Microprose as well. They are offering ten copies of the classic helicopter sim, Gunship; ten copies of the submarine sim, Silent Service and ten copies of F-15 Strike Eagle.

Is your old Henry's Cat mug looking tired and stained? If so, those busy Freescapers at Incentive have just the job - twenty-five Incentive/Freescape mugs (that means they move in solid 3D!) So, if you win, you can be the envy of your local coffee morning!

Finally, we close with the very, very generous Mirrorsoft. Up for grabs from them are ten copies of Falcon, so you can shoot MiGs from the safety of your bedroom; ten copies of the utterly brilliant futuresport, Speedball (that is if I don't decide to keep them all!); ten totally trendy and hip Imageworks T-shirts; and ten, also trendy and cool, wrist watches!

Right, I bet you are asking: "OK then, how do I get my hands on one of these brilliant prizes?" Well, all you have to do is answer all of these three questions correctly and send your answers to "ST Action Birthday Tombola Competition, Theatre House, Theatre Lane, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1SS." Entries must be recieved no later than April 10th. If you do not want to deface your copy of ST Action we will accept photocopied entry forms, although anybody found guilty of multiple entries will be disqualified. Afterall, we want as many of our readers as possible to win a prize.

1. What game has been awarded the highest percentage rating in the history of ST Action?
2. What two games received the coveted STA1 award in our very first issue?
3. Name two of the ST Action reviewing team?

Answers

1

2

3

Name

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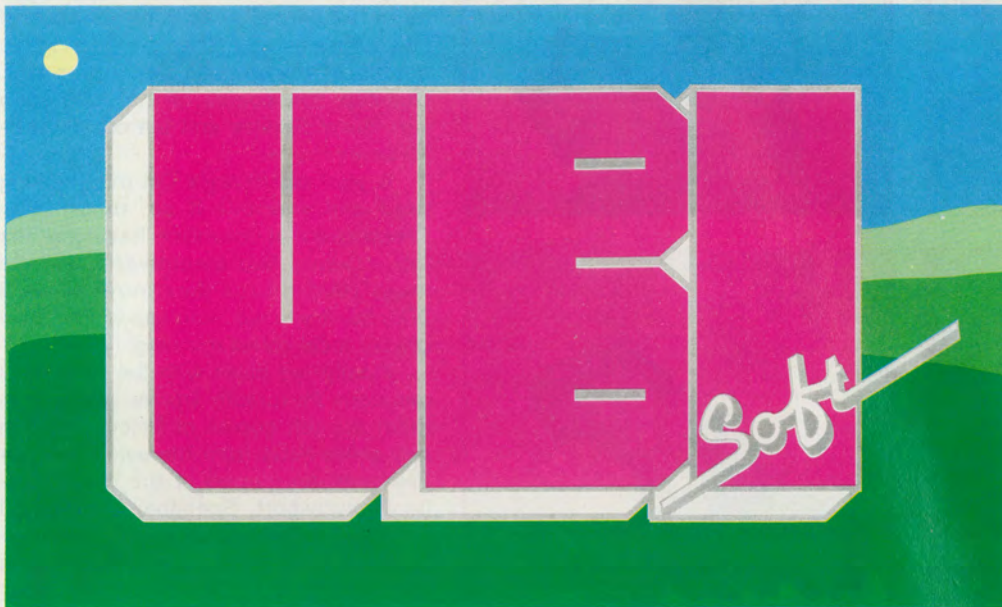
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ST Action Competition Rules: The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into regarding competitions or the results of competitions. All prizes are offered believing them to be available. If, however, a prize is unavailable we reserve the right to substitute a prize of comparable value. No cash alternatives will be given. Results will be published as soon as possible and prizes despatched soon thereafter. Please refrain from phoning regarding competition results or prize delivery. Employees of Gollner Publishing Ltd and companies participating in competitions are not eligible to enter.

ST ACTION COMPANY PROFILE



'Come and stay at our beautiful chateau for the weekend'. That was UBI Soft's irresistible invitation to the European press last year. This intriguing request worked perfectly as representatives from all over the continent descended on Rennes in Brittany. A year later, Jason Spiller travels to the 'City of Lights' to report on the latest developments of this exciting company.



The UBI chateau - once the home of French aristocracy, now the working place of UBI Soft's software development staff.



Just hours after arranging an interview with UBI Soft, I was on the plane to Paris, struggling to decipher a pidgin-English fax of the changes and connections to be made on the labyrinthian Metro. As this was my first visit to Paris, I was looking forward to seeing the famous landmarks and monuments. But as the underground train rattled through the darkness, stopping abruptly and briefly at the Bastille, Eiffel and Notre-dame stations, I could only imagine the sights above ground. After two hours of darkness, I emerged from the concrete depths at my destination, 'Voie Felix Eboué', in Creteil, the location of UBI Soft's Paris offices.

UBI Soft was originally established by the Guillemot family who are native to rural Brittany. Yves Guillemot, president of UBI Soft, described the transition from farming to the software industry: 'My father's business was the distribution of agricultural supplies to farmers, which taught my brothers and me about marketing and distribution. But whether it is farming supplies or games you are selling, it is the satisfaction of the customer that makes you a success or a failure.' The Guillemots' first venture into hi-tech industry was the distribution of compact discs: 'At the time, it was uncertain whether CD would be a short-lived fad or a success, and large companies were hesitant about investing in it. Therefore, my brother, Michel, realized the opportunity and developed a successful business supplying retail outlets with CDs.'

Move to entertain

The move into the entertainment software industry



Yves Guillemot: 'If it means delaying the release of a product to make it as good as possible, then that's what we will do.'

seemed a natural progression from CD distribution. But there was a major obstacle to overcome first. Guillemot explained: 'Existing software distributors in France were enjoying a monopoly of the market and newcomers were not welcome, and so they formed a cartel which was committed to ostracize us from the French market.' Evidently, Guillemot posed a threat to them. But today, as the director of Europe's premier software company, he is adamant that there is a place for everyone in the industry and is excited by new developments: 'Ultimately, it is the software buyer who decides.' As a result of this hostility, Guillemot's involvement in UBI Soft was kept a secret for a year - although there was obviously a driving force behind the company: 'The British market was particularly exciting, and in 1986 we negotiated with Elite Systems to represent their software in France. UBI established Elite SARL in France and for the next eighteen months there was always an Elite title in the French top ten.

This success opened the channels and UBI's 'French Connection' with Britain was firmly established: 'We have represented Mirrorsoft's affiliated labels in France since 1987. We advise on translation and, of course, we are in a better position to suggest which games will be popular in France. Dungeon Master from FTL has been particularly successful over here. We also market Domark's Trivial Pursuits which is a real hit in France.

Software Chateau

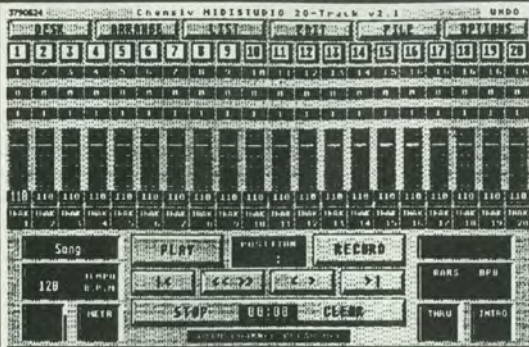
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Midistudio £99.99

Midistudio is a 20 track Midi Music Studio. This Midi software package is a realistically priced introduction to Midi music processing and includes the following features. 20 tracks each assignable one of 16 midi channels, each track can be transposed up or down 2 octaves, the main screen features full tape deck controls with individual volume sliders for each track, note editing facilities including editing of pitch, octave, duration and velocity; plus full midi controller editing (pitch bend, mod wheel, etc.). Full control over phrases is offered through Quantizing, transposing, and phrase arrangement software pages. The arrangement facilities allow moving and copying phrases on any of the 20 tracks. The package is easy to use and is a strong competitor with Pro 24.

"Out performs Pro-24 v2.1 in almost every way"
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The Image Scanner is a peripheral for the ST which can provide high quality graphics digitising for a tenth of the cost of other digitisers. This simple unit plugs into the cartridge port of the ST and accepts scanned information via optical cables which fix easily to the head of any printer. Scanned images can be saved in raw data, Degas and Neochrome formats. The Software supports scanning resolutions of 75,150,216,300,360 and 1000 dots per inch horizontally. An example disk is available which contains a slide show of images scanned with this product. The cost of this disk is £3.99, £2.00 of which is redeemable on purchase of a scanner.

IMAGE SCANNER ONLY £89.99

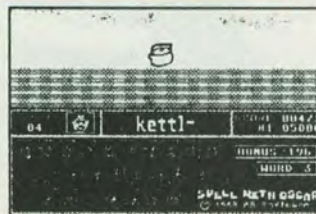
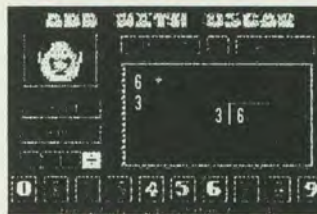


Add With Oscar £12.99

Add with Oscar is a fully mouse controlled educational game with full colour screens and sound for teaching addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to children. This program has selectable difficulty levels and a Hi-Score table.

EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE

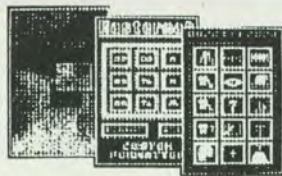
Spell With Oscar £12.99



Spell with Oscar is a game which teaches spelling, keyboard skills and motor coordination. Pictures of objects move smoothly across the screen and the pupil should spell the name of the object while Oscar checks for mistakes. Spell also incorporates selectable difficulty levels and a Hi-score table. Extra data disks £5.99

Quick List Plus is a utility that compiles a directory of your disks. Sort on disk or name, reads any drive, including hard drive. Printer output for hard copy of databases.

TRILOGY £12.99



Mastermat is a formatter that optimises disk space, allows non standard sector and track formats/ fast read format.

Picstrip is a utility that captures all or part of a picture file for use in Basic programs, supports GFA, FAST, HISOFT and ST Basics and is Degas, Neochrome and AB Animator compatible.

AB Animator £14.95

AB Animator is a utility for creating and animating sprites. It supports GFA, HISOFT and FAST basics and is compatible with degas and neochrome picture files. Use the full icon control to animate up to 20 big frames of 56 pixels wide by 33 pixels high.



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(above) The breath taking artwork in Iron Lord provides a perfect setting for the game play.

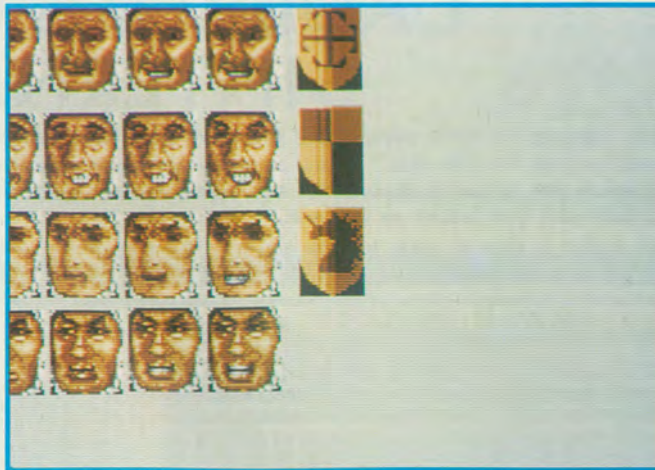
(top left) The incredible artwork was drawn dot by dot with Degas.



Ivan Gacout working late on Iron Lord in his splendid bedroom: 'The chateau's historic atmosphere was inspirational for Iron Lord.'

has achieved great success representing other companies' software in France. But it is the development of their own games which is particularly exciting: 'With the software distribution business well established, we decided to develop our own software

under the UBI label. The first stage was to find programmers, graphic artists and anybody with some good ideas, and so we placed advertisements in computer journals and put cards in with the games. The response was incredible! Programmers from all over France came to us; some with a basic idea for a game, others with complete plans for a project, and it was during this stage that our knowledge and experience of the market was invaluable. After a process of elimination we decided on a number of projects, and the next stage was to meet with the programmers and talk about the games. Each project required programmers, coders and graphic artists and so we delegated specific tasks to the relevant people. But directing and coordinating the project with the development staff working in different areas of France soon proved to be impossible. The solution to the problem was obvious, but not simple. UBI would have to find somewhere for them to work together with living and sleep-



ing facilities as well.

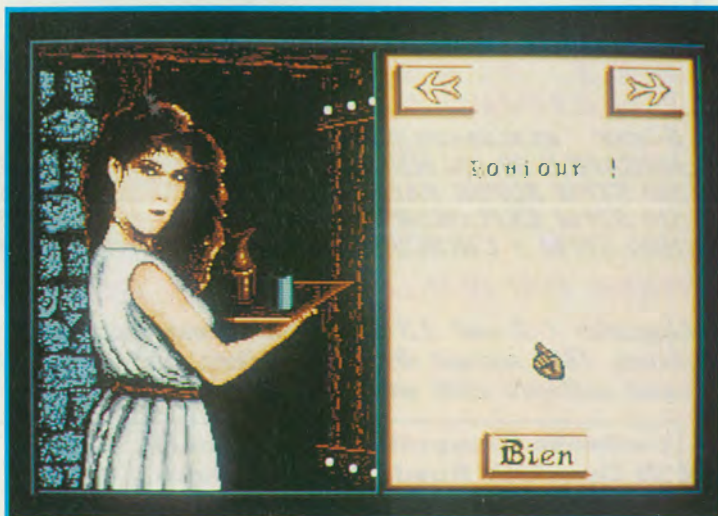
The solution eluded Guillemot until a large chateau in Brittany became available for habitation. Set in 700 acres of beautiful countryside, this 18th century chateau is magnificent. Enormous tapestries still hang in the great halls and, in the gardens, a pond the size of a football pitch encircled by statues thirty feet high, is a monument to the opulence and extravagance of 18th century French aristocracy. The grand halls which once played host to balls and banquets are now the working place of UBI Soft's programming staff. Guillemot described the advantages of having all the development teams under one roof: 'Firstly, the tranquillity of the countryside means that they can work without distraction. But more importantly, the ability to interact and work out programming problems together is invaluable.'

Extravagance

For the next year, the chateau was a hive of activity as UBI's development staff developed; Zombie, Puffy's Saga, Night Hunter, Final Command, B.A.T, Skateball and the masterpiece, Iron Lord. After two

years development time, Iron Lord has been unfairly described as 'extravagant'. How does Guillemot answer this criticism? 'Admittedly, it has taken longer than I would have liked. However, we could have released it at an earlier stage and it would have sold on the basis of its graphical presentation alone. But the programming team were adamant that the game-play could be increased and improved and so we delayed the release. This delay may affect initial sales of the game, but I believe that the improvements are justified.' I asked Guillemot why he chose the two simplest games in the range as premier releases: 'Puffy's Saga is an amusing game which we think will appeal to all age groups on all formats, and Night Hunter is a game that you can just get on and play. Both games have received favourable reviews and are selling well.' Software development on this scale must be costly and time-consuming, but Guillemot and his staff are as enthusiastic about the games now as they were when I visited the chateau a year ago.

Guillemot explained that the chateau's enormous rooms are too expensive to



A seductive serving wench serves you a goblet of mead.



Philippe Deriambure has been working on B.A.T. for two years: 'I was inspired by the city scenes in the film, Blade Runner, although the adventure is totally original.'

heat in the winter, and so the programmers are now working in the Paris office. This gave me an opportunity to talk to them. I asked Ivan Gacout, the originator and programmer of Iron Lord, what it was like working at the chateau. 'The ability to interact with the other members of the team and work all through the night if necessary was the biggest bonus. There was friendly competition between the teams to reach targets, and everybody was committed to doing the best job possible which created an industrious and creative atmosphere. The chateau has an incredible atmosphere which gave me great inspiration for Iron Lord.'

Iron Lord

Iron Lord is a massive game with the most incredible graphics, and for the last year the team has been working on improving the game-play. Gacout described some of the problems he encountered during production of this graphical masterpiece: 'With a game of this magnitude, the main problem is data compression. I had to reduce the program from six disks to three without sacrificing any part of the game.' What aspects of the game-play have been improved? 'During the development of Iron Lord, the graphics were always described as 'outstanding', while the game-play hardly got a mention. Therefore, we believed that the game-play aspect had to be increased to do the presentation justice. The archery section now requires greater aiming and distance-judging skills, the adventure aspect has been increased and you must use tactics rather than rapid joystick waggling to beat your opponent when arm-wrestling in the tavern. I have also included a battle strategy in which you must command and move an army on the battlefield.' Iron Lord contains screen after screen of incredible scenery and characterization, all drawn dot by dot with

Degas: 'We have worked constantly on the game for nearly two years, and the extra time spent on improvements will make it a much more absorbing and involving game.'

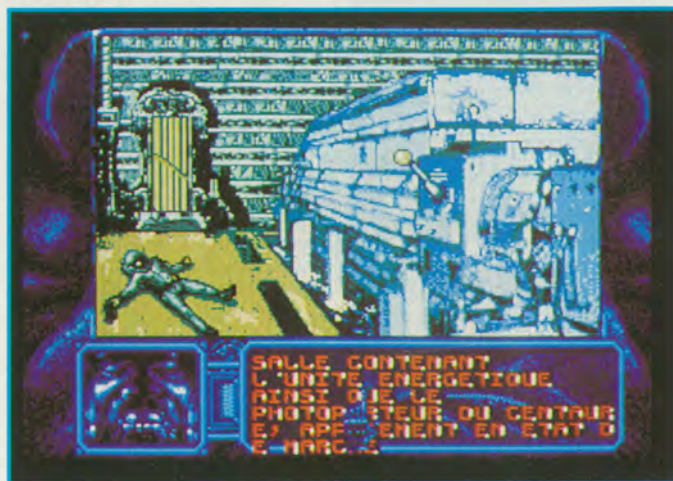
When the chateau was closed for the winter, the Paris office was quickly partitioned to give the programmers their own areas. Behind a bamboo screen I found Philippe Deriambure hard at work on the science fiction adventure, B.A.T. He described his inspirations for this massive adventure. 'I'm a sci-fi fan and I was particularly inspired by the city scenes in Blade Runner, although the adventure itself is completely original.' Deriambure has been working on the B.A.T. project



The release of Skateball was delayed to improve the scrolling on the ST version which is a crucial aspect of this sort of game.



