

# PAGE 6

ATARI USERS MAGAZINE

## XL/XE

**Type-in**  
DEMON ADVENTURE  
KLEPHT'S CASTLE

ADVENTURE  
SURVEY

ADVENTURE  
ANSWERS

DAVE T's DISCO  
Great Music

**REVIEWS**  
ZYBEX  
THUNDERFOX  
TWILIGHT WORLD  
ATARI ROMS

## ST

WORLD of  
ADVENTURE  
DUNGEONMASTER  
BEYOND ZORK

Sierra's QUEST  
Olds  
Northstar  
Goldrunner II  
Many more reviews

# ADVENTURE!



◀◀ **LEVEL 9 Interview**

# EXPAND THE CAPABILITIES OF YOUR 8 BIT SYSTEM

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Expanding the 1050 disk drive's strength is what ICD's US Doubler is all about. A true performer in the area of hardware modifications, this chip set quickly transfers your Atari into a powerhouse, radiating with innovative features never before possessed by a 1050. Features like true double density for greater storage, single and double density support, an accelerated I/O rate designed to triple your speed, when combined with **SPARTADOS** and full compatibility with existing Atari Software.

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## SPARTADOS

This Disk Operating System has been widely acclaimed as the best DOS for the 8 bit Atari range. **SPARTADOS** from ICD supports everything from 810 disk drives through RAM disks to hard disks. A special menu allows rapid transfer, erase and locking or archiving of files using only the Space Bar, Cycles, Start and Select keys. The exciting software supplied also features a 32 character keyboard buffer, intelligent switching between disk densities, a binary file game menu, subdirectories and timestamp stamping.

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A greatly improved editor allows upper or lower case letters, automatic line numbering and renumbering on request. Other features include: Advanced string handling, nine new Player Missile Graphics commands, master joystick and paddle control and structured programming commands. **CD88.00**

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**SUBMISSIONS**

PAGE 6 welcomes and encourages its readers to submit articles, programs and reviews for publication. Programs must be submitted on disk or cassette; articles should wherever possible be submitted as new files on disk. We wish to encourage your participation and do not have strict rules for submissions. If submitting an article, you, review a program or article and submit if appropriate persons will be made for all published programs and articles.

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Issue 14 July/August 1988

**"The Magazine for the Dedicated Atari User"**

ISSN No. 0952-4967

**THE CREDITS**

Full "official" credits are on page 3, here are the people who made it possible.

Lee Kilmington did the Editing

Nicola Perry looked after the ads

The Regular Contributors are ...

- Garry Francis
- Mark Hutchinson
- Matthew Jones
- John Davison
- John Davison jr
- John Swainey
- Paul Dixon

All other contributors for this issue are credited alongside their articles or programs. Thanks to everybody for contributing and thus helping others.

This issue is dedicated to Garry Francis whose support and dedication to the cause over the years has been an inspiration. Garry's writing has always been top class (I don't have words to) and he also sends long letters full of ideas and suggestions to which I will try my time to reply. Garry has become a long time friend who I have never met, maybe one day one of us will make the 12,000 mile trip!  
Thanks Garry, till now it's for you!

Barclay? You bet! But Atari is supposed to be so well run's it?

The next issue of PAGE 6 could feature YOUR article or program. So, send it!

PAGE 6 is put together almost entirely with Atari equipment and software. Hardware used: IBMPC, 1024-bit drive, 800-bit drive, 800 keyboard, modem, AEC/MS2 printer, 1000000, 5.25/3.5 monitor. Atari 5200A hard disk drive, Atari 8000 printer, MicroVista 3.5floppy software word processor, Panko Ruler, John-Yoko, Mosaic, Pango Wix and several custom-written utilities on the 4-bit Atkinson PC hardware, Thunder and Planet Street Publisher on the ST.

Copy is prepared on a IBMPC using Superwrite and writes custom-written programs and then transferred to ST via John-Yoko and PC Interconnect. It is then split into two 1.44MB and 1.2MB floppy disks which are then printed on the ST via a Commodore 64000 printer and they get into a Monotype Laserwrite printer.

Welcome to a special issue of PAGE 6 devoted to *Adventures*. Many readers have asked for another *Adventures* special ever since we did the last one a few issues ago. Or was it? It was actually Issue 10 which was almost four years ago! There have been a lot of changes since then, mostly good, some bad but I suppose that's the price of progress, of trying to make the magazine better whilst still retaining the interest in what it's all about. It's been quite a struggle putting this one together, not because we couldn't find enough material, but because we had too much! I wanted to maintain a balance as always so that those not interested in *Adventures* still had plenty to read but I fear that the *Adventures* have almost entirely taken over! Still it's only for one issue and maybe only once every four years!

Several features which are missing will return next issue and so have some excellent articles and programs lined up. So, what of this issue? You will find a superb interview with Level 9 in true Page 6 tradition, no spare space! Probably the longest and most interesting Level 9 interview you will have seen, and one of those hard decisions was which of the other six pages to leave out! There are several *Adventures* game reviews and a bumper selection of hints and tips from Garry Francis. You'll see his name and John Swainey's crop-up quite often in this issue, a couple of Atari *Adventures* fanatics who have my grateful thanks and admiration for their dedication. Anyway, read on, you will surely enjoy this *Adventures* issue even if your interests do not lie wholly within that area.

**IT'S A HARD LIFE!**

You will all know from the quality of the writing in Page 6 that we are very fortunate in having some really excellent freelance Atari enthusiasts writing for us (as opposed to "professional" journalists) but one of the real problems we have had in recent months is finding people to work for Page 6 on all the stuff that needs to be done "in house" who share that same dedication and enthusiasm. Staffed with me to be an area totally devoid of Atari enthusiasts! Our recently appointed Editorial Assistant departed quite suddenly several months ago, unable to take the pressure, leaving

you're truly burning the midnight oil (not quite right, can you hear the 2 O'clock owl). We had lots of things in the pipeline most of which have fallen behind schedule and so are back in the old situation of not being able to acknowledge contributions, letters and the like. My apologies to anyone who may feel that they have been ignored, you haven't, your contributions are still appreciated and you will get a reply as soon as possible. Hopefully we will sort this out soon, but when you are trying to produce a dedicated magazine with various supporting articles and make it better each issue whilst retaining your own interests in the subject, you could do without all the "behind the scenes" hassle. Maybe it's all too much for an "aging hippy". Maybe I'll pack it all in, but then maybe I won't!

**SUBSCRIBE PLEASE!**

Setting a magazine through the worldwide is a perilous business especially when you suddenly one month get paid several thousand pounds less than you were expecting! It's a complicated story but that sort of thing can put a small publication like ours out of business unless we can get a lot more support from the people who really care - and that's you! Please going on the newstands we have lost a lot of subscribers, presumably because it is now easy for you to pick up a copy locally, but we now really do need to get those subscribers back and hopefully pick up some more. From this issue we are introducing regular offers to get you to part with your money in exchange for a years subscription to PAGE 6. If you check the offers out, a subscription need not cost you anything!

Quite aside from any offers, we need your subscriptions to ensure that we can keep on bringing you the best of articles and programs you want, the sort that no other Atari magazine provides. If we had not lost many of our subscribers you would not have lost any of the regular features from this issue so we would simply have put in another 18 pages and you would have been able to read everything that was written but, as things stand, we can't afford the gamble, so get out your cheque book or credit card and ensure that you continue to enjoy Page 6 for many years to come!

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## ATARI GAMES CENTRES?

Trade magazine *Computer Trade Weekly* reported a couple of months ago that Atari plan to set up a number of Atari Games Centres specifically to promote the XE and 2600 consoles. If the story is true, it is to be welcomed but it does seem to be a strange case of holding the table down particularly as Atari themselves are primarily responsible for killing the horse! To their credit, Atari have recently released a number of the all time 8-bit classics on ROM and some new titles on disk and cassette but it seems that it will not be enough to bring a new resurgence of interest in the 8-bit market. Atari pushed the XE under the carpet when the ST arrived, despite the fact that it was still one of the leading machines for all sorts of use. The advertising and press hype continued many existing Atari owners that they had old and outdated machines yet that was far from the truth as Atari now seem to want to show:

If the Atari Games Centres get off the ground we will be one of the first to give support but somehow we feel that it will turn out to be just one of those ideas that seemed good at the time.

