

ST ACTION

THE WORLD'S ONLY DEDICATED
ST GAMES MAGAZINE

ISSUE 17 SEPTEMBER 1989
DISK & MAG, ONLY \$2.95

COIN-OP CUTIES:
IREM'S MR HELI
RAINBOW ISLANDS
NEW ZEALAND STORY

IF YOU CAN READ THIS,
YOUR AMAZING ST ACTION
GAMES DISK IS MISSING -
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→→→ PLAYFUL



"the most playable and enjoyable licensed games to date".
New Computer Express 5 star

"The graphics are slick, the action is tough ... designed to keep you glued to your stick".
ZZAP Sizzler



"a popular movie license backed up by great game-play, an unbeatable formula – needless to say, I'd buy it ... miss this and you're missing the hottest game of the year".
ST Action



"A sure winner with the official conversion to the home computer".
The Games Machine

"There is more than enough action in this one to keep you coming back for more".
Ace

"a superb game with such addictive gameplay".
Computer Games Week FAB



ATARI ST

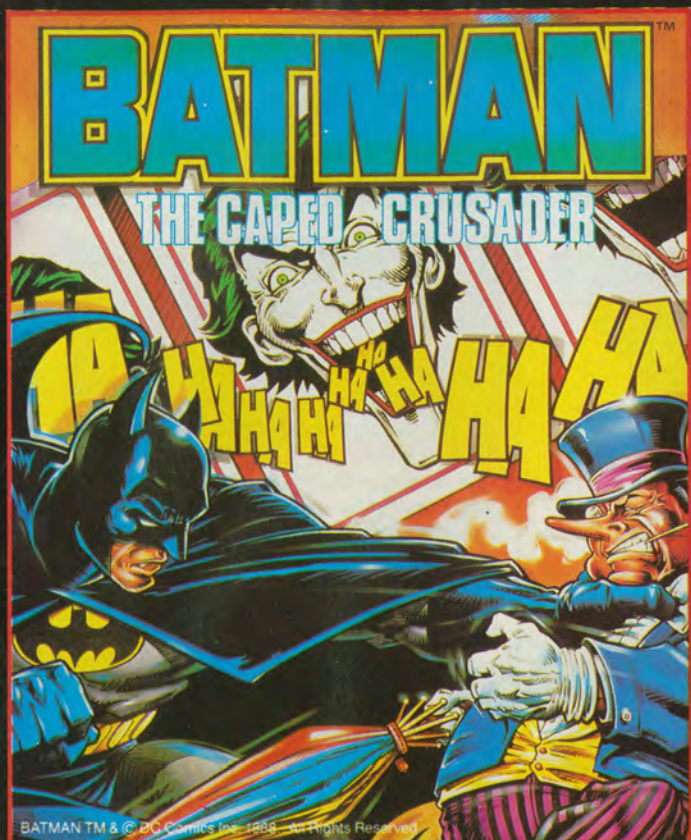
CBM AMIGA

BATMAN

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INTELLIGENCE



"Special FX programmed the game and have done a great job, recreating the character of the originals with a hint of humour".

Amiga User Int.

"The characters and backgrounds are striking – each are superlative – the Amiga features a soundtrack in glorious remixed stereo".

The One

"polished in every aspect – from the humorous storyline to the end of the blasting".

The Games Machine Top Score

"... you're in for the time of your life ... fabulous 3D, hours of absorbing play – you name it, Voyager's got it. And that's not all: Ocean throw in a cassette soundtrack which has to be one of the most mind-blowing pieces of music I've ever heard".

ZZAP Sizzler

"... scrolling 3D graphics, the most impressive I've seen on the ST ... a great arcade formula and clever graphics ... an excellent game that will keep you playing for quite some time".

ST Action



STAI



ROBOCOP
DRAGON NINJA
VOYAGER

ATARI ST CBM AMIGA
£19.99 £24.99



ACTION PACKED



ACTION COVER DISK 32

Two full length games on one disk? Yep! The first ST Action cover disk has two complete arcade games written by top authors - how's that for amazing value! The disk features Ammotrack, a previously unreleased game by John Phillips ; the programmer behind Hewson's smash-hits, Nebulkus and Eliminator. Not only that, we are also proud to offer you the amazing arcade-strategy game, Skulldiggery; 919 rated by our competitors, ACE. Still enough of this talk. Load up the games and enjoy!



INTERVIEW: TIERTEX 16



You would have thought that being responsible for some of the best arcade conversions and license games would certainly be something to shout about. But as Jason Spiller discovered, game designers, Tiertex, would much rather leave the razzmatazz and showbiz aspect to others. After successes such as both Indiana Jones games, Thunderblade and Strider, these Stockport-based coin-op conversion specialists have got some great games on the boil.

LICENCED TO THRILL? 24

Talk to any software house representative and they'll tell you that 'this' year, their company intends to become the biggest name in home computing. It came as no surprise therefore to be greeted with this assurance when we arrived at the offices of DOMARK Software. Two hours later, having seen some of their forthcoming goodies, the claim sounded much more credible.

YAK'S YAK 88

"Computer technology is advancing at a ridiculous rate - so fast that it's almost impossible to predict what will happen next.", In his own inimitable style, software guru, Jeff Minter, ponders over the past and looks to the future.

DUNGEONS & DISK DRIVES 20

Mitch reports on his trip to the Atari show where he learned of a real 'GEM' of a tip for Dungeon Masters. Meanwhile, the Warty One answers humble humans' queries about Snowball, Police Quest II, Kings Quest IV, Dungeon Master, Deja Vu II, Goldrush & Shadowgate.



REVIEWS! REVIEWS! REVIEWS! REVIEWS!



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▲ NZ STORY P.38

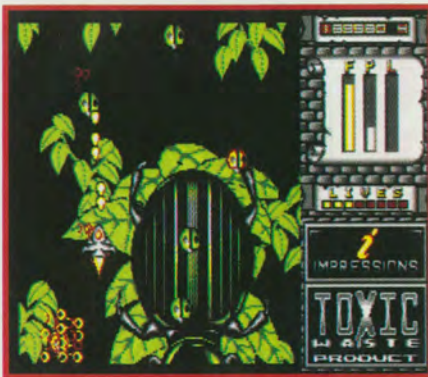


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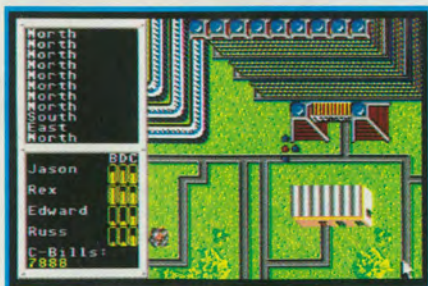
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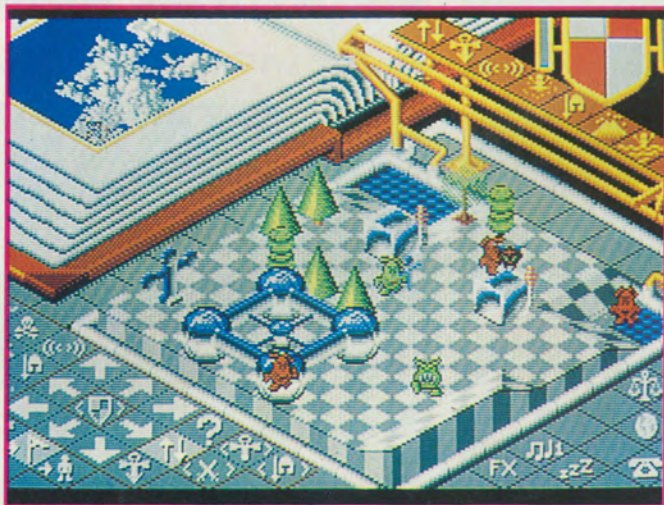
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ACTION NEWS

Hello, and welcome. Well, here we are at Issue 17, doesn't time fly when you're having fun? If that's the case, ST owners aren't going to have much spare time on their hands. I'm sure you'll agree that the quality of software is increasing all the time. This month, sees the emergence of cuddly cartoon characters - it seems as though the software houses are turning soft in their old age. However, although these games offer nothing exceptional in the graphics and sound departments, no one can deny that they are worth every penny gameplay-wise. That's enough of this old waffle - I'm off for a game of New Zealand Story!

POPULOUS DATA DISKS



Silly land, just one of the all-new Populous landscapes.

Following the phenomenal success of Populous, Bullfrog have announced the release of a data disk, The Promised

Lands. Available for both Amiga and ST, The Promised Lands will feature five entirely new lands. Revolution

FIREBIRD'S ORIENTAL GAMES

Martial arts beat'em-ups are becoming very common on the ST. However, Firebird believe that their offering, Oriental Games, is the ultimate martial arts fighting simulator. Oriental games will feature no less than four different fighting styles - Kung Fu, Hollywood Rules, Sumo Wrestling and Kendo.

Players may compete in any of the four styles. Each event will take place over six gruelling rounds, the winner of which will be granted the title of Master. Beginners, however, may find the might of the computer-controlled contestants a little too hot to handle. Therefore, a practice

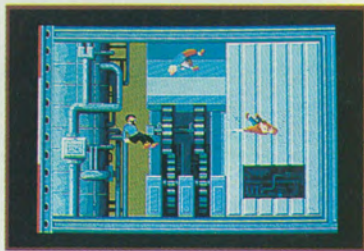
mode has been included to allow players to brush up on their various skills.

Players who successfully become Masters of all the four disciplines may then proceed to the grand tournament in an attempt to win the esteemed title of Grand Master. Carrying a price tag of £24.95, Oriental Games is scheduled for a September release.

FRENCH ARCADE-ADVENTURES

Expect to see two rather interesting games from Infogrames in the near future. First off, we have Transmutor. Bored with his mundane life, Janky and his pet lizard, E.D., begin to toy with a powerful transmutor. Janky watched as poor E.D. was transported to a far-off planet. Janky's task is to somehow get his unfortunate friend back home. Transmutor will cost £24.95

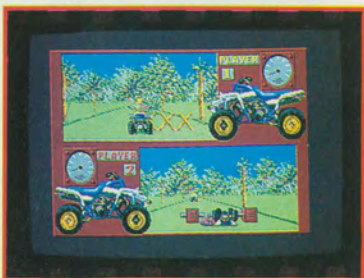
Meanwhile, comic-book hero, Tintin, is on the moon. Together with Captain Haddock, Professor Calculus and Snowy, you must assume the role of Tintin and thwart the plans of the evil Colonel Jorgen. Will you manage to save your loyal companions and arrive safely on the Moon? Tintin on the Moon is an all-action arcade game and will cost £24.95



Tintin and Captain Haddock try to figure out the problems of zero gravity.

IRON TRACKERS

Welcome to Iron Island, where the owner's favourite sport is manhunting. Players will be invited to compete for fantastic prizes and untold wealth. Equipped solely with a four-wheel drive quad, players will have to drive across numerous terrains whilst trying to avoid the traps and ambushes. Iron Trackers is an arcade-adventure filled with both suspense and laughter. Watch out for it in the not too distant future, priced £19.95



Avoiding obstacles is the key to success, hit one and you could end up like player II.

FREE
FERRARI
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FERRARI FORMULA ONE
- the complete Grand Prix racing game.
"The game has gone a long way towards
recreating the atmosphere of Grand Prix racing
and as a result, it's undoubtedly the most realistic
yet. In short Ferrari Formula One is a masterpiece
of a program which no Amiga owner should be
without"

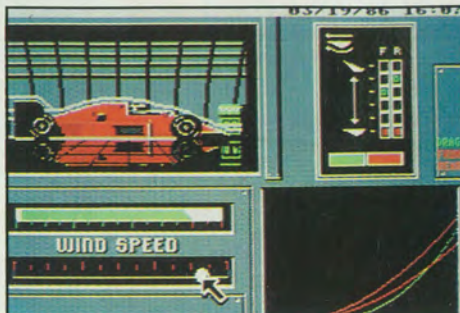
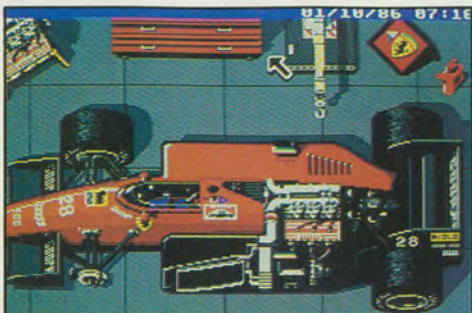
The Games Machine.
Now available on ST, Amiga (£24.99) and PC
(£29.99 - 5.25 & 3.5).

Commodore 64, Spectrum and Amstrad
cassette and disk versions to follow.

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FORMULA ONE
GRAND PRIX RACING SIMULATION

Ferrari



Screenshots represent the ST and PC versions, other versions may vary.

MINDSCAPE'S EXTRAVAGANZA

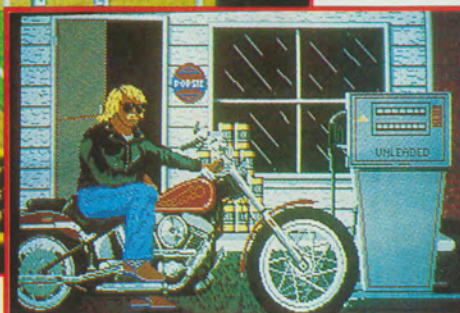
Featuring
cartoon-
quality graphics,
Fiendish Freddy's
Big Top O'Fun is
full of slapstick
comedy.



Life and Death - prepare to make your own NHS cuts!



Their
under
starter's
orders, their
off! At last a
horse racing
game
featuring all
of the regal
sport's
aspects.



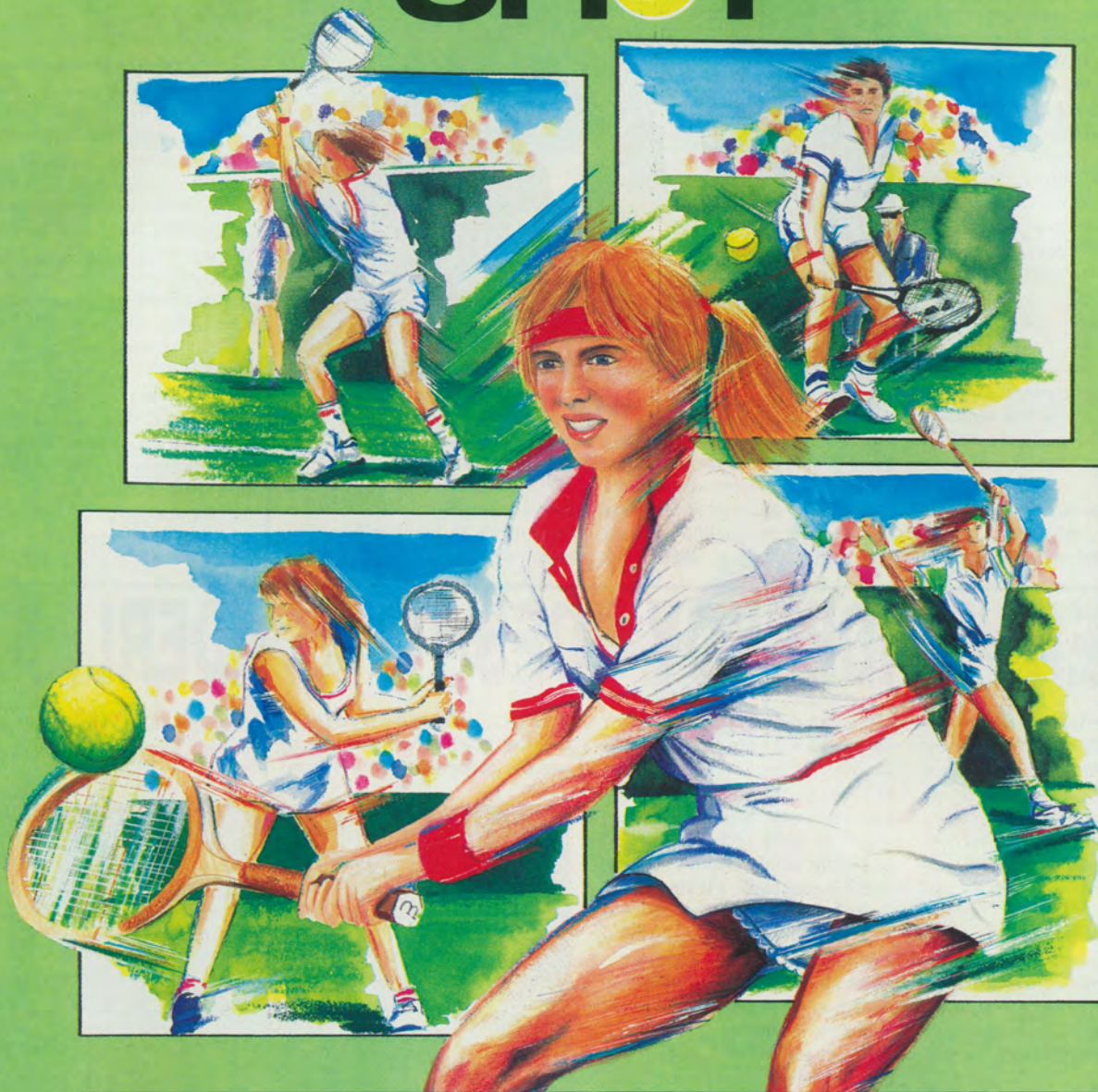
Mindscape have a whole host of games lined up for all ST games players. Fiendish Freddy's Big Top O'Fun, sees you desperately trying to save a circus from a group of money-grabbing property developers. You must earn money by performing various events such as the human cannonball and tightrope walking. However, trying to stop your goody-goody schemes is Fiendish Freddy, a diabolical clown, who will stop at nothing to bring about your untimely demise. Earn the cash and the circus is saved; lose and... well, it doesn't really bear thinking about really. Fiendish Freddy features excellent cartoon-style graphics and one of those annoying tunes which you just can't stop whistling.

Ever wanted to play doctors and nurses for real? Life and Death puts you in the position of a top surgeon. You must diagnose patients, administer drugs, or, if the worst comes to the worst, perform major surgery. Life and Death is said to be an accurate simulation. Definitely not a game for the squeamish!

Other games due from the company include Horse Racing, Basketball and Harley Davidson - a game in which you must bike it across America. Watch out for these titles around Christmas time.

Mindscape's Harley Davidson game, a sort of computerised Easy Rider.

PASSING SHOT™



Anyone for tennis?

Not 'alf! Image Works serves up another ace with this conversion of the Sega® coin-op smash.

Featuring tennis-ational singles or doubles action on clay and grass courts from around the world, Passing Shot™ is the most accurate simulation of the noble sport to appear since the real thing!

Game, Set and Match to Image Works!

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Ivor Lentil

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Spectrum (cassette)
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Screenshots from Atari ST version



SEGA®

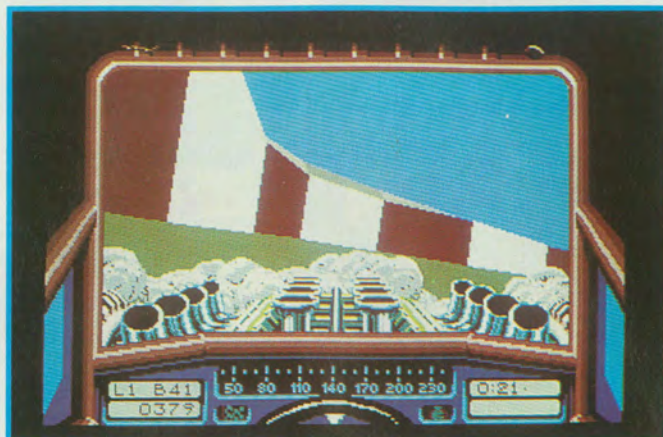


MICROSTYLE'S STUNT CAR RACER

Hot on the heels of RVF, MicroStyle are set to launch their new racing game, Stunt Car Racer, sometime in September. Finding yourself behind the wheel of a powerful stunt car, you must race your way around eight gruelling tracks, competing in four different leagues. Division four features easier tracks, whilst division one contains fearsome tracks such as 'ski jump' and 'draw bridge'.

The stunt car is an exceptionally fast turbo-powered vehicle which will take a lot of skill to control. Players will have to compete against computer-controlled racers whose names, 'Dare Devil' and 'Road Hog', unfortunately reflect their personality.

Once again, like RVF, players will be able to link up



MicroStyle's Stunt Car promises gripping race thrills. It also features a two-player link up for dual play.

their STs to allow simultaneous racing. Any drivers who finally make it to the top of the first division will be eligible to enter the Super League, where the

going gets really tough. ST owners will be able to get their hands on Stunt Car Racer sometime in September. The game will cost £24.99.

NORTH AND SOUTH

Based on the American civil war, North and South is a game with a subtle blend of strategy, tactical planning and outright action. The game can be played against either the computer or a human friend. Players will need to keep a calm head as they move their armies into position. During the battles various cavalry, infantry and artillery units can be commanded to ensure victory. Of course, players will need to finance their campaigns and therefore collecting taxes becomes a necessary part of the game. Players will also have to beware of attacking Indians, marauding Mexicans and fearsome storms.

North and South should appear in September, priced £24.95

SUPER WONDERBOY GOES TO WONDERLAND

Subtitled, Wonderboy in Monsterland, Super Wonderboy is soon to be released from Activision. The unlikely hero of this story is none other than a nappy-clad juvenile. In his previous game, Tom-Tom was called upon to save his luckless girlfriend. Now, however, it seems as though he has a much more difficult task in hand. The inhabitants of Wonderland are under siege by a ferocious fire-breathing dragon. As Tom-Tom's adventure unfolds he comes face to face with all manner of nasty adversaries; Jellyfish, mudmen, snakes and vampire bats all attempt to halt his progress. Only when he has reached the eleventh level will Tom-Tom face the terrible dragon. Of course, he'll be able

to collect a number of treasures to aid him in his quest. There are four different types of boots (Cloth, Leather, Ceramic and Legendary). Four different types of body armour are also available (Light, Heavy, Knight and Legendary). Finally, Tom-Tom may use four different types of shield (Light, Knight, Hard and - believe it or not - Legendary). Super Wonderboy also has a whole host of extra features including hidden and visible doors which lead to fortune tellers, and taverns - from all of these Tom-Tom will be able to receive help in his mission. Super Wonderboy will be available in September and will cost £19.99

Meanwhile, Activision's coin-op conversion of the Sega

classic, Altered Beast is nearing completion. Expect to see the game sometime around

October. So watch this space closely for the definitive review!



Super Wonderboy, Tom-Tom, begins his mission. As you can see here, he's already got quite a bit of protection.



Tom-Tom can buy extras at various shops. Here, a cuddly croc offers various refreshments.



Altered Beast is nearing completion and looking pretty good.

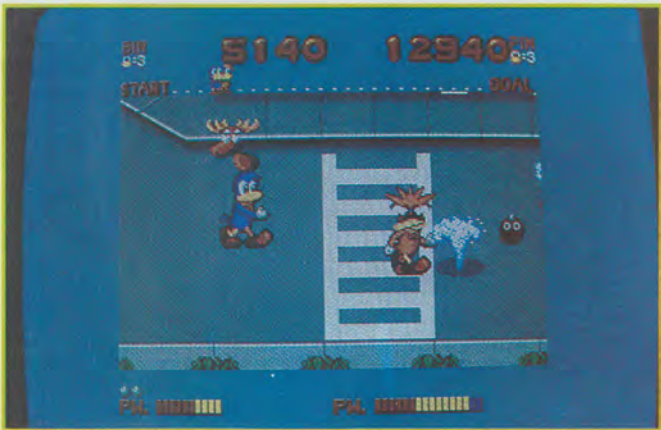
Bin and Pin, the Dynamite Dux, confront a huge ball of flames, just one of the end-of-level guardians.



DYNAMITE DUX

Gosh, would you credit it, Lucy has been kidnapped by the evil Achacha. Who can rescue her from her terrible fate? Bin and Pin, of course! The heroes of this story are two daring, but loveable, Dynamite Dux. Originally a Sega coin-op, Dynamite Dux has to be the cutest game around. Featuring cartoon-style graphics spread over six levels, Dynamite Dux

offers no less than eighteen unlikely bad guys, ranging from Sumo pigs to boxing crocodiles and snappy dogs to short-sighted moles. As well as these rather nasty characters trying to hamper Bin and Pin's progress, the game will also contain water spouts, mini volcanos and walls of fire. Dynamite Dux will be on general release in September and will cost £19.99.



Watch out for that water spout! The Dux have to avoid a number of obstacles as well as the numerous nasties.

Artronic, together with the Spice racing team, present the most accurate race game on the ST. Well, probably.



THE TOWER OF BABEL

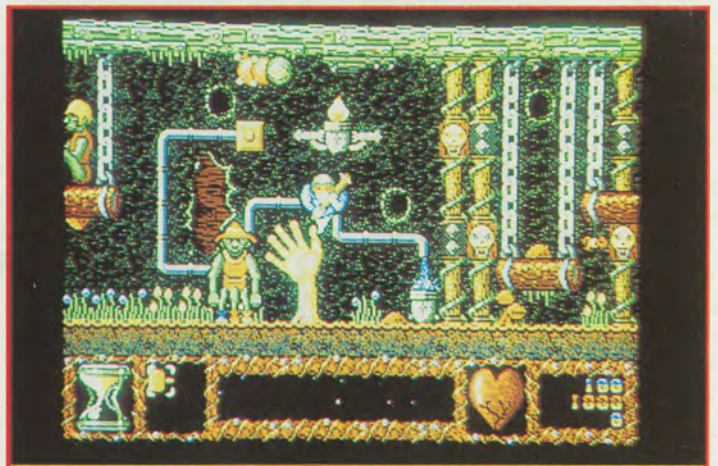
Following on from their success with Dark Side and Total Eclipse, MicroStatus are proud to announce the imminent release of their next game, Tower of Babel. You must take control of up to three independent spider robots, each with their own particular skill. The idea behind the game is very simple - all you have to do is reach the top of the tower.

Included with the game comes a construction kit with which players may design their own fiendish puzzles. The Tower of Babel is created and programmed by Peter Cooke (author of classics such as Tau Ceti and Academy). The game will appeal to all manner of gamers and will cost £24.99. Watch out for it sometime in September

IN AN ENGLISH COUNTRY GARDEN

After what seems like an eternity, Rainbird Software are finally set to release their 'Rentokil-style' game, Verminator. Set within the trunk of an old oak tree, you play the part of a three-legged Verminator who has been employed by the Tree Council to exterminate the influx of strange vermin. Of course, you don't work for free and this latest call promises to be a nice little earner. Set over two-hundred and fifty levels, your

main task is to get rid of all the nasties. Extra, more sophisticated equipment can be purchased from various shops, but, if you fail to eradicate the pests, the council will send around the heavies to knock some sense into you. Verminator features colourful graphics and superb sound effects. Due for release in August, Verminator will be available on the Rainbird label and cost £24.99.



Rainbird's Verminator features a Jake-the-Peg lookalike. Controlling him you must eradicate all the nasties who have invaded the old oak tree.

LIFE IN THE FAST LANE

Artronic are promising to produce what they bill, "the most exciting and technically accurate sports simulator ever produced for the Atari ST". Fast Lane has been specially developed in association with Spice Engineering, who have recently entered the brutally competitive 3.5 litre non-turbo C1 sports car arena. The object of Fast Lane is to compete in a number of races at such famous courses as Suzuka, Le Mans, Brands Hatch and Nurburgring. Of course, the ultimate aim is to become the top driver but, with the myriad of factors hampering your

progress, only the most skilled players will achieve this elite status. Unlike other racing games, Fast Lane also features the off track side of racing such as team management and car maintenance. Night time driving, tyre changes and changing weather conditions all make racing hazardous. Fast Lane is the first of three major releases to come from Artronic: the game itself will cost £19.99. Watch out for the company's next releases: ACE, the ST version of the best selling eight-bit flight simulator; Soldier 2000; and Anti-Terrorist Mission.

ACROSS THE POND

News just in from MicroProse U.S. mentions a wealth of games for the ST. Expect to see the new version of Pirates! any day now. The apparent reason for the delay has been that the company has changed the game's graphics. Pirates! will now feature graphics from the Apple version. Meanwhile, the company are working on a number of new, previously unannounced titles. Watch out for Samurai, a game set in the ancient East which follows the same sort of line as Pirates! but has, apparently, many more action sequences. F-15 Strike Eagle II, is also under development. F-15 II will feature spectacular graphics and the usual standard of excellence we have come to expect from MicroProse. Red Storm Rising is now also complete: the submarine game, based on Tom Clancy's best-selling novel, should be available soon. Finally, the simulation experts are midway through the ST versions of both Project Stealth and their Abrahams Tank simulator. More news as I receive it.

WHO YA GONNA CALL?

June the 16th saw the U.S. release of Columbia Picture's Ghostbusters II. The film quickly zapped its way into cinema history by grossing over a colossal \$10 million dollars on its opening day (the latest Indy film, The Last Crusade, had held the previous record with \$7.9 million dollars). The battle of the film licences is now on. With both Batman and Indiana Jones vying for a top slot, the competition looks fierce. However, with the success of the first Ghostbusters game (which, incidentally, sold two million copies), Activision are confident that their game will reach the top spot. Due for a simultaneous release with the film, Ghostbusters II will be available from December 1st.

The team behind the game, FoursField, have already had much critical acclaim with their previous ST releases, the Incredible Shrinking Sphere and Timescanner. FoursField are working in close collaboration with the Software Studios team, apparently they have

Who's coming to save the world again? Ghostbusters II, due for a simultaneous release with the film.



seen the film and are making sure the game follows the storyline as closely as possible.



Ghostbusters II features unique gameplay. With great sound and graphics, the game looks destined for the top.

IN SEARCH OF THE ELEPHANT'S GRAVEYARD

Soon after Ninja 2, ST owners can also expect to see Tusker. Set within a mysterious jungle, Tusker features a budding young adventurer following in his late father's footsteps as he follows the trail along which his dad met his end. And it's no wonder his dad copped it: the land is full of sword-wielding

arabs, and, as you venture into the dark realms, you will encounter long-forgotten dinosaurs and moving idols. The action scrolls horizontally as Tusker wanders around, and to complete his quest, our hero must collect clues and extra weapons. These are left discarded throughout the

games by previous unsuccessful adventurers, and Tusker must use them to ward off the natives and to allow him to explore further into the mystical land. At present, Tusker is at a very early stage. Only two levels were available to view: the first desert level, and the caves which are the second. Aesthetically, Tusker looks not a million miles away from Activision's Predator, but the game is much larger and features more involving gameplay than the said horizontal shoot'em-up.

Finally, we can expect to see more games before Christmas. The first is Vendetta, which is a horizontally-scrolling shoot'em-up, and the next is Myth, which System 3 are pitching as the 'biggie' this Christmas. From what I have seen of Myth, it is a four-scroller set in various stages in Earth's history. You will be doing battle with creatures like hydras and with Vikings, but I'm not allowed to say any more than that.

PICTIONARY

Pictionary is a game that in many ways is similar to charades. Instead of acting out a word or title, players are asked to sketch clues. The game features an innovative art package with which players will attempt to portray their clues. Many people, however, don't like to draw and, to aid these players, the computer can be made to draw the clues. As with Trivial Pursuit, Pictionary will provide players with hours of fun.

The game will be launched at the PC show in late September, prices are still to be confirmed.

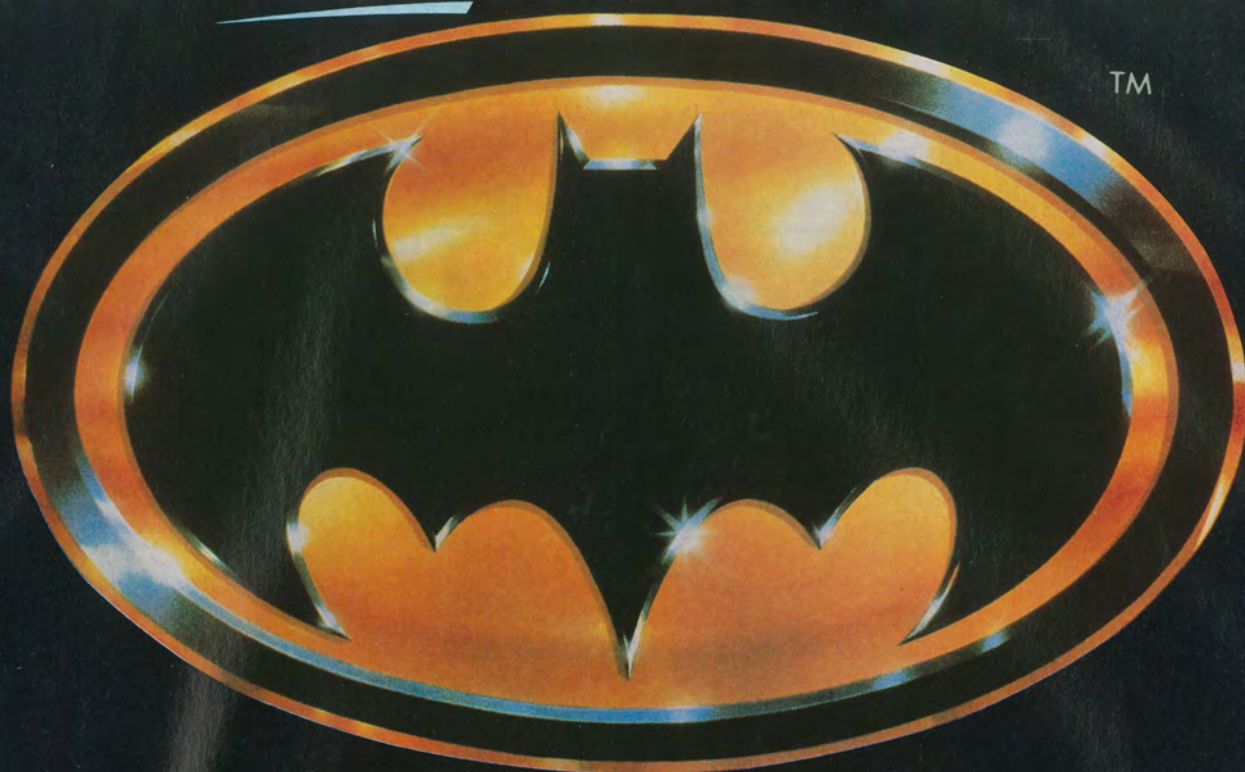


Hot on the heels of Trivial Pursuits, Pictionary is the latest yuppie board game to be converted by Domark.



System 3's Tusker sets you off in your father's footsteps to find the elephant's graveyard

WATCH YOUR SCREEN – SEPTEMBER



TM



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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS!

We have moved!

1

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2

You too can have a piece of the Action!!!

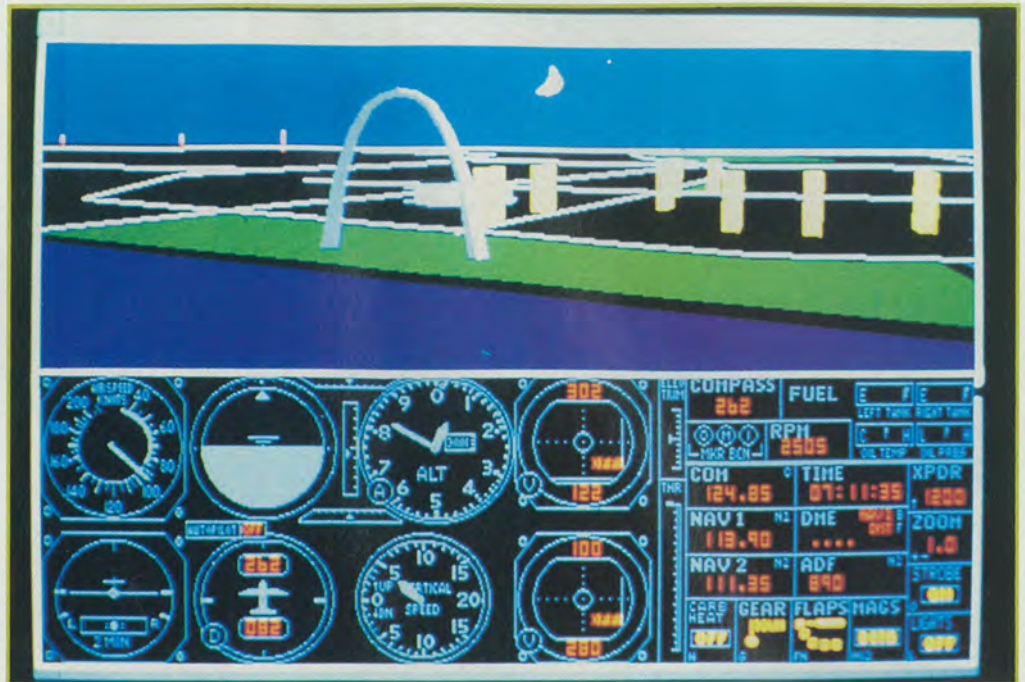
Yes, we want to hear what **you** have to say. So turn to page 41 and fill out our remarkable new ozone-friendly supercharged Reader Survey! Let us have an earfull and in return you could win a really super prize.

**Turn to Page 41
NOW!!!**

SUBLOGIC'S NEXT GENERATION SIMULATORS

Avionics experts, Sublogic, recently came over from the States to demonstrate their next generation of aircraft simulation, both software and hardware. Old, bold pilots will probably remember the Flight Sim series, as well as Jet, which concentrated on realistic flight simulation and accurate aircraft attitude, but totally disregarded the aspect of hostility and shoot'em-up. These immensely popular programs are as realistic as possible. But no computer keyboard or joystick could provide the tactile feedback essential for a real aircraft yoke feel. Therefore, the team have devised a yoke and rudder controls, called Flight Control I, which fits in the standard joystick port and works with the same configuration. The console comprises the yoke, a T-handle throttle as well as accurate gear and flap switches, with rudder pedals optional. FC-I can be used with any aircraft simulations, although obviously they have been set up specifically for Sublogic programs. The price of the yoke has not been finalised, but it is expected to retail at around £100.00, with the rudder pedals extra, at approximately £40.00.

Sublogic are also releasing some new simulations and extra scenery disks for existing programs. Instrument Pilot Scenery, USA, is a supplement which is designed to expand the instrument flight rules and flying environment of Sublogic simulations. The package



includes all radio-nav aids such as VORs and NDBs, as well as all commercial airports located in the US. Many airports also provide instrument landing system approaches and are digitized from DOT data for precise geographical accuracy. Additionally, the latest scenery disk, Scenery disk 9, will be released this month. This latest addition works in conjunction with all Sublogic simulations. The disk covers Chicago, St Lois and Cincinnati airspace and terrain, which amounts to more than 30,000 square miles of the midwest United States and incorporates 150 different airports.

SubLogic's ninth scenery disk features a tour of the midwest and includes many of the well-known landmarks.



A U.F.O. simulator? I suppose much of this game is based solely on theory.

NEW FALCON MISSIONS

Just as all you budding fighter pilots are coming to grips with the desert battles, Spectrum-Holobyte are proud to announce a new scenery disk. Used in place of the original disk A, the Falcon Mission Disk puts pilots in a real-time battle environment where all of the events are inter-related. First, pilots will have to remove the threat of oncoming tanks and landing craft before going on to destroy enemy communication lines and factories. The eventual aim of the game is to cripple the enemy into surrender. Of course, the skies are peppered with lethal MiGs intent on your swift demise.

Available now, the Falcon Mission Disk is on sale for £19.99, don't miss it!