Animation interacts with the still screens, and there are games within the game to play if you reach a dead end in the adventure.



for eighteen months: 'Originally I was working part time, but Yves really liked the concept and so for a year I have been working full time for UBI.' Deriambure described the game: 'B.A.T. is a long and taxing adventure

in a game are designed to give the adventure more variety and keep the player amused if he has reached a dead-end. But they also interact with the course of the adventure itself. For example, there is gambling in a casino and a flight

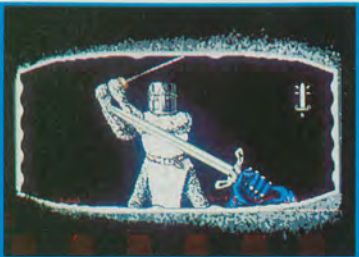


Final Command Team - Laurent Deravault, Robert Betaut and Philippe Reyauld.

with interactive animation and many games within the game. Your task is to track down and eliminate the evil Van Gogh who is planning to destroy civilization.' Again, B.A.T. has exceptional artwork and the adventure has many different aspects to it: 'The games with-

simulation which I am working on at the moment.' The graphics are quite brilliant and Deriambure has worked tirelessly on making the game easy to use and the adventure itself as gripping and taxing as possible: 'There are traps and pitfalls that even I would fall

Arm-wrestling in the tavern requires more than joystick waggling. It is a cleverly interpreted strategy to fox and tire your opponent. The knight's face indicates how he is faring in the wrestle.



for... and I wrote the game.'

Zombie is based on George A Romero's film, 'Zombies: Dawn of the Dead', and is every bit as bloody and violent. As the title suggests, your task is to locate and eliminate the zombies and avoid being eaten. The ingenious mouse/icon control enables you to move swiftly throughout the game from one room to another, and the disk is accessed each time you change location without any delay. Guns can be taken from a shop in the arcade and used to shoot the zombies, and if you can reach the roof of a sky scraper you can make your escape by helicopter. This bloodthirsty game is sheer suspense and is due to be released on the ST soon.

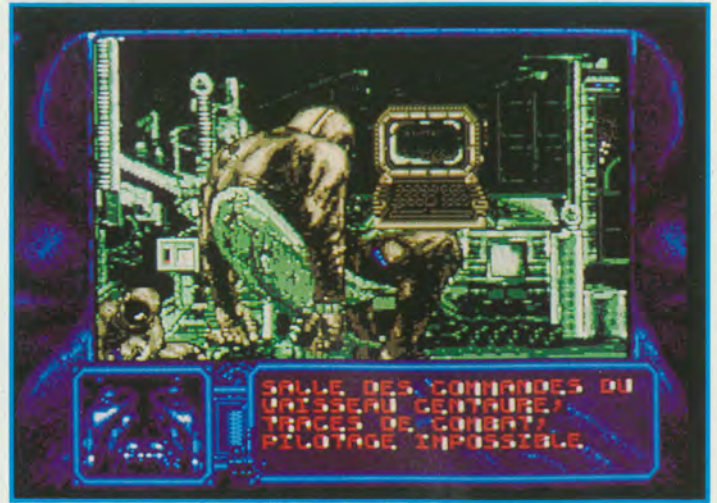
The release of Skateball was delayed while the programmers worked on making the scrolling smoother, and I can report that the extra time spent on the game was well worth it. Skateball is a combination of ice hockey and rollerball, and each pitch has spiked posts, pits, and electric terminals. The controls are remarkably responsive and the game-play offers the greatest two-player action. The difference between the Skateball I saw at the chateau a year ago and the version I played in Paris was remarkable. It is another example of UBI Soft's policy not to release a game until it is at its best.

Final Command is likely to be UBI's next release and fortuitously, all three members of the team were at the Paris office. Graphic artist, Laurent Delavault, described how they developed the game: 'Final Command is the first game that any of us have written, although, as computer game addicts we know what makes a good game. Myself, Philippe Reynaud the programmer and Robert Betaut the storyboard-



Ingenious animation features play on the spectacular back-cloths. The horse gallops across the map in the direction you have chosen.

er, are into sci-fi books and comics, and for the first part of the project, we looked at drawings and thought up a story. We worked together on the project for seven months



at the chateau and achieved far more than if we were working in Paris. Like most of the programmers at UBI, we developed the game on the ST, using 'C' and machine code, and drew the graphics with Degas. The ST is an excellent programming tool and we can port the artwork over to the other machines.' These games are near completion and are to be released over the next six months. But Guillemot spoke of more games which are at various stages of development: 'There are a dozen or so games in the pipeline but we are withholding information in case people get confused with the games that are about to be released.'

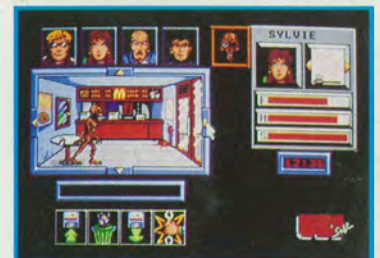
Evening by the Seine

The evening was spent in a restaurant by the Seine with views of Notre Dame, and as I prised a particularly reluctant snail from its shell, Managing Director, Christina Quemard described future plans: 'Yves recently visited a number of companies in the States and the response to the games was amazing. We have recently set up an arrangement with Electronic Arts, whereby we represent them and promote their games in France and they market our software. This forms a common interest and brings both companies close together and we intend to use this technique in other countries.' UBI Soft is very much a family company, and both the programmers and administration staff have tremendous enthusiasm and interest in the business and the products. Their energy has made UBI Soft the main representative of the world's software in France and now, with their own exciting and innovative games, these same companies are vying to represent them.

The success of UBI's chateau weekend last year demonstrated the creativity and originality of the company. Not only did it give the European press a chance to meet and talk, the message

Final Command is the first project that any of them have worked on. But as arcade addicts they know what makes a good game

that the premier software distribution company in France was now developing its own games was enthusiastically relayed throughout the continent. Guillemot described his theories and policies: 'My first priority is that UBI Soft presents the software buyer with good entertainment and value for money, and that the games themselves are not mindless shoot'em-ups, but taxing, thought-provoking and enjoyable entertainment. If that means taking a long time over a game or delaying the release dates in order to make improvements, as with Iron Lord, then we are willing to

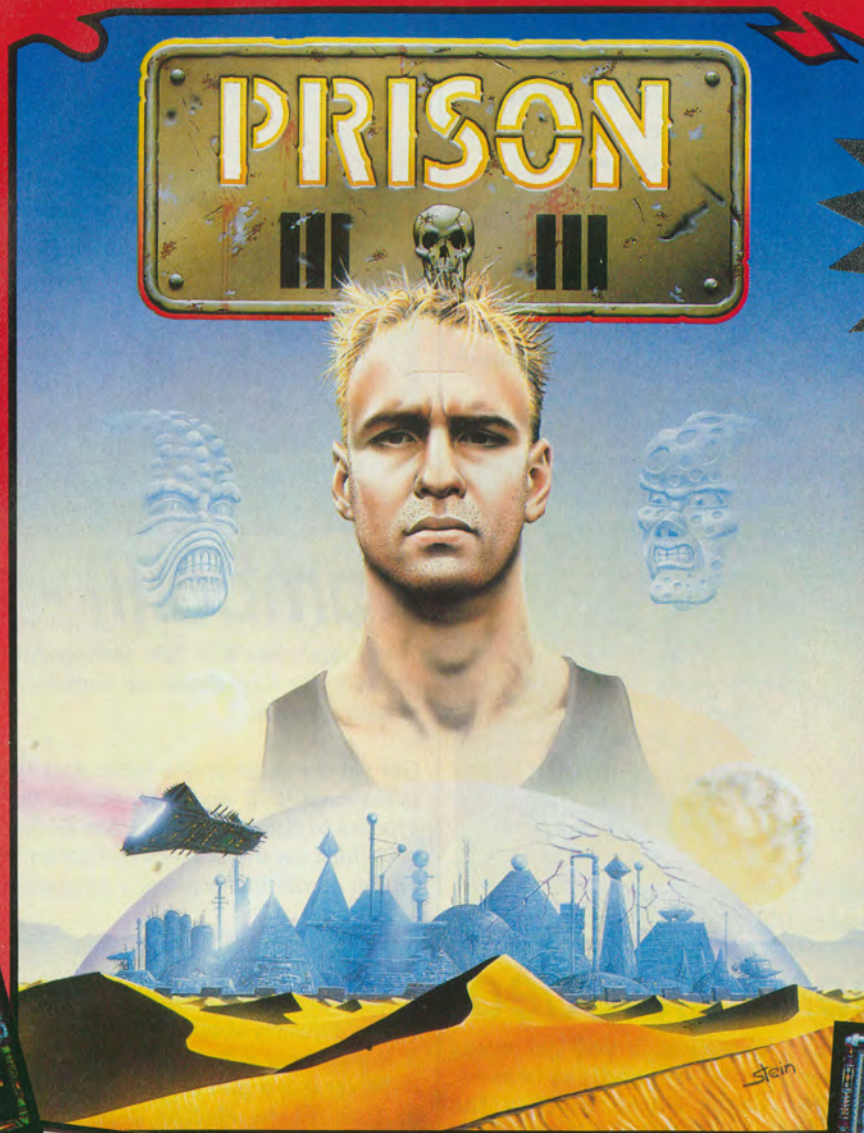


make that sacrifice.' But his long-term plans are on a grander scale: 'My plan is to make computer entertainment as widespread, accessible and as common as music and television. You just sit and watch a TV or listen to music, but computer games are tangible entertainment in which you are involved, and I believe the developments that we are making in software will be a major contribution to this.'