## ATARI MAKES MONEY

Atari's latest quarter results to April 1988 showed sales increasing to \$97.1 million against \$65.1 million for the same quarter last year but net income was almost identical at around \$15.25 million. During the past year however Atari purchased a major retail group in the States to handle its American sales but as that company were running heavily at a loss Atari's net income for the quarter was in fact only \$3.8 million despite the overall turnover reaching \$145 million.

Atari did much better in Europe last year as reported by our Danish correspondent. At a dealer meeting held in Holland in February a lot of interesting information regarding the European market was released by Atari with Jack Tramiel's consent.

Worldwide sales of Atari during 1987 were stated as \$353 million against \$258 million the previous year. Sales in the Benelux countries accounted for 4% of the overall turnover with the product split as 38% ST, 8%, XL/XE and 7% other. In Holland a total of 15,000 ST's were sold in 1987 the majority of which were 1040ST's. It was stated that in the UK 15,000 500ST's were sold in

December alone against only 800 1040ST's!

Of Atari's worldwide sales in 1987 64% was in Europe with a massive 28% in Germany alone. Sales were also made in the Communist countries of Poland, Czechoslovakia and East Germany although for security reasons only the 8-bit machines are sold there! Sales of the Mega ST have been relatively low in this country although it is reported that in Germany over 15,000 units have been sold, 50% of which were with the lower price.

## NewsScene

### MEDIA WHO?

Mediagistic is the new name of one of the most widely known computers in the Atari market - Azerbaijan. Apparently, Azerbaijan's activities have expanded beyond the games arena and the company executives wanted a name more appropriate to the diverse range of the company. Mediagistic seems a strange choice of name, it sounds to us more like a company selling blank disks than original computer software! Thankfully Azerbaijan will be retained as a software label so there will be no confusion amongst an simple folk!

Although known as one of the world's biggest software companies, Azerbaijan made a leading profit in the year to March 1988 for the first time in four years! Isn't it surprising when companies that we all assume are eternally successful can continue to lose money for years? Part of the successful turnaround has been due to Azerbaijan's U.K. operations where they have established their own development unit based in Southampton. The unit, known as The Software Studio, was set up 18 months ago initially to handle conversions of U.S. programs but has rapidly grown to finding and developing new and original European software.

Azerbaijan's future releases will include a number of titles licensed from the arcade including *AlienBuster*, *B-Type*, *Cyberdash*, *SD3* and *Timecaster*.

## WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP PAGE 6? and get lots of FREE goodies!

The number of newspapers in the country is vast and there is no way we can check to see that PAGE 6 is stocked in the right places or if the shops have sufficient copies, but it is vitally important that we do all we can to ensure sales are as high as possible. We can't possibly do it, but you can!

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## ULTIMA IV QUEST OF THE AVATAR

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Offers open only to UK readers. Please send your remittance of £7 for the subscription plus the appropriate price of the game of your choice to PAGE 6, P.O. BOX 16, STAFFORD, ST16 1DN. Please state clearly which game and which version (ST or XL/XE, tape or disk) you require. Your subscription will commence from issue 15 unless you state otherwise. Please allow 21 days for delivery.

# Kleph's Castle

by Peter Dean

Kleph's Castle is a challenging text-only adventure which takes place in and around a country mansion. The object is to retrieve ten classic Atari games, stolen from you by the arch villain Kleph and hidden in the mansion's rooms and passages.

Various objects can be found which will help you solve the problems and puzzles that stand between you and your 'treasure'. Use your wits and powers of logic and ingenuity to unravel the secrets of the mansion and its garden. Along the way you will meet characters both friendly and hostile — keep an eye out for one in particular who has a tendency to come and go like a thief in the night!

The game has several features that you might find in 'commercial' games although it is intended to be a 'low-sitting' game and does, in present, has no facility to save a game to disk or cassette. It does however have **RAMSAVE** and **RESTORE-IT** recognition and text compression. The routines which control these will be of interest to anyone wanting out on the long trail of adventure writing.

Input is by verb and noun only, e.g. **TAKE BAG** or **REMOVE COAT**. Keeping things simple will reward you dividends. A full list of words can be deduced from the wordbank between lines 100 and 140. If a word outside this range is typed in, the parser will tell you which word could be used. Remember the **SAVE** and **RESTORE** options and use it before you do anything dangerous.

You will have done well to have completed the game, at the first attempt, in fewer than five hundred turns.

## ARE YOU STUCK?

We have the full solutions to three of the Adventures in this issue. Anyone who gets stuck on **DEERHORN CASTLE**, **DESIGN ADVENTURE** or **KLEPH'S CASTLE** can come running to us for the solution. Copies are available from **PAGE 6** upon receipt of a large, even post addressed envelope. Please state which solution you require and write to **PAGE 6 ADVENTURES, P.O. BOX 34, STAFFORD, ST16 1BB.**

**WARNING:** These are full solutions rather than hints, so make sure that you try really hard before sending off for the answers!

Wander around an old mansion and see if you can find the treasure — in this case some of the classic Atari games!

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# LEVEL 9

*Britain's leading Adventure company is also the only one to have supported the Atari from the beginning to the last had to go and get the definitive interview. Armed with questions set by Gary Francis the Editor set off on the trek to deepest Berkshire. Pete Abrahams, knowing how hard it would be to get an interview, had had some TIFO maps to finding Level 9 was easy but the Level 9 office were so unusual and interesting at some of the locations in the adventure? Pete and Mike Abrahams set us on the line and after a quick tour of six levels of Level 9 the PAGE 4 interview began by missing out all the routine background that you already know and getting straight down to the really interesting stuff.*

*Most of our questions were directed to Pete Abrahams but brother Mike joined in and after answered most of the technical questions.*



**When you were at Cambridge University you were studying Natural Science. Did you develop your interest in computers from there? Yes, that's right. I had been rather curious at school of people who did the Computer Studies course at the local technical college so when I went to University, although I wasn't actually doing computing, it made it quite easy to get time on a computer. The first program I did was Conway's Game of Life which I had always wanted to do. I started from there.**

**Most people think that your first program was an adventure but you actually wrote a few programs before you went into adventures? We didn't start doing adventures until several years after I had finished University. In fact I didn't play any adventures there, what I was actually doing there was Fantasy Wargaming. On the computing side it was writing games like arcade games. I did a Pac-Man Simulator, 1-D Noughts and Crosses and other sorts of stuff.**

**Did you continue with your Natural Sciences or give that up when computers took over? I continued with that. My first degree is in Natural Sciences. In fact, I switched over to Psychology which was probably a mistake because Psychology is a load of waffle but I ended up with a degree in it and then started for another year to do computing formally.**

**When you left Cambridge did you go into a regular job? This was before there was any real micro market. There were tin machines coming out and the BSO was around but not much else. If I had been sensible I would have stayed at Cambridge and gone into Accor or something similar. Like a lot of other people did, although at that time the money paid for that sort of thing was pretty minimal. I joined a Software Consultancy to work for banks in the city. I stayed there for about a year and a half and then went to Perkin-Elmer, who**

## MASTERS of ADVENTURE

(and nice people too!)

are currently called something like Concurrent Computing, they manufacture minis. I worked on system software for them and then moved on to Hewlett Packard which was definitely a mistake. I was there thinking that they were doing original software but it was in fact just maintenance of stuff that had gone wrong at the prototype stage.