HEWSON'S METAL

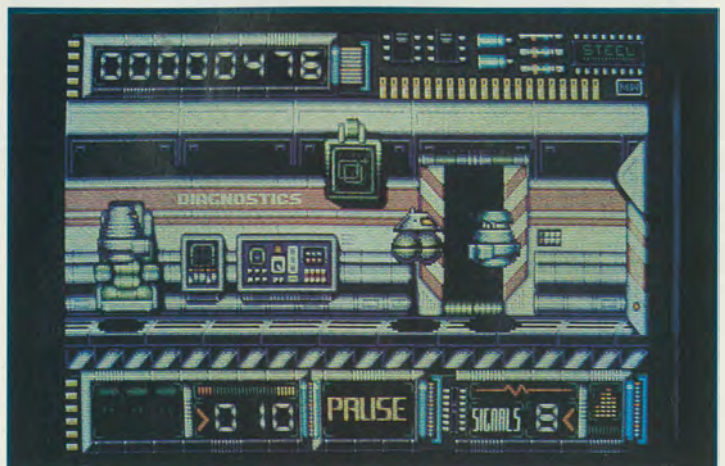
The next two titles to come from the esteemed stables of Hewson will be Slayer, in September, and Steel, in October. Slayer is a horizontally-scrolling shoot'em-up in which you must kill everything and anything that moves. Extra weaponry, along with extra fire power and smart bombs may be collected to aid you in your mission. And, boy, you'll need them too. Because at the end of each level is a deadly mothership which must be destroyed.

Meanwhile, robots have gone berserk on the intergalactic spaceship, Steel. Your task, as a robot commando, is to move your way along the ship destroying anything and anyone that stands in your way.

The key to the game is the skilful use of various computer terminals on board the ship.

The game contains a number of sub-games which, on completion, yield access cards for use with the terminals.

Both games will carry the asking price of £19.99. More news as we receive it



Take on the role of a robot commando and see if you can salvage the intergalactic spaceship, Steel.

READ ALL ABOUT IT

Elite are proud to announce the August release of their conversion of the top-selling coin-op, Paperboy. Probably the company's most popular eight-bit release, Paperboy follows the antics of a fanatical BMX rider who must try to avoid a phenomenal number of obstacles as he endeavours to deliver his precious papers. I'm sure you'll agree that it looks every bit as colourful as its arcade parent. Elite plan to deliver Paperboy at the end of August, the game will cost £19.99.

Not content with just one release, Elite are also planning to launch both Commando and Ghosts'n'Goblins. Both games brought the company considerable praise. As of yet, no release date has been given but expect to see the games sometime this winter.

Commando was a huge success on the eight-bit machines and with graphics like these it deserves to do well on the ST.

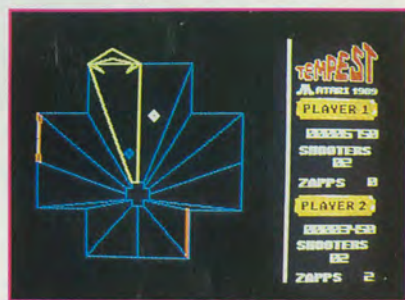


Elite's Paperboy features the antics of a BMX riding delivery boy who, while delivering his papers, must avoid any on coming obstacles.



TEMPEST

Not long after the birth of Asteroids, Atari created two new-styled video games. One was Qix, the other Tempest. Now ST owners can have the chance to play this classic game in the comfort of their own home. Featuring frantic gameplay and some excellent vector graphics, Tempest is a frustratingly addictive strategic shoot'em-up. Tempest should be available about now, priced £14.95.



The unmistakable vector graphics of Atari's classic game, Tempest.

ATARI'S PORTABLE CONSOLE

Atari recently had a stand at the British Grand Prix. On show was the company's latest venture, the Atari portable colour entertainment system. From what we've seen it looks set to give Nintendo's Game Boy a real run for its money. Also at the show we met up with Atari's Managing Director, Sam Tramiel, who enthused, "People want and deserve more, our graphics are not only detailed and dimensional, they're done from a palette of 4,096 colours. And, with a connecting cable, players can link up eight Atari portable colour entertainment systems so they can use a single game card to compete in multi-player challenges." Weighing only one

pound, the unit is just larger than a standard video cassette. Games are available on small cards which simply plug into the console. The package will come with a version of Epyx's California Games but there are a number of developers working on games for the unit. As well as California Games, Epyx have also produced five other games: Blue Lightning; Impossible Mission; Monster Demolition; Time Quests & Treasure Chests; and Zendocon. Expect to see the console launched at the British Toy and Hobby Fair in January. No definite price as of yet, but rumours say that it could sell for as little as £100 - £150.



The Atari portable console, note the size!

In an attempt to avenge his brother's murder the Fallen Angel must overcome enemies all over the world.



FALLEN ANGEL

Following the death of his brother he sought vengeance on those responsible. Drug dealers everywhere became his quarry. He became known as a renegade - the Fallen Angel. Now it's your chance: take on the role of the crazed renegade as you attempt to clean up the underground systems of the evil drug barons. As players progress through the game, they visit different locations: Paris' Metro; London's Tube;

and New York's Subway. Extra weapons such as lethal nunchakas are at your disposal, and at the end of each level you must confront a henchman. Only when you have cleaned up all of the locations will you be able to face Mr. Big in the ultimate showdown.

Fallen Angel is available from Screen 7 and will carry the street price of £19.99.

LAST NINJA II MAKES LONG AWAITED DEBUT



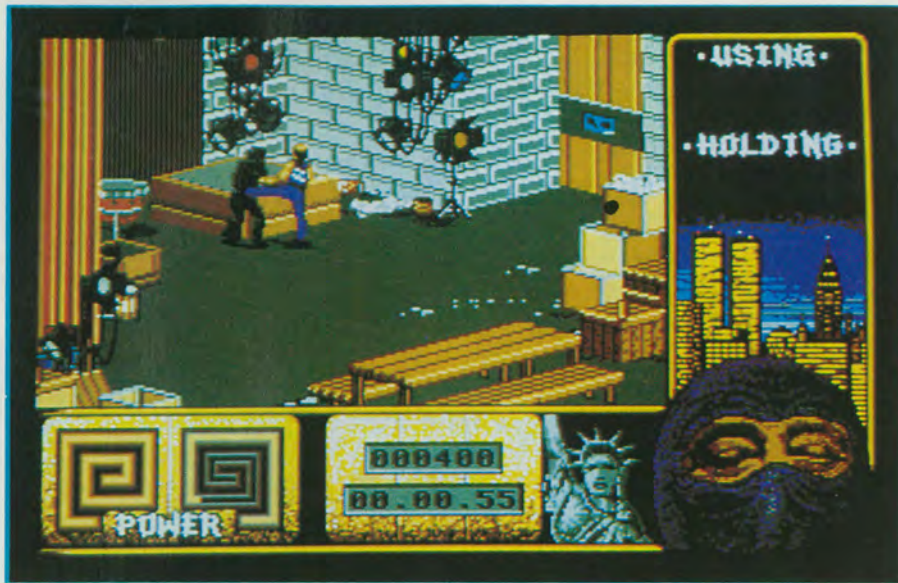
If you used to own an 8-bit machine, the chances are you will have heard of the Last Ninja series of games. Well, within the next three months, you can expect to see Last Ninja 2 on your faithful ST. Originally, System 3 had planned to release both of the Last Ninja games for the ST, and duly announced the original's conversion about a year back. Unfortunately however, programming difficulties meant that the game was permanently shelved - luckily, though, the sequel is well on its way.

Set across seven levels, Ninja 2 follows the adventures of our black-clad hero as he attempts to trap the immortal spirit of the wizard warrior who

killed his fellow Ninjas. In the first Last Ninja our hero successfully defeated the evil warlord (not on the ST, though), but now he is back and, instead of terrorizing ancient Japan, he has set up a base in down-town New York. Under the premise of a drugs factory, the warlord has a whole host of henchmen under his control - and all of them are out to get you. As you travel through the seven levels, the Ninja must fight his way through the flick-screens, collecting weapons such as shruiken and throwing stars as he does so. The player has full control over the Ninja, and he can be made to perform several fighting moves, including kicks

and punches, and he can also somersault and run out of danger. Each level depicts your journey into the warlord's lair, and you must travel through sewers and across rooftops, collecting objects and solving puzzles, until you eventually make your way into his domain.

At the moment, most of the graphics and animation have been implemented and it is the puzzles that are being worked on. The ST Last Ninja 2's graphics are a lot more detailed than that of the 8-bits, and there is better animation on the main sprite. Sound, too, isn't being neglected, and a separate tune accompanies each stage. So far, System 3 are very happy with the work on Ninja 2, but you can judge for yourself in the exclusive review in next month's ST Action.



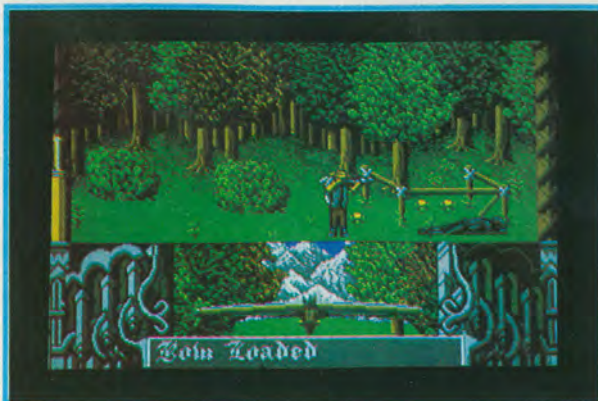
The Last Ninja features exceptional graphics and a huge gameplay area.

CROSSBOW

Crossbow the Legend of William Tell, follows the antics of Switzerland's legendary hero. Having failed to worship Prince Fredrick's hat, William's son has been arrested. You must assume the role of the master bowman and pursue your son's captors, Gessler's Black Knights. The action takes place in and around the forests near the small village of Claremont, and eventually

amidst the towers and dungeons of Gessler's castle. If you succeed, you will bring hope to all the oppressed workers of the area who cower under the tyrannical leader's power. If you fail...

Crossbow's subtle blend of action, strategy and player interaction will ensure that players will enjoy the long-term challenge it offers. Crossbow - the legend of William Tell should be available sometime in September priced £19.99.



With his son, having been captured, our hero sets about his mission to crush the evil Gessler's reign.

WANNA KNOW A SECRET?

Official Secrets started off small but, with increased publicity, the company has already grown. The club game, Myth, has been selling in great volume, not only in Britain but also across Europe. Official Secrets offers club members a telephone helpline, a regular bi-monthly club magazine, a copy of Myth (programmed by the Magnetic Scrolls team), a copy of Level 9's Gnome Ranger, and instant membership to Special Reserve - the company's sister club which offers games at very good prices. What's more, the current membership fee of £19.95 represents excellent

value. For further information contact John Trevillian on 0279 726541.



Programmed by the Magnetic Scrolls team, Myth is only available through the Official Secrets adventurers club.

HAWAIIAN ODYSSEY

Sublogic are renowned for their realistic aircraft simulation, but Hawaiian Odyssey is an unusual diversification. Again, this scenery adventure can be used with any existing Sublogic

simulation, and not only does it include realistic flight around the paradise isles, flying into the crater of Mauna Loa, Hawaii's most volatile volcano, takes you to various fantasy lands. Prices for scenery disks have not yet been disclosed.

A MAMMOTH COMPILATION OF WORLD BEATERS...

When the golden team take their golden games and add a little bit of golden magic, then there's only one outcome... A GIANT SUCCESS. Four giant games squeezed into one giant compilation.

OUT RUN™ "To be blunt, this game is going to outsell anything going this Christmas. A flippin' good game - test drive one today!!!"

GAUNTLET II™ "It's one of the finest conversions I've ever seen."

1943™ "Highly addictive sequel to the award winning 1942. Sure to be another Capcom success."

STREET FIGHTER™ "Yet another great Capcom arcade game. Excellent graphics: the various characters move around on screen with all the elegance and might of real Street Fighters."

WORLD BEATERS



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U.S. Gold Ltd, Units 2/3, Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham, B6 7AX. Tel: 021 625 3388

TIERTEX



▲ John Prince demonstrating the RGB image process. Using a video camera, the team can capture hand-drawn graphics and spin an RGB wheel to get the colour.

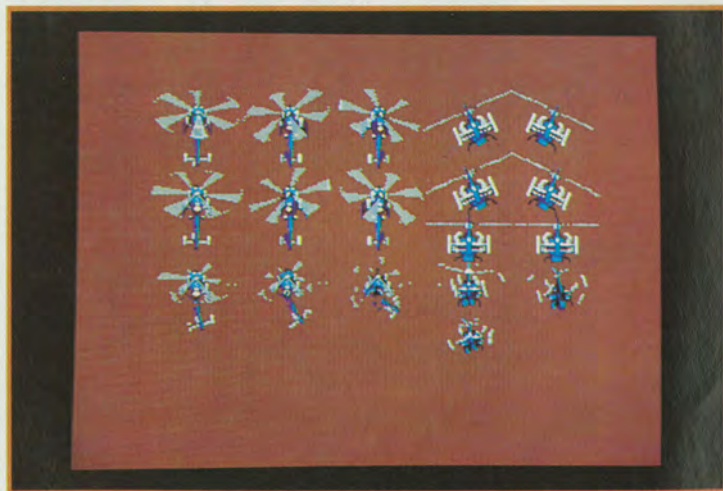
"You would have thought that being responsible for some of the best arcade conversions and license games would certainly be something to shout about. But as Jason Spiller discovered, game designers, Tiertex, would much rather leave the razzmatazz and showbiz aspect to others."

The computer game industry has its fair share of gurus and celebrities, and if you go star-spotting at various shows, you might catch a glimpse of a tie 'n' dye-clad Jeff Minter or a Bitmap Brother or two. But what about the unsung heroes, like Tiertex, who would prefer just to let their games do the talking?

Whichever way you look at it, the Tiertex collection is impressive, with titles like Thunderblade, Atari 720, Indiana Jones and Strider, and so I was intrigued to discover more about this seemingly press-shy company. Tiertex was formed about two years ago by physicist, John Prince, and electronics engineer, Donald Campbell. With such specifically technical backgrounds, how did they come to forge a career in the relatively lighthearted industry of computer game design?

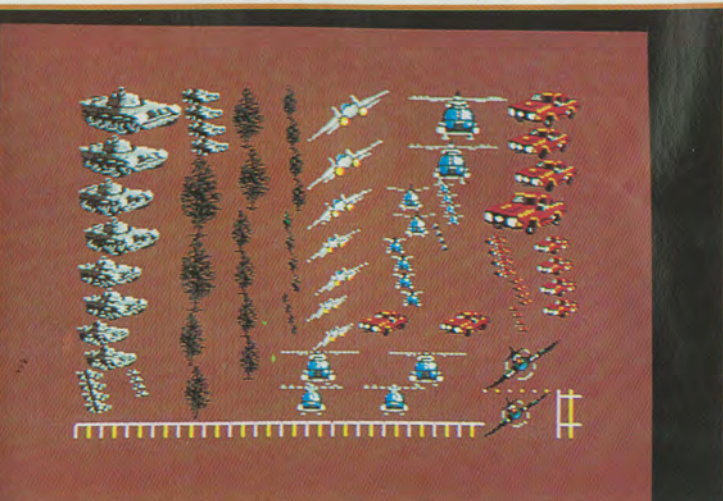
Campbell explained: 'I met John at Artic Computing, where we were involved in small programming tasks on various games. Then we moved on to Paragon and produced games like Infiltrator, Ace of Aces and the first Indiana Jones coin-op conversion, The Temple of Doom, and it was during our involvement in these more engaging projects that we struck up a good working relationship.'

crushing down megabytes of memory, the different game-play aspects, like the mine car chase, created even greater problems. But our involvement in such a taxing project proved invaluable in the future. During the first year, Tiertex were commissioned to produce such coin-op conversions as Rolling Thunder, and the popular skateboarding game, Atari 720, which got a weekly airing on the TV quiz show, Master Teams. In comparison to the techniques we employ today, the process of coin-op conversion was primitive to say the least. Without the luxury of hard drives and sprite pattern reading facilities, it was very much a process of playing the game, studying every aspect and painstakingly mapping it out. With a game like Atari 720, this was fairly straightforward, but a larger scale game such as Indiana Jones or



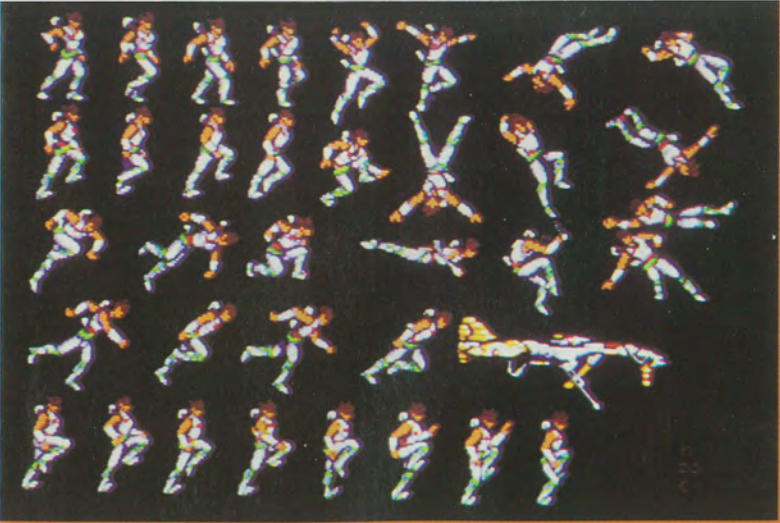
▼ The skyscrapers were drawn using fast polygon routines.

▲ Thunderblade was one of the most graphically advanced games in the arcade : a complicated conversion.



TAXING PROJECT

With the experience gained from numerous projects at Paragon and Artic, Campbell and Prince decided to go it alone and form their own company: 'The Indiana Jones conversion was a particularly massive project because, not only was there the usual difficulty of

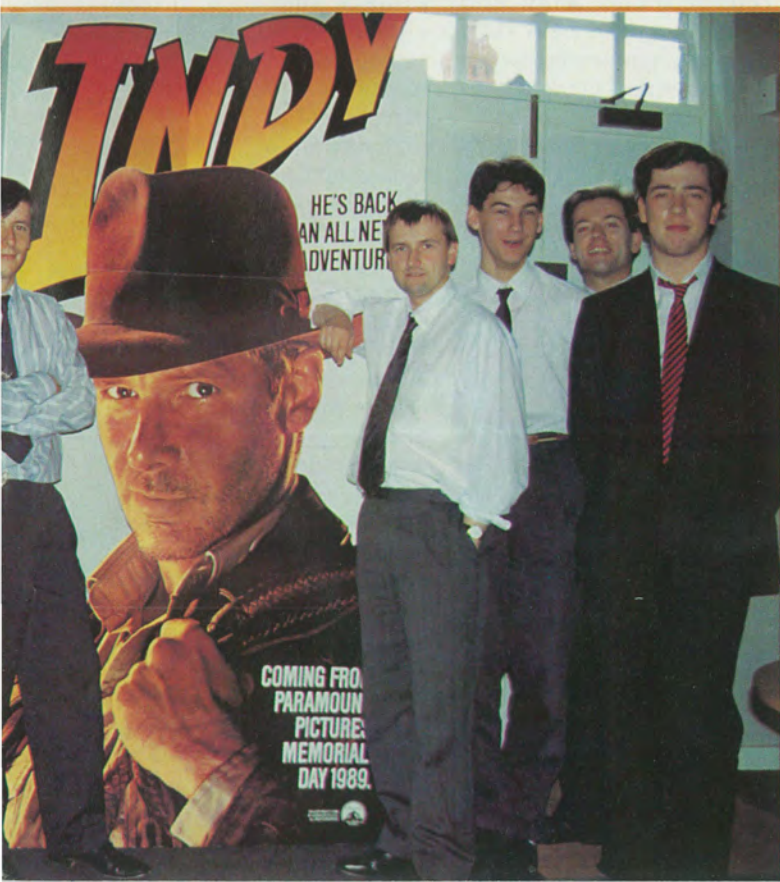


▲ Strider a massive coin-op conversion with dozens of sub games.

▼ The main sprite can move in any direction. The game looks, feels and plays just like the arcade original.



▼ The Tiertex team flanked by the subject of one of their more recent projects.



Rolling Thunder really tried your patience.'

▲ A part of the coin-op conversion process requires knowing the game inside out, and so the team ripped the guts out of the Strider machine.

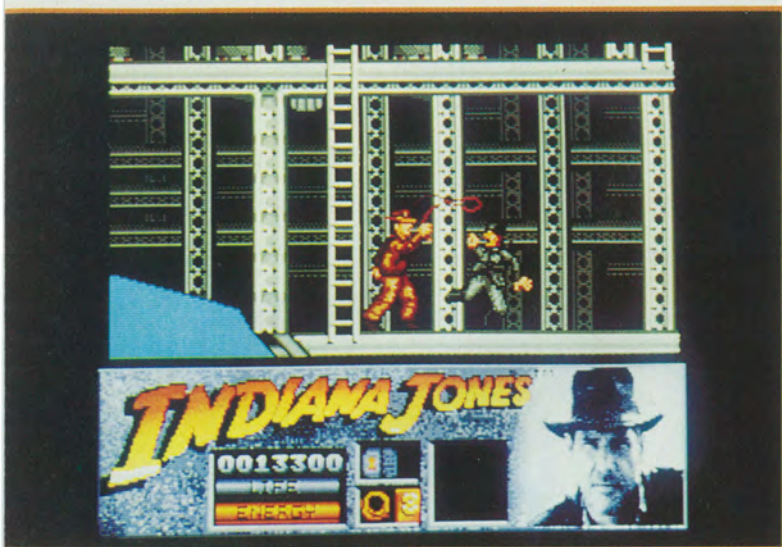
THUNDERBLADE VS AFTERBURNER

Coin-op conversions are judged by how similar they look to, and play like, the arcade original. Both Rolling Thunder and 720 received critical acclaim for their accuracy, and this recognition paved the way to more lucrative commissions. Campbell described the next stage: 'U.S. Gold approached us with a big coin-op conversion, which was predicted to be a particularly difficult conversion. Nevertheless, we agreed to undertake the project and began planning the conversion of Thunderblade.' The effect of this immensely successful Sega coin-op game relied on incredible 3-D graphics, swift, uninterrupted scrolling and the sort of special effects which can only be afforded with megabytes of memory. Prince described the project: 'The two big coin-op conversion at the time were Thunderblade and Afterburner, which was Argonaut's project and both were the most graphically advanced games in the arcade. But even with the limitations and working with a fraction of the memory capacity, we were determined to get the conversion as close to the original as possible.'

PAINSTAKING

The team painstakingly analysed all aspects of the

game from sprite behaviour and scroll speeds to the configuration and pattern of the game-play: 'We concluded that the most prominent feature of the game was the incredible 3D effect and we were determined to reproduce it as accurately as possible. The graphics were pre-sized and pre-scrolled before run time, which was a big help, as it enabled fast, on-screen printing. This afforded us more time to concentrate on other more cosmetic aspects of the game such as drawing and perfecting the buildings and canyons which run through the game and which are such an integral part of the overall effect. Some of the larger graphics, such as the skyscrapers, were drawn using fast polygon-fill routines which could create the several layers of the building. The sky and terrain were generated using a raster interrupt to change the colours and this enabled considerably more than 16 colours on screen at any one time.' Thunderblade was a long and painstaking project and the fact that the end result surpassed even their original boasts is praiseworthy indeed. Not only did it play like the original, the graphics were superb with few compromises. Argonaut had achieved less success with Afterburner, and this enhanced further the praise Tiertex received for



▲ At last licence games no longer rely on the name. The gameplay does the movie justice.

Thunderblade, and its subsequent popularity.

LAST CRUSADE

Thunderblade was a triumph, and U.S. Gold had no hesitation in entrusting the team with what was perhaps their most important licence to date. Campbell explained: 'U.S. Gold had bought the licence to do a game based on the latest Indiana Jones movie, *The Last Crusade*', and so, once again, Tiertex picked up their trusty bullwhips and donned their fedoras. In the past, license games were a last ditch attempt to squeeze money out of a blockbuster, and the games were invariably mediocre.

▼ T.O.R. the teams personal all original project.

But now, companies like Lucasfilm treat the game with almost as much importance as the film. 'Unlike the first Indy game, which was converted from a coin-op, we would have to design 'Crusade' right from scratch, and we started preliminary work last Christmas. Lucasfilm were adamant that the game should adhere to the plot of the film, and so they invited us over to the States to talk about game design. Before they had even started filming the movie, we were sworn to secrecy and were allowed to read scripts, look at location film stills and study Lucas's and Spielberg's' incredibly detailed film scene drawings. From these movie plans, we then had to select 10 possible action themes. It would have been great to go for some really

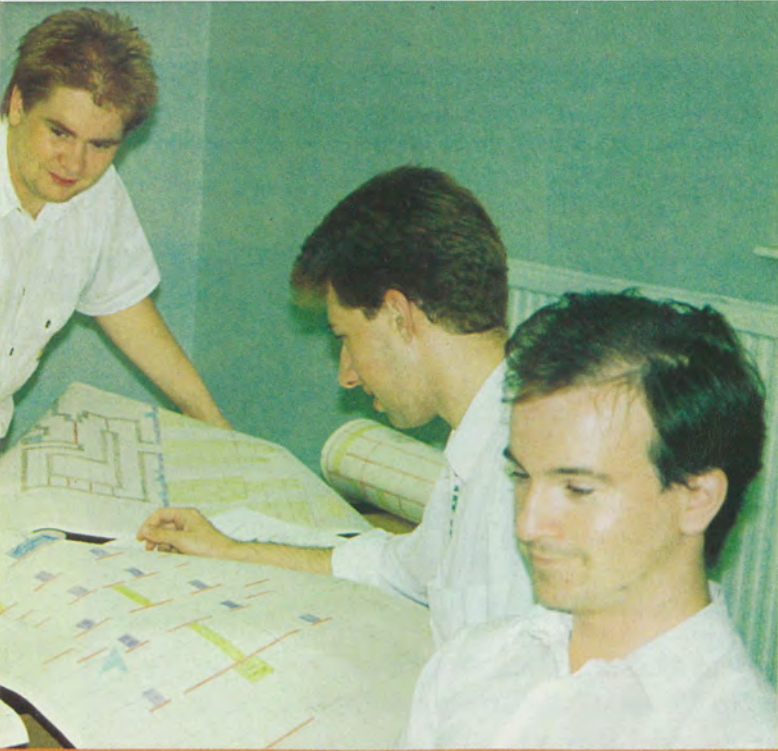
extravagant stunts and let our minds run riot, but you must always be aware of the limitations.' The team finally agreed on six main action sequences, which not only kept to the script, but also offered a variety of circumstances and gameplay.

Tiertex now have twelve in-house programming staff, and Campbell introduced me to the individual teams who were busy working on the current projects, Indy, Strider and an unnamed personal project. I spoke to musician, Mark Tait, who implemented the music for Thunderblade, Indy and Strider: 'I use an Akai 7000 sampling synthesizer which is connected via MIDI to

Steinberg 24, on the ST. For Thunderblade I had to tape the music from the arcade version and reproduce it, but for Indy I was given John Williams's original score to work on. Once the music has been implemented, I edit and mix down from 24 tracks to three on the ST, and four on the Amiga. Then finally, the MIDI data is converted to a form which is suitable for our own music drives.' Mark demonstrated how he puts a score together by piecing together individual tracks: 'I'm working on the music for Strider and our own project, and with all the equipment set up, we are setting up a MIDI and music bureau service for other companies.'

Once again, U.S. Gold turned to Tiertex to take on their latest big coin-op licence, Strider. Campbell described this particularly complicated project: 'The main development problem with Strider was the sheer size of the game - we had to reduce over 6 megabytes of arcade graphics down to less than half a meg format. This enormous data-crushing operation was a process of separating the graphics into different levels, compressing and loading and then loading and de-compressing to fit. The main sprite, Strider, for example, took no less than 160 frames to animate, because he can move in





▲ The T.O.R. team pour over the extensive mapping and plans for the game.

any direction. Once the graphics have been drawn, they are further mirrored and scrolled as required, using our own software techniques rather than performed graphics. The maps of the game were then constructed from the many subsections to give a large, overall playing area. The coin-op version has loads of sub-games and these were all coded using a flexible logic/sprite driving method.'

QUIETLY CONFIDENT

Campbell showed me around the graphics

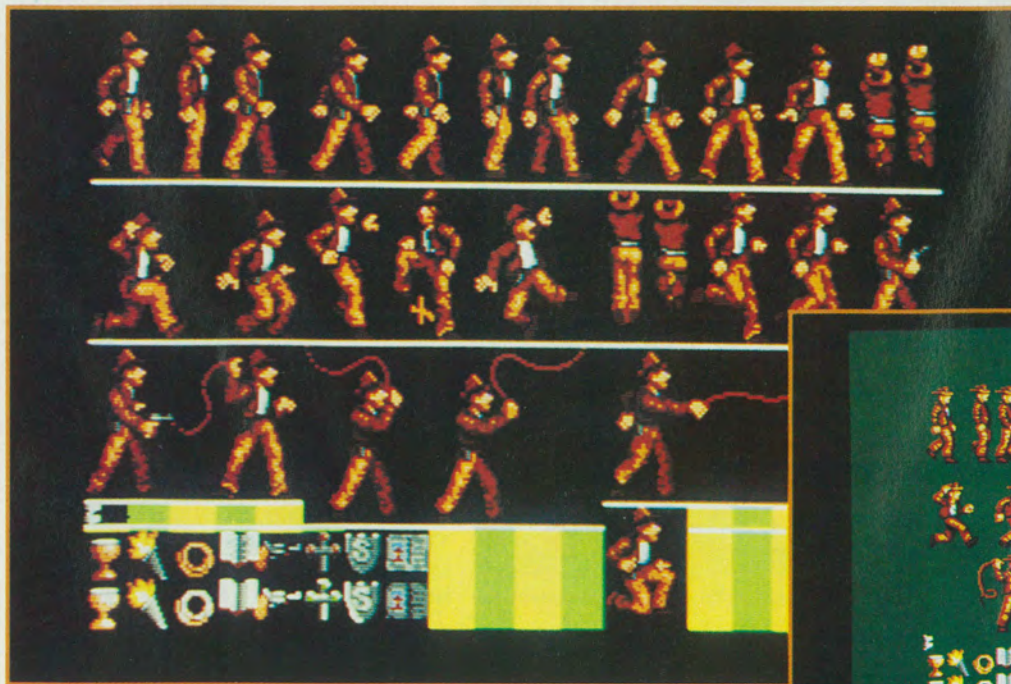
department: 'The games, both coin-op and original concepts are put together using our own graphics inventions which are based around the ST. But all the graphics are generated on Degas and converted to the different formats at download. This download software combines object code and graphics data which is ported via parallel interface to the specific machines.' Tiertex have devised their own digitizing techniques which are used extensively in all projects. Graphic artist, David Lees, who is currently working on T.O.R. demonstrated the technique with a pencil drawing of a dragon's head:

'Setting the drawing beneath the video camera lens, we can take RGB scans to capture hand drawn graphics and spin a plastic RGB wheel between the lens and the drawing to get the colour. We also use a similar technique for freeze framing coin-op graphics.'

The fact that software giants, U.S. Gold, have turned time and time again to Tiertex to take on some of their biggest license games and coin-op conversions, is an indication of the professionalism of this company. At first, I got the feeling that the team would have preferred the press coverage at the more

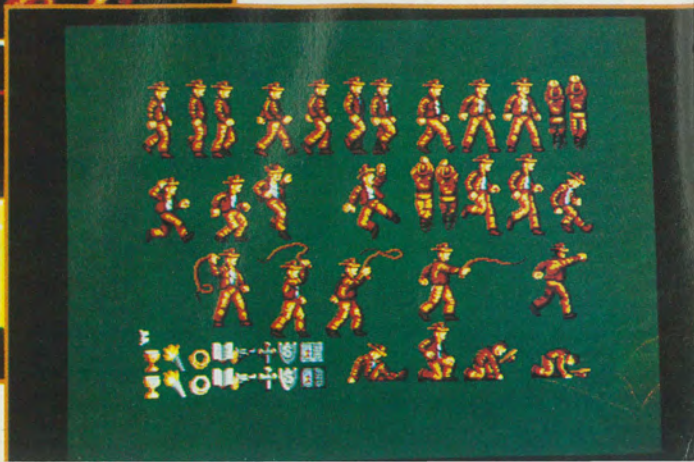
appropriate P.R. stage. But as they demonstrated their techniques, there was more than a hint of pride in this recognition. This area of high profile license games and coin-op conversions is brutally competitive with many vying for few commissions. But Tiertex are 'quietly' confident of their ability, and so are their customers.

▼ Mark Tait did the music for Thunderblade, Strider and Indy.



▲ Platform arcade action at its best as Indy leaps from rope to rope and jumps chasms. The team had to choose six action events from the movie and re-interpret them.

Whip crackin' action guaranteed thanks to Tiertex's slick animation ▼



Dungeons & Disk Drives

The long hot days of summer are upon us and the song of the Dragon has gone from the land. Software houses have shut up shop while they await the coming of the great autumn shows, and Adventurers and Dungeoneers sleep fitfully in their bunks, recovering the 'Manna points' lost in the winter crusades. Everywhere swords lie sheathed and idle in the sunlight.

Only the promise of an outing to the Atari Show in Alexandra Park could raise a bit of sparkle in the Crew, and even that was tinged with the threat that this may well be the show's last appearance. Nothing daunted, the Dragon and I arrived to mingle with the hoi polloi and 'press the flesh' of fellow fans. I soon found, however, that it was our fat, flatulent friend whom we had left behind dozing under his bridge, that most people wanted to have strong words with. We tried to answer as many questions as we could, but as usual we were found wanting. Next time we visit a show I'll remember to bring my crystal ball with me.

I must especially mention Alan Froud and Tony Rossi who turned up with one 'Gem' of a tip for Dungeoneers. As players who have already reached the lowest levels will already know, once

you have obtained the fire gem and re-entered the Dragon's Lair, the corridor to the upper levels disappears and you are left to do battle with the final foe. These two intrepid warriors found that if you throw the gem through the doorway instead of carrying it, the pathway to the upper levels remains open and you are free to return to these higher domains and wreak havoc with your new-found power.

The more observant amongst you may well be aware that Magnetic Scrolls, creators of such well-loved games as JINXTER, THE PAWN and THE GUILD OF THIEVES, are currently fighting some real-life dragons of their own. Their publishing partner, Rainbird Software, has been taken over by Microprose, and for various reasons this has caused all sorts of problems for everyone concerned. In an effort to find

out what the future holds both for Mag Scrolls and their loyal fans, I have sought an audience with the company's elegant leader, Anita Sinclair. In a pre-meeting telephone call she admitted that they are working on an exciting project which involves graphic animation, but there is no way that anyone will persuade her to reveal more on that subject. Happily a particularly persuasive member of the Dungeon Crew will be accompanying me to the meeting so there is a better than even chance I will have lots of secrets to spill next month.

Mitch

Troll Letters

Fiery Snowballs

Aaarrggghhh, please help me! I have come to a dead end in Snowball. I can get as far as the final screen with the hijacker and I can destroy the bomb by playing the flute; but how do you put out the fire? Is there a handy fire extinguisher anywhere or do I have to blow it out myself?

P.S. I do not think you are a real Troll. Why not show a picture of yourself?

Mark Howlett, Essex

Yes, there is an extinguisher. It's to be found in the Engine Room, below the Snowdozer Control Room.

I've offered countless photographs of myself (some of them quite sexy), but they won't publish them. And why not? They are afraid that you will no longer love me for my brain, but lust after my body instead.



FTL's monster-game, the legendary Dungeon Master. Followers constantly manage to find new and different aspects to the game. This month, a real gem.

Mundane police work was never much fun. Good job Sonny Bonds got his promotion.



The Key to Brute Force in Police Quest II

I am at the Motel and have found room 108. Every time I kick down the door I get shot and my partner just stands by the car.

M Toomey, Wilts

Good old brute force and ignorance strikes again! Why not just stand to one side of the door and open it?

'But if you please, Troll, the door is locked and the receptionist won't give me the key!'

If you read your manual you would know that it is proper police procedure to radio the station and obtain a search warrant. With this in your possession you will be able to convince the stubborn receptionist to come up with a pass key.

Dictionary Definitions

As described in my pocket dictionary, a TROLL is:- 'A supernatural being in Scandinavian mythology and folklore'. Personally, after reading Dungeons and Disk Drives for a while, and seeing the way you treat some poor readers who write to you, don't you think the dictionary is wrong and it should be changed from 'Supernatural being' to 'Superobnoxious being?'

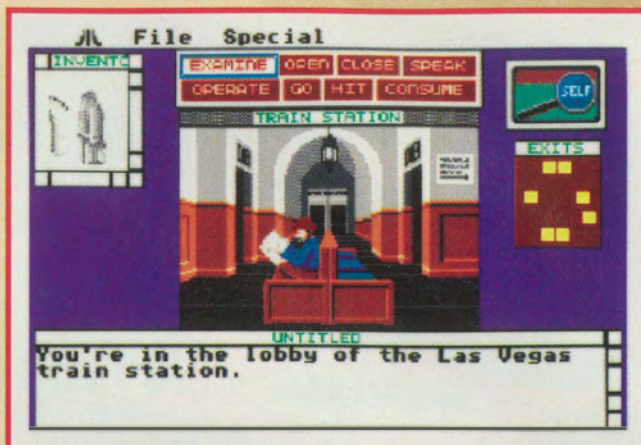
Sean Allan, Tyne and Wear

Yes - Bog Off!

Having a 'Whale of a time' in Kings Quest IV

Please help! I'm stuck in the whale's mouth and can't get out. I think the peacock's feather is significant, but if I try to tickle the whale's insides I get the mes-

Waiting for a train can be a very tedious business, especially when your down on your luck and stoney broke.



sage: 'Not Here'. Am I using the wrong words or do I have to be in a particular place? May your magic never fail you and may your page in ST ACTION run and run.

Jan Sobotnicki, Hants

You know that wobbly bit hanging down from the roof of the whale's mouth? That is what you should be tickling. You must climb up the whale's tongue (starting from almost the far right-hand side) until you reach the top middle. Even knowing that, it's still not easy. You are right that you must use the peacock's feather, so at least you didn't fail completely. (still a pretty miserable effort though!)

I expect you say such nice things to all the Trolls.

Dungeon Master Help Line

I've done it! I must be the first and only 'Goblin' to have completed Dungeon Master. Anyway, as a way of saying thanks for all the help, I have come up with a way of lessening your workload. Anyone wishing help can write to me enclosing a S.A.E. and I will help them out. Will this get me on your list of Honorary Goblins?

Lawrence Edwards, Westdale Fuchsias, Holt Rd, Bradford-On-Avon Wilts BA15 1TS

I hope you know what you are doing. Dungeoneers are liable to write in their millions and that will serve you right.

Westdale Fuchsias - what kind of an address is that? Are you sure you are a Goblin and not a Fairy?

Gambling Hints for Deja Vu II

Please give me some tips in Deja Vu II. I have been playing the game for two weeks now and I am completely baffled. How do you win enough money in the Casino to buy a train ticket to Chicago? I

have completed Legend of the Sword, Deja Vu, Uninvited and Shadowgate.

K Bruce-Smith, Blackpool

Don't feel too bad, Mitch was also stuck at this point and he was NOT pleased. Luckily for him the Dragon stumbled on the answer by accident. If you look closely at the croupiers (is that how you spell it?), you'll see that they are wearing nametags. Examining the tags you will find that one of these card-shuffling pirates is your old sparring partner (as mentioned in the newspaper clipping). By 'operating' the paper on the croupier he will recognise you and start dealing aces.

Hotel Double-Booking in Sierra's Goldrush

I have entered hotel room number 12 through the window. I have taken the magnet and the string, and have also read the note which says that I have to find my brother. But I don't have a clue where to find him!

P.S. Do you think Space Quest III is value for money if it is supposedly so easy?

K Clements, Edinburgh

For a start I don't know how you managed to get into the room through the window - I couldn't. I got in by asking to rent room 11 and was sent upstairs by the desk clerk to deliver a message to the room's occupant. Leaving that aside, you should have noticed a bird trying to get into the room through the window. Once the bird enters its cage you can examine it and use it to deliver a message to your brother. As for finding your brother, remember Little Bo-Peep who lost her sheep? When left alone they found their own way home. In this case some other animal will find its way home if left free to wander and you can then follow it.