Au revoir!

I descended the steps into the metro and left 'The City of Lights', inspired by this exciting company and a city that never sleeps. The sounds from the jazz bars and excited talk were drowned by a train rushing through.

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GIVING THE GAME AWAY

Happy birthday to us, happy birthday to us.... well, hello and welcome to this, the twelfth Giving the Game Away. This month has seen a slight slump in the number of tips I've received - so hurry up and send some more in. After all, don't forget there's plenty of software up for grabs. Anyway, enough of this old tosh, on with the tips...

Double Dragon - Melbourne House

J. Yule of Folkestone, Kent, has sent in these useful cheat modes which should be typed in on DD's title screen:

LEVEL ONE PLEASE - start on level one.

LEVEL TWO PLEASE - start on level two.

... and so on, until level four.

THE LAST LEVEL PLEASE - places you on the last level.

GIVE ME MORE HEALTH PLEASE - lots of energy.

GIVE ME LOADS OF TIME PLEASE - yes, you've guessed it - extra time.

I DO NOT WANT TO DIE - invincibility.



Goldrunner - Microdeal

Type 'Easymode' on the high-score table. Now when play begins press the F9 key to skip the present level. Pressing this also deactivates the bomb collision

detection. If you get bored with the endless waves, press F8 to disable the cheat. Rajeev Doshi from Kingsbury, London, sent that in.



Rambo III - Ocean

Yuk! I don't like this film conversion much. Still, if you got given it for Christmas or something, here's a cheat for skipping levels:

Get on the high-score table and type RENEGADE. Now press keys 1, 2 and 3 to access the level of your choice. Thanks to Brian Medway from Berks. for sending that in.

Whilst on the subject of Rambo, Andy Mullan has sorted out some tips to aid any struggling Slys:

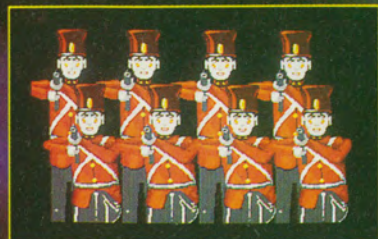
1. When in the second building, always wear your infra red goggles.
2. Try not to walk in front of soldiers or you will trigger an alarm, causing about eight soldiers to attack you.
3. If you enter a dark room, use the 'glow tube'.
4. Never use a gun unless you have a silencer.
5. Turn off the electric door by flicking a switch several rooms away.
6. The mine detector won't work unless you have the generator to fix on it.
7. The infra red goggles won't work without a battery.
8. Mind out for the infra red beams or you will trigger the alarms.
9. Here is a list of the items you can find: arrows, silencer, first aid kit, infra red goggles, glow tube, battery, key, mine detector (comes in two parts), pistol, ammo for pistol, and some rubber gloves.

Flying Shark - Firebird

Mr. Medway also sent in this tip for this corker of a conversion. When on the high-score table, enter HSC for

infinite lives, or KDJ for invulnerability.

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Daniel Webster of Buckingham has sent in the following tips for this excellent 3D romp.

General tips:

Shoot the pyramid crystals to gain energy or shields. The upside-down crystals regain energy, while the others replenish shields. These crystals are found in lots of places, mainly on the lighter side of the moon. The shed in Amethyst contains blue and yellow crystals, and two of these will fully energise your shields if they are really low, so don't waste them. When the crystal supported by a cube has the cube shot away, it is worth extra shields. The other supported crystal, when shot, regenerates the three ordinary crystals, so shoot them first, then shoot the aforementioned supported crystal to get them back for later.

The crystals in the shed in Obsidian completely restore your attributes; once again, the upside-down ones giving you energy, whilst the others replenish shields. However, on entering this shed, go in by the rear door as there is a particularly nasty laser waiting for you at the front. If you do attempt to destroy it though, raise the height of your vehicle and enter with your laser positioned at the top of the screen. This way you should get it within a couple of shots. Also, Dan mentions, that shooting the strip lights just goes to show the attention to detail gone into Driller. Another way to gain energy and shields is to shoot the treed-like structure in Emerald. It disappears after a few shots, so, once again, don't waste it.

Most laser beacons can be destroyed with a couple of shots, but the laser in Topaz can rotated away from you by shooting it - effectively de-activating it. If you hear an alien alarm and you are attacked by something you cannot see, rotate upwards, using the right mouse button on the up icon, and you will see a Ketar

Driller - Incentive

Skanner in the sky, shooting at you. Simply shoot it to destroy it.

Generally, if you can't immediately see the answer to a puzzle, try viewing it from as many angles as possible; eg: move around it, over it, next to it - this way you may see a previously hidden switch. Never move off a platform on a side where there is no visible wall, or you will fall to your death. The only platforms where there is an exception to the rule are Amethyst and Ruby; you can walk through the wall in Amethyst to get to Niccolite, and out of Ruby on to the Girders.

Solutions to puzzles and specific tips:

In Amethyst, shoot the arch to gain some points, then shoot the top of the tall tower for some more. Shoot the white box on one of the walls to reveal a door to Obsidian. What ever you do, don't shoot the store shed, or it will disappear, taking the valuable energy and shield crystals it holds, with it. As this is the first stage, the puzzle is fairly easy: just plant your rig on the cross on the floor. Once you have found the jet, a useful way to refuel is to land on the top of the tower. The floating block above Amethyst is a secret room which is used to activate the teleports. Additionally, activating the teleports can be done by going to Topaz, and having shot the laser turret so that it is pointing the other way, moving to the block next to the floating room and getting on it. Once on, turn around and shoot the red box on the right. You will now be lifted up. Enter the room and head straight for the block on the wall. Behind it you will find a secret passage. Go through it and you will end up in a room containing four boxes. To activate the teleports,

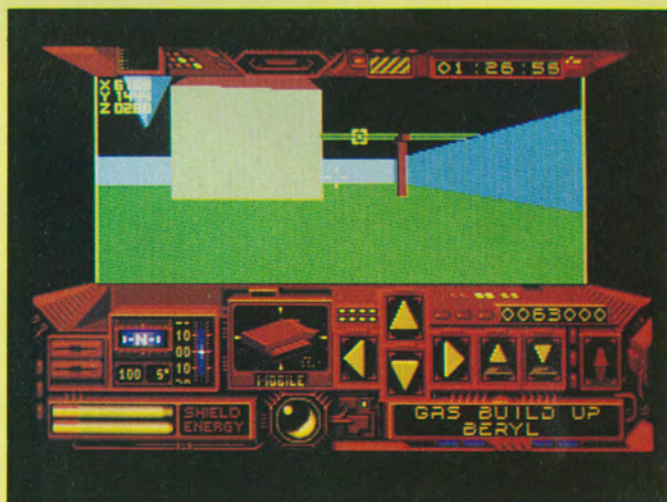
you must shoot all four so that they all disappear at once. To do this, mentally number them 1-4 from left to right, and shoot them in the order 2-1-3. Return to Amethyst (through the passage - not the slot) and you will see a large T-shape. There will also now be T-shapes in Ruby, Emerald and Beryl, and touching them will take you from one T to another. Additionally, if you are in the jet, you can get to the secret room simply by flying through the slot.

To obtain the jet, follow these instructions. Go from Amethyst to Topaz, and cross to the other side by using the steps. Enter Beryl and shoot the three telegraph wires until they disappear - cutting off the laser's supply. Enter the building it was protecting, and face the three shapes on the wall. Shoot these and they change their order, so shoot them into the sequence hexagon, square, triangle and exit the room to find a new door has appeared

level. Go beneath the wall and shoot it again. A door out will now be revealed.