**So how long was it from the time that you left University before you started Level 9? About four years before I went full-time on Level 9, I had been doing a certain amount of Level 9 as a hobby back in the Perkin-Elmer days.**

**Who was involved in Level 9 when you first started? (Mike) When we first started it was Peter and myself and Nick, the three brothers which was in about 1981. We started off writing about Conan and Ultima on the good old Minicom and then after about 9 months or a year we wrote the first adventure game which was Colonial of course. (Pete) I found Colonial Adventure at Perkin-Elmer running on one of their machines. I thought that we could do this, in 1981 on a micro and in fact we did. The main thing that we got right at that stage was that we actually wrote a system, we didn't write a game but we actually wrote a system which incorporated a database. Virtually, everybody else writing adventures at that time, in fact everybody that I can think of, went and wrote one-off games.**

**Did you do that as a deliberate policy, actually write a system first? Yes. Well we realized that about half of the work in Adventure games is in the machine code, it is driving the machine and in the compression routines you want and so on and we figured that we could produce sort of a family of games rather more efficiently than a one-off game and this was basically the way to do it. Fairly rapidly, we then realized that you could put versions of the adventure system on other micros and get even greater efficiency and access to a wider market because at that time every man and a dog was bringing out a micro. (Mike) The BBC had just been announced. So we were asking ourselves how can we get this game onto a BBC if we had code in Z80.**



On Level 9 team - Mike, Mick, Pete

Going back to Level 9 as just the three of you, you've carried it on as a family business ever since. Has that been a deliberate decision or is it just the way things worked out? It's been a deliberate decision. (Mike) There are quite a lot of other people who work for us, mostly on a freelance basis. (Pete) The big advantage is that you have to specialise in niche companies. It is not possible for one person to do everything. I tend to deal with the design, Mike in the past has tended to deal with Adventure coding and Mick has dealt with machine coding and transporting different games to different machines. It's slightly more complex but that is basically it. Because we are a family we can trust each other, if we weren't related and say Nick left we would be in a real trouble because it would take as a long time to work out how to transport the games onto different machines because all the knowledge is in his head so basically, the stability of the family is essential. I think it ran the business effectively and efficiently.

Did you have an interest in Dungeons and Dragons when you were at University? Yes.

Is that where Level 9 really started? Well the name Level 9 was designed to indicate a level of quality. It was the highest level that you get with a one digit number. I started with D & D. The form of D & D that we played is very unlike that played elsewhere. I have seen other D & D groups and I don't much like them. We played political D & D where, frankly, if you had to fight your way out of a situation that you had done something wrong. The basic idea was to do stuff and blackmail people in the game and use political intrigue and spy techniques and that sort of thing.

So there was much less Fantasy? Fantasy was a big part. If you watch ordinary people play D & D they go up a corridor, they kick in a door, they throw in the football, that wipe out the monsters, they go in and take the treasure then move on to the next dungeon and repeat the process. It's not particularly skilled, it's not particular fun although they seem to enjoy it - you know, I've wiped out the 10th level dragon - when in fact the poor beast is just waking up when everybody droops upon it and backs it to bits.

Did you have a particular character and do you still remember it? I had a large number of characters. My favourite one I guess was a character called Sam, who got to be incredibly good at fight spells, in fact he provided every light for the local city. One of the things he did was get a contract for the street lighting which indicates the difference in our D & D, but he was also a Necromancer and he went around sucking darkness surrounded by Zombies, in his other life does the dragons.

Your first game was called Fantasy? It wasn't our first game, it was our first kind of role-playing game.

What type of game was it? It was a game with about 50 locations. It had people wandering about and essentially it was one of the few games where the other characters were exactly the same as the player and they were all after the gold as well. What made it amusing was that they had quite interesting characters, each had a table of attributes, some of them were cowardly, some of them were strong - that kind of thing and we gave them names. There was one called Ronald Reagan and one called Maggie Thatcher and so on. (Mike) and there was George Khan, etc. - (Pete) so you could wipe out your first favourite person!

How does it compare with anything available now? I've not seen anything like it. It's the sort of thing that worked very nicely as a hobbyist game or as a sort of experimentation game.

Your first commercial game as Level 9 was Colossal Adventure? (Mike) Yes, the first commercial adventure game. It's still quite a lot of arcade games under the Level 9 name. (Pete) Our first two products were this Fantasy thing and Extraneous Basic which still looks very good. (Mike) Basically, what it did was it took the standard Microsoft Basic on the Macos which is fairly similar to the 80 basic on the Atari, and made it into an equivalent of the BBC basic in virtually 100%.

Why did you release Colossal Adventure? There were lots of versions around at the time. (Mike) I didn't have access to a computer to play it on so I just had to write a version!

Was it based on any particular implementation? I'd played the one at Penkese House about a year before. (Mike) There were a lot of versions on it, on many machines that ran on micro at that time.

You made a couple of changes to the game, for example, moving one of the treasure and adding the end rooms. Why did you do that? The only thing that we actually moved in the food which we put in the forest. It was really because there was a lot of forest around, nothing actually to do with the game. We put the extra rooms in because we had told everybody that there would be 200 rooms and when we created them up there were only 150, so we just had to put the others in!

Ever since then most of your games have had around 200 rooms. That really has been one of the criticisms of Level 9 games, that you have to spend a lot of time wandering about doing nothing. Yes, we didn't realize over the years that our games were taking longer to actually get through because of number of rooms. The number of rooms didn't actually go up it was just that you had to do more rooms. We have overcome that in our new games from George Ranger onwards - it was taking so long to play them on all the different versions so we now have a policy that you can play this thing, if you know the solution, in about half an hour. (Mike) Obviously, we have done this partly by the cutting down of the number of rooms and partly by the way the games are laid out so they are now much more a sort of square map rather than a very long linear one. (Pete) I think that most people have become quite bored with mapping. Now, you will get some people writing in saying that mapping is great, I enjoy mapping but I think that after you have played a few adventures you really don't want to map, you want a fairly simple organization of rooms which is fairly simple, fairly logical - no need to map and we tended to go over to that rather than the labyrinth type of games we were designing three years ago.



Your next game was *Adventure Quest*. There are some wonderful ideas in that like the four elements in the different regions and the teleports which were quite hard to grasp. Do you think that parts of that didn't get through to people? (Mike) You can never get everything across to everybody. If a lot of people did, figure it out. We have had people coming up to us or others saying so. (Peter) It is not absolutely necessary for everybody to get every single thing out of the game. I try and design them fairly logically and put in as many different things as I can although there is a danger that you overload the game and it becomes confusing.

Would you do it any other way if you were writing that adventure again? I would make it less linear. *Adventure Quest* was the first game I actually designed from scratch and it's a very linear game. You go through about eight different zones but you have to do them really in order. Nowadays, I prefer games rather more like *Dungeons Quest* which is the one I designed after that where you can wander around in a reasonable area and there are groups of puzzles within that. If you get blocked on one group you can go and try another area and that I think is probably the sort of thing I want to design nowadays.

*Dungeons Quest* was the third one and that completed what you call a Middle Earth Trilogy. You released that with graphics under the Jewels of Darkness, why did you not call it Middle Earth? Well Rainald chose the name. We were in fact going to release it as the Middle Earth Trilogy or perhaps the Colossal Trilogy.

From there, you went on to science fiction with *Snowball*. Do you know of 'The Man in God's Eye'? Were you inspired by that in any way? No. I think I quoted 'The Man in God's Eye' in the bibliography section purely because it's a good book and Steve designs his science fiction universes properly.

Was that an inspiration to you? No, not at all. In *Snowball* the player's alter ego is Kim Kimberley. Is Kim a male or female? Neither. (Mike) There is actually a reference to that. (Peter) The theory is that that was one of the things that interested players could find out. Kim was picked to be either male or female but in fact, if you look in the packaging it credits Miss Kimberley's wardrobe... (Mike) although it doesn't actually say that in the game. (Peter) They do chat with science fiction books, you find that cover is something to do with what happens in the book so we might have done the same thing in our game.

You advertise *Snowball* as having 1,000 locations. Does it really have that many? Oh, yes. (Mike) They are all rooms in which you can store objects. (Peter) They're also all got code lights on the ceilings and they are different code lights. Obviously they aren't dramatically different to each other.

Is it possible to visit 1,000 different rooms? Yes and if you had 1,000 objects you could actually drop an object in each room. In fact you can't but you can drop an object in a particular room and it will be seen in that room and nowhere else so they are different.

You next went onto  *Lords of Time* which was designed by somebody else. I believe Sue Ginnard designed the game and coded it. How did that collaboration come about? Sue saw a design in. I didn't like the initial design but she redesigned it and it was quite good. The design that we eventually used from Sue was excellent on detail of background, the puzzles tended to be actually easy, basically you examined things and gave them to people so I added a few other puzzles, for example theircle one, and the resulting game worked out quite nicely.

So you are quite happy with that? Yes that is one of the ones that I am happiest with.