As regards Space Quest III, it is a lot

Yee-haw! Well I'll be hogs-woggled if I can find that pesky hotel. Still, I guess if I manage to make it to gold country I'll sure need to rest up a while.



easier than the other Quest games, but it is unquestionably the funniest game that the Dungeon Crew have played and it deserves to do well. There is no doubt that you will enjoy it; the question is, can you afford its high price for the reduced length of play? Perhaps the best option is to buy it via mail-order which will reduce the price considerably.

Tracking Sweet Cheeks in Police Quest II

I'm in trouble with Police Quest II and it's a right pain. The problem is after Marie has been kidnapped - I don't know what to do. I have been in her house, dusted the ashtray and got the hit list, but I still can't find any clues which tell me where to go.

Colin Smith, Airdrie

Yep, this is the point that separates the men from the trolls. If you return to the station and use the computer to look at Bain's criminal record you will find out who fingered him. You can also find out from examining the Vice files that this person is under the protection of the police in Steelton. You could try phoning the witness and warning him about Bains, but if he won't listen I really feel you should phone Steelton's police and get them to warn him. Who knows, they might decide that you should fly down there and give them a hand - you being a super cop an all!

Cooling things down in Shadowgate

I have the Atari ST version of Shadowgate. How do I get past the Dragon? How do I get past the room full

of fires behind the mirror? and how do I kill the writer of Shadowgate!

Paul Mozul, Nottingham

Well, I'm glad you've got the Atari ST version - believe me, getting the Spectrum cassette version to load in your disk drive is a real bitch!

You can't get past the Dragon or get the chest. I noticed, from your extremely interesting letter (yawn), that you have got the skeleton key. You got the key by freezing the lake using the orb - I say that, both to inform other ignorant humans and to remind you, as you have no doubt already forgotten how you did it. Well, if you use a torch to unfreeze the ice around the orb, you can retrieve it and use it again to solve the problem of the fires behind the mirror.

Dungeon Master's Magic Dump

On Level 6 if you perform the 'Test of Strength' feat and throw an object hard enough, a portal opens giving you access to a small corridor and a small room. If you stand in the room and throw something (westwards?) towards the end of the corridor, it disappears (the object that is). What's more, the objects are never seen again. Trying to walk through the wall does not get your objects back, it just results in a bloody nose. Perhaps this is a new form of ozone-friendly rubbish tip? Can anyone explain this?

P.S. Not sure about the compass directions (I threw the compass through the wall!)

Owen Williams, Kent

Dungeoneers never fail to amaze me.

However did you manage to find this odd fact? I don't know the answer and I suspect no-one else does either. No doubt it's what is called a 'feature' - which is a polite term for a 'bug'.

Well at least one foreigner took my advice and sent his query on a pretty picture postcard. Ron Harel of Jerusalem sent me a picture of what appears to be a graveyard in Israel. Thanks a lot, just what I needed to cheer things up under the bridge! Next time, send some pictures of Israeli soldiers - the ones in bikinis...

Brian Gibbs of Tollerton spent a long time writing out the complete solution to Sierra's MANHUNTER NEW YORK and sending it to the Dungeon. Consequently he has found his way into the Troll's Book of Honorary Trolls.

One fascinating letter from a human (of the male gender) was sent to the Dungeon this month. I will do him a favour and not mention his name. Having noted all the letters from other humans who appeared to be having problems with the Dungeon Master game, the genius in question has come up with a brilliant suggestion. His unique offer is that if you send him £1.50 he will supply a disk containing a 'SAVE' file which will place you at the end of the game. Having loaded this file you will need to only complete one final action to finish the quest. By this means you will have solved all your problems.

However, I've got an even better scheme. Send me £1 and I will play the game for you, sparing you the trouble of even having to load the 'SAVE' file. Mitch, give me strength! It's no good, I can't lower myself to talk to humans any further - I feel one of my 'heads' coming on.

Send your queries - plus a S.A.E. to:

**The Troll
29, Blackthorn Drive
Larkfield
Kent ME20**



Sierra games seem to be very popular and our warty friend seems to know all the answers.

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ACTION SPECIAL REPORT

DOMARK LICENCED TO THRILL?

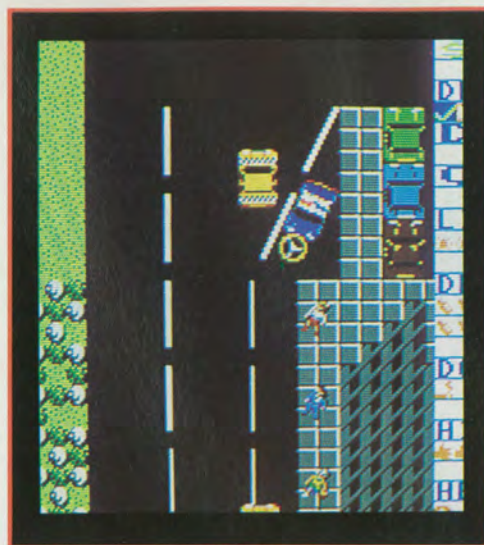
Talk to any software house representative and they'll tell you that 'this' year, their company intends to become the biggest name in home computing. It came as no surprise therefore to be greeted with this assurance when Mitch arrived at the offices of DOMARK Software. Two hours later, having seen some of their forthcoming goodies, the claim sounded much more credible.

Hard Drivin'

In the corner of the office, beside a studious looking guy who was furiously typing on an Atari ST, sat the imposing, sit-in arcade machine, HARD DRIVIN'. Complete with all the hardware needed to tie the occupant's stomach in knots, this dream-machine gives you a driver's view from the wheel of a stunt man's nightmare. While OUTRUN allowed you to carve up the freeway, HARD DRIVIN' allows you the option of selecting a speed track, or taking a detour through what appears to be a theme park complete with a 360 degree loop, a huge hump-back bridge and a series of high-banked bends.

As your car roars over the peak of the bridge there is a delicious moment of terror as the wheels lose contact with the

road and all you can see before you is blue sky. Seconds later the ground reappears in the windscreen and the whole machine thumps back onto the tarmac. Skidding towards the oncoming traffic, you quickly become aware that the car is very difficult to control at high speed. Off the bridge and revving towards the loop, you are tempted to reduce speed, but at the back of your mind is the certain knowledge that without enough power behind the wheels you'll never make it through the turn. To complete the scenario, your car is just one of a horde of maniacs who are also jockeying to be first to complete the course. With barely concealed vicious delight on their faces, the Domark staff stuffed me into the machine and started the engine. Believe me, as the bonnet of the car starts to lift at the base of the loop, it's a rare individual whose



Take control of officer Bob as he takes the law into his own hands.

face doesn't stiffen in fear.

Once they managed to unclench my rigid fingers from the wheel I was lifted out and introduced to the studious young man nearby. He, it transpired, was none other than Juergen Friedrich - the writer of Domark's highly successful STAR WARS game. It is his onerous task to transform this new classic driving game into a 16 bit epic ready for a Christmas release. Juergen is a German student from Dusseldorf who has come to England with the mission to complete the conversion in 6 months. As we were shown, in two weeks he has already produced the main driving area complete with the spectacular loop. Juergen is using TURBO C to produce the fast-moving, solid 3D graphics and creating the background graphics with the aid of ART DIRECTOR. If space and time permits, he also hopes to include the action replay sequence from the arcade version. This addition gives a birds-eye replay of your pathetic attempts to control your car in yet another death slide.

APB

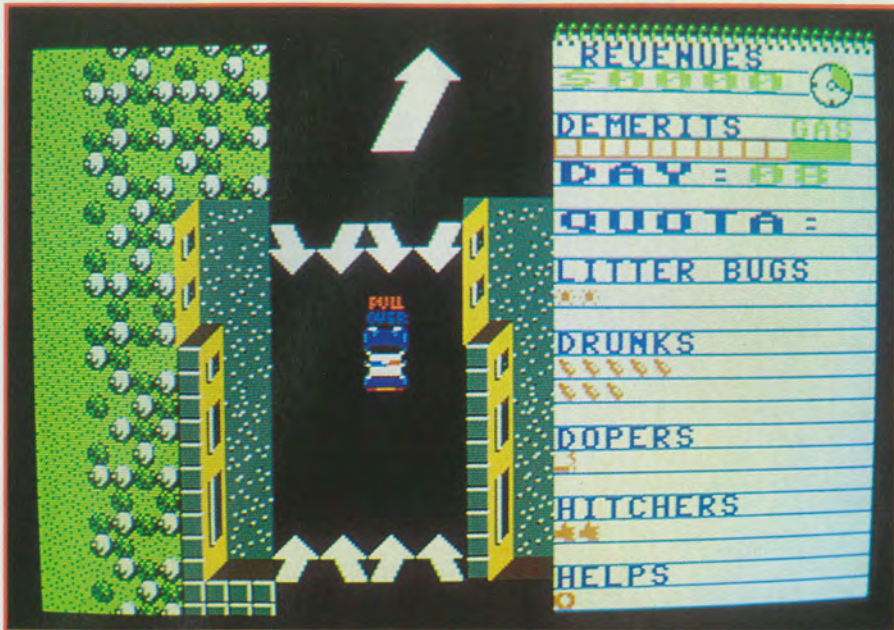
(All Points Bulletin)

Staying with the crazy driving theme, APB is due for release at the end of July. This vertical-scrolling car-chase game puts you in the uniform of Officer Bob of the Highway Patrol. Using the joystick, you must control the small police car as it travels up the screen dodging other road



Hard Drivin', although it is early in development, this hot conversion is already looking excellent.

As with *Hard Drivin'* A.P.B. is still under development. For instance, the note pad is going to be changed.



users. The theme of the game is to ensure that you fulfil your quota of arrests which has been given to you by your nasty station boss. Credits can be obtained which will allow you to drive to the Speed Shop where you can equip your car with armour plating, acceleration and many other goodies. Every so often an APB alert will be given which will allow you to switch on your siren, abandon normal traffic regulations and burn rubber. Once you manage to locate the bad guy's car on the huge sprawling map of freeways, you are permitted to bash, crash and blast the vehicle off the road. Returning to the precinct with your suspect, there is a funny cartoon sequence during which you have a few moments to extract a confession from the hood. As you waggle your joystick as fast as possible, Officer Bob takes the suspect by the throat and attempts to shake the truth out of him! If the truth is not forthcoming, or if you fail to meet your quota, it's Officer Bob who is given the rough of the desk sergeant's night stick and ends up being thrown into

a nearby trash can. Whatever happened to good old PC Dixon?

Dragon Spirit

Yet another Domark arcade conversion which is shortly to be with us is *Dragon Spirit*. Set for a September release, this vertically scrolling zapper is being built to be the hardest shoot'em-up around. Using the novel idea of controlling a large, wing-flapping, fire-breathing, bomb-pooing dragon, you must run a gamut of other equally deadly monsters, hell-bent on shrivelling your leathery hide. En route to meet the end-of-level monster you will fly over magical eggs which you can pick up to increase your already terrifying fire-power. How do you fancy having two extra heads spouting napalm? Even in their death throes your opponents are dangerous as their erupting feathers and scales can inflict damage as they explode around you. There are nine levels featuring exciting graphical terrains covered in erupting volcanoes and jagged moun-

tains. Only when you have flapped and scrapped your way past each of the impressive mighty beasts at the end of each level, will you be able to save the beautiful princess who awaits your coming. Let's hope she is worth it!

Being a great believer in film tie-ins, Domark were pleased to demonstrate the results of their latest block-buster, *LICENCE TO KILL*. This all-action production is a multi-role game in which you take the controls of a helicopter and a boat, and combines this with swimming, water skiing, parachuting and shooting. Sadly, a bedroom athletic section has not been included! The graphics are very good and the commando-style shoot-out section where you must dispatch a horde of drug smugglers with your trusty beretta, is fast and furious. Pouring enough bullets into the oilcans, behind which your opponents are hiding, will produce a satisfying explosion - destroying can and gunman alike. The aircraft sequence requires you to control the helicopter, below which Bond swings tarzan-like from a rope. You have only a short time in which to manoeuvre our hero into a position where he can transfer onto the fuselage of the villain's plane.

Previous Bond film tie-ins have received mixed receptions from the press, and time will tell if this smoother, faster and slicker game will be as big a splash on the small screen as it surely is on the large.

Whilst ferreting around the offices I also noticed many wire baskets, overflowing with floppy disks. Querying the source of these disks, I was told that these were just a portion of the game submissions which arrive each month from hopeful game writers. The staff were keen to point out that, contrary to what you may have read recently in a certain mag, Domark do not return all unsolicited material unopened, but always give serious consideration to such games. So if you have that 'Zap-to-end-all-zaps' don't be afraid to send it in.

STA



↑ Already a hit on the PC engine, *Dragon Spirit* is looking perfectly suited to the ST.

← Pick up magical eggs, as you spray the landscape with fire.

COMPETITION WINNERS

DE GALE'S SUPERCHARGER COMPETITION

Congratulations to the thirty of you who are soon to become the proud owners of a new Supercharger joystick. The lucky winners are: Paul McGinniss from Stoneleigh, Andrew McDonald from Duston, K.A. Robertson from South Norwood, Christian Simpson from Richmond, Steve Mitchell from Peterborough, Dominic Archer from Sidcup, Edward West from London, J. Claxton from Llantwit Major, E. Hoque from London, Huw Owen from West Ewell, Andrew Powell from Bolton, Julian Miller from Sheffield, Robert Brady from Romford, Mike Carr from Manchester, S.W. Goddard from Marlow, Sean McDonald from Glasgow, Jonathan Ray from Shrewsbury, Wayne Green from Langley Mill, Alan Soong from Eastbourne, Simon Allsopp from Matlock, David Smith from Sheffield, Ian Flory from Banff, Donald Leetch from Portglenone, Gregg Montgomery from Slough, Paul Heester from London, Howard Marshall from Bishops Stortford, Neil Dandy from Bury, Mike MacDonald from Fife, Jonathan Durman from Tredegar and Kimman Li from London.

Well done, all of you!

STOS COMPETITION

Congratulations to Richard Lye from Torquay. He's won himself a copy of STOS Maestro Plus, the STOS Compiler and STOS Sprites 600! The three second-prize winners, who each win STOS Maestro, the STOS Compiler and STOS Sprites 600, are: Peter Eaton from Heysham, Lee Upcroft from South Normanton and Mark Leadbitter from Sunderland. Finally, the six lucky runners-up, who receive the STOS Compiler and STOS Sprites 600, are John Weaver from Credenhill, Edward Dales from Lyminster, Dave Foreman from Telford, Steven Combes from Stoke-on-Trent, Gary O'Brien from Hayes End and Matthew Jones from Grimsby.

3D Pool Competition

Well done, Jeremy Bayliss from Purley, you are now the lucky owner of your own Pool table! The lucky runners-up, who each receive either their own Pool cue or a Firebird game are: Bryan Smith from Edgware, K. Davis from Southampton, Neil Ross Roper from Basildon, Simon Allen from Birmingham, Shaun Thompson from Jersey, John Strain from Glasgow, Steve Wood from Wolverhampton, M. Whitton from Peacehaven, J. Winkel from Wantage, R. Warr from Bristol, M.J. Clift from Aylesbury, Paul Ban from London, Darren Buckley from Stockport, Derek Thompson from Sheffield, Chris Corker from Chichester, M. Jones from Fareham, P. Hill from West Molesey, Richard Mallinson from Slaitwaite, Stewart Bayfield from Gravesend, Jeff Roland from Co.Durham, Mark Hardy from Sheffield, S.A. O'Donnell from Barnstaple, Kevin Dempsey from Bolton, Zakir Maniar from London, Robert Plunkett from Stoke-on-Trent, Glen Taylor from Hyde, Mark Stewart from Gillingham, Kevin Taylor from Manningtree, Wayne Haywood from Stourbridge, Tim Cook from Somerton, Stephen Moore from Norwich, P. Willey from Bradford, John Townley from Sheffield, Ian Hutcheson from Portsmouth and Michael Brennan from Maidstone.

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THE LETTERS DESK

Are ST users getting value for money?

Are you satisfied with the standard of software?

Do you know how to get rid of that annoying virus?

How do you scroll screens in STOS? If you have any thoughts or questions then write to us at: The Letters Desk, ST Action, Latham House, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 2NY.

Hello, and welcome to issue seventeen's letters desk. Once again we've been busy, busy, busy. The month was interrupted by the Atari show; we all travelled to the bright lights of London and, more specifically, the Ally-Pally. As shows go it wasn't too good, but at least we met one or two of you, our loyal readers.

Thanks to everyone who took the time to write in. This month's star letter was from Steve Bates. If you're reading, Steve, please drop me a line and tell me what game you'd like.

Don't forget, we offer software prizes for any letters we feel deserve rewarding. If you want to voice an opinion or just ask a question write in - you never know, you may just win a prize.

Who Wears The Trousers?

Please help, I am a new ST User. It all started at the Atari show last week. With the help of my brother-in-law, I managed to persuade my wife into letting me buy a 1040STFM; after many hours, even days, of crawling I was granted permission to get one.

All my troubles started soon after arriving at the show. I did indeed buy the computer but then I took my life into my hands and bought a monitor, mouse mat, blank disks and joystick, all at a knock-down price of £199. I was really pleased I'd saved "loads of money" and proceeded to go home with all my goodies.

My wife went mad, hit me (I've got the bruises and hospital records to prove it), put me on rations (i.e. I'm not allowed to go near her for at least a month), my brother-in-law is banned from the house, and, to make matters worse, I've had to buy a Hoover and a holiday. All I know is that this computer has cost me a fortune, got me beaten up and put on rations! I'm sure that if you said in your magazine that I got a bargain with my monitor she'd stop hitting me and may even get round to talking to me, not snarling like she does at the moment.

Please help, try to convince the love of my life that I was acting in her best interests, honest.

Steve Bates,
Croydon, Surrey.

Hello, Steve. Who's been a naughty boy

then? Spending all your hard-earned beer money on a monitor an expecting 'er-indoors not to mind - I don't know! Still, seeing how you've had to buy your little lady a new Hoover and a holiday (incidentally, I'll expect a postcard), I'm sure she must have calmed down by now. If not, I suggest you explain to her how useful a monitor really is. For example, what happens if you need to complete some important work on the computer and she wants to watch the latest episode of her favourite soap? You are now in the privileged position of being able to use your monitor while she watches the box. What's more, she'll also be able to watch the TV in peace as you'll be so busy tapping on your machine you won't have time to interrupt. Also, try pointing out to her that you've won a prize for being this month's star letter, that should do the trick.

Water, Water, Everywhere...

A question. Does anyone know about a game titled 'The Ancient Mariner'? Way back in the depths of Computer and Video Games the old 'mince pies' were confronted by a full page of ST screen shots for said game. It was these shots that convinced me to part with my trusty Spectrum and give up four-hundred big ones for an ST. It's been over two years now and I'm still eagerly awaiting its release. I'm getting fed up with all the hype for what turn out to be duff games.
Adrian Bean,
Bradford.

Yes, Adrian, I too saw those lovely screen shots. I seem to recall that The Ancient Mariner was going to be released by Mindscape. However, for some reason they never actually released it. As for all the hype, you shouldn't buy a game until you've read a couple of reviews and, if possible, actually had hands-on experience.

Complaints Dept.

You can forget any grovelling or "your mag's the best thing since sliced bread" stuff. This is a letter of complaint.

After seeing the advertisements for Microstyle's RVF I thought, "This looks good. But wait - What, in the past, have we been told by STA? Wait until you've read the review before you buy, otherwise you may just end up with a pig in a poke." So, what didn't your reviewers mention that got my back up? Nothing, it's what they did mention that has got me riled. What swung me to spend my hard-earned cash - the two-player option, that's what. Quote: "... for the ultimate racing experience try linking two STs together - Incredible".

This leads me to believe what I stated in a previous letter re badly compiled reviews. That is, you are not reviewing the same version that goes on sale to the public or that you are simply repeating what the software house has told you.

So, prove me wrong. Point out that I didn't read the manual properly. For try as I might I still can't play two-player RVF.

David Burnett,
Edinburgh, Scotland.

I'm sorry that you have had some trouble with Microstyle's RVF. However, I feel that some of your comments are a little unfair. As you may have noticed, David, I have had to edit your letter somewhat. Still, I've managed to keep your main complaint, that of the two-player option in RVF. For your information we did review the version that appeared in the shops; we could have presented a review on a pre-production copy but felt that this would be unfair to our readers. The version we saw did contain the two-player link-up option. Having read your letter I telephoned Microprose to ask whether the ST version did include a data-link. Apparently, the first batch of ST RVF did not contain the data-link set-up. It seems you have purchased an early version of RVF. If you return that copy to Microprose they will be more than happy to replace it with a full-working, two-player version.

Round One

I am writing to you as I saw an item about the boxing game, Second's Out. I've been trying to find the game everywhere, but none of the shops I visit seem to have ever heard of it. So, maybe you know, who does write Seconds Out?

M. Donovan,
London.

Easy, Seconds Out was published by Tynesoft. Just recently it's appeared on one of their compilation sets. For more information call Tynesoft on 091 414 4611.

Rambling On

Let me say how pleased I was to see a picture of Jack Nicholson on page two of July's issue. It was also refreshing to see

Neil from the 'Young Ones' sitting next to Jack. Unfortunately, after reading Neil's ramblings on the back page my brain went into a deep fit of depression. What on earth is he talking about? I know it's nice to have some variation in the old mag but honestly, what's the point of having someone waffling on about how they prefer 68000 assembler?

Also, I can't understand why everyone says that Crazy Cars is such a bad game. Is it because it's too hard for them? Personally, I have always enjoyed this game. Surely there must be someone out there who likes the game, perhaps Neil does?

I have recently stopped buying computer games because they are too expensive. Isn't it time prices came down? The only time I'm going to spend £25 on a computer game is when it contains TV-quality graphics and speech, which unfortunately won't be until about the year 2000 I suppose. (Until then I'll just put my ST in the attic.

Colin Harsant,
Ipswich, Suffolk.

Colin, Neil (or Jeff as we know him) has been commissioned to write what he's up to and about what is going on in the world of entertainments software. OK, so maybe he was a little over indulgent about the 68000 but, if you read August's column I'm sure you'll find it much more light-hearted and amusing. As to why nobody seems to like Crazy Cars, I don't know, maybe it is too difficult for them. Finally, don't put your computer in the attic. Games for the ST will undoubtedly improve in time but I'm not totally convinced as to whether we'll ever see TV-quality graphics.

Chaotic Release Schedule

Way, way back in issue 2 you mentioned that an extra five levels would be coming out for Dungeon Master in August (1988); could this be Chaos Strikes Back, I thought.

Again, in issue 5 you mentioned that the first week in August would be its release date. Nothing was mentioned until...

Issue ten when a special feature proclaimed that it had been rescheduled for the last week in January.

Issue 11: Chaos was mentioned as 'almost upon us' in the Dungeons and Disk Drives section.

Issue 12: Action News said 'Mid-April. Dungeons and Disk Drives mentioned 'Mid-March.

Issue 13: Dungeons and Disk Drives revealed that 15 levels would be available, and that the new date was 1st April (More fool us!)

Issue 14: Action News said '23rd

June'. Dungeons and Disk Drives reported 'Late May'

Issue 15: Dungeons and Disk Drives lead us to believe '14th June' Fed up with this series of events, I decided to telephone Mirrorsoft who told me

August 23rd was the official release date. So, Chaos is over a year late since you first mentioned it!

Under almost every release date your comment was 'improve your characters' skills'. I followed this advice and now all my characters are at the highest level (Archmaster) in every skill. In fact, they're so strong they practise their Ninja skills on Lord Chaos himself! I have completed the game with four, three, two and one character; what's more I'm totally addicted to this game. So, come on Mirrorsoft, pull your fingers out!

**Paul Akehurst,
Rainham, Kent.**

Hear, hear, Paul. Roll on Chaos! We, too, have been patiently waiting this blockbuster of a sequel. However, it is not Mirrorsoft who are to blame. The game's creators, FTL, specialize mainly in spell checkers. DM is a project they started to develop in their spare time. Since its release, the game has grown into an almost uncontrollable monster. Despite the constant plea for Chaos, FTL remain perfectionists who will only release the game when it is totally error-free, hence the delay. Like yourself, we have also been given August the 23rd as D-day. But, until I see it, I'll continue to wait patiently.

Pen Pals

It was good to see that ST Action supported the last Atari User show, even though Steve Merrett was looking very bored and Mitch couldn't find anywhere to put his dragon. However, I am writing to ask you why you do not include a pen-pals section. I'm sure that many of your readers would like to contact other users to discuss the mind-boggling world of the ST. I also include my address in case anybody wants to write to me.

**Kevin Wright,
115 Eastern Avenue East,
Rise Park, Romford, Essex. RM1 4SH.**

Well, Kevin, we don't run a pen-pals section largely due to the lack of demand, and partly because of the time it takes to compile such a section. However, I have included your name and address just in case anyone feels like contacting you.

Alas, Poor Infocom, I Liked Their Games

It is often said that the ST is not well supported in the USA and I am writing about one aspect of this problem. I used to own

an Amstrad CPC and enjoyed playing Infocom adventures. However, as Infocom decided not to convert their newer titles to the CPC I decided to purchase an ST. It now appears that Infocom's latest range of titles will not appear on the ST either! I did see previews for these new titles some time ago, some even featured ST screen shots. I understand that marketing policy can often change and technical problems can delay the release of a game. However, what puzzles me is how can a major software company, like Infocom, completely abandon a major US computer? After all, if Sierra can see a worthwhile market, why not Infocom who arguably produce better adventures. Do you foresee a change of heart at Infocom? Any news would be most welcome.

**Terry Roberts,
Harrietsham, Kent.**

Hello, Terry. I'm afraid I've got some bad news for you. Infocom have recently moved from their hallowed halls in Cambridge, Massachusetts to somewhere in sunny California. During the move the company have also lost a large number of software authors, Steve Meretsky and Dave Lebling included. It seems as though the mighty Infocom have fallen on hard times and rumours are rife that they won't be releasing any adventures for some time.

Missing Points

I have thus far completed several Sierra games. However, I have done so without getting a 100% score. For example, I have just finished Leisure Suit Larry II with only 480 points out of a possible 500. As it happens, the Sierra adventures are my favourite type of game. But, I am left feeling dissatisfied, knowing there is a bit of the game I have missed. I understand Sierra's intentions for doing this are probably so that people will want to play the game time and time again in order to find those missing points. Personally, I'd like to know what other players think, as I can never muster enough enthusiasm to play the game.

**Richard Heath,
Leek, Staffordshire.**

Which Soccer Simulator do you prefer?

I'd like to know how much Microprose paid your reviewers for all the good things they said about their Soccer 'Simulation'. As a simulation it is definitely useless. It has no free-kicks, penalties, red or yellow cards etc. Just how can it be called a simulation?

I paid out £24.99 for it on the basis of the review in ST Action. I thought that any game that gets a higher percentage than Anco's Kick Off must be pretty amazing.

The Microprose game may be aesthetically better and it may even have an excellent action replay, but surely a game should be judged on playability. Having played both of the aforementioned soccer games, Microprose soccer comes a poor second. If you had reviewed it as a simulation it would have attained the score it deserved; around 40%.

Steve Gunn,
Nottingham, Notts.

Thanks for your comments, Steve. I must admit you're not the only person who has mentioned the difference between the two games. I will also admit that I feel that Kick Off is a very playable little game; both Steve Merrett and myself regularly enjoy a punt about (he usually wins!). However, as a one-player game I feel it lacks something. Personally I prefer Microprose's version when there's no-one else around. I'll agree the term 'simulation' is not fairly used. However, both games have their faults. Have you ever tried running over someone's leg in Anco's game? The result is an instant free-kick or penalty and, more often than not, a yellow or red card for the player who innocently stuck out his leg! Maybe, if the two parties joined forces, we could look forward to a game of Kick Off's calibre but with Microprose's graphics and variety of kicks.

Long Live The Text Adventure!

Sol! The text adventure is dead, is it? (NC's comment in Deja Vu II, July 89) Not to me it isn't. Personally, I am sick of these new-fangled graphic adventures, with exorbitant price tags and their continual disk access that quickly wears out both disk and drive alike. What's more, they are usually held on two or more disks - lose one disk and you've lost the lot! Good text adventures are still being produced, costing £2 or £3 (PD or Shareware). Others, such as the Infocom games, can be purchased independently from between £3 to £9 from most mail-order companies. You could do far worse than review some of these games.

The text adventure will only die when imagination dies, not when NC waves his bent wand.

Ron Kilbride,
Kippax, Leeds.

OK, Ron, I'm sorry. The text adventure may not be dead, but it's certainly not as popular as it used to be. I am a great fan of the old Infocom titles, but with the break-up of the once great 'Master story tellers' and no news from Magnetic Scrolls, the once popular text game seems to be on the way out. Let's hope that someone picks up where these great companies left off.

Green and Warty

I am relieved that, unlike other magazines, we are spared endless letters from "plonkers" stating that their computer is bigger and better than those owned by other "plonkers". However, I am disappointed to read that we are now entering the debate of "my favourite ST Action reviewer is better than your's". And no doubt he also has a bigger ram extension. I would like to point out that my son is obviously the best and smartest reviewer, and it's only jealousy on the part of the rest of the editorial staff that has prevented him from achieving his full potential. I also know for a fact that his ram extension is much larger than Steve Merrett's - even if it is green and warty!

Mrs M Troll,
Kervonia

Mono Moans

A good magazine - relatively uncluttered but with lively pages. We get the reviews of various reviewers, whose tastes we can relate to and glossy full colour. However, I would like to see more about games that require a little thought (are there such games?). I would especially like to know of games which run on a mono monitor. Mono seems to be largely ignored, and it can be annoying, to say the least, to buy a game on the strength of a review only to find that I must also purchase a colour monitor before I can play it.

Nick Gassman,
Hirston, Middlesex.

Hi, Nick. I agree that mono games are in short supply. Of course, mono monitors are really meant for more serious pastimes than playing games. Three games I really enjoy playing in mono are: Starglider II; Skulldiggery; and Bolo.

Meanwhile, don't forget all of the Sierra range, the Infocom adventures, many PD games, and some of the Atari mind games are compatible with your mono monitor. As for the many other games, you'll either have to buy a colour monitor or use a standard colour television set.

1 THE ST ACTION

ST Action is the world's only dedicated ST games magazine. It seems only right, therefore, that our very first coverdisk should contain two complete and fully-playable games.

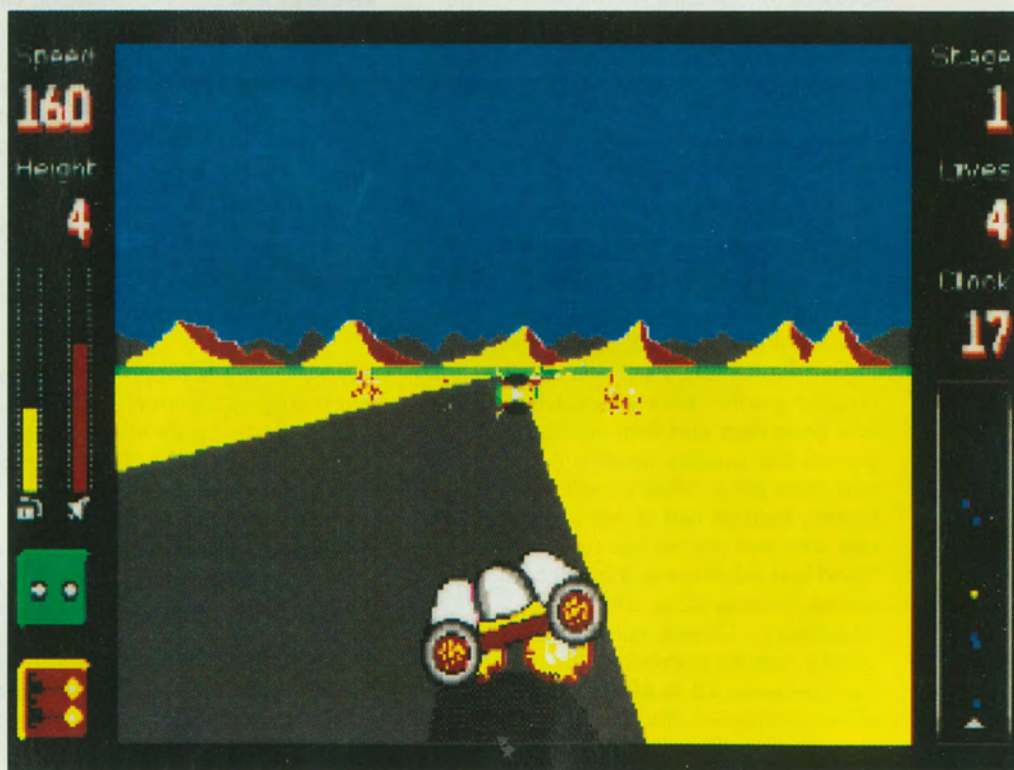
Many of you have undoubtedly heard of John Philips, the programmer behind Hewson's smash-hit games, Eliminator, Impossaball and Nebulus. Well, we're very proud to offer you one of his previously unreleased titles,

AMMOTRACK FROM JOHN PHILIPS AND HEWSON

If you were a fan of John Philip's superb blaster, Eliminator, you are just going to love Ammotrack. This is the game that spawned that race to the death - and it is every bit as good.

To load the game, simply put the disk in the drive and switch on your ST. After a brief load, a menu screen will appear offering the choice of which of the two games you wish to load. Press the key for Ammotrack and, before long, a loading screen will appear, and after this has cleared it is time for the race to begin!

Before the game begins, it is wise to let the computer cycle through the intro screens, as one of these gives some useful information of what you are likely to encounter along the winding lanes of Ammotrack. Basically, Ammotrack is a race against the clock. However, your race can be extended by collecting the various goodies that have been left by other, not-to-successful Ammotrack riders. These items include: fuel, without which you grind to a halt, and which must be topped up constantly; extra weaponry, which allows you



to blast any other riders you encounter; and, finally, enhancements for your vehicle, which allow your already hi-tech craft to perform acts such as flying.

Beginning the race

Pressing the firebutton begins this race to the death, and your racer is shown on the starting grid. Pushing the joystick forward causes the shuttle-like ship

to accelerate, whilst left and right perform their usual functions and pulling back slows you down - easy!. Collecting the enhancement pods couldn't be simpler, either - just run straight into them, the accessory will then be instantly added to your racer.

As you career along the twisting lanes, other riders will attempt to slow you down. If you are armed with a weapon, pressing fire will

despatch them into the hereafter, but if you are presently unarmed, just steer a route past them. Be careful, though, of other obstructions, such as the blobby orange rocks that litter the road. Crash into one of these and your craft will be instantly destroyed. Oh, and one final thing: don't forget to keep on the road...

GAMES DISK!

Ammotrack. This race'n'blast game provided the original idea for Philips' Eliminator and is a superb game in its own right.

Skulldiggery, meanwhile, is a frantic arcade-strategy game in the mould of that classic tunnelling game, Boulderdash. Previously available as a full price game, Skulldiggery received much acclaim, including an ACE

rating of 919!

To load your ST Action coverdisk, simply insert it into your disk drive and power up your computer and select your choice of game at the prompt.

In the event of your disk fails to load, please return it to: T.I.B., T.I.B House, 11 Edward St., Bradford, BD4 7BX.

SKULLDIGGERY FROM MANMADE SOFTWARE

Skulldiggery will run on any ST, in mono or colour. The object of the game is to collect a set number of diamonds from within a cavern before a timer runs out. You must guide a bouncy cave mite around the caverns (there are 100 in all) in an attempt to satisfy his insatiable appetite for diamonds.

Game Components

Skulls - Skulls will fall when under the influence of gravity, crushing anything that gets in their path. Make sure that it's your enemies that get squidged - not you!

Raw Diamonds - Diamonds are also your key to success. Collecting diamonds couldn't be easier - just run into them.

Diamond Clusters - These rare finds are well worth digging out. A single diamond cluster is worth five raw diamonds.

Crystal Bats - These subterranean creatures can be very nasty indeed. Winging their way through the caves, the crystal bats follow paths cut in the earth. The only safe way of dealing with them is to drop a skull, or diamond, on top of them.

Crazy Ghosts - These

behave in a very similar fashion to the crazy bats, with one exception. When caught beneath a falling object, ghosts explode and leave behind a whole cluster of diamonds.

Fairy Cakes - Although somewhat difficult to find, fairy cakes are well worth sniffing out. For each succulent cake you devour you'll be granted one extra life. Alternatively, extra lives are also granted for every 5000 points scored.

Creeping Vine - Left to its own devices the vine will slowly spread throughout the cavern. Just see what happens when either a bat or a ghost comes into contact with it. Better still, try to enclose it within a

surround of skulls.

Solid Earth - Due to geological changes within certain caverns, some areas of earth have become so compact that they cannot be excavated. Unfortunately, solid earth looks exactly like soft earth - so watch out!

Stone Walls - Left by an unknown civilization, stone walls cannot be dug up. They simply restrict your digging freedom. However, should you destroy a bat or ghost next to a wall, you may just find that the explosion creates an opening.

Diamantiferous Walls - Diamantiferous walls react when an object is dropped on them. Remember

though, leave a gap underneath the wall to see the fruits of your labour!

Joystick controls

Player 1 = Port 1
Player 2 = Port 0
Fire button and direction digs thus removing earth.

Keyboard controls

Z = Left X = Right
M = Down K = Up
SHIFT = Dig

High Score screen

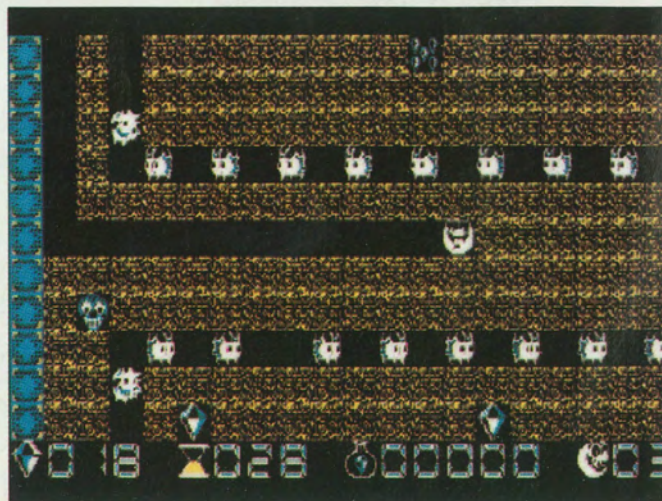
1 = Select 1 player mode
2 = Select 2 player mode
+ = Advance start screen
- = Decrease start screen

During the Game

1 = Sacrifice player 1
2 = Sacrifice player 2
P = Pause game
R = Restart game
T = Turn music on/off

Two-Player Mode

Two players can play Skulldiggery simultaneously. They can work either as a team or in competition with one another. Either way, Skulldiggery is great fun!



INDIANA JONES

COMPETITION

You've read the book, seen the movie and played the game... now you might be able to wear the jacket! Yes, thanks to U.S. Gold, this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to own one of the few, genuine, Indy leather jackets available on this globe, just like the one Harrison Ford wears in the movies. Be the envy of your friends as you cruise into the disco with this incredible piece of clobber on your back, which is estimated to be worth

£275.00 in monetary value, but priceless in pose potential. Naturally, only one lucky STA reader can win this fantastic prize. But fear not, twenty runners-up will each receive a copy of the game, Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade, a great Indy Tee shirt and a movie poster.

All you have to do is answer these six questions relating to the movie and the game.