When you first want to enter Ruby it is best to go via Aquamarine. Level your tank to the ground and follow the arrow until you meet another arrow pointing in another direction. Follow this one now, and move right up to the side of the room. Lift your tank from the ground, and move forward into Ruby. Lower the tank again, and traverse the girders. To cross the girders safely, change the forward step to twenty-five units, and the turning step to ninety degrees. This makes it easier to move along the girders and allows you to turn at exactly the right step.

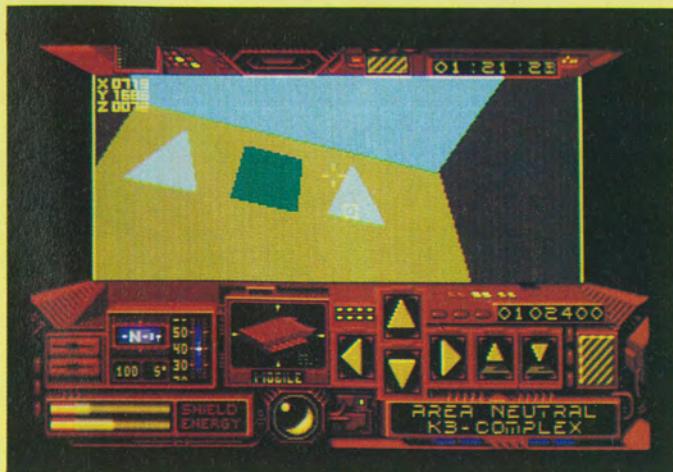
To get into Diamond, shoot the switches in Niccolite, Alabaster, Opal and Quartz. To disable the annoying laser in Quartz, shoot the thin wire suspending the heavy block, causing it to snap, dropping the block which, in turn, demolishes the beacon. You can get to the other side by squeezing through by the block. Once all the switches have been shot,



opposite the building. Go through this, and you will enter Aquamarine. Go to the left hangar and shoot the doors. Within this now-open hangar is the jet, so trundle in and position yourself directly beneath the jet. Dock with it, and control is yours. The jet is only useful for exploration and cannot lay rigs, so if you want to position one, land on the hangar and re-enter the tank.

To cross the gap in Obsidian, shoot or bump into the tall, thin block until it falls over, bridging the gap. Within the gap there are several energy and shield crystals to shoot, but be careful not to fall in. To get through Lapiz Lazuli, shoot all five pyramids then weave through the blocks to reach the wall. Using the up icon, raise your tank until you see a block on the other side. Shoot it and lower yourself back to ground

the wall in Opal will disappear and you can enter Diamond through it. There are crystals here which can be shot to replenish any flagging energy levels - which you undoubtedly will have! To get into Trachyte, the final section, shoot the switches in Basalt (not forgetting to blap the Christmas tree for extra points!), Ochre and Graphite. At first, there won't be a switch in Graphite; but to make it appear, cross the river on the bridge, then line up the 'gunsights' on the wall. Shoot the wall where the sights line up and the switch will appear. The switch in Obsidian is the last one to be shot, but it won't appear until all the other seventeen sectors have been cleared of gas. When they have, shoot the switch and you can enter Trachyte to clear all of the sectors.



ST BASIC CHEAT FOR BATMAN

```
10  REM ***** INFINITE ENERGY FOR BATMAN *****
20  OPTION BASE 1: DIM A%(1024):CHEAT=VARPTR(A%(1))
30  DEF SEG=0: REM Remove this line if new ST Basic is in use
40  FOR X=0 TO 81 STEP 2
50  READ B:POKE CHEAT+X,B
60  NEXT X
70  CALL CHEAT
80  REM *****
90  DATA &H42A7,&H7E20,&H3F07,&H4E41,&H2EBC,2,1,&H4DF9
100 DATA 7,&H6000,&H2F0E,&H2F3C,4,2,&H4E4D,&H588F
110 DATA &H41FA,&H22,&HDCD8,&H3CFC,&H41F9,&H588E,&H2CFC,&H303C
120 DATA &H4A2E,&H7005,&H3CFC,&H3140,&H3CD8,&H51C8,&HFFF8,&H3CBC
130 DATA &H4ED0,&H4E75
140 REM TYPE IN LINE BELOW FOR DISK 2 ONLY (JOKER GAME)
150 DATA &H21C,&H3B6,&H54C,&H57A,&HF76,&H14CE,&H18D6
160 REM TYPE IN LINE BELOW FOR DISK 1 ONLY (PENGUIN GAME)
170 DATA &H218,&H3AA,&H520,&H10A4,&H1696,&H16A0,&H1A02
180 REM *****
190 REM TO USE THIS CHEAT,TYPE IN THE LISTING AND INSERT THE CORRECT
200 REM GAME DISK.NOW RUN IT AND BATMAN SHOULD LOAD WITH INFINITE
210 REM ENERGY.DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE COLOURS BEING ALTERED ON THE
220 REM LOADING SCREEN,THEY'RE OK IN THE GAME
```

ST BASIC CHEAT FOR RETURN OF THE JEDI

```
270 REM add the line to the universal cheat routine.
280 REM INFINITE LIVES FOR RETURN OF THE JEDI
300 DATA 1,0,&H26D2,&H0000
310 DATA &H6175,&H746F,&H5C6A,&H6564,&H692E,&H7072,&H6700
320 DATA 99999
330 BSAVE "JEDI.PRG",CHEAT,256
```

ST BASIC CHEAT FOR OPERATION WOLF

```
10  REM ***** Cheat Routine for Operation Wolf *****
20  OPTION BASE 1: DIM A%(1024):CHEAT=VARPTR(A%(1))
30  DEF SEG=0: REM Remove this line if new ST Basic is in use
40  FOR X=0 TO 226 STEP 2
50  READ B:POKE CHEAT+X,B
60  NEXT X
70  CALL CHEAT
80  REM *****
400 DATA &H3F3C,1,&H70FF,&H3F00,&H2F00,&H487A,&H28,&H3F3C
420 DATA &H12,&H4E4E,&H4FEF,&HE,&H7001,&H3F00,&H42A7,&H3F00
440 DATA &H4267,&H42A7,&H487A,&HE,&H3F3C,9,&H4E4E,&H4FEF
460 DATA &H14,&H4E75,&H601E,&H574F,&H4C46,&H3031,&H9A22,&H8200
480 DATA &H202,&H100,&H270,&HD0,&H2F8,&H500,&HA00,&H100
500 DATA 0,0,&H2F3C,2,2,&H4E4D,&H588F,&H41FA
520 DATA &H14,&H43F9,0,&H8E00,&H2449,&H707F,&H22D8,&H51C8
540 DATA &HFFFC,&H4ED2,&H2F3C,7,0,&H4E4D,&H588F,&H4267
560 DATA &H2F3C,&H126,&H1A8,&H4DF9,0,&H9000,&H2F0E,&H4267
580 DATA &H3F3C,4,&H4E4D,&H4FEF,&HE,&H43FA,&H18,&H7002
600 DATA &H7203,&H2419,&H3059,&HD1CE,&H2082,&H51C9,&HFFF8,&H51C8
620 DATA &HFFF0,&H4ED6,&H4A79,2,&HDB2,&H1910,&H205A,&H285A
640 DATA &H33FC,&H78,&HF56,&H1AE8,&H21C0,&H2968,&H4E71,&H33C0
660 DATA &HE20,&H1986,&H20D0,&H28D0,&H4D50,&H4C20,&H5353,&H3136
680 DATA &H2034,&H4A42
690 REM TO USE THIS CHEAT,TYPE IT IN THEN INSERT A BLANK DISK WITH
700 REM WRITE PROTECTION REMOVED,IN DRIVE A.NOW RUN THIS PROGRAM AND
710 REM IT SHOULD WRITE A BOOT SECTOR TO THE DISK.NOW RESET THE ATARI
720 REM AND WHEN THE DRIVE STOPS INSERT OPERATION WOLF DISK 1 AND PRESS
730 REM A KEY.THE GAME SHOULD NOW LOAD AS PER USUAL WITH CHEATS INSTALLED.
```

COMPETITION WINNERS

SUPERMAN COMPETITION

The winner of the Superman competition is Jake Court, from Merton Park in London. He wins a gold Superman tie pin, a Superman video, a Superman t-shirt and a copy of the Superman games. Well done, Jake!

The 46 runners-up who each win either a pin, video, t-shirt or game are: Steven Lothy from Lightwater, Michael Lacy from Retford, L. Stanford from Kinruss, David Jay from Manchester, Dale Beet from Coalville, Michael Johnson from Chichester, Daniel Nation from Clehonger, J. Smith from Newport, R. Williams from Southampton, Orlando Houghton from London, J. Grindle from Doncaster, N. Warwick from Wokingham, Marco Moni from Shipley, Chris Moss from Awsworth, Alexander Seponar from Torphilchen, Simon Allen from Great Barr, C. Stanfield from Reading, M. Draycott from Chesterfield, Jude Atkinson from London, Davis Lloyd from Tarporley, P. Curtis from Bridgewater, Ben Moorhouse from Lancaster, J. Hamilton from Wilford, Zoe Atkinson from Rowlands Castle, J. Gilvary from Warrington, Richard Evans from Sutton Coldfield, Sue Cormack from Esher, Stephen Knight from Ashton-Under-Lyne, K. Walters from Ormskirk, C. Moody from Stockton-On-Tees, Matthew Parsons from Brinsley, C. Peach from Quebec, John Lee from Walthamstow, Darren Garbutt from Leeds, Andrew Westlake, Simon Toon from Corringham, Lewis Brookens from Stewartfield, Stuart Parsons from Wilmslow, Jay Padden from Brentwood, D. Christe from Alnwick, Nigel Moses from Hampton Hill, Ian Powell from Littlehampton, Jan Henshaw from London, Bernard Clark from Ilford and Andrew McDonald from Northampton.