Was that going to be part of a trilogy originally? We were hoping Sue would do other designs. She did in fact submit another design but it was very one paced. One of the problems in adventure design is that first of all you must stick to the subject and a number of people tend in designs where they have clearly run out of ideas that way through. My best example of this is someone who sent in a *Bornmade Triangle* game and the first part, of a three part game, is all about the *Bornmade Triangle*, UFO's - all good stuff, but then he ran out of ideas and so in part two you just went down into the cave below this island in the *Bornmade Triangle* and it went back into standard hackneyed adventure stuff. You would be surprised how many designs fall into that problem. The second problem with designs, which is more subtle, is that they do stick to the subject but they stick to it too rigidly so you have 200 rooms all of which are wondering about in some gigantic swamp, for example, and after about the 50th room you get sick to death of this gigantic swamp so you need to have variety but it needs to be all within the one overall theme. Sue's second design was all one one-paced, all one similar. It was an utterance one with *Nograte's* and so on cropping up, the theme was that *Nograte's* kingdom had been attacked but it was all about going through the ruins of his kingdom. I would have liked the occasional pocket where the kingdom contains everything in its original state and was all nice and cheerful and people were enjoying themselves and so on.



Mike Austin trying to solve an adventure!

Have you had any collaborations since with other people? The games that *Moore*, *Price Of Magic* and *Bornmade* like were all based on original ideas from other people. (Mike) It's not quite a list every word on there.

*Lords of Time* has got nine levels. Is that anything to do with Level 9? (Peter) Of course. (Mike) There are a lot of references to 9 in most games.

Are there any personal references or tie-ins in other games? (Mike) Yes, at least one or two in each game. (Peter) We tend to put in references to the number 9. Personal references, not really. Political references - quite a lot - yes I try to avoid writing programs too publicly but you can get rude about people in games. You have to avoid overdoing it because the reader/player is probably not interested.

In *Return to Earth*, you said the alien universe is like *Larry Niven's 'Panslav Space'*. You also referred to *Harry Harrison's 'Deathworld'* in the documentation. Can you explain the references? The game wasn't copied off other things but there were similarities and people who liked the aggressive suggestions would like the *Death World* one, other people would like some of the short stories by *Larry Niven*. In fact, in later games I stopped putting those references in because people claimed when I put

a reference in it meant that I had copied the ideas which I never do, so although I thought it was a good idea I decided to stop doing it.

**Red Moon won a lot of awards but some people didn't like it because of the Dungeons and Dragons style of fighting monsters. Why did you introduce that? We were trying out different styles. In fact, in Red Moon the whole point is that killing people is pretty pointless. This is one of those single hammer moral messages that we occasionally get in them. If you do kill people they just come back as a ghost and you have to kill them all over again. (Mike) Some people have finished the game in that way it is incredibly tedious.**

**Specifically on Red Moon, I was quick to discover that you can bury a monster to get rid of it without losing hit points. Was that a bug? Yes. That got left in because we did not realize that the bury bug was in there, it was in the standard system and we didn't realize it was there.**

**And you could also finish the game without actually solving all the puzzles. Was that intentional? Yes. In all of our games you can solve them without solving all the puzzles. Generally speaking, where puzzles are difficult I provide more than one alternative way of doing it, particularly nowadays. (Mike) To get a maximum score you need to solve everything. (Peter) I also quite like putting bonuses in. Even if you go back to Colonial Adventure which was the first one you could finish that and there were a number of bonuses like leaving the magazine in Wits End which you didn't have to solve to get to the end, so it is in the original tradition.**

**How much of Red Moon was David Williamson's and how much was yours? The map and monsters were his. I took his magic system and made it slightly more consistent because he tended to have arbitrary spells and I put it into a system basically to make it easier to code and easier to use. I put in the spell focus idea for example because it gives you more things to look for. Basically, though, the atmosphere, the setting itself was his as were the majority of the puzzles.**

**Red Moon had some interesting ideas such as the use of a focus for magic and the way the iron inhibits magic. Were these based on real world magic or are they just inventions? The focus thing is something which is used fairly widely. (Mike) That's kind of folk lore. (Peter) The fact that iron inhibits magic is real world magic, a sort of British fantasy idea, it's fairly well known that iron being around is bad for magical creatures and bad for magic.**

**Do you try and put that kind of semi-factual stuff into your games? I am trying to in the more recent ones. Red Moon and Price of Magic were kind of set in the D & D type environment. If I do Magic now, as I did for Knight Orc, I try to avoid mixing my sources. I'm trying to stick to magic in the British Isles. You won't, I hope, see Egyptian mummies and so on cropping up in our games not unless they are set in Egypt.**

**The Price of Magic continued in the same vein and seemed to be influenced by the Dark Ages. Did you do a lot of research for it and do you do research for other games? Price of Magic wasn't my game. It was a David Williamson design which I added to so I didn't do the background, hence not much research but for things like Knight Orc and the magic system in that and in games following that and indeed the games I do myself, so I do research. I make lists of relevant locations, connected ideas and so on.**

**Are there any plans to do another one to add to the Price of Magic and Red Moon to make another trilogy? Well, we released them with Lords Of Time as a trilogy. The theory is that they are set in a magical equivalent of the earth and there is a large scale battle over these two linked worlds. Our own world, which is in Lords of Time, and its magical**

twins which is in the other two and using this idea we have linked the three together into a trilogy already.

**Let's go on now to the actual programming side of things. How do you actually start to write an adventure? Could you briefly explain the ideas and the coding? Well we start with a design which has got a map and a play sequence and a list of puzzles and a list of objects. (Mike) We start a standard adventure system and you can basically just enter the text and number around from room to room and doors will open and close and all this sort of thing will happen. (Peter) To regularise this slightly, I think you start by entering prototype room descriptions, fairly short room descriptions with the exits table, object names and that sort of thing and when that is entered just using the standard adventure as Mike said you can wander about and do things - some of the puzzles are in there of course but you can wander about and check that the game looks alright.**

**Do you make changes to the design after that stage? (Mike) Only where we find that things are too difficult to code or for some other reason they aren't quite work but that is quite rare. For the most part the design usually works as it stands. (Peter) Yeah, it usually does. Occasionally, Mike thinks of better ways of doing things.**

**But basically the adventure is written as a whole before it is actually coded? Yes. It is worth saying that in the later ones when it is finished we play through it and we now have about a month's play testing and we do take the results of the play testing quite seriously. This is from Colonel Ranger onwards. (Mike) Quite often nowadays, we find alternative ways of doing things that we might allow. (Peter) We also, where people find puzzles hard, put hints around the place to make them easier.**

**How long does it take, typically, to conceive the adventure and get it through to final coding? In rapid time, it seems to be about a year to get a game out. (Mike) The different stages - probably design takes about three months, the coding takes about the same and then a month or two of play testing and bug fixing. Additionally, other people are writing the text and drawing pictures and so on.**

**When you have finished the design is it as a straight English text description or is it flow-charted and mapped before it goes for coding? There are various bits, there is a map and there is a list of objects which contains a description of what you can do with them. Nowadays, I do a cross between a play sequence and a list of locations in that I try to describe what happens in each location in the order in which you would come upon them in the game. I used to do both a play sequence and a list of puzzles.**

**I believe that you are currently working on a new game called Lancelot. Can you tell us anything about the inspiration for that? Yes I wanted to do a proper Arthurian game basically because I was afraid, for example, that Melbourne House would get the idea and do what they did with Lords of the Rings on it and I thought I had better get in first. Within games, I try and tackle a game from as many different directions as I can. On Lancelot for example, I did a lot of research I got a lot of Arthurian books, I printed the Mass of Arthur and so on and tried to find out what incidents and settings and so on work in the game. Additionally, I knew what features our adventure system has got, it allows you to order people about and have multi-character puzzles and makes that quite natural so I was determined to have a reasonable number of them. The big developments recently are that we are now farming rather more work-out-to-outside people. I used to write the text for example, but over the last year I have found that it is a good idea for me and Mike to do an initial version of the text and then give it to outside authors who add their own gloss and build up the descriptions and put**

in their own feeling about the world and that greatly impresses it. We also use a freelance artist nowadays. Before we had an in-house artist but using freelancers seems to get us a greater variety of styles.

**Are these professional people, professional writers?**  
Oh yes, yes. It used to be that you would try and get gifted amateurs and to cut the advantage of using professional people is that they will usually stick fairly closely to a deadline, whereas with amateurs it is a hobby with them, it doesn't really matter. It is fairly important as the pictures and text tend to be the last thing that gets done.