THE QUESTIONS:

1. THROUGHOUT THE LAST THREE ACTION-PACKED, INDY MOVIES, NAME THE TYPE OF HAT WHICH HAS LOYALLY STAYED GLUED TO OUR HERO'S HEAD.
2. IN THE MOVIE, INDY'S FATHER IS PLAYED BY A WELL KNOWN SCOTTISH ACTOR. NAME HIM AND THE CHARACTER HE IS MOST WELL KNOWN FOR PLAYING IN THE PAST.
3. IN THE MOVIE, HOW MANY TESTS OF FAITH DOES INDY HAVE TO PASS IN ORDER TO REACH THE HOLY GRAIL?
4. NAME THE TWO MOVIE MOGULS WHO COMBINED TALENTS TO DIRECT AND PRODUCE THE LATEST INDY FILM.
5. IN THE OPENING SEQUENCE OF THE FILM, NAME THE ITEM THAT THE YOUNG INDY STEALS FROM THE ARCHAEOLOGISTS.
6. AND FINALLY, INDIANA WASN'T THE NAME THAT WAS GIVEN TO HIM BY HIS FATHER, SO FROM WHOM, OR WHAT, DID IT ORIGINATE?

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 as quickly as possible. 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.

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ANSWER 4 ANSWER 5 ANSWER 6.....

Name

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T Shirt Size

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Plundered Hearts	£5.99
Sea Stalker	£5.99
Lurking Horror	£7.99
Kult	£14.99
Chariots of Wrath	£14.99
Falcon	£15.99
F16 Fighter Pilot	£14.99
Dungeon Master	£15.99
Kick Off	£12.99
Chaos Strikes Back	£14.99
Voyager	£13.99
Millenium 2.2	£15.99
Populous	£16.99
Microprose Soccer	£15.99
Time Scanner	£13.99
Forgotten Worlds	£14.99
Dark Side	£14.99

Precious Metal

Arkanoid II, Xenon, Captain Blood,
Super Hang On.
Our Price: £16.95

Always read the small print - you know it makes sense.

BUDGET REPORT

KLASSIX

US GOLD'S £9.95 RANGE

"Having tentatively entered the budget market before with their decision to release software at £14.95, U.S. Gold have now set up Klassix, a budget label through which they can re-release their older titles at a cheaper price. Steve Merrett takes a look at the first three releases."



Leaderboard:
The next best thing to real golf.

The first release on the new label is a game we at ST Action - and everyone else, come to think of it - were looking forward to last summer. Out Run was the biggest conversion of last year, out-selling even Activision's 8-bit classic, Ghostbusters. Converted by Probe from the Sega coin-op, Out Run sits the player behind the wheel of one of the most expensive cars out: the Ferrari Testarossa. With your girlfriend seated beside you, you must race through half a dozen stages, in a race against the clock and all the other maniac drivers. Contact with any of the other racers or traffic causes the car to spin out of control, wasting valuable time. However, if you hit something more substantial, such as the scenery, the car will flip over, losing you even more time and earning you a nagging from your attractive passenger. It must be said that a lot of us were disappointed by the conversion, presumably because we were expecting too much. The graphics aren't particularly impressive and the sound is appalling; in addition, the gameplay now seems stale and repetitive - even at the new price.

Leaderboard, on the other hand, is worth every penny. Retitled for some reason as World Class Leaderboard, the player must make his way around one of four eighteen-hole courses, attempting to go round using as few shots as possible. A full complement of clubs is available, ranging from a one wood for lengthy thwacks to a delicate putter, and control of the shots is via the mouse. As the player grows more adept at the game, features such as cross-winds and slicing can be introduced, making the game even more realistic. Everything about Leaderboard is excellent; Klassix have even made the wise decision to remove the dongle protection system - it could prove a real pain when you consider where the ST's joystick ports are. However, I find it hard to believe that anyone doesn't already own a copy of this classic, as it has been released for quite a while, and has recently been put on a compilation. Still, if you haven't got it, I suggest you go out and get it now.

Outrun:
Although a great seller, compared to the likes of Super Hang-On it now plays and looks dated

Finally, we come to Foundations Waste, a game I have played a lot in the past. Although it offers nothing out of the ordinary, Foundations Waste is one of the only vertically-scrolling shoot'em-ups I keep returning to. As a veteran space pilot, you have been called on to wipe out four levels-worth of alien invaders. Along the way you will be able to bolt extra weapons such as homing missiles and lasers to your gleaming gold ship, but Foundations Waste also has the novelty of collectable pods that hamper your ship's progress! The graphics are excellent, featuring bold, colourful sprites which move smoothly over the detailed background. In fact, the sound is the only thing that lets the game down. I don't think many people bought Waste when it was first released, which is a pity. Don't make that mistake now that it is only a tenner.

Foundations Waste: A superb shoot'em up that is even better at its new price.



STA



"Armed with only a bow and arrow and a floating rubber ring, can Tiki the Kiwi overcome all the odds and save his kidnapped friends?"

OCEAN (£19.99)

As a coin-op, New Zealand Story never really featured amongst the top titles. However, with the release of the ST version I've got a feeling all that's about to change. Following in the tradition of Bubble Bobble, New Zealand Story is a tenacious little platform game featuring the cutest bunch of characters ever seen on our screens. Ocean have re-created the game perfectly and players of all abilities should love this extremely playable game.

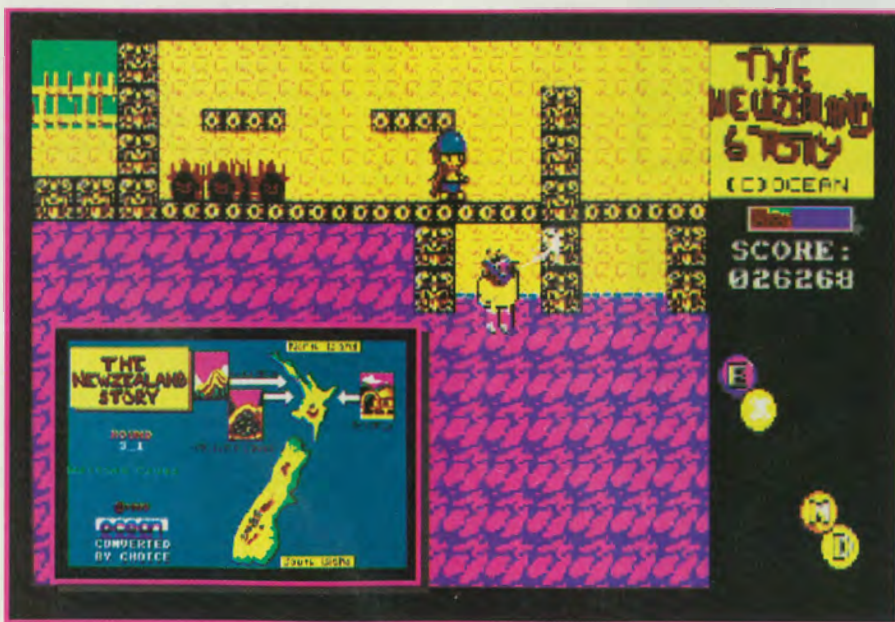
JS

Taito's New Zealand Story is another of the popular 'cute' coin-ops. Like Bubble Bobble and Mr Heli, the emphasis is on playability rather than superb graphics

and sound, and because of this, the game only attained cult status rather than mass popularity - a pity really, as this style of game offers more value for your money

than something with super-fast graphics and quadrophonic sound that you play for ten seconds, before wondering what the hell you were supposed to be doing. New Zealand Story follows the adventures of a brave young Kiwi as he attempts to rescue his kidnapped friends from the clutches of a naughty Walrus. As the game loads, we are shown the Kiwi and his chums tweeting away and generally enjoying themselves, only to be snatched away and bundled into a sack by the large blue Walrus. Before the Walrus can waddle away with his chirping swag, though, he fails to notice our little hero wriggle out of the sack.

After you have pressed fire to begin, the game commences with our little yellow Kiwi standing to the left of the screen. Control of the Kiwi is via the joystick, and by using the directional controls he can be made to run left and right and jump. In addition, the Kiwi has armed himself for

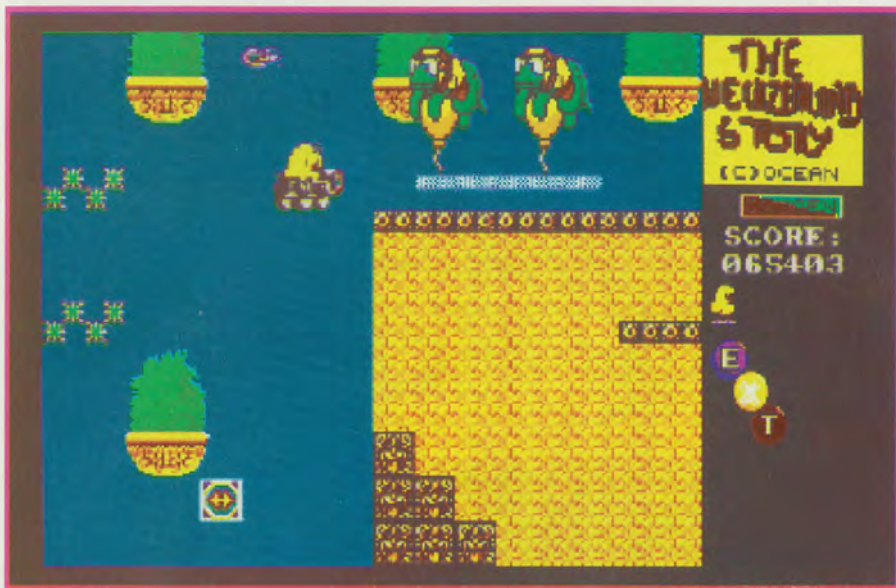


Donning an aqualung and goggles, Tiki makes his way through the flooded passages of the walrus' lair. All the time his air is running out, but by finding a handy air pocket it can be re-filled. (Inset) The map that charts Tiki's progress.

Graphically New Zealand story is best described as cute. All the characters, even the nasty ones, look as though they are enjoying the game. That's pretty apt really, anyone who plays this brilliant platform romp this will like it. The game's controls are really easy to get to grips with and the game's difficulty has been set at just the right level. New Zealand story is a must, not only for platform game fanatics but for anyone looking for a first class computer game.

NC

Using a hi-jacked space ship, Tiki blasts the enemy dragons as they appear from the portal.



I really like the New Zealand Story coin-op, but I won't be putting any more money into it now I've got a perfect conversion for my ST. The Kiwi's adventures are all displayed in graphics that, apart from a slight lack of colour, are arcade-quality, and the game is graced with a nice rendition of the coin-op's music. Control of the Kiwi is nice and simple, and the game's difficulty level is set at the perfect level, giving the game that 'one more go' feel. New Zealand Story is another of the annoyingly playable cute coin-ops that, like Bubble Bobble, you'll keep returning to. Even if you have never even heard of the coin-op, don't let this excellent conversion pass by.

SM

the perilous journey, and pressing fire shoots a small arrow from a hidden bow, which can be upgraded to better weaponry at a later stage. As the Kiwi moves, the screen scrolls in the usual eight directions to follow his actions. Each of the levels is littered with platforms, and climbing these

attacked by floating nasties who appear from randomly-appearing portals. All of the attacking hordes can be felled with a single shot, and if a flying monster is killed, the Kiwi can steal their flying machines.

The hijacked flying machines range from floating teddy-bear heads to a hot-air balloon, and allow the Kiwi to take shortcuts that would previously have been impossible - especially, since Kiwis can't fly! However, if the airborne Kiwi comes into contact with anything whilst floating, he will lose his free ride and will fall down to the nearest platform. Not only can the Kiwi fly, he also has the ability to swim - albeit with an aqualung! Large expanses of alien-infested water must be crossed by the Kiwi, and he musn't hang around as he only has a limited oxygen supply. Tentacled anenomes reach out to kill our Kiwi, as do the spiky turtles that patrol the sea-bed, and should he come into contact with them, then it is goodbye to another of his three lives.

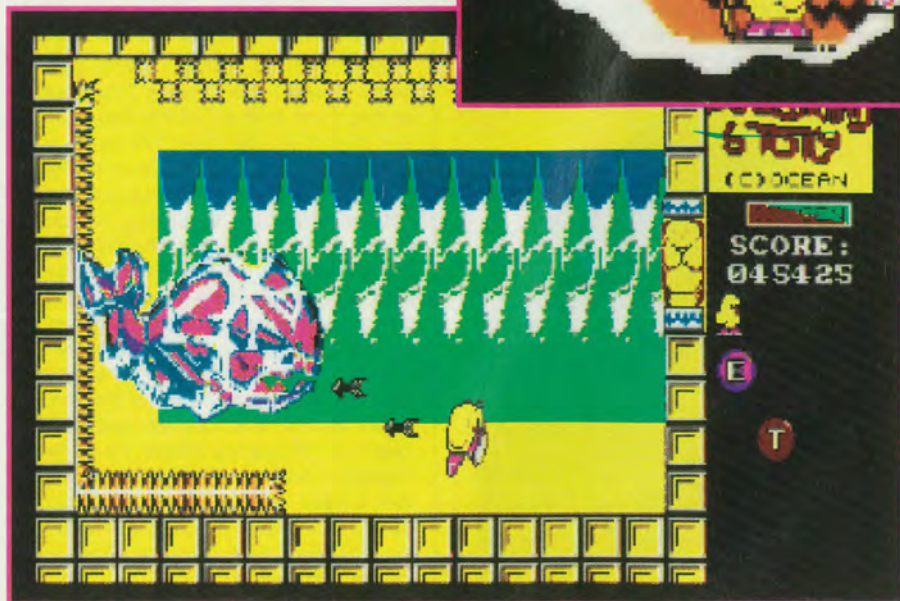
Once Kiwi has scraped through to the end of a level, he will find one of his caged friends. Freeing your chum is simply a matter of touching the cage, and after he

or she is free, they will both flap their wings excitedly while the next level is loaded. This routine of avoiding the Walrus's cronies and rescuing goes on as your travels across New Zealand continues, but is interrupted every four levels when you do battle with the Walrus or an octopus. These appear at the end of every fourth level, and the Kiwi must leap inside their gaping mouths and do battle from inside. Once inside, the Kiwi must avoid any of the dripping gastric juices that fall on him, and must keep firing at the Walrus's stomach-lining. When enough shots have been fired, the creature retreats - presumably, to down a couple of Alka-Seltsa - allowing you to rescue your friend.

STA



is simply a matter of jumping onto them from below. Wandering along the platforms and along the ground, are a number of the Walrus's cronies, and, as can be expected in a game of this ilk, all of these nasties are also cute, ranging from tottering snails to marauding kittens. These aren't the only creatures the Kiwi has to deal with though, as he will find himself



Guarding the end of every fourth level is one of the walrus' cronies. For the most part they just require a lot of shots to destroy them. But in the case of the large whale you actually have to go inside him to kill him.

STA Rating
82%

GRAPHICS: 75%
SOUND: 78%

LASTING APPEAL: 80%
ADDICTIVENESS: 85%

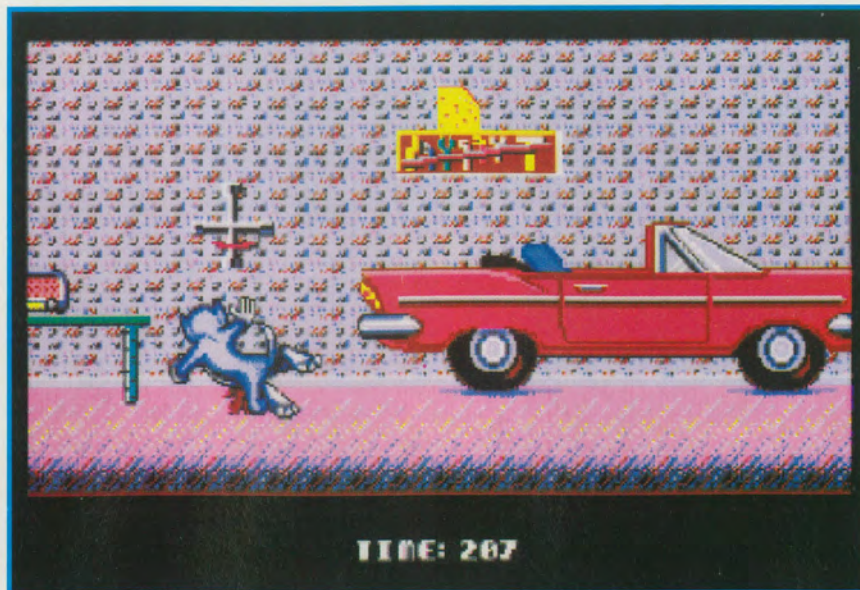
DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: 43,180

"Tom and Jerry have had people laughing out loud at their antics. Can Magic Bytes succeed where they, and many others, have failed, and convert this humour into a computer game?"

In the true spirit of the cartoons, Tom is once again intending to turn Jerry into a snack. So, taking control of Jerry, the player must roam around the characters' house, avoiding Tom's clutches and feeding the mouse's considerable appetite. Food to fill Jerry's stomach comes in the form of large lumps of cheese that are positioned throughout the house, and if Jerry can collect every piece before his time limit expires, then the player will have completed the game. If he fails, then Tom will be preparing the spit!

The house is split into five separate rooms, each of which is connected by one of Jerry's mouseholes. Each room is full to the brim with tables, chairs and other furniture, and Jerry will have to climb these platforms if he is to reach the food and avoid Tom. Jerry is controlled using the joystick, and can run and jump to the left and right, with the firebutton prompting the leap. Jerry's progress is seen from the sideways-on view, and the screens flick to keep up with him. To begin with, Jerry has a six-minute time limit in which to eat all of the cheese, but this limit is whittled away every time he is caught by Tom. The magnanimous cat appears from either side of the screen and will start to chase our rodent hero. Although Tom can leap fairly high, if Jerry stays on the top platforms he will be relatively safe. In addition to simply keeping out of Tom's grasp, Jerry can perform various dirty tricks on Tom - just like in the cartoons! Every now and then, Jerry will come across a useful item such as a heavy bowling ball or a banana lying on the shelves. If the player then waits until Tom is directly beneath him, pulling down on

Tom pounces on Jerry having cornered him in the garage.



TOM & JERRY

MAGIC BYTES (£19.95)

Everybody loves the original Tom and Jerry cartoons, and so the first licensed game would have to be damn good to do the cartoon classic justice. Unfortunately, this Tom and Jerry by Magic Bytes certainly does not! What we've got here is a second-rate platform game which simply fails to capture the character of the lovable duo. The game-play amounts to picking up lumps of cheese around the house and evading Tom's grasp, and this is made more difficult by the less than responsive controls. With all the antics which have kept us laughing for decades, Magic Bytes could have called on a thousand stunts to put in the game. But there is no strategically-placed rake, no iron in the face and no throat-height ironing board. Just a bowling ball to drop on Tom's head. Quite frankly, this is a travesty!

JS

the joystick will cause Jerry to drop the item on the poor, unsuspecting cat's head - sending one flat cat scuttling off the screen, and leaving Jerry temporarily safe.

Making your way between each room is simply a matter of entering Jerry's

I really like the Tom and Jerry cartoons - there's nothing as funny as seeing Tom lose all of his teeth, or get diced as he runs through a fence. As the cartoon's humour is based on the violent encounters between the two, so surely, Magic Bytes' computer game should also have been. Running through the flick-screens, getting to grips with the irritating control system is OK at first, but after a while gets boring. In addition, Tom rarely appears, but when he does it's at a point where you can do nothing about it. Dropping items like the bowling balls and hammers on Tom's head adds a little variety, as does the tunnel section; but ultimately, Tom and Jerry is another wasted cartoon licence

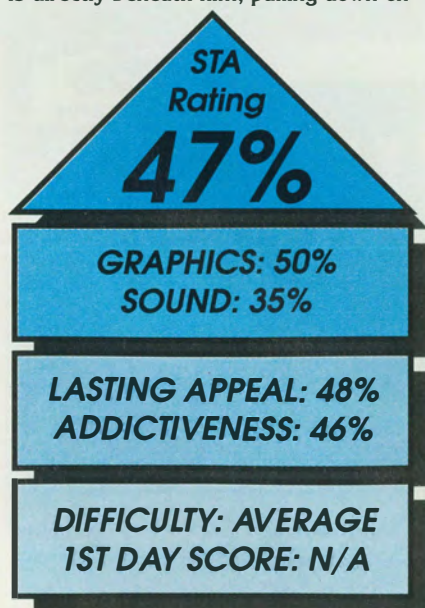
SM

mouseholes. There are normally one or two in each room, and they are entered by pushing the joystick forward. Before access to the next room is gained, Jerry must first run the gauntlet of a number of traps Tom has laid. As Jerry runs through the tunnels he is viewed from behind, with any obstacles rolling towards him. Amongst the items that roll towards Jerry, are mouse traps, explosives and bowling balls. Contact with these depletes even more time from the ever-decreasing limit, but all of the obstacles can be jumped over. Likewise, to make it worth his while, Jerry can also collect bonus lumps of cheese.

STA



Tom scuttles away, looking like a trampoline, after Jerry has flattened him with a bowling ball.



ACTION

Survey

Okay it's reader survey time again! Last survey did not generate anywhere near enough response and we think that this time you should get your biros out and do your duty! If you choose to make your voice heard, you're in with a pretty realistic chance of winning a prize. Ten lucky winners, picked at random from the brimming box of correctly filled-out survey replies, will win a game of their own choice. Furthermore, if more than 2000 of you answer *yes* to question 15, then the October issue of ST Action will contain a special 16 page supplement on an ultra exciting topic! If you don't fill out the reader survey then we'll probably choose to send Steve Merrett round to sort you out - and you wouldn't like that, would you?

1. How old are you?.....

2. How many games do you buy a year (estimated average)?.....

3. Where do you purchase most of your software?

- a. Mail order, via magazine adverts
- b. Specialist computer shop
- c. Major high street chain store (W.H.Smith, Boots, etc.)
- d. Other, please specify

4. How often do you visit your local games arcade?

- a. Very frequently (e.g. 3 or 4 times a week)
- b. Frequently (e.g. 4 or 5 times a month).....
- c. Infrequently (e.g. Once a month)
- d. Only very occasionally (e.g 3 or 4 times a year)
- e. Never

5. Which model of ST do you own/use?

- a. 520 ST/M.....
- b. 520 STFM
- c. 1040 STF.....
- d. 1040 STFM.....
- e. MEGA 1,2 or 4 ST
- f. I do not own/use an ST.....

6. Which peripherals do you own?

- a. Colour television set.....
- b. Dedicated colour monitor
- c. Hard disk drive.....
- d. Modem
- e. Monochrome monitor.....
- f. Printer.....
- g. Second disk drive.....

7. Which versions of Basic do you have for your ST?

- a. Computer Concepts Fast Basic.....
- b. HiSoft First Basic
- c. GFA Basic
- d. HiSoft Basic
- e. Standard ST Basic.....
- f. None.....

8. Where did you *first* hear about ST Action?

- a. From a friend
- b. In a newsagent's
- c. At a computer show
- d. From an advert in your ST's box.....
- e. From an advert in ST World magazine

9. Which of the recent issues of ST Action did you buy?

- a. August issue 16 (California Games).....
- b. July issue 15 (Dragon Ninja vs Savage)
- c. June issue 14 (Robocop Metalic Mahem)
- d. May issue 13 (Pacland - Pac Man bounces back!)....
- e. April issue 12 (Birthday £8000 competition).....
- f. March issue 11 (Batman and Superman)
- g. February issue 10 (Binary artists interviewed).....
- h. January issue 9 (Afterburner and R-Type).....

10. How many people read your copy of STA?

- a. Just yourself.....
- b. yourself and 1 other
- c. yourself and 2 others.....
- d. yourself and 3 others
- e. yourself and more than 3 others

11. Do you subscribe to ST Action?

- a. Yes.....
- b. No.....
- c. I intend to in the near future

12. This month featured our first cover-mounted disk. We are considering making this a regular feature (i.e. every issue!). Please indicate whether you would prefer us to have or not to have a regular cover mounted disk, bearing in mind that the price of the magazine will have to rise to £2.95 to cover the cost of the disk and duplication.

- a. Yes, I would like a cover disk every issue.....
- b. No, I would not like a cover disk every issue.....

13. What is your opinion of the following articles in ST Action?

- | | Like it | Dont like |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Action games reviews | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Adventure games reviews | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Competitions | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Dungeons and Disk Drives..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Game pokes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Giving the Game Away (tips)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. Letters Desk..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. News..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i. Interviews and special reports | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

14. Which of the following mags do you buy?

- | | every
issue | some
issues | I never
buy it |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. ACE..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Atari ST User | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Computer and Video Games..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. New Computer Express..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Popular Computing Weekly..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. ST Action | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. ST Format | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. ST World..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I. The Games Machine..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| j. The One..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

15. Would you like a free supplement in November's ST Action?

- a. Tick box for Yes

Name

Address

.....

.....

Postcode.....

Phone number

Please complete this survey and return it to:

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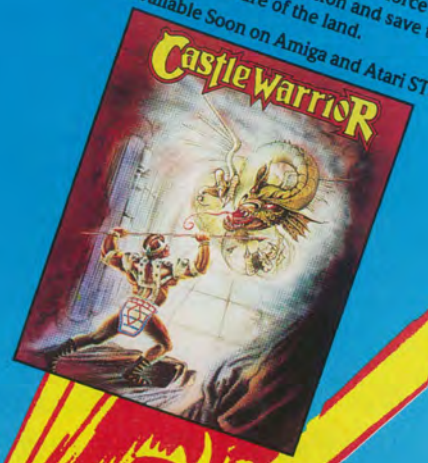
The hit sequel to one of the all time computer game greats!

The search for the evil Drax continues. Now the Barbarian and the Princess fight their way past dozens of incredible monsters, through a maze of caves and dungeons.

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Classic arcade-style action for home computers as only the 16 bit machines can deliver: large characters, incredible colours and fantastic sound. The evil wizard Zandor has poisoned your father, Edelred the Good, King of Pacifa. You have one day to force the antidote from the demon and save the future of the land.

Available Soon on Amiga and Atari ST.



EXPLOSIVE 16 BIT ACTION FROM PALACE SOFTWARE



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Run, leap, somersault and spin your cyborg through the Bio Challenge assault course. Furious joystick action through many levels as the seconds tick away.

Available Now on Amiga and Atari ST.



PALACE SOFTWARE

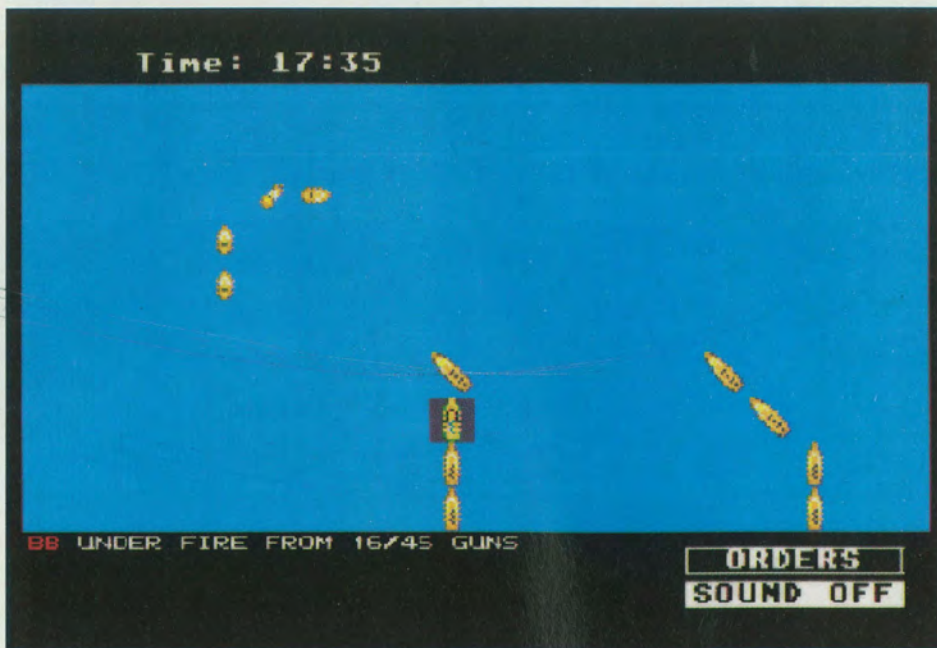


Warship is yet another heavy duty war game from specialists SSI. Unlike last month's offering, Red Lightening, Warship is much easier to use as it effectively utilises pull-down menus. However, more serious wargamers may, in fact, prefer the more complex strategy of Red Lightening. I, however, enjoyed Warship, partly as it's a more accessible game. Together with the game's scenario creator, Warship is a game that should appeal to beginners and novices to wargaming.

NC

"Warship is a World War II war game situated in the Pacific. It is a tactical naval combat based on individual ships, allowing you to play either side against the computer, two-player game, or even the computer against itself."

Prepare to open fire.



WARSHIP

SSI (£19.95)

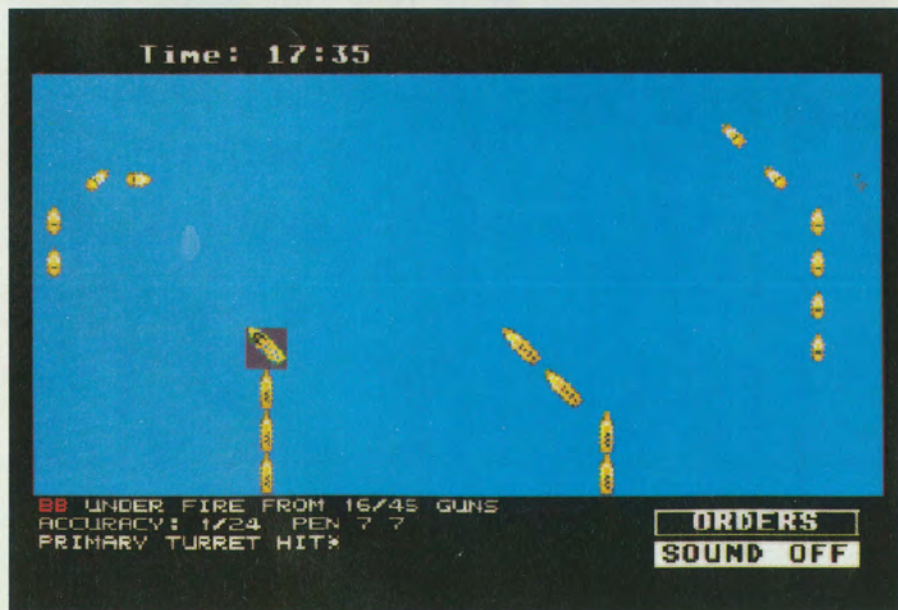
The game is based on a two-minute turn time with the map display being updated every thirty seconds. At the end of a turn players can interrupt in order to issue commands to their ships, or let the game run into the next turn.

The screen display consists of a portion of the playing area with two

'buttons' bottom right. The mouse is used to point to and activate the buttons. One is to interrupt the turn, the second is to toggle the sound off and on. During the turn, messages are displayed along the bottom left saying what ships are being shot at and by what type of weaponry. It also details the effects of the shots. On

the map display, the ship being fired upon is displayed with a flashing cursor over it. In the order phase it is possible to scroll around the full playing area.

In the order phase you can examine the status of each of your ships and assign new 'orders' to them. The 'orders' you can issue are commands such as speed, course, hold fire, gunfire etc.. In order to ease the burden



Too many numbers. I'm not that interested in what the calculations are based on, as long as it's the same for both sides. I just want to be able to direct the action and get back reports of damage done and sustained. I also feel that the game is oversimplified as it takes little account of air power which tended to be decisive in naval combat in that theatre of operations. In fact, one of the reasons for the American's attacking Guadalcanal was that the Japanese were building an airfield there and it was used by the Americans to help repulse Japanese naval counterattacks.

AM

1 in 100, a direct hit on a turret. Another like that and the target will be crippled.



STA
Rating
57%

TEXT/GRAPHICS: 55%
GAMEPLAY: 57%

LASTING APPEAL: 62%
ADDICTIVENESS: 57%

Menu of commands for a Division

of controlling a number of ships, there are commands available. These are used to designate a number of ships as a 'Division' and to issue orders that apply to all ships in the division. It is also possible to get the ships to play 'follow my leader' by giving course information to one ship and telling others to follow it. Of course, you still have to designate speeds for each of the following ships.

Warship comes with four scenarios, two are based around Guadalcanal, one at Empress Augusta Bay and the last is a hypothetical engagement between two larger naval forces around the Leyte gulf

It also comes with a scenario building capability. This allows you to not only create a scenario in terms of the setting, number of ships and type of action, transport, bombardment or sea battle, but also enables you to change ship data. This allows you to make up ships to your own specifications - within reason, of course.

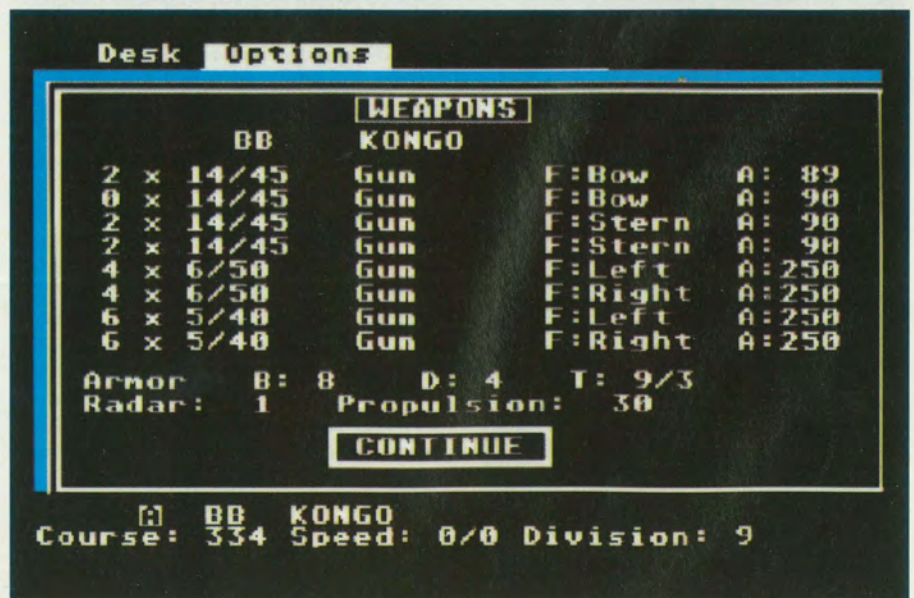
The game was disappointing, starting with the documentation and continuing on to the game itself. The documentation is rather sparse in the description of the commands and how to use them. On the other hand, it goes into great detail on how various factors, such as gunfire accuracy, are calculated. It also goes to some length on ship data, not just drawings and essential information but a set of line drawings in relative scale, and just to top it off they also give the ship data in chart form. This takes up half of the booklet. What is not given are diagrams of the various icons used to denote the different ships as seen on the map display.

STA



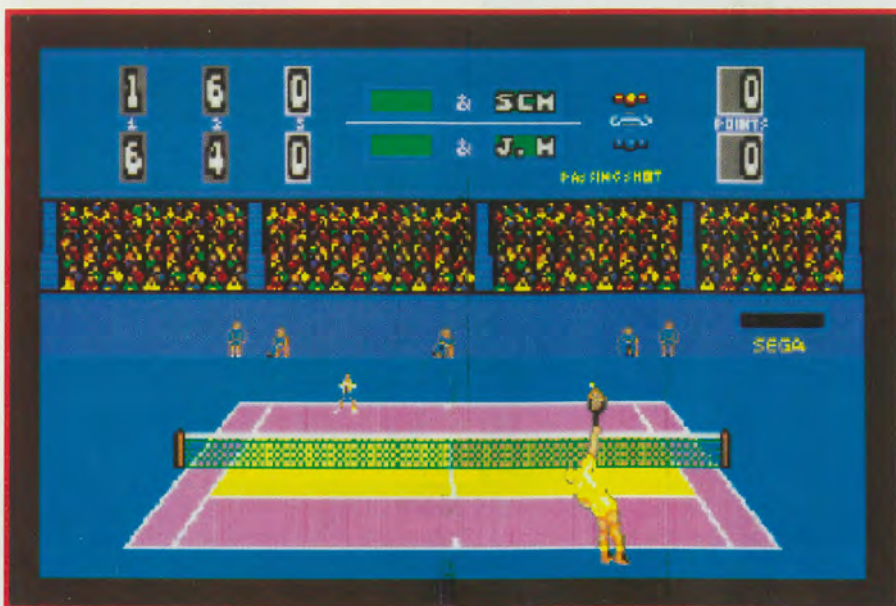
Guadalcanal, The Slot, Iron Bottom Sound, Henderson Field - names to conjure with. Bombardment by naval batteries; transport ships running the gauntlet; naval 'hand-to-hand' combat. Warship tries to evoke this kind of atmosphere but doesn't quite make it. While I found the action side of the game was credible enough, I wasn't too keen on the way the game was controlled. Too much pulling down menus to select an item - just to get another set of menus.

SK



Individual ship Menu

When the ball is in the air, the player must press fire and a directional control to serve. Which direction you choose alters the style of the shot, allowing you to play the shot towards the back line or to the centre of the court.



"If you, like many others, vegetated whilst watching the two weeks of Wimbledon, Imageworks have found what they hope to be the cure - Passing Shot. Perhaps it works on the 'hair of the dog' principle!"

PASSING SHOT

IMAGEWORKS (£19.95)

I am surprised that Passing Shot wasn't released during Wimbledon, as that would have given people the chance to play a binary version of their favourite sport whilst Desmond Lynam rattled on and on! Still, with Wimbledon but a faint memory, Imageworks' conversion of the Sega coin-op should give a few armchair sports fans the chance to be a trophy-lifting McEnroe or a Navratilova for a

while - albeit without the prize money. One or two players can play Passing Shot, with the two participants joining forces against the computer in a game of doubles, and there are four levels of difficulty to choose from, ranging from the relatively easy Australia to the highly-seeded English. The basic object of the game is to beat your opponent in each country before making your way through to Britain and working your way through to the quarter-finals to the final itself.

After you have chosen from the doubles and singles option and picked your difficulty level, the actual tennis begins. All of the sport's rules and features apply in Passing Shot, including double faults, faults for coming into bodily contact with the ball and hitting the net, and the game begins with you about to serve. Initially, play is viewed from behind, but after you have thrown the ball in the air and pressed fire to slam it to your opponent's side of the court, the view switches to one as seen from above. Control over your player is via the joystick, with its directional controls sending him running all over the court, and pressing fire swings the player's bat - hopefully hitting the ball as it goes round! In addition, by holding the joystick in one of the four main directions and pressing fire, one of a number of special shots can be per-

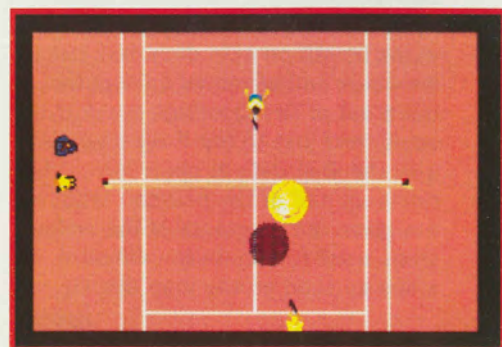
Although not up to the high standard of the coin-op, Passing Shot is still a competent tennis simulation. The graphics have lost a lot in the transition, as has the sound, but the basic essence is still there. Also still present, are the nice touches the coin-op enjoyed - for example, your opponent may often lose his footing and stumble - and these random elements make Passing Shot just that little bit more realistic. There is one real problem, though, and that is the fact that playing tennis solidly for an hour can get boring, but this is a fault of the sport, not the computer game. Tennis fans and would-be Lendl's should take a look.

SM

Apart from some nice touches, there isn't a lot I can recommend about Passing Shot. Initially, it looks good as your player throws the ball up and serves, but when the action is viewed from above, the game loses its appeal. As your player runs around trying to hit the ball, the scrolling fails to follow the action successfully, and I normally ended up in the wrong side of the court, losing valuable points! Still, if you can get used to these annoying double faults, I'm sure Passing Shot could be a playable little game. But whether it is worth twenty quid is another matter.