Congratulations! All of you.

In case you were wondering, here are the correct answers:

- 1. Christopher Reeve*
- 2. Kryptonite*
- 3. Daily Planet*
- 4. Metropolis*

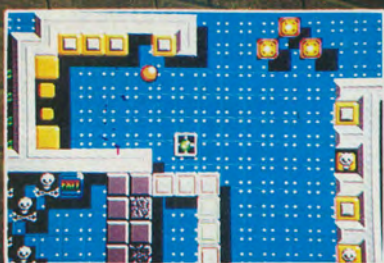
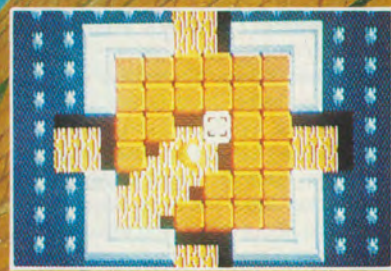
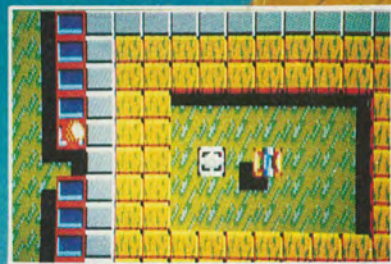
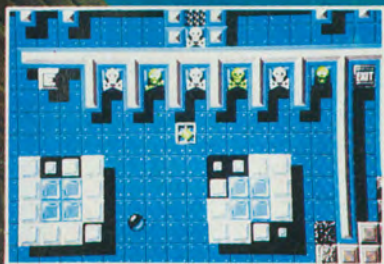
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JUST WHO DO WE THINK WE ARE?

When you read the reviews you must undoubtedly read our reviewer's comments. Have you, however, ever wondered just who they are? You haven't? Oh well, never mind. Since our first issue the team has changed very little. Jason Spiller and Nick Clarkson are still here, joined by Steve Merrett, they still take care of the more arcade-orientated games, while Steve Kennedy and Andy Mitchell look after all the adventures. You may have already guessed that Steve M likes platform games, Jason loves the odd flight-simulator and both Nick and Mitch are crazy about Dungeon Master, but what else makes our team tick?



Name: Hugh Gollner.
Age: 20 going on 90 (pressure of work!).
Position: Publisher.
Favourite Food: Pizza.
Favourite Drink: Old Thumper (real ale).
Favourite Films: The Star Wars trilogy, Back to the Future and something naughty I'd rather not talk about.
Favourite TV Progs: Any alternative comedy progs.
Worst TV Progs: Eastenders.
Music Tastes: David Bowie, Dire Straits, INXS, Jackson Browne, Bruce Hornsby and the Range, Jan Hammer, Berlinda Carlisle, Elton John, Pet Shop Boys, and just about everything else.
Likes: Fast cars, magazines and sleeping.
Dislikes: Late article submissions, getting up early, hangovers and spiders.

Previous Computers Owned: Texas TI99/4A, Apple II, BBC micro, C64, Apricot F1, Lots of STs and a few Apple Macs.
Favourite Games: Boulderdash on the C64, Nebulus, R-Type, Starray, Return to Genesis, Menace - anything that scrolls and shoots!
Worst Games: Boulderdash on the ST (what a travesty), Manhattan Chaser, Battle Probe, Flintstones and all flight simulators.

What is the thing that most annoys you about the software industry?: Gor blimey! What do you want - a book? If I had to mention one thing I hate it would have to be software houses releasing duff games - ST owners are too good to be bombarded with substandard trash!
What would you be doing if you didn't work at ST Action?: A below average games programmer or working in some magazine's art department.
Ultimate ambition?: To break the world marathon sleeping record after a night out breaking the world ale-drinking record!



Name: Jason Spiller
Age: 24
Position: Reviewer
Favourite Food: Chinese cooking. Any seafood. Thick and chewy pizzas.
Favourite Drink: Stella Artois, Old Thumper, percolated coffee, Perrier water with lemon.
Favourite Films: Dead Men don't Wear Plaid, The Jerk, Back to the Future, Tess of the D'Urbevilles, Citizen Kane, Apocalypse Now, Macbeth.
Favourite TV Progs: Only Fools and Horses, Hot Metal, Ski Sunday, A Very Peculiar Practice, The Biederbecke Connection, Supersense.
Worst TV Progs: TVAM, any daytime television, Top of the Pops, Eastenders, Points of View.
Music Tastes: Dire Straits, Fleetwood Mac, Eric Clapton and early Neil

Diamond.
Likes: Playing guitar, free weekends and holidays.
Dislikes: Mike Morris, the daft old bint with little Willy in Eastenders, being ripped off at restaurants, Sunday drivers who have never had an accident in forty years but have caused dozens. Laziness. Loudmouths, vandalism, **Previous Computers Owned:** ZX81 and Commodore 64. I have been in the computer industry since I left school and so I have borrowed various computers to use at home including; Apricot XI, IBM PC, C128 and ST.
Favourite Games: Gunship, Nightraider, Skychase, Metrocross.
Worst Games: Galactic Conqueror, Manhattan Chaser, Gary Lineker's Superskills, Bomb Disposa.
What is the thing that most annoys you about the software industry?: Software companies who release a poor game before it is reviewed, so that it doesn't receive bad publicity.
What would you be doing if you didn't work at ST Action?: Session musician.
Ultimate ambition?: To stay in journalism, but earn enough money and have enough spare time to pursue my other interests.



Name: Andy Mitchell (alias Mitch).
Age: Old enough to know better!
Position: 'Upside down' and boss of the Dungeon Crew adventure reviewers.
Favourite Food: Something covered in chocolate!
Favourite Drink: White wine.
Favourite Favourite TV Progs: Hill Street Blues.
Worst TV Progs: Anything Australian - especially that one!
Music Tastes: Old movie musicals.
Likes: Science Fiction and Dragons.
Dislikes: Gardening and cleaning up after Dragons!
Previous Computers Owned: BBC Micro.

Favourite Games: Elite (BBC version).
Worst Games: Not a penny more, not a penny less.
What is the thing that most annoys you about the software industry?: Reviewers that score everything above 80%!
What would you be doing if you didn't work at ST Action: I'd be a full time programme seller at the Olympic Games.
Ultimate ambition?: To find a Billy Goat - gruff enough to fix that troll just once!



Name: Steven J. W. Kennedy.
Age: Older than ST Action, but much younger than Mitch!
Position: Prone, and member of the Dungeon Crew.
Favourite Food: Steak.
Favourite Drink: Vodka and Coke.
Favourite Films: The Blues Brothers and Enter the Dragon.
Favourite TV Progs: M.A.S.H. and Hill Street Blues.
Worst TV Progs: Australian soaps, Dallas.
Music Tastes: The Beatles and Fleetwood Mac.
Likes: Reading Sci-Fi and Fantasy.

Dislikes: Working for a living.
Previous Computers Owned: Apple II.
Favourite Games: Dungeon Master.
Worst Games: Time and Magik.
What is the thing that most annoys you about the software industry?: All the hype that surrounds the release of a new game.
What would you be doing if you didn't work at ST Action?: I'd like to be involved in designing new adventure games.
Ultimate ambition?: Hmmm, I certainly wouldn't mind a trip into space.