**Why are you doing that? Is it to try and get more variety or for another reason?** Well, it gets more variety, it gets a better job. When I have written the text I tend to run out of ideas, there are only a number of limited ideas that I have got in each period of time and I have to slow down and take a break and then go back and write some more text and so on. If you give it to outside people, they probably haven't written anything fictional. I mean we use people that write other things but they may be haven't done anything in the adventure game field so they have got a whole load of ideas stored up which they can use.

**So effectively, they are like ghost writers. You take an idea and they develop it? I guess it is. It's kind of like collaboration. The best teams in comedy seem to be collaborations, where one person comes up with an idea and the other person phrases it and so on, and you can get much the same thing using the outside writers. It's not quite the ghost writers in that that implies that the person who is supposed to be the author actually can't write at all and just talks much as I'm doing to you and the other person makes it coherent. It's a slightly more equal partnership than that. The other thing is that it forces me up. If I'm not careful, I find that I'm spending so much time writing the text for one game that I'm behind hand when it comes to designing the next one and it's fairly important, particularly now, when we want to try and bring out about five games a year, that I don't do unnecessary work. If there is somebody who can do it as well, or better, then I let them get on with it.**

**Have you had problems finding people or have you been quite fortunate?** We have had some trouble with some people who haven't been quite as good as they ought to be but we now have a fairly solid team. I sub-edit the stuff when it comes back anyway, I don't see it straight so I can put a week

in and sub-edit the text. It doesn't really matter if some of it is rubbish because I can take that out and I can keep the good bits and even the bad bits give me something to draw on.

**So it still ends up very much as a traditional Level 9 product? It depends which game. On the Gnomes Rangoon one where we used Peter Mulholland to do the text I tended to give him his head because his style works extremely well for that character. With Time and Magic it was more a traditional game because we used a writer who wasn't quite as varied and didn't have quite as many ideas of her own so it required slightly more polishing when it came back. Likewise, we have not yet got the text back so I can't comment on that but I think we will need to do a certain amount of work on that to match up the game with the book that we have done to go with it, to make sure it is in the right sort of pseudo-Arthurian style.**

**The code you use to create the adventures is, I believe, called Asmode. Where did it code come from?** (Mike) Back in the very early days when we started to produce Colossal we wanted to find a language that we could port to any computer system so I actually decided to produce a very small but very fast language for a specific adventure that would be basically very fast.

**Is it similar to any other language? It is kind of the machine code. The analogy that I tend to use nowadays is the Ric process. It is like a real micro-processor would be but it's fairly interpreted. (Peter) Mike essentially designed and worked out what instructions we needed for adventures, for example, you don't need much maths, you don't use real numbers, you just need integers, and we ended up with a reduced instruction set. We got all the advantages of Ric things, the fact that our programs are very small because the actual instruction length is short and it executes quickly.**

**Is that something that you developed from scratch?** (Mike) Yes, that was the second language I designed.

**What about compression of the text, do you do that when it is compiled or do you do that separately? It code itself is compiled whenever you change the program and that is entirely separate from the text. The rest of the game, the actual development of it pulls the one up and then carries on.**

**Did you develop the data compression techniques or were they standard techniques?** There were mainly two types of data compression - A-Gate is one that makes programs about six times smaller than they would be in any other language including machine code and the text is compressed.

**What sort of compression do you get? I could quote you anything between 50% of the original and 90%.**

**Obviously, it varies depending on what the actual text is? Not a lot actually. As long as the text is fairly large it compresses fairly well. Our system is not optimized just to some particular form of text which a lot of games are. One of the reasons I can't tell you an exact figure is that we have the keyboard table in with the text for example so the keyboard table perhaps takes up less space. It is very hard to explain.**

**When you add graphics to your adventures who actually designs them for you?** (Mike) Knowledge, we have a pair of artists who are drawing on the ST. (Peter) We went in for digitised pictures on Knight One and Time and Magic. We are now getting hand-drawn pictures done on the various machines.

**So these are just drawn as straight pictures? They are drawn just as you would draw any other pictures, yes.**

**Is there a special graphics editor or anything that has been developed?** No. We are getting two artists to both do all the pictures in Lanzarote and we will take the best use of each room which ought to give us pretty good quality and we are also using compressed pictures as well. We seem to get about 50% compression nowadays. (Mike) Better better than that now actually.



An early Level 9 advert



**Do you use the same pictures on all machines?** We have a separate set for 16-bit machines compared to the 8-bit machines. The 8-bit pictures are drawn on the Commodore 64 and the 16-bit ones are drawn on the ST.

**But within each group they use the same pictures on every machine?** Yes that is right, we took them a bit for the various machines, make sure the picture works properly and so on.

**Are the graphics in future going to be similar to The Pawn and Guild of Thieves?** Yes. They are presented differently. On the 16-bit machines we have a window and they load into this window so we can have a border around. Magnetic Scrolls basically does it better with a border. On the 8-bit they just load into memory, although of course the Atari 8-bit doesn't have that. But yes they will be the same sort of style as this.

**Your games always have lots of minor bugs. Who actually play tests them?** We use a number of outside play testers who we had better not name. We would like to use more play testers but we had a problem with *Conan Ranger* whereby the play test version of the Atari ST version was actually played and we are getting people writing to magazines with bugs that were on the play test version and we feel slightly annoyed about this. I think that people who pirate games should not write into magazines with bugs particularly if they have pirated a version which was never actually released, so we do get it play tested but we have to restrict the number of play testers for reasons of protecting the market. On the other hand we have to walk this tight rope and make these compromises in getting it tested enough to get the bugs out but not enough so that we get too much piracy.

**So the people who play test are they people who have written it?** They are people who we have known for a long time. If somebody writes in and says can I play test, there is far too much chance they want copies to pirate. I really don't know how you solve this particular one. (Mike) The people we are using now have been writing to us for many years and playing games.

**Do you actually have time to play other people's adventures?** (Mike) Yes, sure. The only one that I find remotely interesting are the *Infocom* ones which I play a certain amount and usually get stuck on about half way through.

**Have you got any favourite games amongst the Infocom range?** Yes, I like the *Bushmaster Trilogy*, particularly the first one - *Sovereign and Schemer*. I like *Suspended*, *Planetfall* and *Starflight*.

**(To Pete) Do you have any time to play them?** I have a problem with playing games in that I would be accused of copying them. I would go along with Mike in that I have been very impressed by the Infocom ones. I tend not to play them all the way through but I play them enough to get the feel and I also very much like the *Sovereign* ones, the *Trilogy* and I like *Procyon* and *Planetfall* and so on. I have been less impressed by some of their recent ones but it could just be because. (Mike) I like some of their recent ones as well so I don't think it is.

**So Infocom really are your main interest?** (Mike) Of adventure games, yes. (Pete) The problem with Infocom is that you either get stuck or else you finish them very quickly. They have always gone all in for the environment and they don't really put enough puzzles in them. There are some games, *A Mind Forever Voyaging* for example which I did play through because I couldn't believe it. (Mike) No, I couldn't believe it either. (Pete) I think it must have had one puzzle in there because I actually got stuck but you get right to the end but examining things. Their games do tend to lack good puzzles but they have extremely good text. Their text is probably unrivalled. The problem has always been though that for a game that has in the past been £30 or £40 which you can

find in one day you wonder if it is really worth it. (Mike) I think Steve knows it very well with an *Infocom* game. (Pete) £10.00 an hour! We wouldn't mind being paid that but paying someone else that is a bit much.

**Do you know Stephen Donaldson's chronicle of Thomas Covenant?** Oh yes.

**Have you ever thought about writing anything along these lines?** Something weighing about 2000? Yes, a game you can't actually carry! (Mike) The first game to be sold in a magazine. (Pete) Or maybe a soundtrack! Yes I like the Donaldson things. I have a feeling that the rights would be expensive for that so I haven't got involved in that.

**You would obviously be interested in getting the rights to that and certain other books?** Oh yes, I would be interested in doing that. I'd be interested in doing Tolkien, were it not that a certain other company has taken it and made a bit of a hash of it.