NC

formed, including a particularly nice lob which sends the ball floating up to where we are supposedly viewing from. As in real tennis, you must successfully hit five or more shots past your opponent, and you must always win by at least two points, play continuing until one of you does. There are six games to be won in a set, and a grotesque smiling face appears to keep the score, smiling whenever you win a game. Thankfully, there is only one set to play instead of the arduous six of real tennis, and when you have won, it will be straight onto the following country to play on a different style of court - i.e., clay or grass. **STA**



As the ball floats down, you must position your player so that he can get a good swing at it.

STA
Rating
64%

GRAPHICS: 52%
SOUND: 53%

LASTING APPEAL: 63%
ADDICTIVENESS: 69%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

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"Without doubt, house-breakers and burglars are the scum of the Earth. Nevertheless, there's something quite endearing about this particular little thief."

LEONARDO

STARBYTE (£19.95)

Surprisingly enough, Leonardo, is not a paint'n'draw game inspired by the great Italian painter. This is a Boulderdash-esque game with a difference - a big difference!

Leonardo is a burglar who moves from bank, to museum, to posh house, and lifts whatever treasures, items and personal possessions are inside. An opening sequence shows our thief walking up to a big house and, lighting a cigarette, he waits for the occupants to retire and put out the lights. He moves inside the house where the screen layout changes to show an overhead view, with Leonardo just itching to get his gloved paws on the swag. The booty in this case consists of rather gaudy brooches, but

Leonardo is rather more interested in the ruby in the centre than the tastelessness

of such jewelry. The joystick moves the burglar across the floor and the screen scrolls to reveal more of the floor plan. For some strange reason, large boulders

lay scattered about the house, but our little thief shows remarkable strength for his diminutive stature, as he can push rocks around and crush them to dust when they are squashed against an immovable object. In the corner of each screen is a little hut which is inhabited by the so-called Bobbyguard, a comical looking policeman, and there is even the odd shrouded spook, called Boohoo, who makes an appearance. This strange double act is designed to make a thief's life a difficult one, as they chase Leonardo, try and

cut off his exit and arrest him for burglary. Once Leonardo finds a brooch, you

This is a rather unusual and enjoyable variation on an old theme. The formulation of Leonardo is relatively simple but nevertheless, it makes for great arcade entertainment. Graphic and sound presentation is nothing new or special, but they are both adequate for this style of game, and what there is has been thoughtfully drawn and animated. At first, the theme of the game, which amounts to nothing more complicated than moving various ill-gotten gains across the screen, appears to have a very simple structure. But there proves to be no end of foxing variations on the theme. There is a definite French flavour to the game, as the characterization and animation is very similar to that other crook Bobo in Stir Crazy.

JS

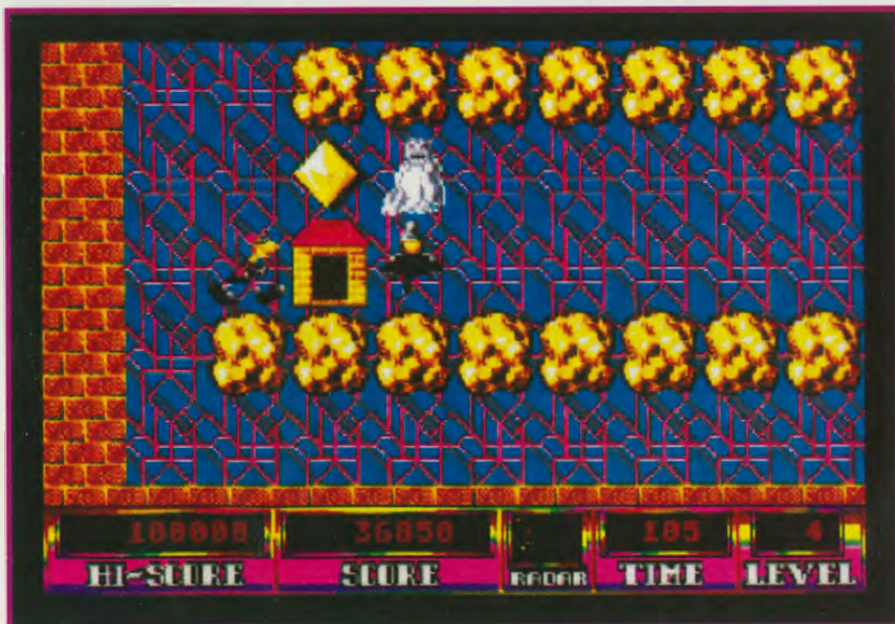
Why is it that the simple ideas are usually the best ones? Leonardo, at first glance, looks like a cross between Boulderdash and Pacman. Closer inspection, however, reveals that the game is, in fact, a very well presented arcade-strategy game. Puzzle-wise, Leonardo starts off at a very easy pace but, after the first introductory levels have been dispensed with, the game becomes more of a challenge. Graphically and musically, the game is only of an average calibre. Still, Leonardo more than makes up for these cosmetic blemishes with its interesting gameplay.

NC

must nudge it across the house, around the boulders, avoiding spook and copper and stash the loot in the bottom right-hand corner of the screen. Some screens contain so-called Severage exits and entrances, and these strange disks on the floor can speed up the little thief's house-search.

The boulders are a hindrance and yet, at the same time, a help, as they can be used to imprison or even trounce the nosy copper and his spook. Some of the boulders even contain a paralysing drug which immobilizes this latterday Starsky and Hutch. Leonardo can also detonate anti-guard dynamite which can blast the crimebusters back to their headquarters. But you must also be vigilant against thief traps, which can end his burglary career in a flash. Once you have collected all of the brooches, Leonardo breaks into the next building to lift some rather tasteless necklaces - the floor tiles are pretty awful as well! This time, the house is set out like a maze with fewer rocks to push around. Next, he moves into an office block to steal some microcomputers and, again, he must carry them one by one to the right-hand corner of the screen. Fifty banks, houses and museums await our adventurous thief and the police force seems to have taken the night off.

STA



Leonardo grabs the swag in this Boulderdash-esque game which has elements of chess in it. Avoiding spook and copper he makes good his escape by nudging the boulders around and imprisoning the constabulary. Now Leonardo can relieve some poor, unsuspecting citizens of their family jewels without hindrance.

STA
Rating

64%

GRAPHICS: 56%
SOUND: 60%

LASTING APPEAL: 67%
ADDICTIVENESS: 69%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: 61500

On locating a rocket factory, the large Nazi thug squares up for a fight to the death. The door behind the guard leads to the rocket parts and KO'ing the burly guard trips a hidden switch, thus opening the door.



*"Blah blah... kidnapped scientist!
Murmur murmur... pretty girl in peril!
Blah murmur... Nazis jackbooting across Europe!
Whisper blah... send for Rocket Ranger!"*

ROCKET RANGER

CINEMAWARE (£24.95)

If you look closely at the B-movie series, King of the Rocket Men, you will see the strings, the implausible plot and even some excruciatingly hammy acting. But Cinemaware ask you to suspend your belief for a while, as they pay homage to this cult classic. Whenever those despicable Nazis kidnap a brilliant professor and his beautiful daughter, it's time to call the Rocket Rangers, whose speciality is rescuing kidnapped professors and their beautiful daughters. Dressed in plus-four

trousers, flying jackets and goggles, and with rockets strapped to their backs, the Rocket Rangers are unlikely saviours. But they are dedicated men! Dedicated to the freedom of humanity, dedicated to thwart all oppressors... and dedicated to getting the statutory bit-of-skirt at the end of the series.

As a Ranger, your objective in this mission is quite straightforward. You must stop the Nazi war machine from jackbooting over the free world, single-handedly destroy Goering's Luftwaffe, bring down a Zeppelin and rescue professor Otto Barnstorff and his daughter, Jane. Oh, and if you've got time, keep your eye out for secret rocket labs spread over the globe, which contain pieces to a rocket

ship. The mission begins at your operation base, Fort Dix, where you enter the war room and plan the mission. Using a decoder wheel with twenty-six possible destinations, you plot your course on a world map, and then check into the fuel depot to refuel the rocket pack with the correct configuration of lunarium fuel. Finally, you're ready for take-off, and as a silhouette of the Ranger flies through the clouds, his progress is plotted on the map. Suddenly your wrist computer warns of an imminent Luftwaffe attack. The screen shows a rear-view of the Ranger flying above the clouds and the squadron appears with guns blazing. With the joystick, you must dodge the fire and pressing the firebutton returns fire.

Rocket Ranger, to say the least, is a very flawed conversion. Several key sequences are missing, and, as far as I can see, there is no reason for their absence. For instance, the Amiga, and even the humble Commodore 64's, versions feature a nice section where Cody runs along in an attempt to gain enough speed to take off - but take-off is automatic on the ST. Apart from sections that are conspicuous by their absence, the long loading time between stages is a real drag too. I was really looking forward to the ST version of Commander Cody's adventures, but like so many ST Cinemaware games, the conversion is very disappointing.

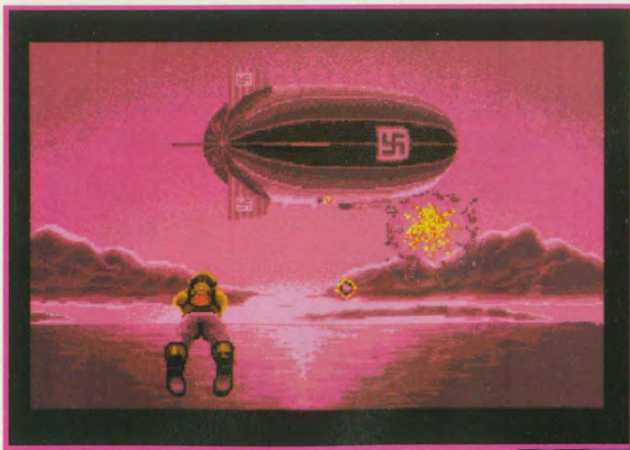
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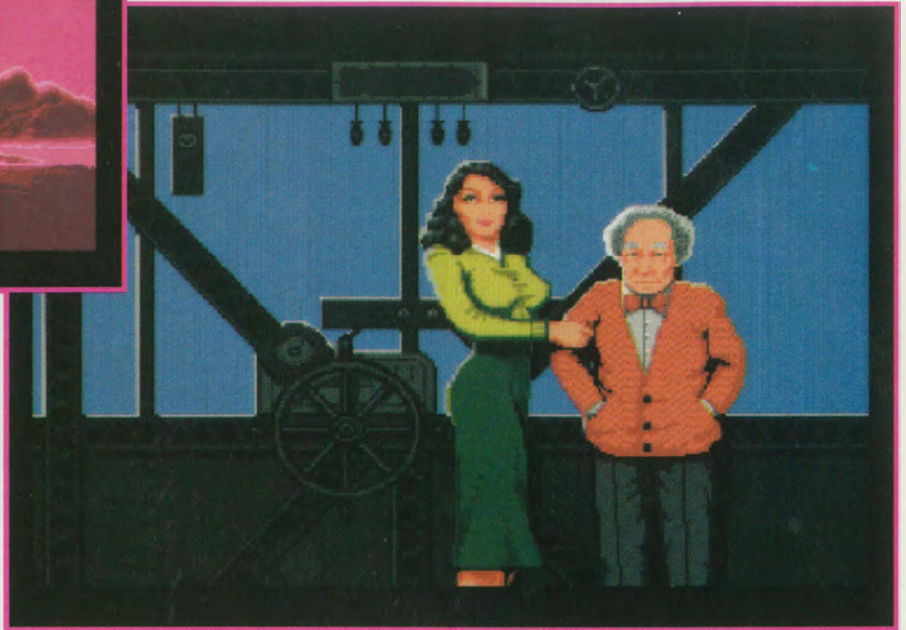
On the moon, you are confronted by brain-washed slaves who fire repeatedly at you. As the lunarium impares Rocket Ranger's vision, one of the women catches him in the chest with a direct hit.

Cinemaware's tireless endeavours to bring the movies to our small screens are praiseworthy indeed, and Rocket Ranger is their best interactive movie game yet. Having played the Amiga version I've been spoilt, but, nevertheless, the ST conversion attains the game-play if not the visual and sound effects. There's a good variety of game-play, adventure and strategy aspects, and plenty of quirky and camp humour. The graphical presentation is up to their usual high standard, in particular the Zeppelin battle, and the sound effects are complementary. Additionally, the structure of the game has been well implemented with easy-to-use menu screens. As usual with Cinemaware games there are three disks, and disk swapping is a real pain. Also, there is a set structure to the game which limits the variations in events and game-play. Therefore, if I bought Rocket Ranger myself, I doubt whether I would be playing it more than a dozen or so times.

JS



Prof Otto and Jane are being held captive on the Zeppelin. Dwarfed by the gigantic airship and armed with a mere radium gun, you must take out the Nazi gunner. However, if you blast the gas-filled dirigible, the imperilled two some escape only to be recaptured by the furious Huns.



The Luftwaffe limps sheepishly back to Germany and the Ranger continues with his mission, determined to rescue the good Prof and Jane who are being held on a Zeppelin which is bound for Germany. This is your first opportunity to rescue them and, dwarfed by the enormous airship, you must attempt to board the ship, avoiding the torpedos and knocking out the gunners with your radium pistol. But you must take care not to hit the gas chambers which would blow the ship up. Mission accomplished, but the Nazis will attempt to abduct the pair at any available opportunity. But if you fail to rescue the stricken pair, you have two more attempts in Germany and the desert base, before they are taken to the moon. In Germany you will have to battle against a squadron of ME-109s to reach them. But on the last ditch attempt in the desert you must blast the ack-ack batteries quickly before the rocket is launched. Fail, and you will be caught and interrogated: 'Vot is your name?' SLAP! So you must escape with the professor and Jane or lose your fingernails.

The Ranger locates a rocket factory which is guarded by an unarmed, burly Nazi who squares up to you for that statutory bout of jaw smashing. Holding down the firebutton and pushing the joystick upwards wields an uppercut, while left and right jabs, and down sends an heroic fist into a Nazi groin. Two energy bars monitor you and your opponent's strength as you bash the living daylight out of each other. The Nazi slumps to the floor allowing you to check the base for rocket parts. The Nazis also have two lunarium bases, in the desert and jungle. This lunarium is for

their despicable bombs, but you must steal 500 units to take you to the next stage of the mission, the moon. The bases are protected by anti-aircraft weaponry which must be knocked out before you can approach the base. A transfer arrow enables you to transport the lunarium.

Once you have collected all five parts to your rocket and enough lunarium to power it, you must pilot the rocket to the moon to eliminate the Nazi's source of lunarium. Once there, you are confronted by scantily clad cuties who fire lasers at you. From the safety of a rock, you must return fire and blast them before the affects of exposure to the Lunarium blinds our hero for ever. Will the intrepid Rocket Ranger reach the source of the Nazis's miraculous leap in technology? Find out next week!

STA

I was fortunate enough to play Rocket Ranger from a hard disk - running the game from floppy slows down the action far too much. The mood of the game successfully manages to recreate the feeling of those Saturday morning picture shows. The actual gameplay is a mixture of strategy and arcade fun. To be honest, I really enjoyed Rocket Ranger - although having completed the game, I couldn't see myself playing it over and over again. Graphically, the game is very well presented and the action is accompanied by some really atmospheric tunes. Ultimately, Rocket Ranger may seem a trifle expensive for the limited appeal it has.

NC

STA Rating
72%

GRAPHICS: 73%
SOUND: 77%

LASTING APPEAL: 71%
ADDICTIVENESS: 67%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

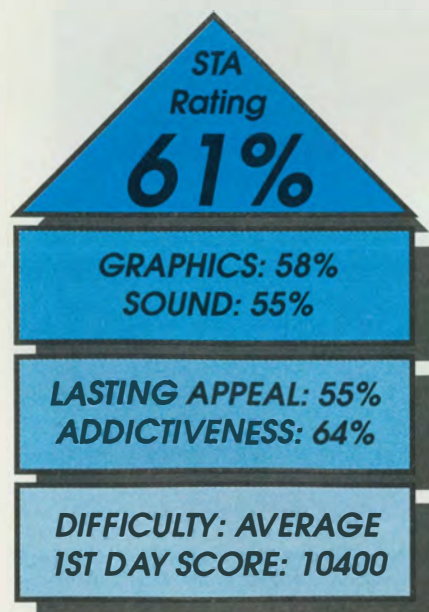


One of your agents has informed you of mysterious goings on in the Congo. Upon arrival, you discover that the Nazis are holed-up in an ancient temple. Having spotted you, the goose-stepping snipers take great delight in taking pot-shots at you from randomly opening portals. To end the menace you must blast at the openings, whilst trying to avoid their deadly fire.

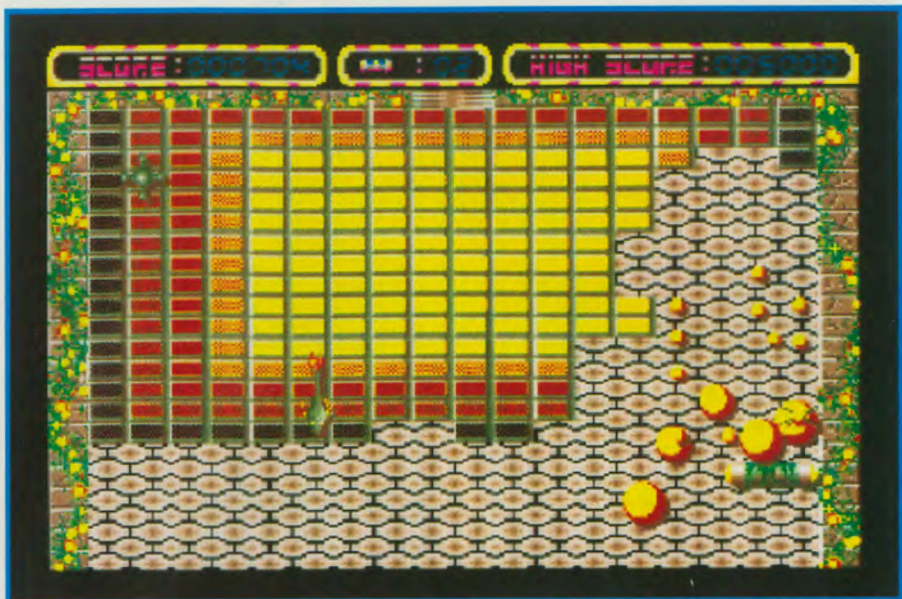
"First there was
Breakout! Then there
was Super Breakout...
then there was
Arkanoid... then there
was Tonic Tiles... then
there was Addictaball...
then there was..."

Arcade fads may come and go, but it looks like brick-busting is here to stay. Breakout was one of the first video machines to be wheeled into the arcades, and this perfect arcade application, with the simplest graphics and coloured plastic strips stuck on the screen, launched an industry. Breakout was brick smashing at its simplest, but each variation on the theme, termed 'Breakout clones', has attempted to take the game a few stages further, and no more so than this latest addition to this prolific theme, which goes under the strange title of, Krypton Egg. Ignoring the scenario, which is completely irrelevant and serves only to remind how daft the majority of accompanying stories are, this slickly presented sequel gets underway with the minimum of fuss.

The much maligned mouse control really redeems itself in Breakout games, and this is no exception. The bat floats near the bottom of the screen and moves in perfect unison with the speed of your hand with no delay. The first of many screens looks like a very typical line of coloured bricks, but as the game progresses, brick-bustin' takes on a whole new meaning. There are the usual indestructible bricks, blocks that take many hits to destroy and even bricks that reappear some time after being destroyed. But it is the so-called 'spell' bricks which really put an edge on the game. These special blocks wait to be released from the wall to either endow your bat with a wide variety of effects and features, or to cause mayhem. When hit, these bricks turn into capsules which fall down, and you must collect them whilst keeping the ball in play at the same time. Some of the bricks contain glue which adheres the ball to the bat



Brick bustin' is taken yet a stage further in this, the latest in a long line of breakout clones



KRYPTON EGG

HITSOFT (£19.95)

This is 'brick-bustin' at its best! Sure, there are dozens of Breakout clones available for the ST, but Krypton Egg (strange title, though) has managed to elaborate on the well worn theme. There is something quite perfect about the Breakout formula, combining the simplest bat and ball idea, which was originally inspired by the Granddaddy of all computer entertainment, Pong, with the satisfaction of smashing down walls. Add to this great test of eye-to-hand coordination, tonnes of special features to spice up the old game and even an alien contingent or two, and you can see that even with great games like Arkanoid and Super Breakout already on the market, Krypton Egg is a legitimate addition to the family - great fun!

NC

Krypton Egg's polished presentation is really impressive. The backgrounds to each level are attractive and the sound is excellent. However, all these nice effects can do nothing to disguise the fact that Krypton Egg is yet another Arkanoid clone. The game is full of nice touches and there are a lot of extras you can add to your bat, but the game gets repetitive very quickly, and I soon got bored with it. As a bonus there is a screen construction kit which allows the player to design screens, but even playing your own home-made efforts gets boring! A well-presented but antiquated game.

SM

and allows you to hold and release at will. Others slow or speed up the pace of the game or increase bat size, and there is even computer-assisted play. But there is more to this game than just batting ball against brick, as an alien contingent pops up once in a while to cause havoc. These

beasts' soul aim in life is to intercept the ball and send it off at obtuse angles. But there is one monster called Cyclopus Picus Vulgaris who actually shoots back.

The game starts off with a traditional line of bricks and progresses into screens of complex formations which really do stretch the limits of this much exploited theme. After every ten screens you are faced with the monster attack which can put paid to the quickest player and, sometimes, the ball can get stuck behind a line of armoured bricks. But fear not, help is at hand by pressing 'F2' which activates a cheat. As described, on the tenth screen you are confronted by a monster, rather than the usual brick construction, and you must batter all six lives out of this tough customer before you can set about the next ten levels. An extra bat is given after every 2048 points, which will help in your overall quest to find all of the fragments to the Krypton Egg. Once you have defeated even the most difficult levels, you can even pit your Breakout ingenuity with your playing skill with a built-in construction kit. This edit facility enables you to customize any level, which really puts an edge on the game.

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STA
Rating
55%

GRAPHICS: 50%
SOUND: 50%

LASTING APPEAL: 55%
ADDICTIVENESS: 49%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 89050



Gemini Wing, is a title which seems to have seen emblazoned on shoot'em-ups since time immemorial. 'Get ready to shoot and blast your way through wave upon wave of organic mutants!' warns an enthusiastic scenario, and if ever a game was summed up in a single sentence, it is this one. Yes, this pure, unadulterated shoot'em-up, without an E number to its name, will set back intergalactic relations a millennium. An intergalactic gutter press paper has run the headline 'Die Mutant Alien Scum', and, as you can imagine, it's caused a bit of a rift in the alien fraternity. So by tea time, all races and creeds of alien civilization have declared war on Earth - bless their little green skins. In anticipation of interplanetary unrest, our weaponry experts have devised the

Another vertically-scrolling shoot'em-up to add to the collection. Gemini Wing's best feature is the simultaneous two-player mode. The ability to steal your opponent's weapons really livens up the game. Graphically, the game is very colourful although the enemy bullets easily become indistinguishable against the background. My main complaint, however, is that players aren't given much of a chance. The screen soon becomes infested with aliens and bullets until dying becomes nothing more than an occupational hazard. Therefore, Gemini Wing fails to rise above the rating of average.

NC

'Here's a friendly message to all our planetary neighbours, wherever and whatever they may be - 'DIE MUTANT ALIEN SCUM!' And a happy Christmas from ST Action.'

GEMINI WING

MASTERTRONIC (£19.95)

Apart from some imaginative weaponry and a quirky slant on the alien opposition, Gemini Wing really has nothing new to offer. Sure the action is frenetic and constant, but once you've played the game for five minutes or so, you've experienced the full extent of its variety. The sprite animation is quite nice, but again nothing Earth-shattering. The best part of the game is the ridiculous bolt-on weaponry, such as the windscreen wiper, which adds some amusement to what amounts to a very ordinary vertical scroller. Not bad, but not brilliant.

JS

Gemini Wing, and that's where you come in - as usual. So as various fruit, flora and fungi descend on Earth with writs in their slimy little paws, you must pilot Gemini Wing and intercept them.

Gemini Wing moves in traditional fashion, vertically, with moderately responsive joystick controls governing acceleration and direction. As described, all sorts of vegetation storm down in various attack formations vehemently demonstrating their disgust at the headline. Suddenly, like an explosion in a fruit 'n' veg stall, the vegies speed up and vary the attack causing you to dodge weave and fire. At first you are limited to a double cannon, but as has become tradition in shoot'em-ups, you can beef your weaponry up until you are practically invincible. Weaponry is the key aspect of this game as described in 'The Gumby's guide to Gunballs'. As you blast your way through a bunch of angry aubergines or griping grapes, you can collect little icons which makes the

fruit massacre a whole lot easier. Some of these little disks give you three-way firing power, others load alien-seeking missiles in the tubes or spiralling firestars. But if that sounds like nothing new, then just wait for the weapon which is amusingly called, the 'Windscreen Wiper of Death'. This fiendish weapon is simply designed to literally wipe the old fruits off the face of the Earth as a bar of light, screen width, just wipes everything off the screen. Some of the disks are not so helpful, such as the one with an 'S' which speeds the game up to a frenetic pace.

In typical shoot'em-up style, countless little fruits lead to a great big fat one at the end of each level. This hideous mutant vegetable muscles in on the screen and you must blast chunks out of it until it's had enough and limps back to that great green grocer in the sky. **STA**

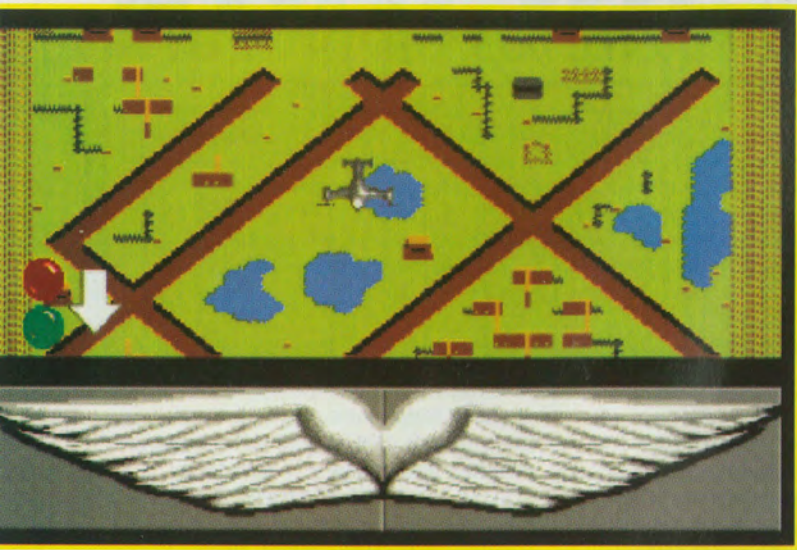


The crescendo of alien fire proves to be the players most difficult obstacle.

GIVING THE GAME AWAY

Blimey, it's so hot I'm surprised my fingers haven't been melted to the keyboard! Still, this hot weather hasn't stopped you all sending in superb tips - keep it up! This month's selection of tips and cheats features guides to Navy Moves and Kult, plus a useful cheat for Mr. Minter's Gridrunner. Ok, let's get this show on the road...

AIRBORNE RANGER - MICROPROSE



Unfortunately, the guy or gal who sent in the following pointers for Microprose's 'Commando with brains' game forgot to put their name down. Still, the tips are still useful...

1. In the 'Create a Division' mission, parachute into a pond and hide there until the attack signal is given. If a patrol comes by, duck under the water, remembering to come up for air every few seconds - isn't it surprising that a crack Airborne Ranger can't hold his breath for more than three seconds! This will keep you relatively safe until the signal is given. If you don't fancy getting wet, the alternative is to hide amongst the ruined buildings.

2. When you are dropping your supplies at the start of the

mission, be careful not to drop them into ditches. If you do, they will be destroyed. It is better to drop them near old ruins or in the open.

3. During the 'Delayed Sabotage' mission, plant the bombs as normal then turn around and blow up the dump for extra points. Due to a slight bug, the mission will still be viewed as a success.

4. Also in the 'Delayed Sabotage' mission, use the stolen uniforms to get you into heavily defended zones. Now plant a few bombs between the bunkers and run for - you will then get loads of points when the installations blow!

5. When attempting a silent attack mission - e.g. disabling an enemy aircraft - you should



ignore the manual's advice re using the knife and crawling around. Instead, you must carry as little as possible and run at breakneck speed to the target zone, using the knife on anyone who attacks you or, if necessary, killing them with a short burst from your carbine. This should get you there unnoticed(!), but fire too much and they will spot you right away.

6. Remember: try not to hand around bombs, or you may get caught in the ensuing explosion. Also, and this may seem obvious, don't fire anti-tank rockets indoors.

7. Don't attempt to throw a grenade over a high object such as a house or a hangar, or you will get killed. Try anything

higher than a wall and you will get blown up.

8. Whilst attempting the 'Photograph Secret Aircraft' mission, before you enter the hangar, plant a long-fused time bomb just outside the door. When the guards come over to attack you, they will be blown up, allowing you to take as many shots as you like!

9. The baddies may be easy to kill, but don't underestimate their intelligence. They won't run through minefields, and they won't cross broken ice, so use this to your advantage.

10. Finally, if you snuff it, when it asks you for the roster disk, reset the machine and reload.

GRIDRUNNER - LLAMASOFT



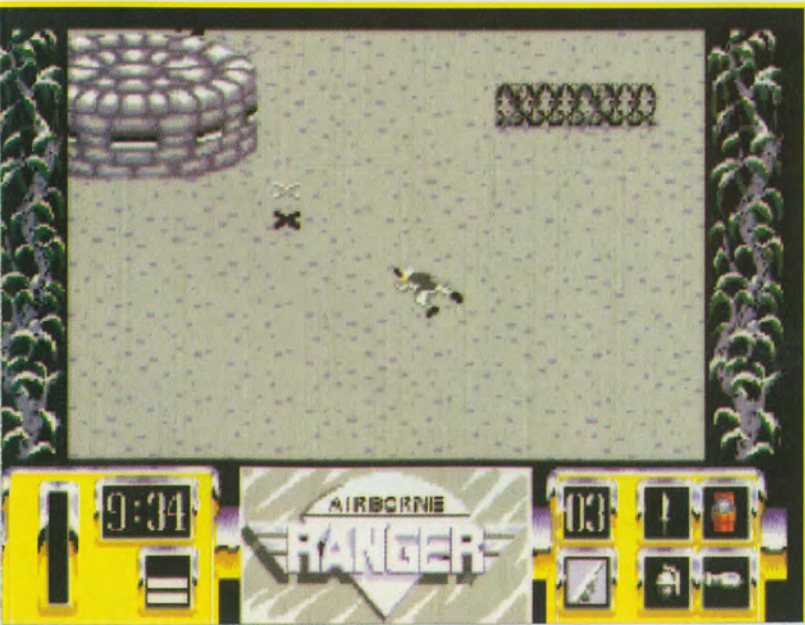
The going in this superb blaster can get a little tough at times, so Matt Bocelle from Horsham reckons that the following cheat may come in handy. During play,

pause the game and then type in Pink-Floyd-are-gods, bearing in mind to include the minus signs. You will now be granted infinite lives.

THUNDERBIRDS - GRANDSLAM

Just a quickie from Mark Chamberlain; who hails from

Norwich, the password to the fourth level is ANDERSON.



MICROPROSE SOCCER - MICROPROSE

James Pratt from Ashby-de-la-Zouch (home of Ultimate - anyone remember them?), has sent in a cheat for Microprose's playable footy game. Load the game and enter about ten names into the name bank. Start the World Cup and choose your team. Check which teams are in your group and note them down. Exit and go to the names section. Use the reselect team option, and change three of the excluded to the names of teams in your group.

Continue your old tournament and in your qualifying group you should win every game as the computer classes it as a two-player game - do make sure that you have a second joystick attached, though. Repeat this procedure when you get to the next group and soon the cup will be yours.

Another tip I have found, guarantees you a goal with every attack! If, when you intercept the ball, you run down either wing and turn towards the goal at

roughly 45 degrees, on shooting, the 'keeper will dive too early and you will score every time.



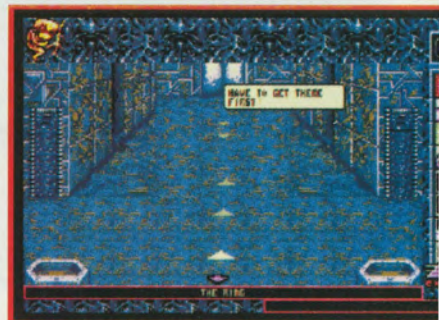
OOPS!

In last month's Stormtrooper tip, I forgot to mention that pressing F10 also removes any barriers. Sorry!

KULT - INFOGRADES

search him and take the whistle. When blown, the whistle will reveal a hidden cavity in the room. Look inside, then take the egg. Now go back to the ring via the return passage (all the doors to the puzzle rooms will be closed so you can't go back through the noose!). Enter the passage that leads towards the concourse, but take the left exit (if you enter the concourse, you will be killed). Take the next left passage to the barred room, pull the bolt and pass through.

After Delios enters the water, use sticky fingers and go through the tunnel in the roof. Go up the tube, and back to the altar room (that's why you must open the altar on the first visit!). Now go to the Threshold of Truth, kill the priestess and then place the egg in the mouth of the gargoyle. This lifts the bars. Inspect the Lectery and then use the psi-shift to get the statuette. Go to Saura's Repose and put it in the niche basket beside the other statue.



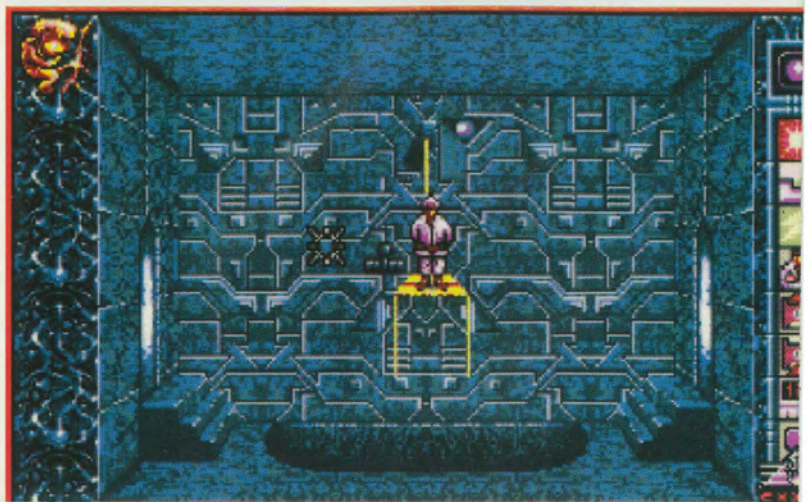
When the tunnel opens up, put the monkey inside, then go to 'in the presence of god'. Examine the starry wall which will open up and let you into the final location. After a couple of moves, Zorq and one of his henchmen will appear. Use your extreme violence option to kill him, and brainwarp his pal. Use the psi-shift to close the trap door, and when Harssk reaches the top he will release Sci-fi. To concentrate on opening the door, throw any blade at him and you will have completed Kult!

I think that somehow this one slipped through the reviewing net. Oh well, John Hogan (I think) from Glasgow has sent in this useful solution. Take it away, John...

Go to the noose, and use the solar eyes to light the room. Grab hold of the left-hand rope then push the lever on the platform. Now press the eye which is revealed through the lever, and pass through the trap door into the pink passage. When you come to the junction, take the left passage, and go straight on until you come to the cavern and meet Norma-Jean and Ash. When challenged, select the accept option and tell them the truth. When the talking stops, do a zone scan and lift the slab. Then take the flask, and go down the left passage. Go down through the trap door to the refectory,

then find the room called Placating the Powers and attack the first priest. Now use the psi-shift to get to the sacrificial lade from the second one, and again to get the mask.

You will now discover that it is your partner, Sci-fi, and that she is under a hypnotic influence. Use a brainwarp to clear her mind, and then give her the flask to drink. She will now be cured. Next, inspect the altar and push the lever to open it. Make your way back to the refectory and, using the sticky fingers, go through the trap door and back into the cavern. Take the right passage and then the second exit on the right. Go through the trap door to the noose, use the solar eyes again and then go to the Master's Orbit. Entering the Master's eye room, throw something at him to kill him, then



GTGA NAVY MOVES - DYNAMIC

Andrew Triggs from Croydon has sent in the following guide to this poor follow-up to a poor original.

1. First of all, when approaching the mines, always move backwards slightly as the mines seem less sensitive from the rear.

2. Jetski bullets can be either jumped over or ducked under.

3. When approaching sharks, don't move left or right, just move up and down.

4. The Octopi can be hard to kill, but use the following technique and you should get it every time: aim, then hold down the firebutton until both missiles ignite. Release the button, and the combination of both missiles will be twice as powerful as a single one. This technique

applies to the sea-monster as well, but aim for its mouth.

5. To dock with the submarine, position the mini-sub in the gap between the tail-fin and the hull, facing the left of the screen. Move upwards slowly, and the computer will take over the docking.

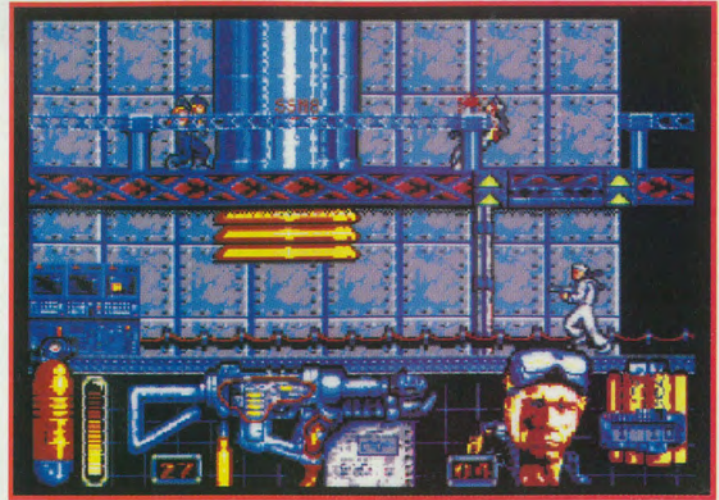
Part II.

1. First of all, the code is 948411.

2. When using the lifts at the bottom of the screen, the arrows indicate which way they go.

3. Ammunition is gained by killing the white marines or the red flamethrower troops. After they have been shot, just stand over their bodies and search them.

4. If you want to get a code of



an official, shoot him with the gun - not the flamethrower!

5. To enter a code into the computer, stand by a terminal and push up. Enter the command and you will be asked for a code. The commands and official's codes that are needed are listed below:

Stop Motors - First Official
Emerge - First Official (same code to stop motors).

Transmit Message - 1st or 2nd transmission Official.

Open Door - 1st or 2nd Machine Official.

Any of the above - Captain (once only).

N.B: To open the reactor door, you must use the terminal directly adjacent to the reactor. When the door is open, go into

the reactor, walk up to it, and the computer will confirm that the bomb is planted. Go out and use the same terminal as you did to open the door, to transmit the message, and transmit this message: OABERYAMD. Now type END at the ready prompt.

6. Now run as fast as you can up to the conning tower, hopefully beating the time limit!



KICK OFF - ANCO



The more I play this excellent footy game, the more I thrash all of the office challengers! Greig Nicholls has been playing Anco's 'finest hour' too, and has found the following tip:

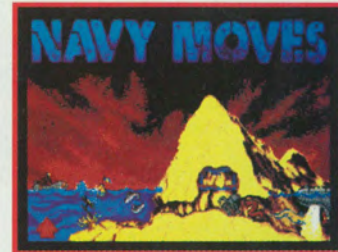
Run with the ball into your

opponent's penalty area, and turn away from his 'keeper. Now press fire and point in the direction you are running just before you reach the ball again, and you will get a penalty every time.