Full Name: Stephen Merrett
Age: 20 and a bit
Position: Reviewer and Cheater
Favourite Food: Chinese, curries (the hotter the better), Macdonalds, my mum's home-made lasagna and cheesy shepherd's pie, and scampi and lemon Nik Naks.
Favourite Drink: A pint of Stella please, rum, Macdonald's root beer, Coke, Iron Bru and Tizer
Favourite Films: Aliens, Robocop, Predator, anything by George Romero, Terminator, The Thing (the latest version), The Fly and the first and third Nightmare on Elm Street films. Oh, and all of the Friday the 13ths.
Favourite TV Prog: Dr. Who, Only Fools and Horses and The New Statesman.
Worst TV Progs: Terry and June, You Bet, Jimmy's, Superboy, Beadle's About, Eastenders (it used to be alright, but it's boring now.)
Music Tastes: James Brown, House Music, The Specials and The Cure.
Likes: Night clubs, pubs, my mum, being a job, having a lie-in and playing football in the office.
Dislikes: Taking screen shots, know-alls, admitting I'm

wrong, people who don't buy rounds and people who nick things from my desk.
Previous Computers Owned: ZX81, Spectrum, Texas TI99/4A, Amstrad CPC464, C64, Sega System and, presently, a 1040ST.
Favourite Games: On the ST: Great Giana Sisters (Really! We would never have guessed - Ed!), Operation Wolf, Impossible Mission II and Buggy Boy. On the Amiga, I like: California Games (105,970 on the BMX!), Rocket Ranger and Pacmania. And on the 64, I like Microprose Soccer and Bionic Commando.
Worst Games: Action Service, Nigel Mansell's Grand Prix, Manhattan Chaser, Galactic Conqueror, Battle Probe, Hotball, Bad Cat, Hades Nebula and The Last Shoot'em-up.
What is the thing that most annoys you about the software industry?: The fact that people get places by relying on who they know and being relatively well-known. You know who you are out there!
What would you be doing if you didn't work at ST Action?: Lying in a gutter, clutching a brown paper bag!
Ultimate ambition?: To be 'Journalist of the Year' by 1990. If not, 'Software Yob of the Year' will do nicely!



Name: Paula Mabe.
Age: 24.
Position: Art production assistant.
Favourite Food: Lamb chops with plenty of mint sauce and my mum's Yorkshire puddings.
Favourite Drink: Vodka cocktails, coke, coffee and anything that's free!
Favourite Films: Bladerunner, Raiders of the Lost Ark, Lethal Weapon, Suspect, Die Hard, A Fiah Called Wanda, Gorillas in the Mist and Aliens.
Favourite TV Progs: Only Fools and Horses, Open all Hours, The Dame Edna Experience, Moonlighting, Film '89, The Clothes Show and Lost in Space.
Worst TV Progs: Neighbours, Snap!, Lizzie Webb's workout on TV AM, and Panorama
Music Tastes: House (acieeeed),

Garage,Soul,OldMusicals,UB40 , Whitesnake, and usually a little of everything else.
Likes: Playing sports, Squash, Badminton, Swimming,Jet Skiing. Fast cars, sunshine, sewing, cats,clubbing, watching films and going to the pub.
Dislikes: Short men, Minis, being broke, rain, lager louts, Ford Capris and whingers.
Previous Computers Owned: None really, but I've got a Hotpoint Automatic if that counts!
Favourite Games: Doctors and Nurses and Trivial Pursuit.
Worst Games: Monopoly, on a computer or otherwise.
What is the thing that most annoys you about the software industry?: The reviewers, especially when they submit incomplete articles.
What would you be doing if you didn't work at ST Action?: I'd probably be drawing the dole, or doing something arty somewhere, and if all else failed I'd go and become a missionary!
Ultimate Ambition?: To earn enough to buy properties in both England and Australia and work six months in each, and also to open my own fashion house.



Name: Nicholas Clarkson.
Age: 22.
Position: Editor.
Favourite Food: Curries, steak and chips, most things containing garlic and, best of all, roast beef dinners with horse-radish.
Favourite Drink: Real ale, coke, the odd glass of wine and MacDonalds chocolate thick shakes.
Favourite Films: The Star Wars trilogy, The French Connection I and II, anything with Peter Sellers and most of Spielberg's stuff.
Favourite TV Progs: Crimewatch, The Cosby Show, Only Fools and Horses, Open all Hours, Coronation St., Eastenders and most documentaries.
Worst TV Progs: Documentaries involving operating theatres, Dallas and Dynasty.
Music Tastes: The Smiths, New

Order, David Bowie, Marillion and most things with screeching guitars.
Likes: Snow, cats, my wife, payday and Garfield. (Not necessarily in that order.)
Dislikes: Sierra drivers, Bonnie Langford, house music, those 'orrible jeans with the Flintstones on them and the little sods who keep dreaming up new viruses.
Previous Computers Owned: ZX81, Vic20, C64 and Atari ST.
Favourite Games: Any Sierra quest, the Zork trilogy, Super Hang-on, Gunship, Dungeon Master and most things that need a little thought.
Worst Games: The Flintstones, Lee Enfield, Super Huey, Pink Panther, Nightmare, Army Moves, Street Gang, Elf, Mafdet and Afterburner.
What is the thing that most annoys you about the software industry?: The hype, the lack of honesty and the 'it's not what you know, but who you know' syndrome.
What would you be doing if you didn't work at ST Action?: I'd probably have gone into the wines and spirits trade.
Ultimate ambition?: Of course I wouldn't mind loads of money, otherwise.... Well, I'm not really sure.

Dungeons and Disk Drives

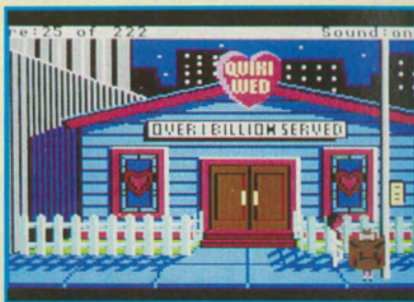
Hi there! Stuck up a gum tree? Surrounded by dragons? Don't despair, write to the Dungeon and let them help. YOU may not know the answer - 'But now you know a Troll who does!'

In response to the Troll's appeal for a good set of Dungeon Master maps, I'm pleased to report that one hardy adventurer by the name of Brian Stevens has come to the rescue. Not content with producing a set of beautifully illustrated maps, Brian has been spending many hours attempting to fight his way to the bottom level using only two characters. This ambition was also held by one of ST Action's adventure reviewers, Steve Kennedy. I'm pleased to say that Steve is now biting lumps out of his broadsword because Brian completed the task before he could. With the help of these maps I hope to persuade the Troll to begin answering some of the Dungeon Master enquiries he had thrown into the 'Too Difficult' tray.

Mirrorsoft have sent me a scroll this month containing an apology for the unexpected delay in the release of 'Chaos Strikes Back'. It appears that the FTL company wanted to give it a few final polishes before letting us get our gauntlets upon it. I suppose we shouldn't complain - better to get it late and brilliant, than early and flawed. The new deadline is mid-March and hopefully you will be able to get in the queue to receive your copy - right behind me!

Whilst I do not intend to promote any rival periodicals, I decided in your interests to investigate the advertisements I keep seeing for an adventure club called 'Official Secrets'. This is a bi-monthly mag which is devoted to computer adventuring and the publishers claim that their writers are the top names in the adventuring world. Well, that is obviously not true, as none of the Dungeon Crew have anything to do with it! Leaving aside that glaring omission, the mag consists of

32 pages of non-colour text and illustrations devoted to all aspects of adventuring and RPG games. Providing you have already sent your



bag of gold to secure your year's subscription to ST ACTION, I will grudgingly allow you to have a look at the magazine as it must be said that it is extremely interesting. Magnetic Scrolls have agreed to create a mini adventure called MYTH which will be

available to members of the club. The game has a Greek Mythology storyline and you can be sure that as soon as it is available I will be obtaining a copy to give you a run-down.

Striking a Bargain in Space Quest

I am on board my spaceship with the droid, but I don't know how to board the Sarien space cruiser.

S. Japs, Edinburgh

That's because you don't know how to bargain properly. When some boggle-eyed alien turns up and makes you an offer for your skimmer, you should never foolishly accept his first offer. If you had refused and gone for a drink in the bar, he would have returned with a better price - plus a JETPACK!



Chaos Strikes back - put back yet another month.

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The Bear Necessities of King's Quest III

I have completed all the spells. How can I stop the evil wizard Manannan coming and turning me to dust? Or how can I kill or put the wizard to sleep?

Aran Stephens, Chalfont St. Peter, BUCKS

As I don't approve of humans messing around with magic, I tend to agree with Manannan's method of dealing with you. On the other hand, he is a bad-tempered old 'wotsit' so I'll help you fix him once and for all. The trick is to get him to eat the magic cookie. You will need to disguise the cookie by crumbling it into something else, or he won't eat it. Now where could you find a bowl of ready-made food? It doesn't 'bear' thinking about. Hey! that's almost a joke. I'd better be careful or I'll end up getting a sense of humour.

More Bear Fun in the Underground Empire

I am being frustrated by ZORK III. In the Royal Museum, how do you bring the jewels back from the year 776? Also, does Smokey the Bear play any part in the game? Can I buy hint books in Britain.

J.T. Dunham, Skunthorpe

As you have already found out, the grey object is a time machine. What you haven't discovered is that it has a secret compartment under the seat. In this compartment you can put a small part of the jewelry collection to be

brought through time with you. Don't be too greedy, only one special item of jewelry can be brought back. Smokey is the symbol used in American forests to warn visitors about the danger of forest fires. If you don't believe how dangerous they are, try burning the trees. You can buy the Infocom hint books from Activision, either from your local shop or direct. Telephone 0734 311666.

Invasion of the Space Quest II Clones

I have recently purchased Space Quest II and I am finding it difficult. Upon getting it home, the first puzzle I encountered was how to get it out of the box. I have been struggling over it for a few weeks now and I write to you as a last resort.