Pete Austin working on *Lancelot*

**Are there any others that interest you, that you may do?** I can't comment on the sort of thing can I? If I were to contact someone else would go and steal the idea. I would say though that it is generally better to take something like *King Arthur* which you don't have to negotiate with people and you don't have to pay a royalty. We are negotiating with another type of theme that you will have heard of, but we originally came up with the idea about the time of the PCW *Shogun* and we will haven't got the agreement made. It has all been rather hazy as to precisely what the rights consist of and so on. That's the main problem if you get involved with rights in modern games. On the other hand, it's a good idea, we want a range of titles, a range of themes.

**What have you got planned for the future that you can tell me about?** Well the two new ones are *Lancelot* and *Conan Ranger 2* - these are in the pipe line. In fact, both of those are designed. What I'm designing as the next game, I haven't made the final decision on. (Mike) There are a number of possibilities.

**Will these be released through Mandarins?** I think so, yes. We have got a contract with Mandarins as far as *Lancelot* - we didn't want to make the mistake that we made with Rainbow whereby we made a contract for four games and then Tony Rainbow who was running it left and the whole relationship changed. Everything changed essentially when Tony Rainbow left. He was the man, so we saw it, who could get things done. If Tony told you something would happen it would, whereas, the BT philosophy seems to be rather more of an institutional one where people don't care to put their necks on the line. Mind you, Tony by putting his neck on the line, ended up having to maybe that proved it wasn't right for BT.

**So how did the Mandarin deal come about, did you approach them or did they approach you? (Mike)** One day someone we were talking to about a dozen different publishers. We have spoken to virtually all the major names you can think of and had offers from a good number of them. A lot of them would have been able to work with us but we didn't like certain aspects of the way they wanted things to work and the control they wanted to have over the game.

**So the important thing is that you retain the control over what you write? (Peter)** That's one important thing. The thing that really gave us the most problems at ST is that we produce games on a wide range of machines. It is fairly essential to us that once the first version of the game, which is in fact on the Amiga ST, has been agreed, that we don't need to agree all the individual versions after that and that was a big problem with Rainbird. As you will have seen with Knight One between the ST version and the Spectrum being released, which was the last one, it was nearly a year. With Time and Magic from Mandarin we got the whole lot released within about a fortnight and it is enormously easier if you can get the game out of the way to a fortnight than if it is dragging on for a year. Mandarin was in agreement with us over the need to get them released because it saves them time if they can get all the versions out at the same time. They have just got to do one lot of advertising and it fills the streets at one time. (Mike)

**Basically, what we liked about Mandarin was that they are marketing and publishing people who are interested in computer games but don't actually seem to involve, whereas the majority of other major publishers in the world are run by ex-programmers who think that they know best.**

**Rainbird actually did their own bit there on some things didn't they? (Mike)** Yes and we got very annoyed about that. (Peter) Could you say that we do a Knight One disc sheet first and if people they want a Knight One disc sheet please ask them to write to us. There has very many more discs than the Rainbird one - people can make their own matches up about the quality - but ours has got about 1,000 entries whereas the Rainbird has about 50. (Mike) And all the entries as far as we know are actually correct whereas there are quite a few mistakes on the Rainbird one. (Peter) It's worth saying that Rainbird didn't actually send us a copy of it or tell us what was in it. (Mike) No the first time we actually found out about it was at the Adventure Convention when somebody came up to me and said only on earth did you do the Knight One disc sheet like that and I said what, it's like our other ones. He said no it isn't and I said that I hadn't seen it and asked him to send us a copy. When I got home I asked Rainbird to send me a copy but couldn't say they didn't so I got the photocopy straight from this person and I then got it supplied by us.

**In future, are you going to get greater control over these sort of things? (Mike)** More than that, Mandarin will let us know they are trying to do and ask if we think it's a good idea and are very helpful which accounts the relationship along. They have actually involved us all the way along the line which is unusual.

**Do you get a lot of demand for the disc sheets? I've been quickly after the games have come out? About two weeks before. (Peter)** Time and Magic was available at the same time that the game was launched. Game Ranger was available a few weeks before the game.



Level 1's comprehensive disc sheets

**You actually get people asking for them before the game is available? (Mike)** Yes, that does happen quite a lot. (Peter) Yes, it's funny that isn't it? People who buy mail order have been known to ask for the disc sheet at the same time. (Mike) Oh, it's quite common.

**With a lot of people, I suppose there is the satisfaction of finishing the game irrespective of how they finish it? I think if you get stuck then it's much better to get a disc sheet and be able to play through the game. I think people do try and play the game without the disc sheet, I never hope they do anyway as it is a bit of a waste of time if you are just going to follow the disc sheet all the time. (Mike)** You can even do it the same way you can do a book. It is still a nice story but you do lose all the challenge. (Peter) In future we are emphasising the story telling elements a lot more because going to three pure games has given us more text and we are following the same sort of balance that we got by Game Ranger where there was a lot more story telling. (Mike) There are still a lot of people in stores but the storyline is much more important. (Peter) Yes, that's right.

**That's all the questions we have. I hope that you found it more interesting than the run of the mill. (Mike)** A good set of questions. Normally, as I say, we have to go through all the background, where we live, why we started them and so on. It's nice not to have the normal set of background questions.



**So concluded a really interesting interview. It was much more to talk to a couple of people who are really interested in what they are doing and to care about the enjoyment people get from their games, rather than some anonymous marketing man who knows little about the product but the price. Level 9 are real people!**

**Just as we were about to go Perry Adams produced a fax with a design for the forthcoming Campaign. "What do think about that for the Holy Grail?" he said. Well in a minute, you're the clever people, I'm only here asking questions! So I put over a few ideas and Perry listened. When he saw, when you get your copy of Campaign, and find the Holy Grail it might have Page 6 obviously engraved on it! Fame at last!**



# TIME

for some Level 9

# MAGIK!

Level 9 are one of the stalwarts of the adventure genre, they have been producing excellent games now for most of this decade. Like the other main adventure producers they have tried hard to put more and more functions into their games. Both of these new ones are extremely friendly; apart from providing nice facilities such as the ability to key ahead, they have also enhanced those parts which help you when you make mistakes. So, as well as normal SAVE facilities to disk or cassette you can also SAVE to RAM so that the SAVE and RESTORE are instantaneous; you can type GOAPS to take back the last couple of moves if they were disastrous; and, in Knight Orc, you can't actually die anyway - you are so vital that they throw you out of paradise back into the game!

I played both the games on the SPECTRUM so didn't get to see any of the pictures you get on the XT (but my philosophy is that if you don't NEED the pictures, who cares!) and was extremely grateful for these facilities - adventure writers do seem to love killing you off as often as possible, and I do get extremely frustrated with the amount of time most games make you waste waiting for RESTORES to complete - RAM SAVE and GOAPS make death acceptable!

Other facilities which Level 9 have added include the ability to FIND, GO TO, or RUN TO any object, person or location which you know to exist and know how to reach. This also greatly enhances the game play. They claim that this means that you don't need to draw maps anymore, and, certainly, in each part of each game, it is easy enough to ascertain the names of all the major locations. However, I, personally, like to see the relations between the locations, and, indeed, in at least one part of Gemini Ranger, if you don't check every unnamed location you may miss a required artefact.

While some other companies have moved almost entirely to bigger and better(?) machines, Level 9 not only still fully support the IBM and even squeeze more out of it, they also continue to support tape-based machines. If you do not have a disk drive, then Level 9 are without doubt the best there is. If you do have a disk drive then the games are still excellent value, but do have a few short-comings, some almost certainly caused by their continued support of tape. The tape limitation means that they can not afford to maintain a vocabulary as they would like, nor adequate responses to all that you might try. Sometimes this can be misleading - e.g. in Knight Orc the Humans on the Wall, even after they have been killed AND cursed off to Valhalla, can STILL pour boiling oil on you, and in Gemini Ranger one of your friends appears not to understand the word HOLD since if you ask it to HOLD THE BRIDGE it tries to pick it up - this is misleading since elsewhere in the game it does correctly understand a request to HOLD something. In both these new games there are lots and lots of other characters of all descriptions, and both games involve lots of problems which you cannot solve by yourself. So, more than in any other games I have seen, you need to learn how to make friends, and also how to use them!