RICK DANGEROUS - FIREBIRD

Rick's journeys through the many platform-laden and danger-filled screens cost him lots of lives. So, to save you keep going through the same old screens over and over again, Jeremy Underwood who hails from

Liverpool has found a useful cheat. Get a high score, and enter the name POOKY (Garfield's canine mate) and you will be able to continue from the level you died on



FORGOTTEN WORLDS -

This mammoth conversion is extremely difficult - perhaps a little bit too difficult. However, loads of you (in fact too many to mention) have found a very useful little tippette.

When the game has loaded and the title screen appears, hold down the shift key and type in ARC. Now release the shift key and press the help key to start the game.

Now if things get a little bit too tough, press S to advance straight to the shop. And pressing N will take you straight on to the next level. Thanks very much to everyone who sent that in.



GTGA LICENCE TO KILL - DOMARK



Paul Masterson from Langton, Staffs, has sent in this useful guide for any struggling 007s out

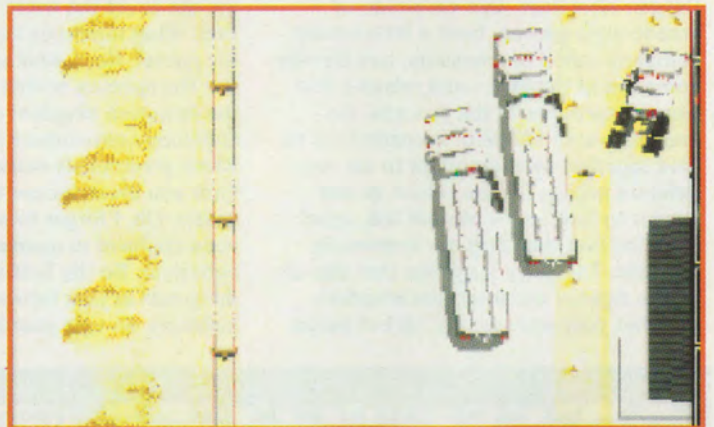
there. Don't waste time destroying the jeep, wait until stage two.

Follow the road all the way and try not to stray off. Don't go too low, though, or you will crash into a deadly ground obstacle. When James is on the second stage, set your gunsight before

getting in the line of fire, and use barrels and buildings to your advantage. First of all, destroy the jeep, as it won't reappear if you die. Never go above halfway up the screen, or the men will gang up at the end, meaning almost certain death for you.

Stage three is simple, but on level two 007 must duck under boats and bullets, but watch for your ever-diminishing oxygen supply. To get on the plane, attack a diver to get his harpoon and fire at the plane's engine. As you are towed, dodge the rocks and buoys, pushing forward to get to the plane. Concentrate on this, because as time goes by, the screen gets very congested.

For the final level, position the plane above the truck as rapidly as possible. Press the firebutton as soon as the sight appears, and begin your trail of destruction. The little trucks' fire must be avoided, and then simply run over them to destroy them. But the bigger lorries must be rammed at the front. Don't let the cabin escape or you won't complete the level.



U.S. GOLD

CYBERNOID II - HEWSON

THAT'S ALL FOLKS!

Tony Cooper's playable sequel didn't score as highly as I thought it should have. Still it's all based on our individual opinions. Anyway enough of this griping

let's get down to the cheat. On the title screen type in RAISTLIN (with a space on the end). Once again as in the first one infinite lives are yours.

CHARIOTS OF WRATH - IMPRESSIONS

If you would like infinite lives for this strange mish-mash of game styles then Karen Scott from Ipswich comes to the rescue. At

any time during the game press the fullstop key on the main keyboard, voila! Infinite lives are now yours!

GROVELING DEPARTMENT

Anyone waiting for a prize for a tip sent in, I apologize for the wait, but due to moving and

general mayhem I'm only just starting to clear the backlog. Sorry!

Right, that's your lot! Prize winners include John Hogan who really must ring me so that we can organise two games just to say thanks for his Kult solution; and Andrew Triggs who will be receiving a game of his choice and if the guy who sent in the Airborne Ranger stuff would get in touch, he too will receive a game.

'Bye, Steve.



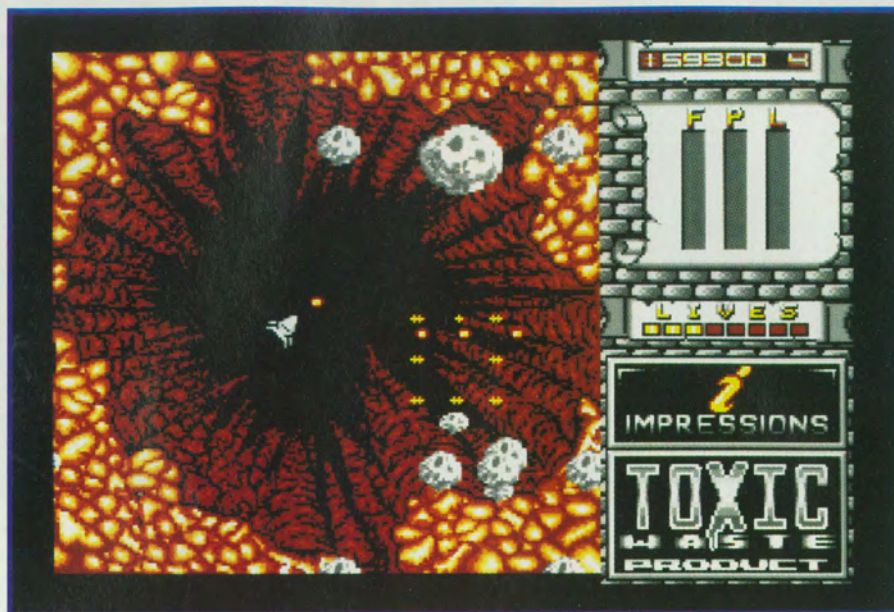
CHARIOTS OF WRATH

"So you want some variety in your game-play? Chariots of Wrath is a veritable jamboree of arcade action!"

IMPRESSIONS (£19.95)

Chariots of Wrath represents great value for money. Impressions have managed to combine everyone's favourite arcade games in one neat package. It must be said, however, that with the exception of the vertically-scrolling shoot'em-up levels, the games are rather basic and somewhat limited. The game's difficulty level has been well judged, allowing players to reach new screens nearly every time the game is played. The game's sonics are a little sparse - only the usual zapping sounds caught my attention. Overall, Impressions have come up with a first-rate compendium of games, slickly presented and highly enjoyable.

NC



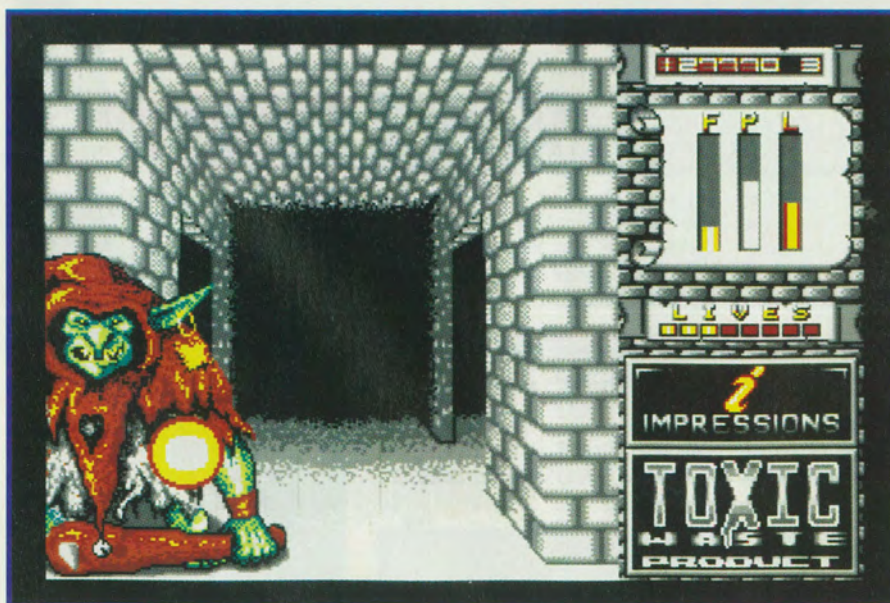
Masquerading under a title which would be more suited to a stuffy Dungeons and Dragon adventure, this collection of arcade-style games, from a little known company called Impressions, has literally come out of the blue - and raised a few learned eyebrows in the process. An imaginative and hopeful scenario tries to bind together what amounts to six very different arcade games, which do not appear to have any common link, apart from the fact that they are immensely playable. The story suggests that you are Prince Agar of the forgotten kingdom, and that your arch-enemy, an evil baron,

has kidnapped the Princess Athena. So you climb into your 'space chariot' and set out to rid the world of the baron for ever. What relevance does this have to the game? None whatsoever!

The opening screen shows a map of the forgotten kingdom (at least somebody remembers it) with a big cross which presumably marks your position. First you must escape from your father's castle. Oh, I forgot to mention, you've been confined to quarters for unprincely behaviour. So the first screen shows the dungeons in your father's castle and suddenly, an ugly guard appears from

behind a wall. Quickly, you must trace a weaponry sight across the beast and fire. Immediately, another monster appears, and then another, so that the dungeon rapidly turns into a shooting gallery. When you have sent the last of the monster guards into oblivion (where ever that is) the screen goes blank and returns with a Breakout-style game. Presumably, batting ball against brick represents breaking out of incarceration, as you struggle to intercept ball with bat and break down the wall. There are a couple of modern-day Breakout-clone features, such as simultaneous double ball action, but nothing too complicated.

After escaping from imprisonment, you finally make it to your space chariot for a monumental arcade struggle. This

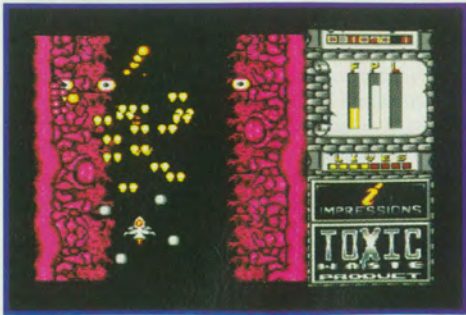


In order to get to the shoot'em-up, you have to blast a few ugly monsters in a totally irrelevant sub game.

In terms of variety, Chariots of Wrath is outstanding! Having just played it solidly for about three hours, I am still amazed by the sheer number of different game styles it contains. Each level is a game in its own right, and every one is presented well both graphically and sonically. Within the game there are variants on the Arkanoid, Asteroids and platform themes - and there is even a contender to the Xenon II throne! The whole package hangs together well, and somehow I lost all sense of time when I was playing it. If you fancy a game that you will come back to time after time, then get Chariots of Wrath.

SM

Blasting little satellite pods endows the space wagon with incredible weaponry. Massive pom pom laser, and three-pronged cannon power.

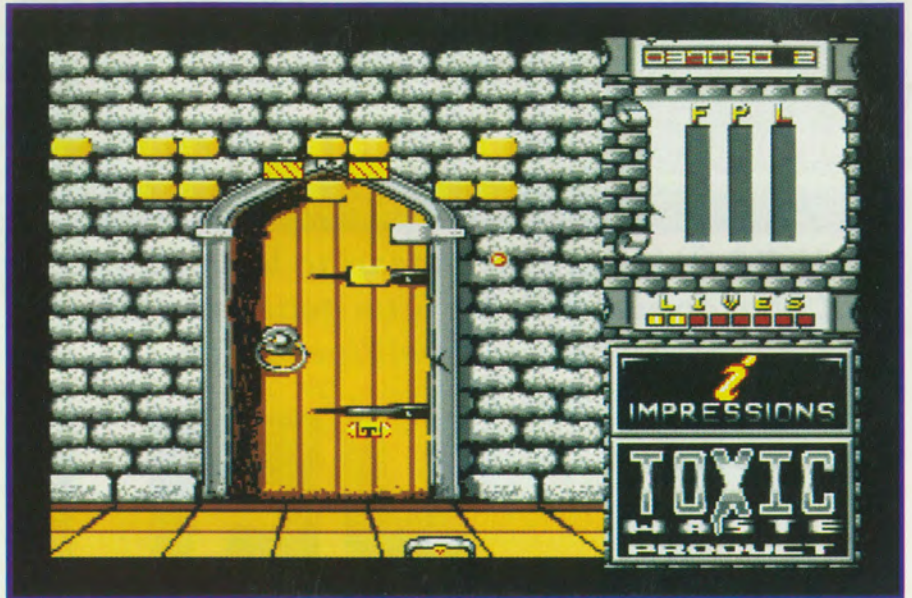


time, the game assumes the guise of a vertically-scrolling shoot'em-up supreme. Your space thingy gently gathers speed and travels through a narrow chasm of parallax graphics and the joystick assumes full and responsive control over the craft. At first, it is equipped with little more than a fore-mounted single cannon, but not for long! Fireballs drift from the sides of the chasm and take chase, and each hit weakens your shields. Then all hell breaks loose, as mines, snaking pods, meteorites and skulls hail down from the roof. Your salvation lies in small meteor pods which you must blast in order to collect whatever lies hidden inside. These pods contain immense firepower and from massive fireballs to spheres which encircle the space chariot and clout anything that gets in the way. There's no stopping you now as a three-pronged laser roars into action and the game turns into an alien massacre. If you manage to collect all of the pods, you stand a better chance against the menacing end-of-level guardian, a fat purple beast which promises a bloody battle but soon disappears in a flash of blinding white light.

Next on this exhausting, nonstop agenda, without even a brief respite to rest weary wrists, another bout of brick-busting gets underway. This time the bricks take on a new formation, although the action is much the same. Then it's back to the space wagon for another mindless battle. The screen is filled with

So there's this game called Chariots of Wrath, with lots of levels and different types of game-play. Well that's cool - we can handle that. But let's just take a look at the game as a whole. First, there's the shooting gallery where you can pot some big ugly beasts - nice graphics, but very easy game-play. Then there's the various Breakout-style games which are, as usual, enjoyable to play. But these are merely sub games which don't appear to have any link. The main spectacle is a terrific shoot'em-up, with non stop action all the way. All in all, Chariots of Wrath does manage to hold together quite well. Arcade fans will delight in playing old favorites, such as Asteroids and Break-Out. Impressions have included nearly every aspect of arcade gameplay to produce a first-class offering. A veritable feast.

JS

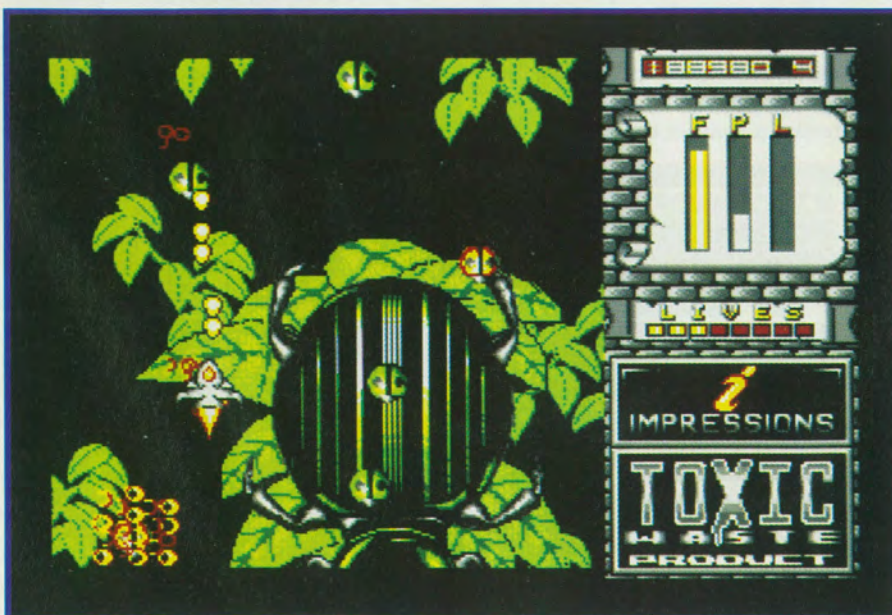


Next stop, en route to your space chariot, a Breakout clone offers first class entertainment. Nothing too complicated, with two-ball feature, but absorbing, brick-busting action all the same.

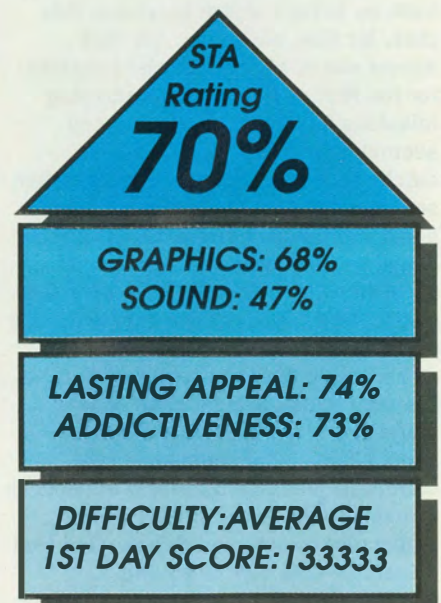
massive sprites, crustaceans and moluscs. Again, there is a throng of enthusiastic opposition, related to the molusc family, and there's ample opportunity to beef-up your weaponry and kick crustacean ass. Another end-of-level villain marks the end of the struggle, but there is no rest for the wicked as the Prince appears on the castle battlements - he must have taken a wrong turning in crustacean city! You have to move the

Prince along the battlements, jumping over steps in search of little diamonds. Gem collection done, its back to the ol' chariot for some more shoot'em-up action. This time giant frogs and various insects take up the challenge. And so this bumper arcade epic goes on and on... ad infinitum.

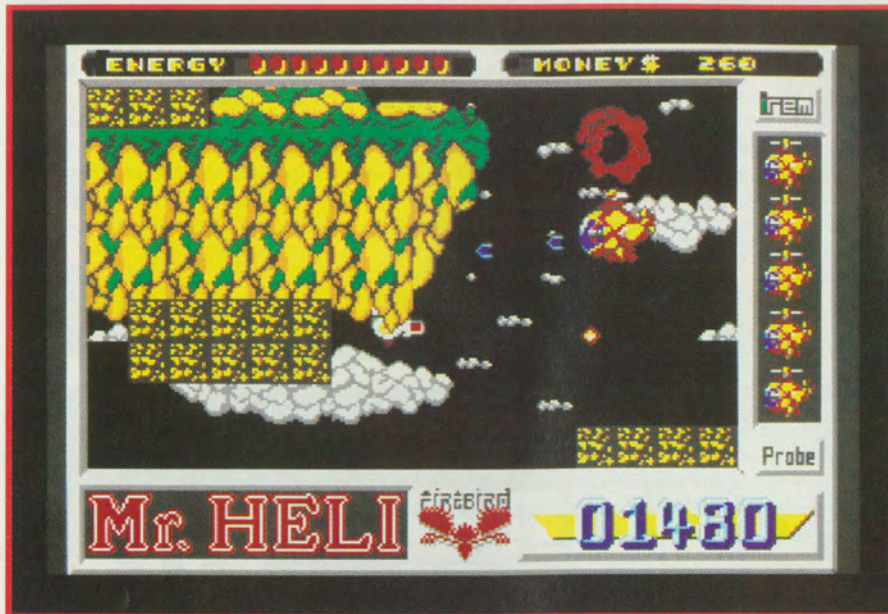
STA



Finally, the shoot'em-up supreme. Big sprites, commendable parallax scrolling, and subject matter which will undoubtedly cause some controversy.



'Cannons to the right, cannons to the left!' Heli takes a wrong turn at Biggin Hill and ends up in a cavern where he is obviously not wanted. Still, he ventures deeper oblivious to this hostility.



The main faults with Mr Heli aren't ones made by the programmers, they are from the actual arcade machine itself. Graphically, Mr Heli is very nice, with the bright orange helicopter fighting through the numerous - and also cute - enemy. These nice graphics are supported by some colourful backdrops and a bouncy David Whittaker tune. However, despite the nice presentation, it is Heli's gameplay that lets it down. Collecting money to buy extra weapons is the aim of the game, but the enemy forces are so strong, that you die by the time you have collected enough cash - losing all your hard-earned in the process! Annoying faults like these stop Heli being a must buy, but fans of the coin-op will be more than pleased with it.

SM

"Mr Heli is certainly an endearing little character. But how does a cute, fat little helicopter fare in the brutally competitive arcade conversion race?"

MR. HELI

— FIREBIRD (£19.95) —

Irem's arcade favourite, Mr Heli, has swallowed a fair few 10p coins this year, and with a combination of cuteness, tenacity and three-layer parallax scrolling, it was a hotly-awaited conversion. So how does Probe's interpretation of Heli square up to the original? Looking like one of those cuddly aircraft that you can buy from an inflight airline brochure, this cute, fat little helicopter, 'Mr Heli', hovers out of his hangar and prepares for the first of many soul-destroying missions into the treacherous and seemingly impossible caverns. A catchy little tune from David Whittaker sets the pace for this fun and frenetic game - although I prefer 'Ol' Durham Town' or 'Skyboat' myself.

With rotors swishing in time to the music, Heli hovers at the cave entrance demanding your undivided attention, and with joystick controls, nudging to the right sends him in. Even at this stage of the game, elbow room (or should I say, rotor room) is a rare commodity. Stalagmites and stalactites thrust into the caves forcing you to dodge and weave, and this renders Heli vulnerable to a countless and inexhaustible army of nasties - exciting

isn't it? First to challenge Heli's right to free flight are little blue craft who spit little fireballs with great accuracy. These missiles look harmless, but each direct hit on his little fat fuselage depletes your energy. Eight energy dots at the top of the screen represent your shield strength, and with each hit sustained they disappear one by one. Meanwhile, embedded in the rocks, a strategically-positioned gun emplacement swivels around and

Heli starts off difficult, and slowly but surely hovers into the realms of impossibility. Irem's arcade favourite is immensely playable and Probe have successfully managed to capture the essence of the game. The team have copied many of the opposition's attack patterns in order to present a conversion which plays as near to the original as possible. But with the smaller game-play area which was unavoidable, the game is even more difficult. Some concessions had to be made in the presentation, but there is some parallax scrolling which was a major feature in the arcade game. All in all, a commendable conversion of a very playable game.

JS

traces Heli's path with gunfire. And all the time a throng of flying foe buzz around, pecking away at his fuselage like scavenging crows on a carcass.

Suddenly, Heli's rotor hum is drowned out by a symphony of ghostly enemy copters, which continue to



A throng of nasty aliens harangue our cute little chum and fire with great intelligence. But Heli is no mean fighter himself. A press of the firebutton fires missiles from the front and simultaneously launches missiles from the roof.

Blasting away sandstone reveals riches beyond this little helicopte'r's wildest dreams, and extra weapons can be collected to beef up your firepower. Holding down the firebutton and pulling back on the joystick drops a bomb to excavate the ground.



STA Rating
62%

GRAPHICS: 59%
SOUND: 52%

LASTING APPEAL: 62%
ADDICTIVENESS: 64%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 10593

harass and harangue our amiable aircraft through the next stage. With Heli's shields rapidly depleting, there is no alternative but to cut up rough - no more Mr. nice guy! Heli is stacked to the gunnels with weaponry, and holding down the firebutton activates a fore-mounted gun and simultaneously launches missiles up from the rotors. Also, pulling back on the joystick drops a destructive bomb which blasts anything in its path. As an addition to self-preservation, there is a cache of weaponry and loot to be had by blasting away blocks of stone and collecting the booty. But get too greedy, and that last hit could send Heli to that great aircraft hangar in the sky. But fear not, he is immediately replaced by another Heli, identical right down to the lovely orange paintwork - the problem is, you have to go right back to the beginning of the game and start again. Like all the best shoot'em-ups, success comes from a long and exhausting process of learning when to shoot and dodge the carefully-prepared hazards - this is really a battle of wits between player and programmer.

With beefed-up firepower and a few quid stashed away, you're ready for anything. Then suddenly, Heli drops through a chasm. 'Cannon to the left,



cannon to the right, you fall uncontrollably down and continuous fire is needed to protect the distressed craft. As one nightmare ends, another begins, as you negotiate a path between massive boulders which seem to be defying gravity and actually falling upwards. Then Heli ventures into a gauntlet of guns and you must dodge, turn, fire... dodge, turn, fire, to evade that potentially lethal gunfire. Finally, a battle-fatigued little helicopter

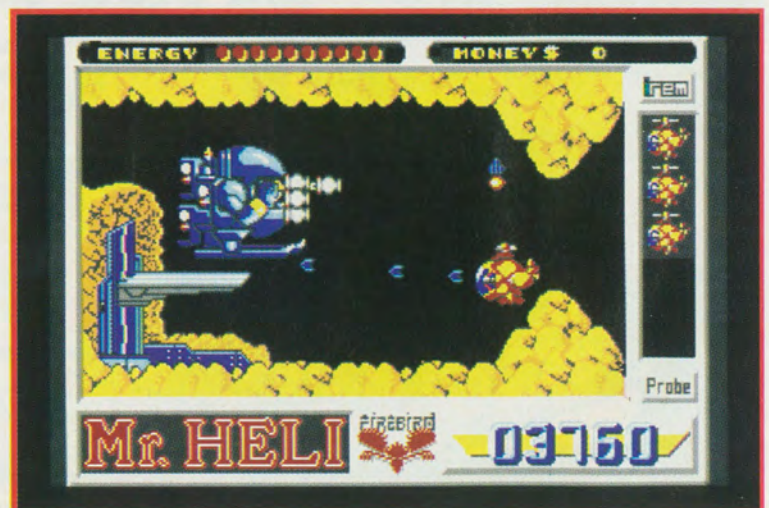
must face the all-powerful, end-of-level guardian. In traditional fashion the guardian holds on to the bitter end. But finally, in a last ditch attempt, the little helicopter and weary player partnership wins over, and the evil-one's demise marks the end of level. Another five levels await you, each one more difficult than the last.

STA

Personally, I just can't see what all the fuss is about. OK, so Mr. Heli was created by Irem, the team responsible for the excellent R-Type. However, that must be Heli's only claim to fame. With its condensed playing area and juddery sprites, Heli is not a patch on its arcade parent. It's understandable that the programming team responsible for the conversion have dropped the parallax scrolling but, along with it has gone much of the game's appeal. As shoot'em-ups go, Mr. Heli is a poor effort. Take my advice and wait for Psygnosis's Blood Money.

NC

Finally, a battle-torn Heli faces the all-powerful end-of-level guardian whose demise marks the end of one nightmare... and the beginning of another.

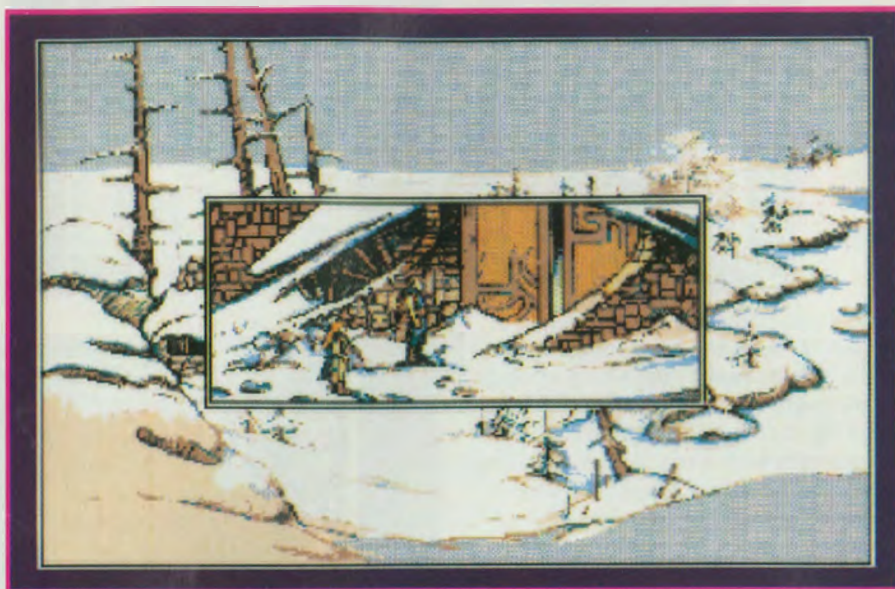


QUEST FOR THE TIME-BIRD

INFOGRAMES (£19.95)

*"Time is short,
and in the Land of
Akbar the hurrying
shadows bring closer
the spectre of
Lord Ramor's return.
Only with the aid
of the Time-Bird
can the Mara the
witch-princess hold
back the day
of reckoning."*

As Knight Bragon you are fortunate that to aid you in your quest you have a 'trusty' axe and a 'lusty' maiden. Roxanna, (she of the dewy lips and thrusting bosom!) is on and to help carry the many strange objects you must gather on your journey and help you dispose of monsters with her lethal whip. Climbing upon the backs of your winged Lopwinds you are free to travel to any of the weird settlements which dot the map of Akbar and there deal with all manner of puzzles and violent inhabitants. The lands include the snow and ice of the White March, the underground temples of the Desert people, the jungle of the Thousand Greens and the Caves of the Snufflers. Should you manage to lose your flying transport there are other strange animals which



It's an awkward, but interesting game. The strange direction commands make movement around the various locations very frustrating, leaving you unsure whether you are stuck because of a puzzle or because the controls are being stupid again. Loved the graphics - very classy. It holds promise, but I suspect you'll have to be determined to get your money's worth to stick with it for long.

SK

can be pressed into your service and speed your journey between settlements. Dangers include Raving Fever, Orcs and Hairy Eggs which make salmonella seem tame!

The game is completely mouse-driven and no text input is required. As can readily be seen from the screenshots, this game is another Gallic

import which ensures that the graphics are top-notch and the game-play is 'different'! The game-plot and graphics appear to have been lifted straight out of a Continental comic and the main screen can become covered in smaller action screens depending upon your decisions.

Via the mouse and pop-up menus, you may talk with, offer love to, or attack the locals. Most locals get quite shirty if Roxanna pushes her talents under their noses and offers a bit of



Roxanna and Bragon set off on their quest. First stop, to find Bodias at Thousand Greens.

STA
Rating
65%

TEXT/GRAPHICS: 75%
GAMEPLAY: 50%

LASTING APPEAL: 60%
ADDICTIVENESS: 60%

To be honest, *Quest for the Time Bird* is yet another case of 'great graphics - shame about the game-play'. The main problem with the game seems to be in the movement phase - I often ended up somewhere I didn't want to be and, as a result, found the problems impossible to solve. What's more, many of the problems and puzzles within the game seemed to have very illogical solutions and I often found that progress could only be made by sheer guesswork. Graphically the game has some very nice touches, the different landscapes providing an interesting variation. Some of the sound is exceptional - the Tarzanesque jungle effects being my particular favorite. However, I can't see too many players concentrating on the game for long.

NC

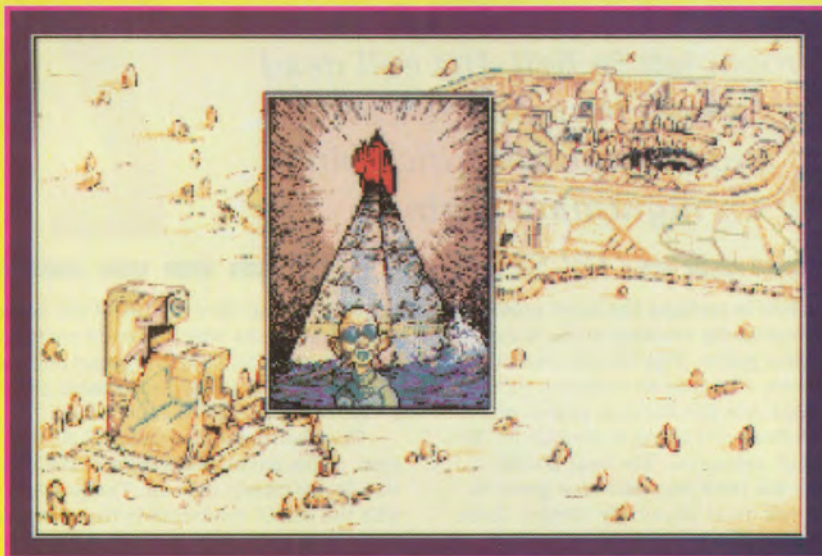
something special - which seems strange to me as she can have the top of my hairy egg whenever she likes! Prodding around with the mouse in the various pop-up pictures can reveal useful objects which are then transferred to your pack. Occasionally a small character turns up to ask a 'funny' riddle, but not a lot seems to happen irrespective of your answer. Most puzzles are solved by selecting the correct response to a situation from a menu of alternatives.

You may also opt to 'yomp' across the countryside and this will produce an animated, sideways-scrolling window into which various monsters will materialize to block your progress. You are then forced to select the 'fight' option and risk damage.

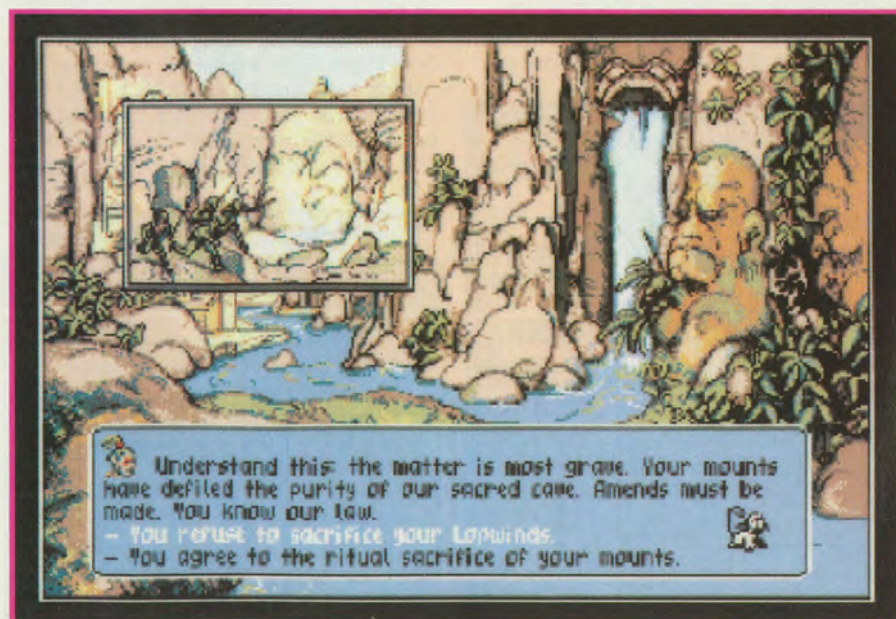
STA



Our two intrepid adventurers attempt to coax the Wizard-Prince, Bodais, into joining their ranks. He will only join the party if they can convince him of their mission.



Having travelled to the Desert region the company search the holy Temple of Oblivion. Bodais is the only member of the party who has the ability to read the sacred runes. Getting him to do so, however, can prove somewhat difficult.



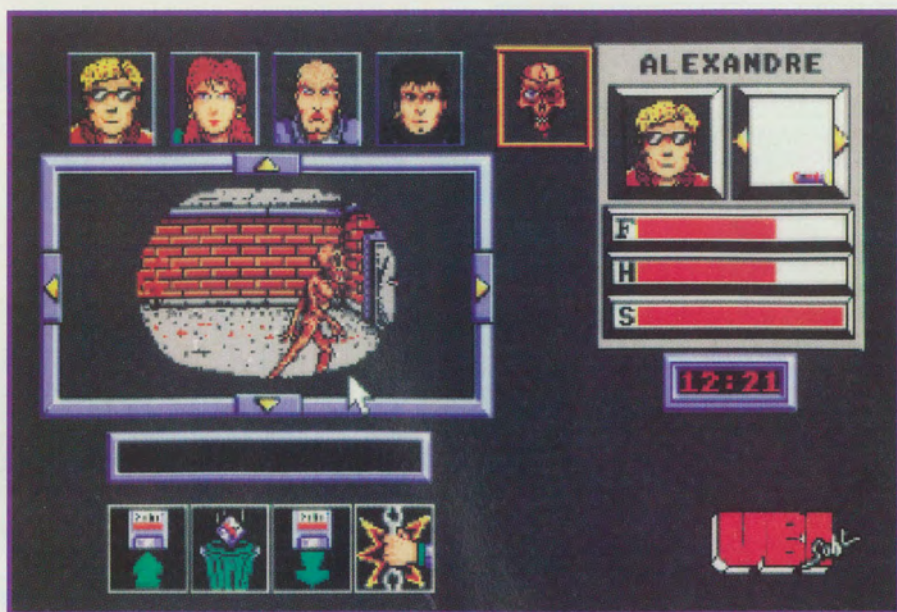
Lapwings are the party's main mode of transport. Unbeknown to them, however, it is forbidden to bring the creatures into the Sacred City.

I wonder why the majority of French games pay so little attention to the game's user interface. The simple inclusion of the option to reload a Save game position after your umpteenth demise seems obvious to me, as this game will insist upon going through the complete intro each time. The artist who lavished such painstaking care on this production has again been let down by the programming team. The game 'locked-up' more than once, with no hint as to whether it was because I had failed in my quest or because the programmer had failed in his logic! Ultimately, *Quest for the Time Bird* had me reaching for both my STs reset switch and for something a little more worthwhile.

AM

'When heaven and hell are full, the dead will walk the Earth.' George Romero's chilling prediction comes true in this, UBI Soft's finest hour. Rigidly following Romero's Dawn Of The Dead story, Zombi has so much atmosphere it is almost like being there! The icon system used to control your party is simplicity itself to use, and the game doesn't throw everything at you at once, making initial exploration easy. The puzzles featured in Zombi may be a bit cryptic for anyone who hasn't actually seen the now-banned film, but once you start experimenting with collected objects it will all start to fall into place. In fact, the only niggle I have is that the actual Zombies themselves are weak and that they could have looked more varied, as could their deaths, but I recommend you get your teeth into a Zombi today.

SM



"When there is no more

room left in hell, the evil dead return to roam the Earth, and the most horrific living nightmare begins."

ZOMBI

UBI SOFT (£19.95)

The zombi is perhaps the most gruesome and bloodthirsty creation in the history of the horror genre. This all-evil creature is merciless, mindless and without morals, as it searches the Earth in search of human flesh and blood to sustain its 'living dead' existence. The best Zombi movies are terrifying, and so a game in which you must physically combat these beasts must heighten that fear. I first saw UBI's Zombi game on the drawing board at the UBI Chateau, and noted the interesting game layout in an earlier development update. Because of the nature of the scroll effect in Zombi, the game-screen occupies only a relatively small area of the entire screen. The remainder of the screen shows the four characters in your screen - Patrick, Yannick and Sylvie supplying the

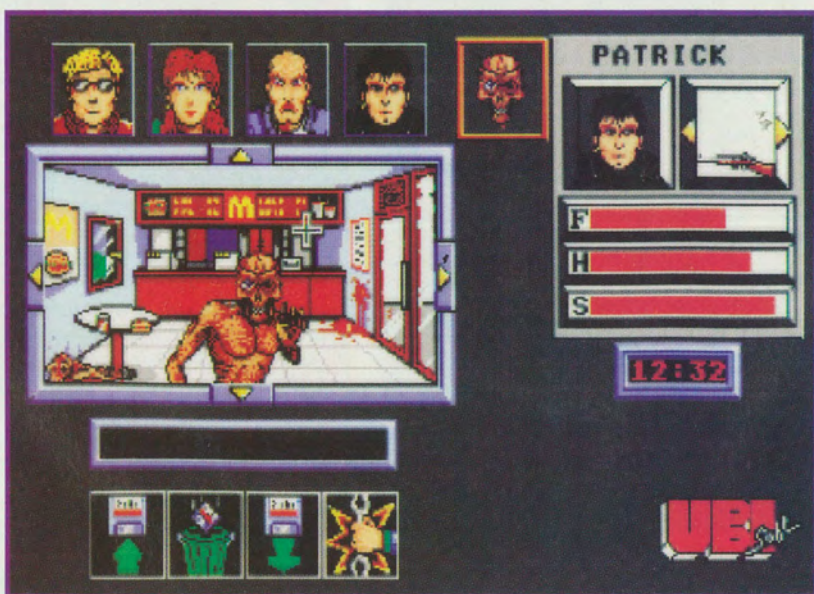
female interest. At the base of the screen are various icons which work in conjunction with the course of the game and various health and energy bars enable you to gauge the condition of your team.