P.S. I have just discovered a button and a few holes on the back of my ST. I would be grateful if you would tell me what they are for?

P.P.S. Anybody know what the lumpy things with the alphabet letters on top are?

Edwin Wobblebottom

I am stuck in the ace game, Space Quest II. I have killed the almighty Vohaul, but his clones are still launched seconds after. I have found the screen that asks for the password to abort the launch, but I don't know it. I have successfully found my way through the glass corridor, but I am stopped shortly afterwards by a Scout-walker look-alike which sends enough high voltage electricity up my behind to run NASA for a year!

P.S Love the mag. Rather hard to get a copy up here, though.

Venstindoe Dratsab, Xenon

Have you ever had the feeling that the maniacs are taking over the asylum? I know I get some strange letters, but these two are something else. Having

smelled a rat, I passed both scrolls to Evil Edna the Witch and she has pointed out some interesting facts. Both envelopes were addressed with green felt-tip pens, used nasty, second-class stamps and were date-stamped on the same day and time in Stoke-on-Trent. I also noticed that Mr Dratsab is a little 'backward'! Well lucky for you, Marco Doel, from Holland, has also written for the answer to this question, so here is the solution. If you search Vohaul's dead body you will find that he has written the password on his hand.

P.S. I assume you have to use felt-tips because they don't allow you to handle sharp objects in there?

P.P.S. Until I checked up on your address, I didn't realise that Xenon was both the name of the great shoot'em-up game and the Space Quest planet!

Dungeon Master's Trickiest Puzzle Revealed

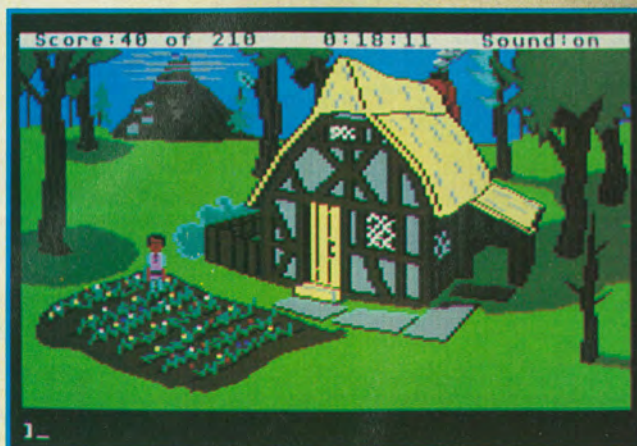
Thanks for all the hints and tips for Dungeon Master; they are a great help, but, sadly, they do not help me with my problem. I am stuck in a room on the fourth level (or is it the fifth?), which contains three pressure pads, a pit, a transporter, a transporter wall switch and a key behind a closed portcullis. Please tell me how to do it?

William Rigg, Cumbria

I am surprised that it's taken so long for this question to turn up, as I know the Mirrorsoft office gets at least two calls a day asking for the solution. The answer is easy, but not logical. Use the wall switch to turn off the transporter and then throw an object onto the spot where the transporter was. Switching the transporter back on will move the object into the corner and activate the pressure pad, thus



Poor Roger Wilco's got enough to worry about with those green tentacles.



Ah, the home of the three bears. Remember, if you get caught stealing - you'll serve porridge.

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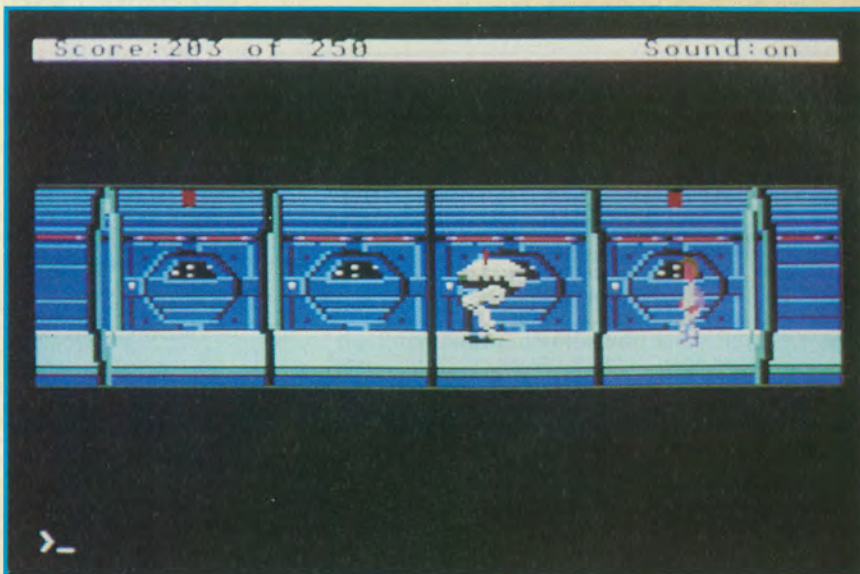
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Ok Roger, now remember you're not Robocop, you'll have to out-smart this machanical monster.



opening the portcullis. Merely throwing an object into the active transporter, or onto the corner pressure pad, will not open the door. Ain't you glad I know everything?

Mindboggling Mindshadow Muddles

I have recently taken up adventuring after buying a 520ST. I have purchased MINDSHADOW and have come to a standstill. What does the old, sea Captain want to let me on his boat and where is it?

Russell Clarke, Moseley

Assuming you don't possess long legs and fluttering eyelashes I think we had best look for something else to attract the sea-dog's attention. I happen to know that there's an old treasure chest buried at the far end of the island which just might contain something to interest him. Like all good treasure islands there is a map to be found, and as this map is halfway down a cliff-face, you're going to need something like a rope to get down there. I trust you're with me so far? Now Tarzan never had any ropes, but he managed. Why don't you go and hang around in the nearby jungle and see what swings into that vacuum between your ears?

I have received a similar letter from Chris Lawton in Oldham. However, this dodo already has the map and can't understand why the captain won't accept it. If you are on a desert island, and you've got a map - why not try using it? The funny symbols it contains refer to compass directions - you might just try following them.

Mind you, if you do happen to have nice legs you can forget all that lot and try another tack!

Get Knotted with Leisure Larry I

I can't get the rope from the hooker's room. Please tell me how I can get it because I don't know what to do.

Raoul, Holland

Some dike appears to have burst in Holland as I am receiving a flood of letters from that direction. (I think it must be the cheesy smell of my socks that attracts them!) What is a nice boy like you doing in a hooker's room? There is nothing in there you can get. Nothing you could take home to your mother, anyway! That rope is not the one you need. I suggest you try getting married first. Once you tie that knot, lots of rope and knots will turn up unexpectedly.

Buying Trouble with Leisure Larry II

I need help with Larry II in the Quikie Mart. I buy a lottery ticket and a soda drink, but as I don't have the money for both, the clerk shoots me.

Jamie Lewis, Edgware, Middx.

I wondered when the letters would start rolling in for Larry II. This is a game that's going to cause a lot of heartache as there are some real 'sneakies' in it. If you can't afford to buy both items, buy only one and stop being so greedy. (Typical human - get, get, get!) If you had half the sense that adventurers think they have, you would realise that you had better buy

the one which could lead to you winning enough money to buy the other! You can always check whether you have the winning ticket by showing it to the girl at the TV Studio where the lottery show is produced.

Surviving the Blast of Trinity

Could you please tell me how to survive the Nagasaki bomb blast and then get back to the white door in the Trinity adventure from Infocom.

R. Bradford, Sutton in Ashfield

It's so simple that even a child could do it. In fact, only a child could do it. There is a little child to be found and she likes origami. (That's paper folding to you!) You'd be surprised what a wonderful flying machine she could make if she had a nice piece of white paper. Mind you, having made it she might want to keep it unless you had something else which you could swop. I recall she had another hobby, perhaps you could give her something which would interest her in that line. Go on, give it a twirl!

I find it interesting that the bulk of all queries I receive, concern the Sierra Quest games. Few letters relate to text-only adventures, such as the Infocom series. I, too, must confess a predilection for these bright, graphic adventures and sympathise with gameplayers who shy away from the older-style games. I also think that some traditional adventures are too tricky for the newcomer and so have limited appeal. However, there are some gems to be found which you should consider. I personally think WISHBRINGER from Infocom is an example of the best of the genre as it combines lovely text with intriguing puzzles that are not too baffling. You couldn't find a better game to demonstrate the mysterious appeal of the genuine article. And after all, if you do get stuck you know a Troll who can help.

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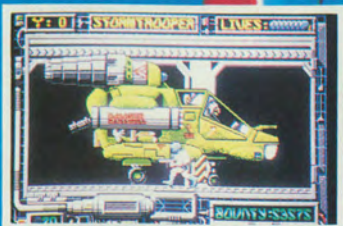
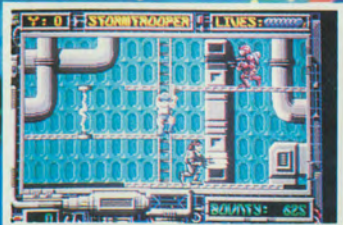
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