Level 9 have recently been repackaging all their old games

## TWO NEW GAMES ...

in Trilogy. Both these new games have three parts and are billed as such. You should be aware that that does NOT mean that you get as much adventure by buying one of these as you do by buying one of the Trilogy packs. That aside, both the new games are excellent value for money, especially when compared to a lot of the other games on the market. Level 9 always pack their games full of puzzles, atmosphere and humour and there are no exceptions.

### KNIGHT ORC

In this you get to play the part of a noble elf-prince Orc. The game treats you like the dirt you are, from the fact that most of the people you meet immediately want to do away with you, through to little details such as the request to 'wait' for the Knight Orc disk back in after a SAVE.

The first part is fairly simple and straightforward, you merely have to find 10 pieces of 'rags' to enable you to escape back home. This part is not much of a challenge, but is quite a good introduction if you haven't played many adventures before.

The second and third parts are actually two different views of the same land - a technological view and a magical view. You can switch freely from one to another with a single command and there are certain problems which can only be solved in one of the two modes. (This may get a little tedious for the Casio-based player, who will have to wait for a load - even on disk I found it a little annoying!) To win you must discover twenty spells, and use most of them as well.

It gets rather hard to please, especially when their logic breaks down a little - e.g. if I am blinded and lose all object whenever I die and go to Valhalla, how can I supposed to deduce that other corpses aren't? - especially when I can't PUT or HIDE an object as a corpse anyway? - most strange. But, never fear, Level 9 produce the best Hitn Shirts in the business - thoroughly recommended even if you have finished the game - they are full of jokes, real feelings, behind the scene explanations, and of course clues - all carefully created so you can't accidentally learn too much. Send a SASE and proof of purchase to Box 99, Whinn-vagar-Mare, BS24 9UR.

N.B. Whatever you do don't get a hint sheet from Rainbow - they have, for some unbelievable reason, produced their

own version. Not only does it leave out most of the information (60 items instead of 3000!), not only is it inadequate anyway, but it actually mixes the questions and answers in such a way that you can't possibly find the hint you want without seeing answers to lots of other items as well - guaranteed to ruin your enjoyment of the game.

### **GNOME RANGER (The Journal of Ingrid Botanikow, the GNOME Ranger)**

Ingrid thought this was great fun, Ingrid footed up the dish and found herself a long way from home, but by making lots of friends and getting them to help her she soon defeated the wicked witch and moved on to the next part of the journey. Here she met a friendly Alchemist and decided to make some Tea for him; it turned out to be rather difficult as the only tea bush had just withered. Undaunted Ingrid decide to become an expert at alchemy herself and soon, with the help of some other strange friends, was able to make a nice cup of tea (and it wasn't Advanced Tea Substitute either - it was the real thing - fancy how Tea seems so hard to make in adventures!). On the final part of the journey home Ingrid met a rather sad girl which had had all its jewels stolen by thieves, Ingrid explored some very strange places and eventually made friends with nearly everybody and found all the jewels so that the girl would be her through to her home.

Ingrid had great fun solving lots and lots of puzzles with all her friends. She thought it was a very good idea to make it as three separate adventures so that people who weren't lucky enough to have disk drives would be able to play easily, and so that there was lots of room in memory for all the wonderful jokes that Level 9 seems clever enough to put in the game.

Ingrid especially liked the part about alchemy. It was great fun mixing, everything up to try and make potions, and the books were super with such gems as "A History of Alchemy - Thus the one whom alchemy was regarded as a social service drew to a close. The alchemists retreated into their cluttered cottages, and grew thick privet hedges around their gardens. This process, known as pervertisation, took the prophets away from the communities which had once shared them!"

Ingrid thinks you should all go out and buy this one straight away as it is much better than Knight Orc. (Note, I think Ingrid is probably a little biased on this point, but I agree with her anyway!) But Ingrid thinks you should ignore the nasty comments by the people at Level 9 describing her as toasty!

P.S. If you don't think you could waste Ingrid telling you about her adventures in this style, then you had best avoid the game - it's all like this!

**KNIGHT ORC and GNOME RANGER**  
Hainbird Level 9  
ST £19.95  
XL/XE £14.95 (Cassette or Disk)

**TIME & MAGIC**  
Level 9 Mandarin  
ST £19.95  
XL/XE £14.95 (Cassette or disk)

## **and THREE OLD ONES UPDATED**

Back in 1985 Level 9 brought out a new adventure - The Lords of Time. On the back of the box were the words "First in the Lords of Time Saga". Sadly, since it was quite a nice adventure, there was no sequel but two years later Level 9 produced Red Moon, and in 1986 a sequel to it, The Price of Magic. At that time there was no link between the three games!

Now, thanks to the Wizards of Modern Science, a fair amount of Arminio Licentis, a few hours with a good Editor, and a concept known in the comic world as Retrospective Creativity, we have Time and Magic reworked three three adventures have been miraculously retranscribed into a coherent trilogy!

The original ZX8-16 Atari versions were only available on cassette, and the latter two had fairly primitive pictures. The parser and vocabulary got progressively better through the three games as Level 9 developed their systems, but never really had quite enough room in memory to spare. The new systems do away with the 8 bit graphics and, on the ST, use the diskette to provide much better digitised pictures. That, together with improvements in software technology since 1985, leaves plenty of room in memory.

Level 9 have used this extra memory to good advantage to provide lots more atmospheric text (especially on the ST), more detailed item descriptions, a few extra clues for the areas which they had more queries about last time around, useful facilities such as UNDO and RAM SAVE, plus, on the ST, variable size text to help if your TV isn't quite good enough for 80 columns, and the ability to recall lots of previous instructions to edit and re-examine.

Enhanced parsers, larger vocabularies, and use of more synonyms to allow multiple ways of solving the game to perform an action all add to the quality of these adventures.

What about the games themselves? You'll find full reviews of Red Moon (my very fine review) and The Price of Magic in Page 6 issues 19 and 24 - check elsewhere in the magazine for details of both issues!

In a nutshell, they are all excellent fantasy adventures, with quite a few D & D aspects, especially Red Moon and The Price of Magic which I, personally, think are Level 9's best adventures. Lots of puzzles, lots of magic, lots of humour, lots of hard Packaged together at this price they are definitely superb value for money.

P.S. The Official Science club advertised in the manual do provide GENUINE Level 9 Hint Sheets - worth getting even if you have finished the games!

**Review by John Sweeney**

# HOW TO TYPE IN THE LISTINGS and get them right!

The program listings in *PAGE 8* are prepared carefully to ensure that they can be typed in as easily as possible. Before typing any listings, ensure that you are familiar with the use of the **SHIFT** and **CONTROL**, and **ENTER** keys as defined in your computer manual. The listings are prepared to match exactly what you see on screen. Heavy characters that you may see in a listing are included in the chain below for cross-reference. By using **TRPO** you can ensure that you take the proper reference. By using **TRPCL** or **TRPCH** as they are printed, Remember a single typing mistake may mean a program will not run.

## WHAT ARE THESE CODES?

Each line of a program printed in *PAGE 8* begins with a special two letter code. THESE SHOULD NOT BE TYPED IN. They are used by the program **TRPO** to check that you have typed each line correctly. If you DO NOT WANT KEYS TYPED IN THE TRPO LISTINGS PLEASE DO NOT NOW. The program can be used on any type in each line of a program or to check an already typed program. The code for each line will match (as if you have problems check the listing instructions below carefully, you are most probably typing a **CONTROL** character incorrectly. **TRPO** is easier check a code has been entered as if you have problems in running a listing enter the line in the program and observe what is entering. If the **TRPO** code, match and the program will does not run, LIST it to console or disk using LIST **CC** or LIST **TABLENAME**, switch off the computer, re-boot and then ENTER the program using ENTER **CC** or ENTER **TABLENAME**. Have this version in the manual way.

## HOW TO USE TRPO

1. Type in the listing carefully, if although you can use **TRPO** to check itself (see below) it may not work if you have made mistakes.
2. **SAVE** or **CHANGE** a copy of the program.
3. Each time you want to type in a program listing RUN **TRPO** 1 first. The program will install a machine code routine in memory and then delete itself. Now type in a line or lines in the magazine including the first two letter code and press **RETURN**.
4. A two letter code will appear at the top left of your screen. If this code matches the one in the magazine carry on and type the next line. Now, the code will not match if you use abbreviations. If you prefer to use abbreviations LIST the line you have just typed, move the cursor to that line and press **RETURN**. The code should now match.
5. If the code does not match, use the editing keys to correct the line and press **RETURN** again. Repeat if necessary until the codes match.
6. To check a line you have already typed LIST the line, place the cursor on that line and press **RETURN**.
7. When you have finished a listing just **SAVE** or **CHANGE** it in the normal way.