The nightmare commences! At the start of the game, the nature of the mission is not clearly defined. The problem with the zombi syndrome is that there are masses of them, and in the course of killing for food, they turn their victims into the living dead. Therefore, it is conceivable that the entire human race could be turned into the living dead. At the start of the game your team's helicopter has landed on the roof of a shopping mall-cum-residential block, where it is believed the zombies are based. First you must choose a scout from the team. Patrick certainly

looks stealth-like and light on his feet and thus a natural candidate for the job. With Patrick's I.D. icon highlighted, Operation Zombi commences.

There are four directional arrows around the screen, and clicking on the right-hand arrow sends Patrick running into the building. The game is played from first-player perspective which is designed to enhance the feeling of involvement. Patrick may only be able to move in one or two directions and, so you must click on all the arrows to see which way he can travel. At the stairwell, clicking on the downward-pointing arrow sends Patrick sprinting down. Some imaginative graffiti on the walls helps you keep your bearings, as you search the building. On the 2nd floor I decided to explore, and clicking on the left-hand arrow sent Patrick down the corridor. The game moves a screen at a time, moving to the next room or section of corridor and, each time, the disk drive

Drawn by the smell of the burgers, two zombis lurch into a famous fast food restaurant and Patrick blasts the beasts.



Zombi seems to capture all the elements seen in George Romero's films. The mouse control method makes play very easy. The graphics are well drawn and quite detailed, although I would have preferred a more varied collection of zombies. The solving of various puzzles is the main part of the game and players might find one or two of the solutions somewhat odd. Nevertheless, UBI Soft's Zombi is a commendable game, one that deserves to do well.

NC

intervenes with a brief whirr, although there is no delay in the action.

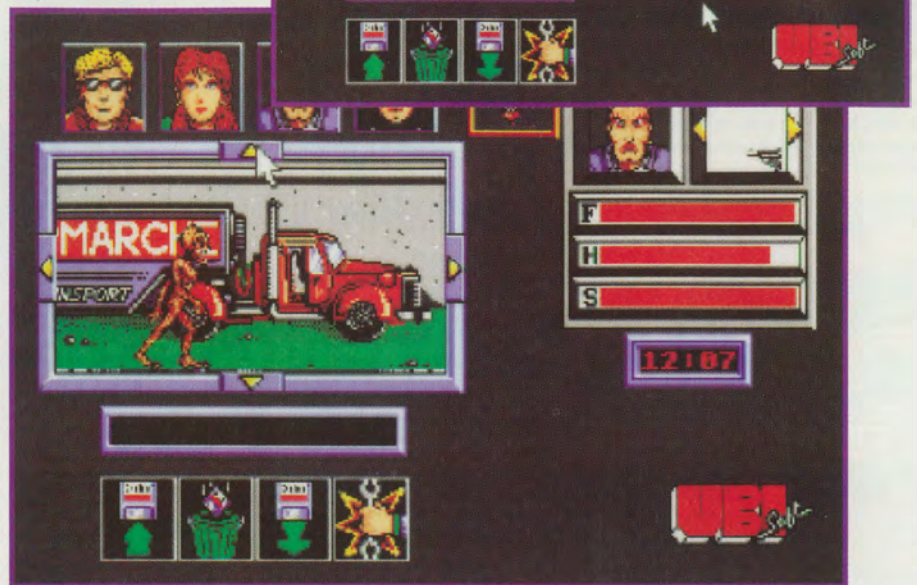
Suddenly, a zombi lurches down the corridor, blind to all but its hunger for human flesh. Another appears, and then another, as they close in on the smell of human blood. Quickly, before they discover the source of the smell, you must get some protection. In the shopping mall, clicking on the forward arrow moves Patrick along the arcade to an armoury shop. Inside, there are three firearms of various size and clicking on the most powerful gun picks it up. Back out in the mall, the zombies are homeing in on their lunch. One of the monsters appears, and clicking on a tool icon loads the gun. A cross-hair sight appears on screen and a click of the mouse button sends a high-velocity bullet thudding into its diseased brain. The bloody spectacle is enhanced as the beast screams in agony. From then on, the game turns into a zombi massacre, and as you search the building, your carnal lust is almost as depraved as the crazed beasts you are hunting.

Tired and hungry from the shopping trip, naturally you pop into McDonalds for a Big Mac and fries. Clicking on a discarded burger and coke replenishes your energy and Patrick slurps with approval. Back in the mall, the Zombies seem to be going somewhere, as if in a trance. Keeping a safe distance, and a finger on the trigger, you follow them outside. A Zombi icon appears to indicate that a beast is nearby, and you select weaponry in preparation. Suddenly, Patrick turns and faces an angry mob of zombies, all with one common interest - Patrick's flesh. Back to the roof you select another team member and again you must visit the armoury and pick up a weapon. You must search each shop and room for clues and solutions. Outside, if you can make it to a truck, you can move it in front of the doors to block their exit. But there are hordes of flesh-hungry beasts lurking around the perimeter of the building. All is quiet when suddenly, a zombi lurches into view catching Yannick unawares. Frantically, you fire at will, but Yannick's aim is poor and the winged zombi lurches towards him, nails and teeth flaying flesh. For Yannick and the human race, time has run out!

STA

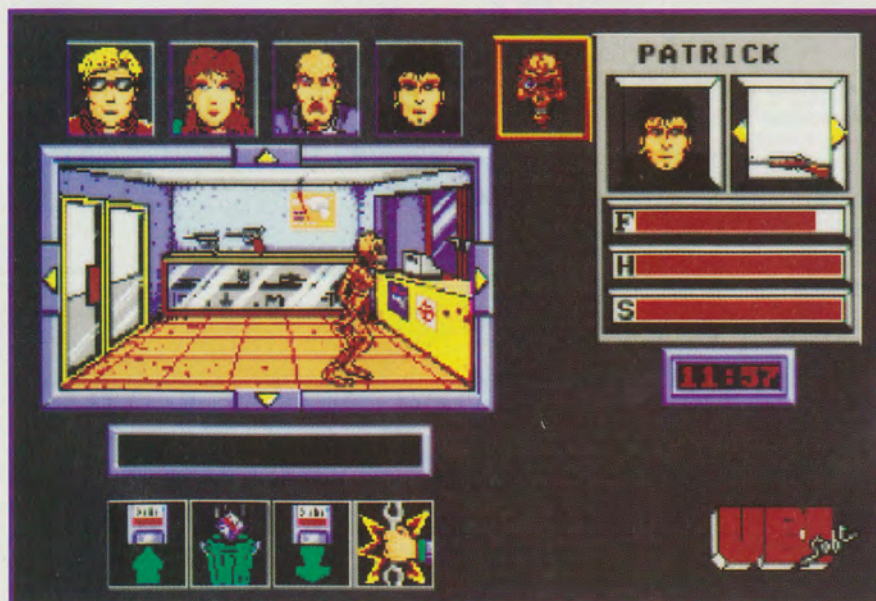
The Zombies seem to be drawn outside. Cautiously, you follow. UH-OH!

You must make it to the truck and block the exit from the shopping mall to stop the zomis.

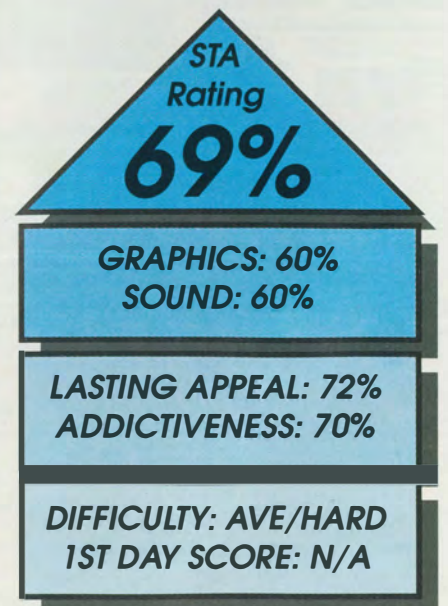


With their eerie atmospheres and petrifying action, George A. Romero's Zombi creations are a tough act to follow. But UBI have produced a commendable movie game. Although the game-play area is rather small, the first-person perspective effectively enhances the atmosphere and your involvement in the game. Mobility in the game has been well implemented and there is no delay in moving from one area to another. Additionally, the mouse/icon system is uncomplicated and easy to use. The graphics are rather clever, with some nice effects, and although the sound effects amount to little more than the scream of the zombi and the crack of gunfire, they are quite sufficient. My only criticism is the inappropriate music which should have been far more spooky and looming, as this would have enhanced the atmosphere even further. Also, there should have been more variety in the way the zombies attack. Nevertheless, this is a very enjoyable and original game from France's premier software stable.

JS



Inside the shopping mall, Patrick walks into the armoury, selects a weapon and prepares to go Zombi-bashing.



The Man with the Hat is

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STAI

RAINBOW ISLANDS

"They're back! No, not Indiana Jones and his clan. And, no, it's not James Bond and Co. either. It is, in fact, those oh-so-cute characters from Bubble Bubble, Bub and Bob. And this time they intend to have gamers everywhere oohing and aahing as they attempt to rescue their girlfriends once more from the evil Baron."

FIREBIRD (£19.99)

Anyone familiar with Firebird's classic conversion of Bubble Bobble will instantly recognise the names Bub and Bob. For the uninitiated, Bub and Bob were two cute Brontosauri who went on a mission to save their girlfriends from the clutches of the evil Baron. Armed only with an unlimited supply of bubbles, the two heroes had to encapsulate all of the Baron's cohorts in the said bubbles, and then pop them, killing the trapped nasty. After they had made their way through the hundred platform-laden screens, Bub and Bob were reunited with their girlfriends, but just as they were admiring one another's scales, the Baron reappeared and whisked both of the girls off again. On seeing this, a kindly old wizard decided that Bub and Bob's dinosaur shape would be a bit impractical for the Baron's new lair, so with a wave of his magic wand he transformed them into the form of a small human.

Once again, the Baron has hidden the girls in a platform-filled land, and once again he has recruited a whole army of strange creatures to inhabit it. However, this time, just to make sure, he has taken the precaution of protecting each level with a huge guard. The Baron's dwelling is split into seven islands, each of which houses four separate stages. Each level is given a different name, reflecting the style of creature you will meet there, and you will come across oddities such as Combat Land and Monster Land. Accompanied by a remixed version of the classic tune, 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow', Bub and Bob's basic aim is to make their way to the top of the vertically-scrolling levels, killing or avoiding any of the Baron's minions that patrol the platforms in an attempt to stop you. The killing of the said aliens and the climbing from platform to platform are both achieved by using the beautifully-

A follow-up to that monster smash-hit Bubble Bobble sure ain't going to be easy. But somehow, Firebird's Rainbow Islands is just as playable as its predecessor. Featuring the same cute-style graphics and another tuneful ditty, Rainbow Islands looks, and sounds, every bit as good as Bubble Bobble. The difficulty level has again been gauged at the right level, allowing players of all abilities to enjoy the game to its full. The game's controls are easy to understand and, unlike so many games, players can get to grips with the action almost immediately. Overall, Rainbow Islands is a quality release from Firebird. One that deserves to, and will, succeed.

NC

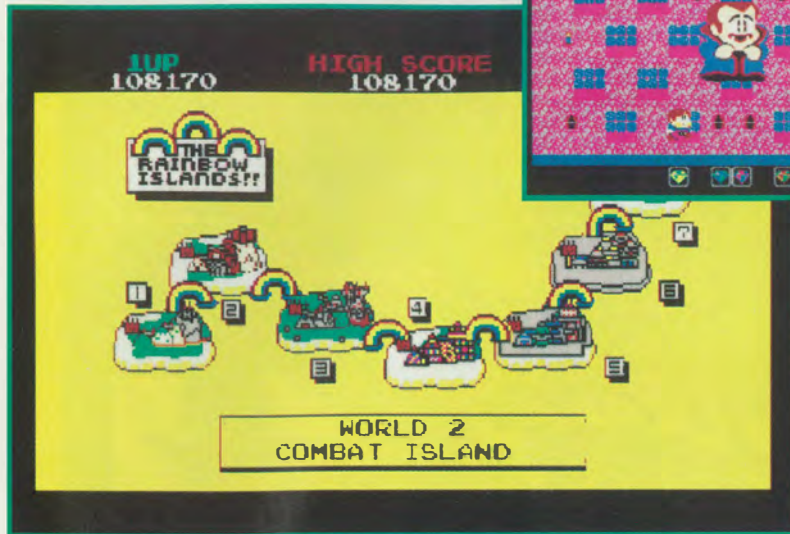
An arcade game with platforms is certainly nothing new, but a game in which you make your own platforms is. Rainbow Islands is a worthy successor to Bubble Bobble and, like its predecessor, it's immensely playable. In these days of 3D graphics and parallax scrolling, a seemingly simplistic game like this looks decidedly hackneyed. Yet, the secret to Rainbow Islands is this simplicity, plus a very palatable concoction of arcade fun. In the true arcade tradition, which has been handed down from the ancient Pong and Horace and the Spiders, Rainbow Islands exudes the one quality which has your average game reviewers stretching the limits of their vocabulary for words like 'addictiveness' and 'fab playability', but not this lad!

JS



At the end of each stage, our heroes are rewarded with a barrage of bonuses for their trouble. A huge treasure chest drops from the top of the screen, and spews fruit worth 500 points each all over the place.

Bub comes a cropper at the hands of a Vampire look-alike in monster land.



In between each level, you are shown a map of the various islands, and your next destination.

STA Rating
78%

GRAPHICS: 77%
SOUND: 62%

LASTING APPEAL: 79%
ADDICTIVENESS: 80%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: 178766

Featuring both cute and colourful graphics and a catchy tune, Rainbow Islands is a more than worthy sequel to the classic Bubble Bobble. Presentation throughout is excellent, from the accompanying remix of 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow' to the endearing graphics and bright backdrops; even the gameplay is up to the high standard of the brilliant original. Climbing to the top of the screen sounds easy, but what with the ever-present nasties and the decreasing time limit, it can prove harder than it sounds. The combination of the arcade-quality graphics and the superb playability ranks Rainbow Islands up there alongside the classic platform games such as the original Bubble Bobble, the brilliant Giana Sisters and Rick Dangerous. Needless to say, I recommend you get it now!

SM

way through four stages, all that stands between you and the next level is the Baron's massive henching! Dropping from the top of the screen, this huge creature attempts to trap you in a corner, killing you instantly. However, this creature can be killed and this is achieved by wearing down his energy by repeatedly firing rainbows at him. Above all this mayhem, the creature's energy bar is shown, and with every rainbow that successfully connects with the foul

beast, this is gradually reduced, until the monster eventually flashes, indicating that it has given up the ghost. To reward you for your bravery, a huge basket of fruit and treasure is then dropped down allowing you to collect the extra lives and bonuses it bestows. And once these are collected, there is a short load and a map screen appears giving details of the next island.

STA

When you have successfully completed four stages, all that remains is to defeat the large end-of-level guardians.



If Bub dawdles, a rising tide hurries

coloured rainbows that both Bub and Bob can produce. These rainbows effectively replace the bubbles they produced in the original Bubble Bobble, as when a rainbow is produced, it kills any aliens that it comes into contact with, turning them into pieces of bonus-giving fruit. In addition, the two characters can run along the arc produced by the brightly-coloured rainbow, and, by building more rainbows on top of other rainbows, a route to the top of the screen can be built using the convenient set of steps the rainbows make! Each level is set against a time limit, and as this runs out, water begins to fill the screen. Neither Bub or Bob can swim, so, the water costs them one of their three lives. However, should they make their way to the top, a huge treasure chest drops from the top of the screen, and throws out dozens of pieces of the bonus-giving fruit.

Having successfully rainbowed your



Go, Indy Go! After his last film licence, our intrepid archaeologist has at last come up with a decent game. Closely following the film's plot, the action sees Indy battling through dank caverns, jumping across circus carriages and searching German fortresses. Graphically the game is superb, the character sprites being among the best I've seen. The game's soundtrack is also excellent, although too much of Indy's theme can become monotonous. The gameplay is also enjoyable, albeit very similar. If I had to fault the game it would be because of the near pixel-perfect positioning often required and the lack of variation between the levels. Despite these moans, Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade is definitely a step in the right direction for film licences.

NC

Having retrieved the Cross of Coronado, Indy makes good his escape. All the time he is looking for the exit, it is getting rapidly darker, but total blackness can be halted by collecting one of the handy torches that are scattered around the caves.



"The hero is back! In the first of two games based on the Last Crusade movie, Indiana Jones returns in the arcade game of the successful film."

THE LAST CRUSADE

U.S. GOLD (£19.95)

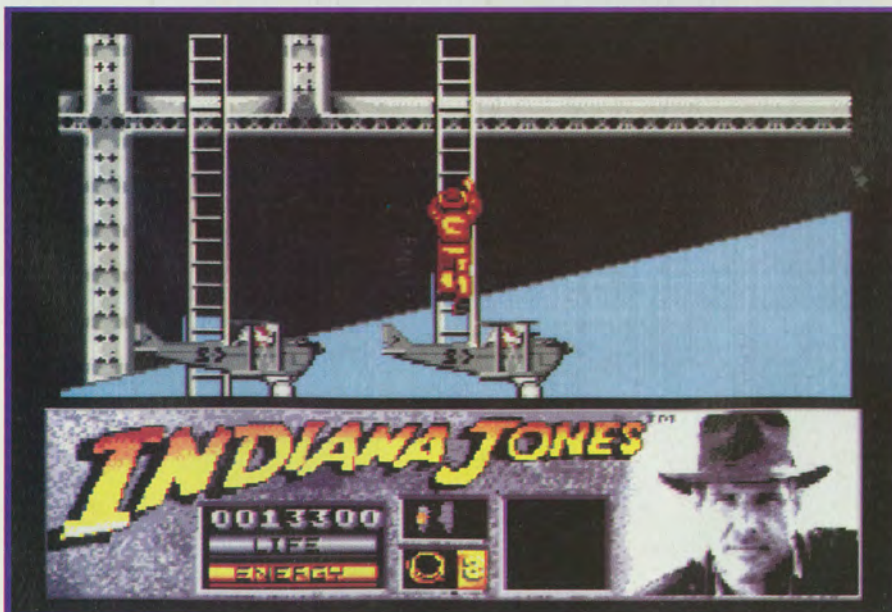
The year is 1912, and we first encounter Indy as a young sixteen-year-old boy scout, scouring a tunnel network in an attempt to steal a valuable artefact called the Cross of Coronada from under the noses of a group of archeologists. This, the movie tells, is how he gained his lust for adventure, and the player must take control of young Indy as he makes his way through the dangerous labyrinth

of tunnels. As Indy searches for the cross, not only must he watch out for the archeologists who are looking for him, he must also be wary of other natural hazards such as falling stalactites and large expanses of water. Indy's health is shown as a gold bar at the bottom of the screen, and if anything dastardly happens to him, the bar is reduced slightly, until it expires and Indy is sent back to the start of

the stage. However, if Indy comes into contact with any archeologists or falls in the water, his bar is instantly drained. As with his energy, our hero's life counter is shown as a bar, and every time the energy bar is fully depleted, the life bar shrinks until it is eventually 'game over'. Initially, Indy is armed only with his fists, and must

Although *The Last Crusade* is a definite improvement over the turgid *Temple of Doom* game, I still feel that a lot more can be done with Indy on the ST. The game is split into four sections that will keep even the best of gamers at it, but each level is a little too similar to the last for my liking, and I feel that perhaps a different game style for each level would have been better - it would certainly better reflect the action-packed film. Still, what there is in *The Last Crusade* is good, with a large Indy sprite walking around large, well-drawn backdrops. Completing the various tasks isn't going to be easy, and the task can be frustrated by the need for pixel-perfect positioning before you jump up onto a ledge, but even so, this is a more than adequate film licence.

SM



Climbing out of the airborner zeppelin, Indy 'borrows' a bi-plane for the ride to safety.

protect himself by giving any attackers a good right-hander; but as he explores, he will come across a glowing circle, which is, in fact, his faithful bull-whip. Collecting it allows you up to five cracks at the enemy, although extra whips can be collected.

If Indy successfully locates the glowing cross and makes good his escape, he is pursued by the furious archeologists onto the back of a moving circus train. It is not only the archeologists that are unhappy about Jones's free ride, the circus animals don't take too kindly to it either, and begin attempting to dislodge the young adventurer from their respective roofs. As Indy walks towards the train's engine, rhinos stick their sharp horns through the train's thin tarpaulin roof and attempt to impale him; while giraffes make their presence known by trying to knock him off by moving their long necks up and down. If Indy comes into contact with any of these he will topple off the train, and as if this were not enough to contend with, there are gun-toting archeologists waiting for him too!

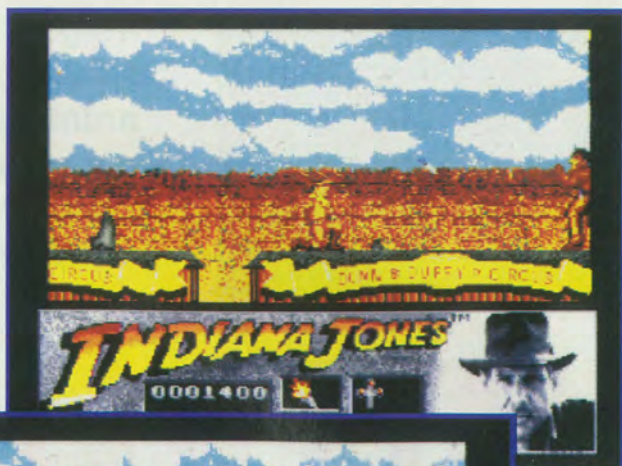
The action now continues in 1938, with a fully-grown Jones in search of his kidnapped father in the Nazi stronghold, Castle Brunwald. Hitler's jack-booted cronies have kidnapped Indy's father so that they can take from him a book about the whereabouts of the mythical Holy Grail. Before Indy can rescue his imprisoned father, he must first find a way into the castle which, like the tunnel system in the first section, is a veritable maze of catacombs. This time, Doctor Jones's life will be endangered by energy-sapping fireballs and flambe rats, not to mention deadly lava pits. When Indy finally makes it through to the castle, he must make his way out using whipping posts and wall-trellises to get about. His ultimate objective is to escape via the main door, but he must be careful not to fall into the yawning chasms that punctuate the area.

After escaping from the dark confines of Castle Brunwald, Indy hitches a lift in a Nazi Zeppelin. Unfortunately, they have been alerted to his presence, so Indy must make his way through the massive dirigible, and escape via the small planes that are tethered to the airship. Once again,



The action now takes us to the Nazi-controlled Castle Brunwald, as Indy searches for his kidnapped father.

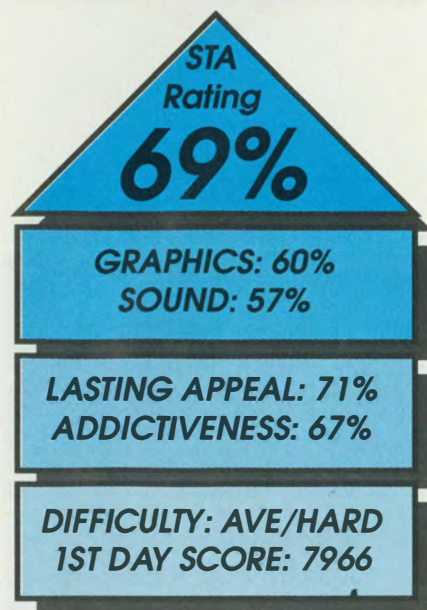
As the archeologists give chase, a young Indy makes his way across the roofs of a moving circus train. As he does so, he finds that the animals don't like anyone hitching a free ride, and attempt to remove him in any way possible.

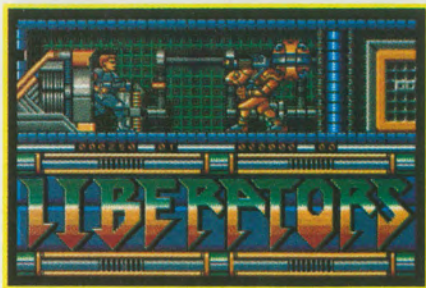


Lucas and Spielberg films are always preceded by loads of hype, but at the end of the day, the movies are damned entertaining. U.S. Gold are also renowned for their enthusiastic advertizing, and likewise, the games are invariably of a high standard, Indy is no exception. Software developers, Tiertex, converted the original Indy arcade game, and so they were the natural choice for Indy's last adventure. The game adheres to the storyline and incorporates a confusing and disorientating maze, infuriating platform game-play and plenty of whip-crackin' action. Although a high-profile license, the game is set at a high level of difficulty to test the most adept arcade player. Like the movie, it's well worth a look - after all, ol' Indy has hung up his hat and whip for good.

JS

the screen is split into a platform-and-ladders format, with the helmet-wearing guards patrolling the ship. Once you have secured yourself a flight home, it is straight to the final stage in which Indy must rescue his father and collect the Holy Grail. This level differs from the others in so far as that it is played over a horizontally-scrolling area, and requires slightly more skill and good timing. Indy begins to the left of the screen, with a large expanse of platforms standing between him and the grail - not to mention his father's safety. A heart icon next to Indy's status panel shows the state of Henry Jones's health, and should the heart stop beating then Henry is dead - effectively, a time limit. As Indy runs from left to right, he must avoid deadly buzz-saws and spell the word JEHOVAH on special blocks. Failure to do this last task correctly, causes the ground to crumble away, killing Indy instantly. **STA**





"Hey dudes, here's a message for all you party animals! Exocet are holding a 'Hell Raiser' party on the planet Hazbal."

EXOCET (£19.95)

HELLRAISER

Hell Raiser is a strange little game. One section is reminiscent of both Trantor and Obliterator, and only lasts about five screens, whilst the horizontally-scrolling shoot'em-up rates as one of the hardest I have ever played. Neither section is particularly good, with the graphics being very weak and colourless, and the lack of variety causes the game to get boring after about an hour. A very poor release from Exocet, who have never really followed up the quality of Foundations Waste.

SM

I can really sympathize with the poor bloke in this scenario. He's just booked up a four week holiday in the Bathsheban Riviera, which is simply lovely at this time of year, when the boss at the Liberator Corp cancels all leave. Why? Because those goddam Hell Raisers are up to their old tricks, and this time it's serious. They've seized control of the defence system on Hazbal, a crucial space trading station, and Interstellar trading has ground to a halt. What's worse is that the outer worlds rely on this vital trading link for their sustenance. As usual, you are the only man for the job and your task is to sneak up on the Hell Raisers and blast them clean out of the galaxy. Although the game is billed as a horizontal-scrolling shoot'em-up, surprisingly the mission begins inside the space trading station, which has been infiltrated by the Hell Raisers. You appear as a large sprite, in human form,

carrying a fearsome-looking weapon and a mean and miserable expression on your face - after all, four weeks in paradise have been postponed thanks to those thoughtless Hell Raisers.

With responsive joystick control, you move the disgruntled liberator around the ship with one aim - to blast as many of the vacation wreckers as possible. But those infuriating little bbb...blighters have reprogrammed the security system to seek and destroy you. Each section of the ship is patrolled and protected by an ingenious security system, with variform robot guards firing lasers at all heights, forcing you to jump, duck and fire to evade a fatal blast. You can drop down elevator shafts to lower floors, or 'energise' from one teleporter to another. With the infiltrators devastated, and the wayward security system destroyed, you must find the airlock that leads to your

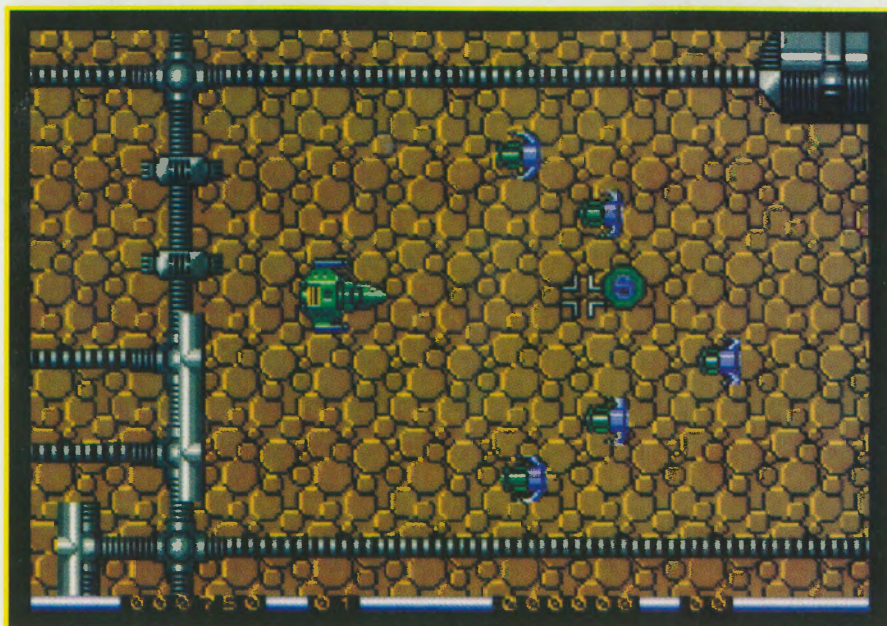
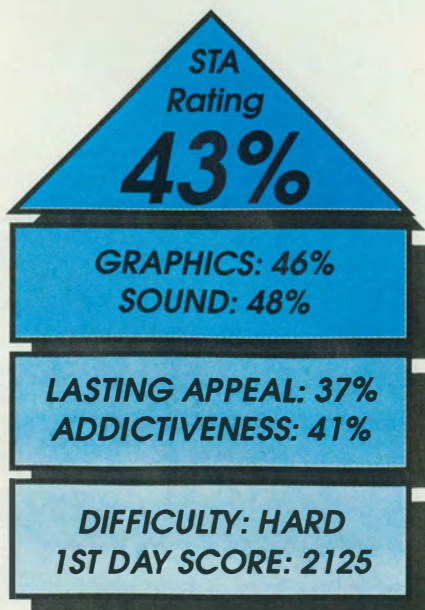
Two types of gameplay in one package seems to be a very popular idea these days, but the link between the two games is becoming more and more tenuous. The first part of Hell Raisers was obviously inspired by Psygnosis's Obliterator. The graphics are great, with big sprites and excellent animation, but the game is rather easy and, after a few goes, very predictable. The main game, the horizontal shoot'em-up, is also well presented, but the problem here is the complete opposite - it's too difficult and the assault craft has no shield protection and no extra lives. If the Obliterator clone had played a more important part in the game and the shoot'em-up was more thoughtfully implemented, this would have been a cracking game. But for a lick of tar, they've spoilt the ship, as my Granny used to say.

JS

assault craft. Now the game lives up to its original promise as your craft hurtles horizontally across Hazbal to intercept the airborne Hell Raisers.

The scrolling is swift as the first squadron of Hell Raisers sweep across the screen in formation, protecting larger enemy assault craft which scream towards you with guns blazing. The fire-button activates a single laser cannon, but extra firepower can be sought as you set about spoiling the Hell Raisers' party. On destruction, the large enemy assault ships leave bonuses with letters such as 'S' for aiming sight. Flying over these letters absorbs the bonus, although there is nothing useful to be had; no shield protection or extra lives. You literally have one chance to defeat the Hell Raisers and return Hazbal to normal. Unfortunately, failure is inevitable and if you sustain a hit, it is fatal and you must return to the trading ship and find another assault craft.

STA



The Terrain is fraught with hidden mines and tank traps.



*"So you've passed your CSEs,
and now you've got in on a YOP scheme
as a trainee robotronic engineer at Cybernetic
Control - God help us!"*

NIGHTDAWN

MAGIC BYTES (£19.95)

You've been posted on one of the I.R.C.'s space freighters in charge of a remote control robot. Your job is to control the droid and explore the weird artificial planet, Nightdawn. Your general lack of experience means that the federation will only trust you with an old and dispensable QE2 droid, and you must earn their trust before they'll let you get your hands on the latest, Explorer ND-1. Spread over the planet, there are five test levels in which you must prove yourself. But the test areas on the planet are man-made and specifically designed to be confusing and beguiling. The planet appears to be three dimensional, but in reality it is a matrix

projection, and the first venue, the training arena, is fraught with hazards. You control your QE2 droid from the safety of a so-called tele-video, with remote control. A freighter delivers your droid and the test commences. Using the joystick to steer the droid, you must carefully guide it along the matrix and avoid falling off. There are ten platforms, one on every level, and each is a complex, labyrinthian pathway.

Hidden beneath the surface are minefields which could blast the droid clean off the planet and, additionally, what our German cousins describe as 'Airbomb Ejaculators', although I'm not sure that's quite the word they should have used. If you hesitate, these airbombs hurtle towards the droid, and so you must keep moving at all times. The platforms are fraught with in-built hazards such as laser barriers, and you must search for the appropriate on/off switch in order to pass through. Escalators can also be switched on which enables the droid to travel to another level. To aid your search, all on/off switches are numbered. Additionally, transporters enable you to travel to a different area, although, like the escalators, they only travel one way. All keys and switches are operated by positioning the droid over the pad and pressing the fire-button.

There are a number of items to collect which are designed to help you, and these include lasers to blast away anything that gets in the way, and a radar which pinpoints the exact exit bearing, enabling you to plot a much more direct course to the next level. But by far the most useful tool is a mine detector. There is a display panel

Behind Nightdawn's dreary graphics and non-existent sound, there is a deceptively playable game. At first, I wandered across the bas-relief landscape aimlessly, occasionally losing a life to the accurate gun turrets I came across. Then I managed to collect an unobtrusive red icon that gave me the ability to fire, and after that a useful icon that allowed me to spot the previously hidden mines - after that, it was all plain sailing! Opening the doors with the correct pass-key isn't particularly taxing, but I enjoyed the limited challenge that was on offer. Not an essential buy, but I liked it!

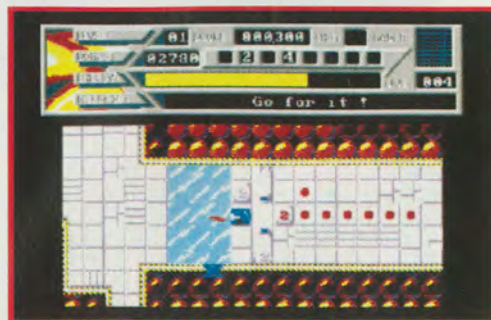
SM

The idea of Nightdawn is an original one as you happily find numbered keys and gain access to other areas of the matrix. There is enough opposition to keep you amused and, once you have found weaponry, you can blast airbombs and enemy tanks to your heart's content. The general presentation of the game is up to Magic Bytes's usual standard, with slick scrolling and parallax. But my main criticism is that the objective of the game is not made clear, and so this lack of an obvious goal could put people off, which would be a shame. All in all, Nightdawn offers something quite different, but I hope Magic Bytes package it with more comprehensive instructions.

JS

at the top of the screen which informs you on your progress and describes any special conditions that you come across. It takes time to come to grips with the objective of the game and how to move around freely. But once you are familiarized with the matrix, the game amounts to collecting kits for survival, replenishing the droid's energy and, of course, survival. Once you have proved yourself on the training ground, you are considered to be trustworthy and the I.R.C. issue you with the latest and most expensive robot. Now you can fulfil your dreams as a Robotronic engineer.

STA



Commanding your droid, via remote control, you must move around the matrix, avoiding minefields and airbombs and look for numbered keys. First you must prove that you can handle a rickety old QE2, before they'll let you get your hands on an ND-1.

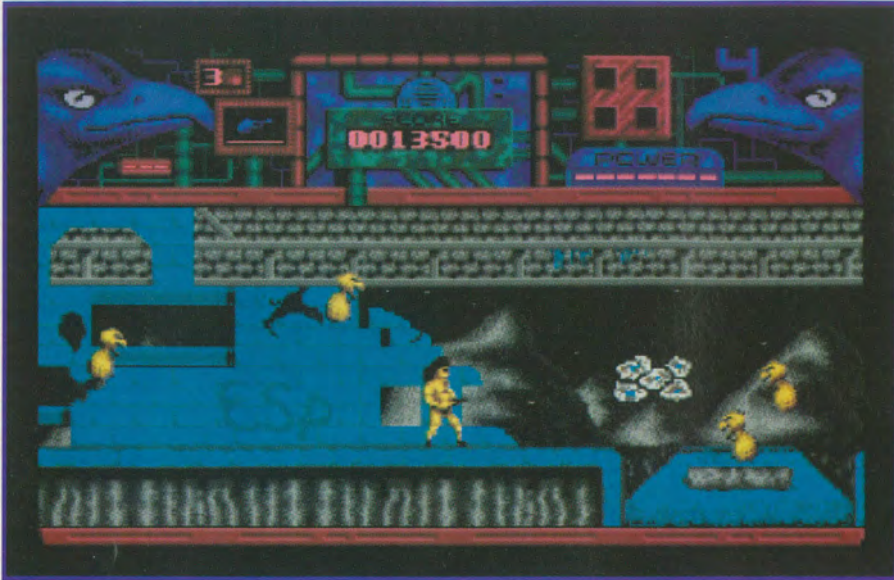
STA Rating
58%

GRAPHICS: 50%
SOUND: 48%

LASTING APPEAL: 62%
ADDICTIVENESS: 60%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 1325

Standing against the graffiti-covered second level, the SLF destroys a wave of attacking Skryksis with his inbuilt laser. When using the weaker weapon, the small creatures need two direct hits to be destroyed, but it is generally not worth wasting your larger ammunition on them.

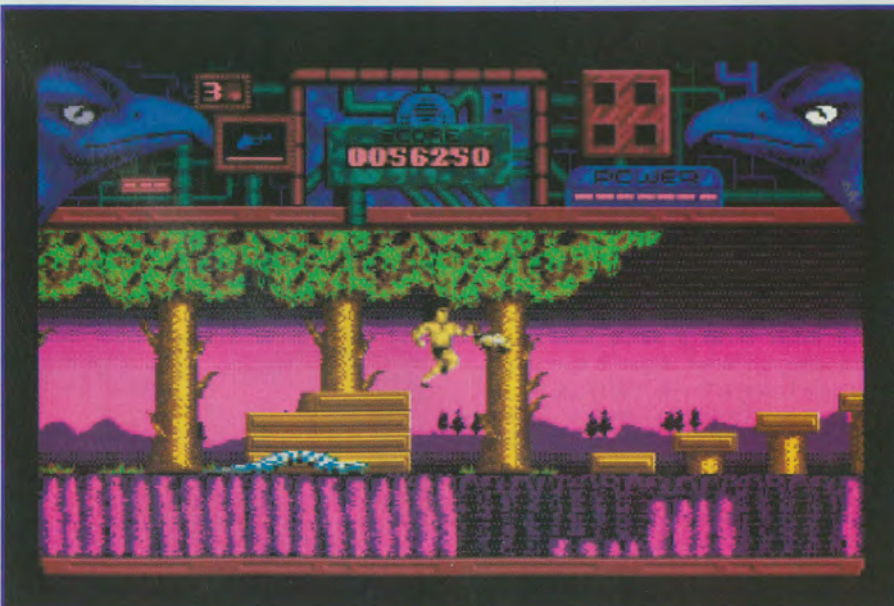


HAWKEYE

THALAMUS (£19.99)

On the edge of the known galaxy hides a tiny unassuming planet called Xamox. A peaceful planet for as long as anyone can remember, Xamox was easy prey for the nomadic space pirates, the Skryksis, who consequently ransacked the planet, leaving barren wastelands where the Xamoxians' twelve large cities had previously stood. Trying to rebuild such a great civilisation was going to be impossible all the time the remaining Skryksis were still patrolling, so the handful of survivors worked non stop for generations, constructing the one thing that could reclaim their lost world.

The result of their work was to be a cyborg, or as the Xamoxians called it, a synthetic life form (SLF). The SLF stood the height of a tall man, and was fashioned in the same way, and could perform all of the same physical functions, i.e. running, ducking and leaping. However, on its own the SLF proved to be too slow for the attacking methods required, so a special controlling computer was devised, allowing the SLF to perform breath-taking feats that it was previously unable to do. The time is now right for the SLF to liberate each of the cities, and, assuming the bio-mechanical



At the top of the screen, the hawk's right eye flashes, indicating that there is an icon to be collected in that direction.

It seems like the half-man, half-droid face from Hawkeye has been staring out of magazine adverts for ever. So what is the result of this long-awaited game? From 'The Boys Without Brains' comes an above-average platform romp, offering plenty of the sort of action which made the likes of Thundercats and Vixen so popular. So this is nothing new, but the pace of the game and the variety of gameplay is just enough to stop you questioning its legitimacy. The controls are swift and responsive and the graphical presentation is rather nice, with parallax scrolling and some changeable backdrops running through the twelve levels. Nothing new, but this is good, solid and no-fuss platform game entertainment.

JS

"Thalamus turn their attentions to the 16-bit gaming market with a conversion of their much-heralded 8-bit platform romp, Hawkeye. Don your revealing leather thong and join us as we check it out..."

I was quite looking forward to Hawkeye, especially after having listened to all the compliments the eight-bit version received. Unfortunately, I was very disappointed with the game. The basic objective of collecting artefacts whilst avoiding the various nasties is rather dated and I soon became bored with the gameplay. The graphics are well presented with the parallax background movement being the most noticeable feature. The sound effects are the standard gun and laser type you'd expect. To sum up, Hawkeye is a bland game. Its graphics and sound aren't poor, but with the mundane gameplay they soon become forgettable.

NC

role of the controlling computer, it is up to you to guide the SLF through the alien-infested levels.

Each of the twelve cities is depicted as a platform-laden horizontally-scrolling area, and scattered across each level are four pieces of a puzzle box. The SLF must make his way across the levels, collecting the puzzle pieces, whilst avoiding contact with the energy-sapping Skryksis and leaping over any holes in the ground. Only when all four pieces of the puzzle have been retrieved, will the current city be saved, and the SLF allowed to access the next city. As the SLF runs and jumps in his search for the pieces, the backdrops to the level all scroll past in glorious multi-level parallax, adding a feeling of

The small square next to the SLF is one of the four missing puzzle pieces, and is collected simply by running over it. Four pieces are needed to complete each level, and once all four are in your possession, the SLF must make its way to the exit at the right of the level.



Although the graphics are attractive and the parallax scrolling impressive, I'm afraid there's no avoiding the fact that Hawkeye is a repetitive platform game. From the moment the game loads, Hawkeye shows lots of promise, with the well-animated main sprite battling against all kinds of well-defined enemies. Initially, collecting the four parts of the puzzle is fun, but once you have completed three levels performing the same task, the novelty soon wears off, leaving a very stale game. Thalamus have produced some excellent 8-bit games, but their first 16-bit showing comes as somewhat of a disappointment.

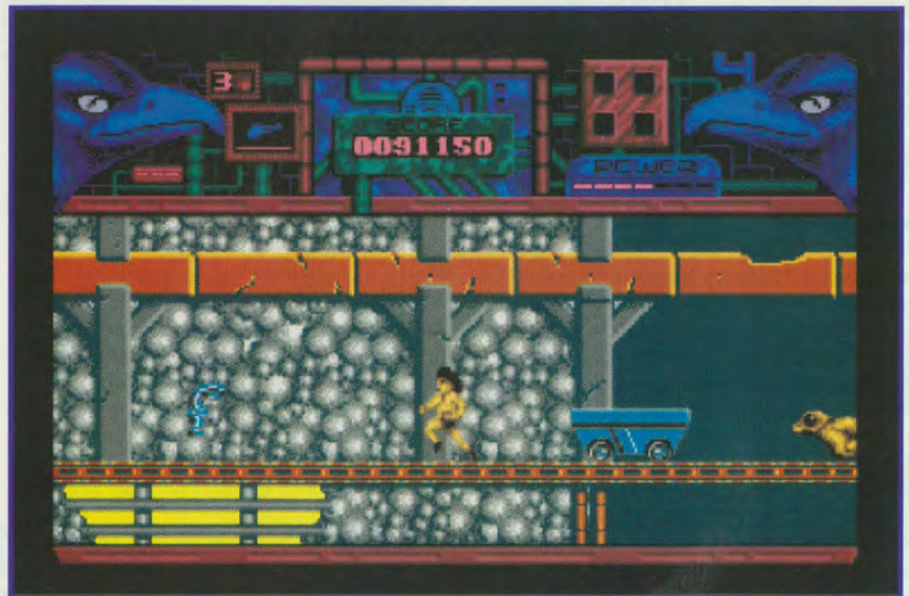
SM

depth to the play area, while above the main action, the SLF's inventory and state of health are shown as a series of icons. Our robotic hero begins the game with three lives, but constant contact with the marauding Skryksis depletes each live's energy bar, until the SLF can sustain no more hits and explodes in a flurry of sparks. However, there is no energy loss when the SLF plummets into one of a level's many chasms - instead, he instantly loses a life! For the most part, the guarding enemy are small reptilian creatures that either fly or shuttle across the ground in groups. However, as the SLF reaches later cities, larger creatures such as gorillas, club-wielding golems and dinosaurs make an appearance, and contact with these severely depletes your health bar.

To combat the odds, the SLF is armed with four different weapons, each of which are accessed via the relevant function keys. To begin with, the cyborg is armed with a standard military laser which yields unlimited, but weak fire and is more than adequate for disposing of the smaller aliens. But for the larger of the Skryksis inhabitants, the SLF will have to use his machine pistol or his pulse laser - the only guns capable of destroying the lumbering beasts quickly! Unlike the weapon you begin with, the stronger weapons have limited ammunition, so they are best saved for the larger creatures they were intended for. In

addition to the ammunition and energy remaining pointers, each side of the SLF's inventory is guarded by two large hawk heads. These impressive birds aren't just there for aesthetic purposes, though. As the SLF traverses the level, their eyes flash, indicating which way the SLF should go to find the missing puzzle pieces. Once the location of the piece is found, the SLF must simply run past it to collect it. Once retrieved, the piece will then be displayed in his inventory panel, along with the rest of his icons. However,

not all of the items the SLF will come across will be puzzle pieces, and some of the objects he collects will aid him in his battle, offering enhancements such as rapid-fire. Once all four pieces have been collected, though, the SLF must be guided to the exit to the right of the level, where bonuses will be added for remaining time and weapons **STA**



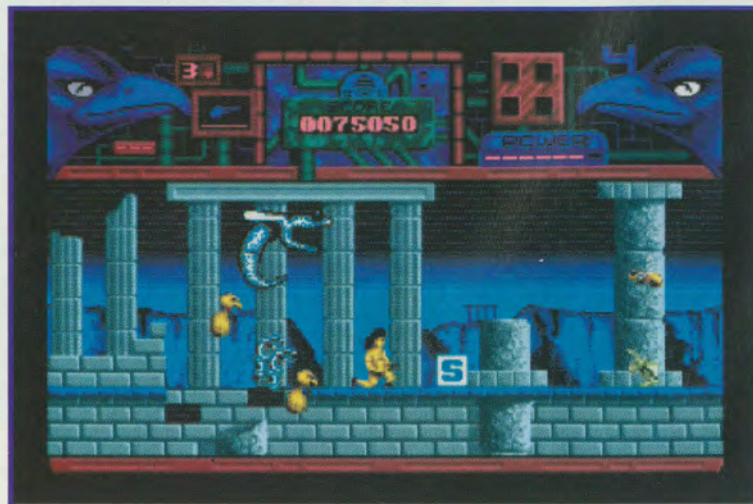
Throughout the game, the SLF comes under attack from all manner of strange creatures and items. Normally, the attacks come from waves of ground or air-based lizards, but later in the game you will encounter rogue spiders, leopards and the energy-sapping runaway carts that are shown above.

STA Rating
59%

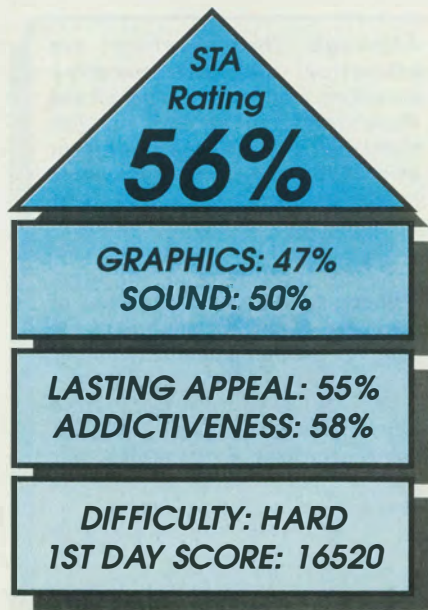
GRAPHICS: 60%
SOUND: 48%

LASTING APPEAL: 58%
ADDICTIVENESS: 63%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: 48100



The collection of the pieces will often be interrupted by other collectable icons. These must be collected before another piece appears, and are also quite useful, offering such luxuries as replenished health and ammunition and rapid-fire.



Approaching from the inky blackness of space comes a huge, malevolent creature. Nobody is sure what it is, and the Earth authorities are hoping it will pass, leaving their inconspicuous little planet safe. They had been warned by other governments that the creature has already absorbed several planets, leaving no more than a dead husk behind, but still they did nothing, choosing to ignore the increasing threat. But now, despite the bureaucrat's hopes, it is heading towards Earth. Only now, when it seems too late, do the authorities make a move, and this move is going to be their last hope.

You, of course, are this last hope - the pilot of the Dominator of the title. The Dominator is the latest in Earth's attack forces, and piloting this beauty you must actually enter the planet-absorbing creature and destroy its very heart. Such is the creature's magnitude, though, that within its body there are swarms of deadly creatures, contact with which will instantly destroy your Dominator. The game begins with you flying vertically into the thing's outer skin, and as you make your way through the organic-looking scrolling level, you are attacked by the first wave of the creatures. As can be expected of a planet's last hope, the Dominator is armed

Yeah, another shooty-shooty game. System 3's Dominator, however, offers little that's new. We've all seen the nasty organic scenery before, and we've all used the R-Typesque weaponry. The difficulty level has been set a tad too high, and novice players may well be put off by this. It is, however, the cramped screen and dodgy sprite detection that spoil the game the most. For me, Dominator is a poor game. Maybe if it had been released a year earlier it would have been hailed as a wonder. Unfortunately, I'm left with a feeling of 'been there - seen it - done it'.

NC

"Strap yourself within the confines of the latest in hi-tech blasting - the Dominator, and prepare to let those alien scumbags have it!"

DOMINATOR

SYSTEM 3 (£19.99)

I'm partial to the odd shoot'em-up, but Dominator isn't one I would play by choice. First impressions are favourable, with the game featuring some very nice organic graphics and smooth scrolling, but my main quibble with Dominator is the dodgy sprite detection and the slow firing rate of your ship. OK, so the latter complaint can be rectified with the add-on weaponry, but even when you collect this you invariably collide with an alien that wasn't even touching you. In addition, when you are making your way through some of the narrow passageways in a level, your ship will move to one side for no reason at all, normally costing you a life. Dominator is a nice looking shoot'em-up, but it has too many faults and, as such, it can't really be recommended.

SM

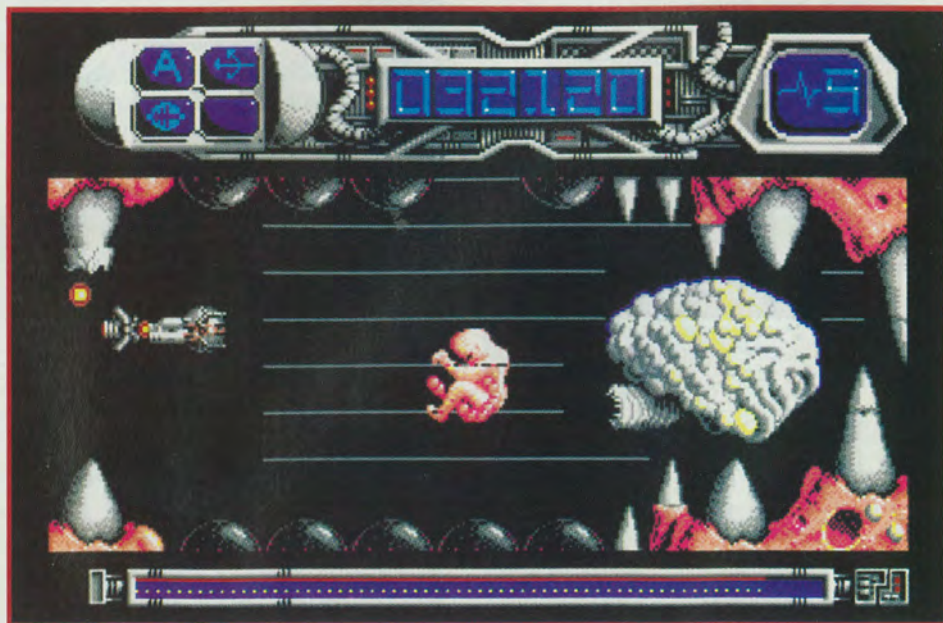


with the latest in weaponry, and as you avoid contact with the manoeuvring aliens, you can pick them off with your front-mounted guns. Occasionally, floating down the screen along with the numerous attack waves, you will be able to add valuable accessories to your craft. When collected, these items enhance the power of your ship's firepower. However, if you come into contact with an alien

and die, all of your extra firepower is instantly lost.

Having successfully negotiated the tortuous caverns and destroyed several waves of aliens, all that remains is to kill the end-of-level guardian. As is becoming the norm, this large creature must be shot dozens of times, and whilst you are firing at him you must also avoid the bullets and missiles that he LOBS at you. Once he is no more, the next individually-loaded level begins. Although the first level of Dominator is vertically-scrolling, from level two onwards the game switches to that of a horizontal-scroller, with your Dominator fighting its way through the many strange caverns that make up the huge creature, and the attack waves and the large guardians appearing from the right.

STA



Armed to the teeth with such luxuries as rapid fire and rear lasers, the dominator prepares to send level 3's guardian and it's foetal protector into the hereafter. Sufficient shots must make contact with the brain, until eventually it explodes.

Your Commando type 'Mech, a lethal fighting machine, especially seeing how it's been converted.

Type : COMMANDO	ENGINE ■■■
Tons : 25	GYRO ■■■
Pilot: Rex	SENSORS ■■■
Rider: Russ	HEAT SINKS ■■■■■
Armament	HEAT
Med Laser	■■■
Med Laser	■■■
Med Laser	■■■
Small Laser	■■■
Small Laser	■■■
Small Laser	■■■
Small Laser	■■■
Small Laser	■■■
Small Laser	■■■
Med Laser	■■■
Loc	
LA	
RA	
RT	
LL	
LL	
RL	
RL	
CT	
CT	
H	
Actuators	
Left Leg	OK
Right Leg	OK
Left Arm	OK
Right Arm	OK

It's been a long, long time since I last played an Infocom game. Battletech continues with the company's policy to produce high quality games. For those of you who have played the original board-game, Battletech isn't quite how I expected it to be. Indeed, all the characters and machinery are present but the gameplay seems to be a more hide-and-seek type affair. The graphics are well presented for a game of this type, while the sound is somewhat poor. Interaction with the game, be it either with the keyboard or mouse, is very simple and makes playing the game more fun. Overall, Battletech isn't a bad little RPG, but one that you should try out before you commit yourself.

JS

BATTLETECH

--- INFOCOM (£24.99) ---

"Transforming a top-selling Sci-Fi role-playing game onto a computer screen is no easy task. BattleTech is Infocom's first role-playing game; just how have The Master Story Tellers fared?"

BattleTech is the brain child of the FASA Corporation and, like Dungeons and Dragons, it too has gathered a cult following. Seeing the potential for a computerised game, Infocom went about securing the rights to produce such a game. Having agreed a deal with FASA, Infocom decided to call upon the talent of Westwood

Associates, the team responsible for classics such as Phantasia III and Summer Games. This is the result of their work, The Crescent Hawk's Inception.

The game begins as you, Jason Youngblood, arrive at the Pacifica Training School, one of the Lyran Commonwealth's premiere BattleMech Training facilities. It is here where you must learn to pilot the great BattleMech robots and graduate to the respected ranks of a MechWarrior. Of course, you'll also have to become proficient in other skills. Both combat and mechanical training programmes

are available. Fees for these ancillary courses, however, must be paid by the pupil. Sponsorship money from your parents arrives at regular intervals but, at only fifteen C-Bills a time, it doesn't go far. Luckily, there is a ComStar station on the complex. Wise pupils invest their money here in order to pay for more expensive extras, such as weapons and armour. The primary reason for your stay, however, is to graduate, and successful completion of the various BattleTech training missions will see you taking another step towards that proud day. Before being allowed to start a mis-

Infocom? I thought they'd stopped writing games for the ST. Battletech is somewhat of a sidestep for the Masters of Adventure, after all it is a role-playing game. So, the question is: how have they fared? Well, actually, quite well. Although BattleTech isn't really my type of game I did enjoy having a crack at it. The game's graphics aren't really anything special, the cartoon-style out-takes being their redeeming feature. The sound was barely noticeable, but then again it isn't really needed anyway. As for the gameplay, I found it slow and rather repetitive. To sum up: Battletech is a good game, but one that should only be considered by RPG fans.

SM

Jason	800
Rex	800
Edward	800
Russ	800
C-Bills:	7888

That Stinger's kind of light on armor, you know? We've got a new kit to upgrade these 'Mechs: we take off the jump jets, weld on a ton of armor, and plug in two medium lasers. That's 7 lasers, total! You could fry a lot of 'Mechs with that machine.

All for the incredibly low price of only 13200 C-bills. Want to modify your 'Mech?

Yes No

C-bills: 7888.

◀ A 'Mech garage, the boys in here can perform wonders and the speed shop crew can drastically improve your fire-power!

sion, you must first complete a small examination. The screen display shows a detailed picture of a WSP-1A Wasp BattleMech. Your examiners ask three questions relating to the Mech's make-up; answer them correctly and you'll be invited to pilot the Mech of your choice. Tests range from simple reconnaissance missions to difficult combat encounters. During the breaks in your training programme you should build up your other skills.

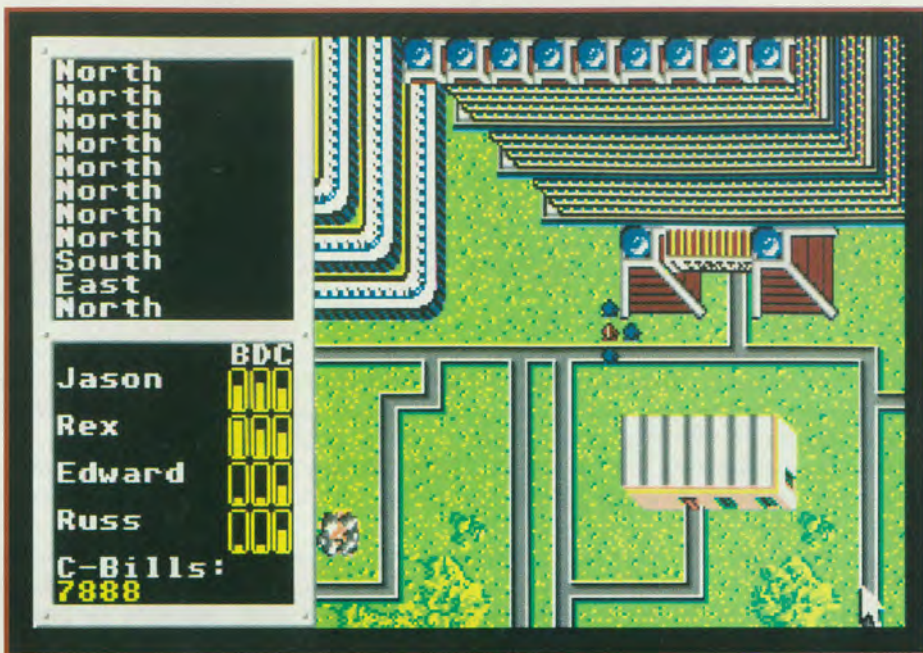
During combat sequences the action is interrupted by short animated sequences. Cartoon graphics, in the style of Japanese 'Monga' comics, chart Jason's progress. However, it is during one such training exercise that you realise the complex has been invaded by Kuritan forces. Gallantly you attempt to beat off the raiders. However, you are no match for their skills. Having sustained several direct hits you are forced to eject from your Mech and hide until the attack is over.

Looking around, you see that the complex has been destroyed. The only place left for you to go is the nearby StarPort. Along the way you will no doubt encounter mercenary humans



who are just spoiling for a fight. As always, the action can be controlled either from the keyboard or by mouse - the latter being the more convenient. Before the skirmish begins you are given the chance to elude your would-be attackers. However, the Mech Warrior's code states: "you're trained to be a fighter, not a librarian". With this in mind you decide to take on your assailants. Learning to defend yourself is a vital lesson and, if you don't change out of your Lyran uniform, you

The ComStar station, inside which you may deal in shares.



may need to enter combat again.

Once inside the StarPort you must begin your real mission - to round up the remaining members of your father's elite fighting force, the Crescent Hawks. With these fearless warriors you must lead the uprising against both the House of Kurita and the other Successor Houses.

The game's packaging comes complete with a detailed instruction manual which, incidentally, also covers the Youngblood family tree and the Succession Wars.

A weapon and Mech recognition guide is also included, contained within which are valuable details which relate to most military hardware you're likely to encounter. Finally, for real fans, there is a fold-out poster of the game's artwork with which to adorn your favourite wall.

STA

Hmmm, a role-playing game from Infocom. Well, I must admit I was a little sceptical. BattleTech, however, is a really good game. Together with Westwood Associates, Infocom have made the usually complex world of BattleTech very simple to understand. The game's graphics are excellent, especially for a game of this type. The comic book cartoon-style animation is also very well done, although I soon found myself turning this option off as it slowed down the action. The game's sound is virtually non-existent, only the standard bleeps being noticeable. To summarize, BattleTech is an excellent role-playing game, one that should especially appeal to fans of the SSI series.

NC



Knowing where you are going is always handy. An overhead map is available and will display any areas you have visited.

STA
Rating
68%

TEXT/GRAPHICS: 63%
GAMEPLAY: 68%

LASTING APPEAL: 75%
ADDICTIVENESS: 69%

So you've completed that game... **What's next?**

Is there 'life after joystick'? Yes. **ST World** is the only magazine in the UK which specialises in the more serious side of ST computing. If you want to find out more about how your ST works, and how it can help to improve your lifestyle, then tune in to **ST World** every month.

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STA
Rating
59%

TEXT/GRAPHICS: 54%
GAMEPLAY: 59%

LASTING APPEAL: 67%
ADDICTIVENESS: 61%

"It's 1942 and Hitler has refused to evacuate Rommel's Axis army from North Africa. In the West the American forces have taken Morocco and Algeria and are pushing east. The Allies are advancing cautiously but steadily from the east."

VULCAN

CCS (£19.95)

The graphics and sound for this game I found adequate. The game, however, was a just a little to simplistic for my taste. The limited availability of air support, the over-simplification of commands and data on the units, all went to make the game a bit unrealistic for me. If you're willing to have your commands reduced to move, attack or hold, then the game will probably appeal to you. I prefer something with a bit more flexibility and detail.

AM

Vulcan has a number of options that can be selected at the beginning of the game. Five of these allow you to modify the scenario in such a way as to change the historical conditions of the encounter. They range from Malta being controlled by the Germans, to the DAK having been destroyed in Libya. Another option is for movement to be Open or Hidden. With Open selected all units are displayed on the map. With Hidden movement only units adjacent to your own are shown. This makes the game more interesting as you are never sure where the next



With the air attack completed, both the British and American troops prepare to put pressure on Rommel's Rats.

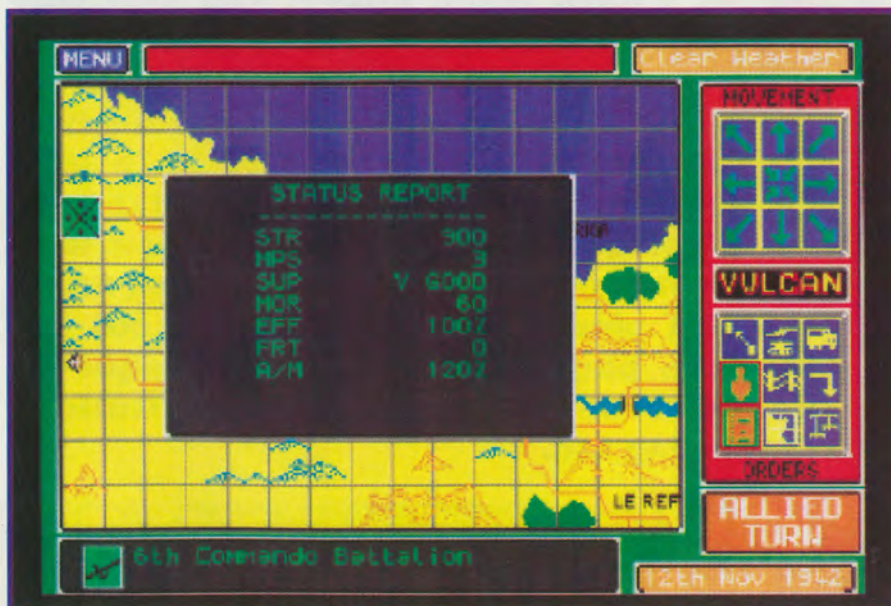
attack is coming from.

All interaction with the game is carried out using the mouse. During the Orders phase each unit is highlighted in turn. Commands are given to units by using the mouse to point to an icon depicting the required order. The commands available are simple: Move, Attack, Dig In and Fortify. Each unit is either a Division, Brigade, Battalion or an HQ and is displayed on the map area by an icon. These icons show what type of unit it is, i.e. Tank,

Motorised Infantry etc. The name of the unit highlighted is shown at the bottom of the map display.

Once all of the units have been assigned orders, the Air Attacks order phase begins. Air operations are not always available due to weather conditions or the non-operational status of the unit. It takes up to four days for a unit to become operational once it has carried out a mission. If a unit is available, the player selects the type of operation to be carried out, either Reconnaissance or Ground Attack. Air operations are resolved immediately. If during the Combat phase a unit sustains too much damage it will retreat.

STA



A status report shows that the Germans still have a fair chance of surviving.

I enjoyed trying to foil Rommel's attack at Kasserine Pass, then to go on and take Tunis. Single handed I planned, executed and won a campaign against one of Germany's ablest generals - or was he a Field Marshal? The graphics of this game are OK, and while the orders are limited they are adequate. It could have done with supplying more details of the units and how they were faring in battle.

SK



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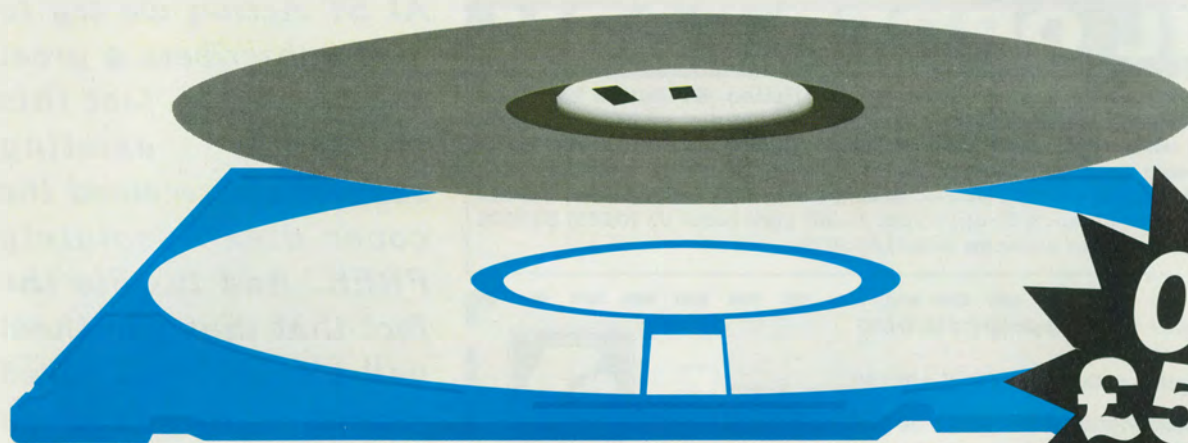
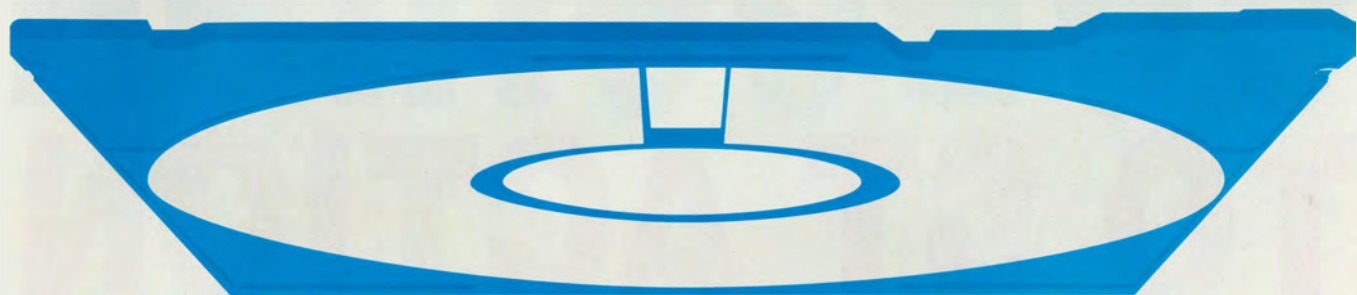
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ST ACTION

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£260

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WHY SILICA SHOP?

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Do you already own a computer
If so, which one do you own?

DTP

YAK'S YAK

A man, a sunny day, a convenient piece of beach. The man sits down. From out of a plastic bag he produces a small, black, metal, oblong device. He plugs headphones in; inserts a shiny metallic disk; presses the PLAY button; settles a pair of ultra-light 'phones over his ears; and lays back to soak up the rays. Perfect Floyd issues from the 'phones; Floyd as perfect as the day it was recorded - Floyd undistorted by any wow, flutter or hiss.

Eventually, the Floyd comes to an end, & the man stirs himself and produces from the plastic bag (a Tesco's bag with blue and orange design) another box - small, black, and far sexier than anything ever produced by Clive Sinclair. He inserts a tiny, flat card; a display screen within the device lights up revealing cartoon-like images. Using controls mounted upon the surface of the device, the man can interact with the scenes displayed upon the screen. Pretty soon he loses himself in this activity, and the summer air is filled with happy sounds of zapping and blasting.

The above scenario, if you'd put it to someone maybe ten years ago when the ZX80 hadn't yet come out, would have seemed like something you might have in maybe forty or fifty years' time. Beam it back further, say to 1962, the year Yak was born, and it would seem like pure science-fiction. (Asimov, in his first Foundation novel, describes something suspiciously like a pocket calculator, and ascribes it to a technology millennia in the future). That's one of the main things I like about being involved with the emergence of computer technology, even on a relatively insignificant level as a videogame designer: no sooner have you got used to one level of hardware capability (wow! the Vic-20! colour, sound, and all for less than 300 quid!!!) than something else comes out and really blows your mind.

Computer technology is advancing at a ridiculous rate - so fast that it's almost impossible to predict what will happen next. The sci-fi books I used to read as a kid always involved some kind of way-out technology: spaceflight, computers, antigravity, matter-transportation... Unfortunately, most of that stuff is still just science fiction. We flew to the Moon and then lost interest; you'll not get from Waterloo to King's Cross by transmat beam just yet; and 'g' remains obstinately at 9.8 meters/sec. Computers, though, have outstripped the fiction to create a reality beyond the imagination of

even the most freaked-out and switched-on of those early sci-fi authors. Who amongst them could have predicted the CD player - perfect music from a billion numbers on a silver disc? Or a PC-Engine running R-Type? (one PC-Engine card has the data capacity of 1,000 ZX-80s..)

The point I'm trying to make here is just that it's amazing what we're doing with computers, and in such a short time. It's only a few years ago that I was perfectly content with 3.5K and a tape deck for storage, and yet here I am now with 4,000K RAM and 20,000K disk storage and thinking nothing of it. I shudder to think of what I'll be using ten years from now.

I've been thinking about all this just recently, in the wake of my latest techno-freakout which arrived with the announcement of Atari's new game console. After all, a game console with all the power of the Amiga (and then some) taking 16-Meg cartridges and weighing only 1 pound with its own flat colour display screen, is quite something to wrap your brain around. Atari must be quite pleased about acquiring the new machine from Epyx, being as it allows them to excrete from a great height upon the hapless Japanese heads of Nintendo, who launched their Game Boy hand-held at the same time (only black-and-white and only about as powerful as the 8-bit Nintendo console). The Game Boy is a nice little hand-held; the Atari device is more like a hand-held arcade machine, with its 16 MHz CPU, hardware sprite scaling, and Amiga-like colour palette. Atari have produced a device which every single person who plays videogames will want to own, and stand to stomp the Nintendo offering into the ground. This must be especially satisfying for Atari, who have seen their virtual dominance of the game-console market in the USA usurped by Nintendo almost overnight. Good luck to them, I say.

It's been quite an eventful month. Firstly, I've sussed the soundchip on the Konix, and it's awesome; my first Konix game will have 12-channel, full stereo tunes and FX. The soundchip on the Konix is not strictly just a soundchip: it's basically a separate RISC processor running very fast and hooked up to two 14-bit DACs. You generate your waveforms in realtime & stuff them out the DACs. You can have as many 'soundchips' as you care to program for. FM synthesis? Sampling? Weird stuff? Just say the word.

Then there was the Atari show - Atari themselves not there, hardly any software houses, just the usual



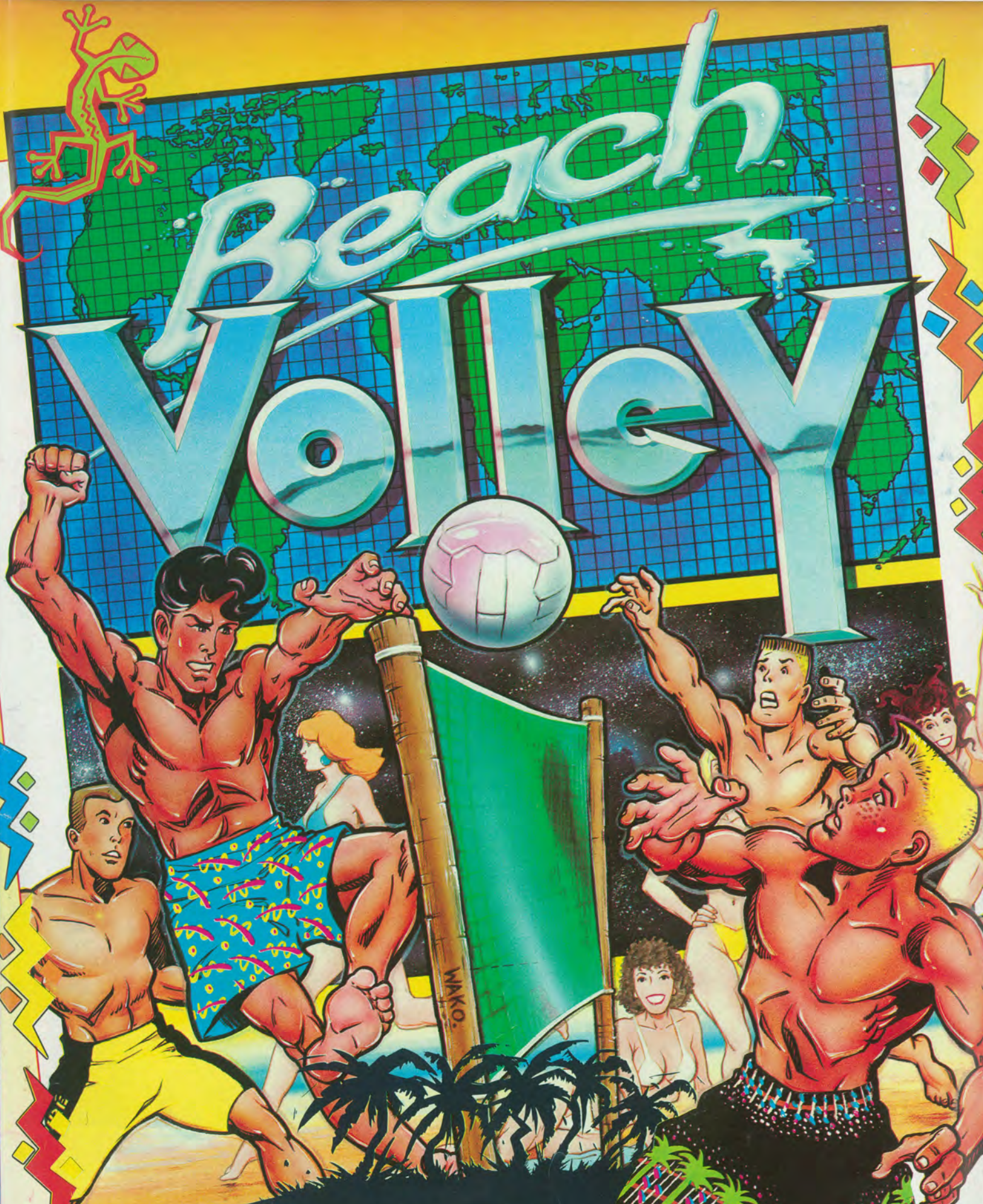
cheap-disks-and-software outfits. There were loads of people who've never seen the Llamasoft games in the shops because the distributors won't buy them as they're too cheap. I took the opportunity to buy two games: 'Forgotten Worlds' and 'Tetris', which I somehow managed to miss first time around and which I picked up for a fiver. 'Forgotten Worlds' I have found to be an average-to-fairly-good blaster, but not really living up to all the hype it's had before release. I remember reading an article about the game's transition to the 16-bit where the programmers made a big deal of the fact that the dragon's neck at the end of level 2 is animated as a single sprite rather than as a linked chain of smaller ones. Very impressive, until you get to the end of level 2 and find that the aforementioned animation only has three frames.

The game I've been playing most recently, though, is 8-bit Atari 'Star Raiders'. I'm down in Tadley at the moment for an extended sequence of Pink Floyd concerts, and in between gigs I've been thrashing the Zylons across the galaxy. Forget 16-bit Star Raiders: pretty it may be, Star Raiders it ain't. The one and only true Star Raiders is the 8-bit Atari 400/800 version, a game which I rate as the best 3-D shoot'em-up on any system, anywhere. Not a vector in sight, a mere 12-pixel starfield, and blocky graphics, but gameplay which is unequalled in its sense of 'being there'. Feel the adrenalin pump as you warp into a Zylon sector and emerge with a Zylon Cruiser blasting your front shields and a Zylon Base Star up your ass. Star Raiders is a miracle of programming. It's the best 3-D shoot'em-up (forget Elite, forget Virus) and it was coded, in 8K, in 1979. It's well worth investing in a cheap 8-bit Atari (I picked up an old '400 for thirty quid at a show not long ago) just to run this game. Think about that next time you get ready to fork out over twenty quid on some crummy arcade licence.

Must go now. Need all my energy for the last Floyd gig tomorrow...



YaK
(but you can call me Warrior Class One).



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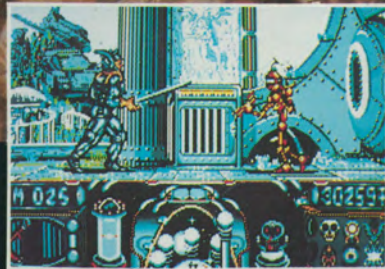
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