You can type in a program without using **TRPO** if and then check it by typing on **LOADING** or **LOADING** a copy of the program, running **TRPO** 1 and then **LOADING** or **LOADING** your program and proceeding to its top 4 above.

Always **SAVE** or **CHANGE** a program before running it and always use **TRPO** before telling us that a program will not run.

## OUR UNIQUE LINE BY LINE CHECKER WORKS ON ALL ATARI XL, XE and earlier 8-bit machines

```

01 1 000 *****
02 2 000 * TRPO 111 by Alan Reeves *
    *                               *
11 3 000 * a programmer's ear FILE 4 *
    * loaded on TRPO 11 *
    * published by ASCII MAGAZINE *
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# BONUS ADVENTURES

## DEDRIDGE CASTLE ADVENTURE by Linda Naysmith

Dedridge Castle is an adventure set in a "real-life" location around my home in Livingston, Scotland. I wrote it originally for my own children but children of all ages (that includes you!) should find it interesting and, I hope, a little different.

The title comes from the statements of our local adventure play park and most of the locations in the adventure have been based on real locations around the park. The tunnel is a long narrow footpath which runs between two rows of houses. Along its length can be found a large concrete frog, a crocodile and a hippopotamus. The dangerous streams is the main road and across it there is a post-hole which six-year-olds have to jump. Further West is another play park where two elephants stand beside the slide. The caves, the temple and the tallies are taken from the street names and there is a very small road to the East. After playing so close to the real situation, I could not possibly have missed out one of our most frequent visitors - the ice-cream man!

As the hero in the adventure, you are almost grown-up and you live in a village which straddles between the banks of Dedridge Castle stream and a large forbidding wood. Your little sister has been kidnapped and it is believed to be held a prisoner in the apparently long-abandoned castle.

Your parents are naturally very upset and are living hope of her safe return as the castle moat is wide and deep, the drawbridge is raised and the walls are unscalable. This resembles tales from your recent childhood about a secret tunnel that leads from the castle down into the hills in the South West. It was said to be used as an escape route during many a daring deed when the castle was occupied long, long ago.

In the rain, the secret of the tunnel's entrance was kept by the animals and of course the horses were able to talk to them because they often found, or were given, a magic talisman. This you discover is a kind of talisman, along with fairy godmothers and good wood fairies who perform magic and heal animals in other stories, but the secret of the tunnel might be real enough, after all, a lot of castles did really have escape routes.

You decide to try and find the tunnel with the hope that you will be able to rescue your sister and bring her home and so the adventure begins ...

The adventure understands two word commands and single letter commands for the four directions North, South, East and West. QUIT GAME ends play, SAVE GAME saves current progress, LOAD GAME restores it. INVENTORY will list what you are carrying. Several other words are recognised, if one doesn't work, try another with a similar meaning.

Linda Naysmith is the mother of four children, Ross, Christine, Alan and David and, having been there and raised in Ford, now lives in Scotland. About four years ago she made the final mistake of buying her younger daughter an Atari computer as a birthday present and became hooked. Linda now plays part-time in the evenings in a local factory packing Smiths and then comes home to spend the rest of the week writing adventures and writing programs. PAGE 6 is proud to bring you Linda's first adventure which, in a field dominated by male writers, has a very different and interesting feel to it. Play it, you will almost certainly enjoy it, so matter how old you are!

These two adventures are too long to publish in the magazine in conventional type-in format and are therefore included as bonuses on the issue 14 disk. The disk is available for £3.95 (£3.50 to subscribers) from PAGE 6, P.O. BOX 14, STAFFORD, ST16 1DR

## MOONSTONE

### A 100% machine code adventure by Tony Longworth

Martin has decided to let you become a wizard, only if you can prove yourself. He has sent you out to explore the legendary Moonstone. No one knows for sure where the stone has been hidden, but it's not going to be very easy for you, as many obstacles lie in your way, which you must overcome if you want to become a wizard.

Moonstone is a machine code, text adventure. The world of adventure, in a totally different world than our own. The law of nature and physics do not as they do in our world. Magic is contained to work, and you must always expect the unexpected. Many newcomers to adventure will find it quite a struggle to communicate with the computer. In this adventure it is not possible to converse with the computer in plain English, instead you can only use one or two word commands consisting of a verb, followed by a noun. For example, if there was a dagger on a chair, then to pick up that object you would have to type in GET DAGGER. If you type in GET THE RUSTY OLD DAGGER, the computer would just pick out the first and last word, and respond to GET DAGGER. The computer will only look for the first few letters of a word, thus dagger becomes dag, sword becomes sord, and so on. As far, it might seem a little frustrating to confuse your sentence into two words. For example, during your adventure, you find a pile of armour, and to put it on you type WEAR ARMOUR. But later on you need to take the armour off and the computer doesn't understand TAKE OFF ARMOUR. The equivalent command is REMOVE ARMOUR.

Below is a table of some of the various commands possible in this adventure. (O) means the name of an object. Anything else in brackets is the synopsis of the command.

INVENTORY (O, LIST)	NORTH (O)
GET (O) (TAKE)	NE
DROP (O) (PUT)	EAST (O)
HELP	SE
EXAMINE (O, SEARCH)	SOUTH (O)
LOOK (L)	SW
WEAR	WEST (O)
REMOVE	NW
QUIT (Q, STOP, END, FINISH)	UP (L, A SCENE, CLIMB)
SAVE	DOWN (D, DESCEND)
LOAD (RESTORE)	

Remember, during your adventure EXAMINE everything. If you're about to do something that will probably be a disaster in your life, then SAVE the game position, and if you are killed you can then just LOAD the game back in and continue from where you were. Always map the adventure out on a piece of paper so you don't get lost. In a maze, you can drop objects to mark various positions in the maze when mapping out. Beware of the red herrings. And most of all ... enjoy the adventure, and have fun!

Thanks must go to Bill Wilson and Steve Prichard for play-testing this adventure and helping me to remove all the bugs and spelling mistakes.

Inspiration gained from the following: *Amey* (Penguin Publishing Group) - *Adventure* (Colson Games) - *Arctura* (Gale in Hollywood) - *Angels* (Adams) - *Stone Menorah* - *Dark Adams* - *Brian Menorah* - *Alan Remick* - *Page 6 Magazine* (probably the biggest inspiration) - and of course to everyone and everything around me at the time of writing this adventure ... *Adventure* tell me on any 0800 Atari 8-bit computer.

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# The ANSWERS!

Over the years that I've been writing the Adventure column for PAGE 6, I've been asked for hints on just about everything from Adventureland to Zerk III. I haven't always been able to help, but I've certainly tried my best.

As this is a special Adventure issue, I've dug out all the questions and answers I could find in my archives and rewritten them for the benefit of other readers. If you've ever written to ask me for a hint or put a question in the CONTACT column, then you'll probably find it here somewhere. Remember these are mostly hints rather than straight answers so you may still have some work to do, but that's all odds to the fun!

## Adventure in the Fifth Dimension (A.N.A.L.O.G.)

Computing magazine

**Q:** What use are the batteries, spherical and trapez?

**A:** Have you examined the spherical? Insert the correct battery in it, then look for the  $\sim \Delta \sim$  symbol in a previously visited location. Hey, that exit wasn't there before! Now you can find a use for the trapez.

## Adventureland (Adventure International)

**Q:** Is there a treasure in the lava? If so, then how do you get it?

**A:** There sure is! You'll need to blow up something that's flammable, then exercise your civil engineering capabilities, but I'll be damned if you think I'm going to tell you any more than that.

## Arrow of Death Part 1 (Channel 9)

**Q:** How do you get into the cave without being killed by the serpent?

**A:** Wear something that will protect you from its attacks.

**Q:** What do you do with the rope and hook?

**A:** Use it to pull something heavy up the same slope.

**Q:** How do you get into the giant building without tripping?

**A:** In doesn't matter about tripping over so long as the giant doesn't wake up. Try dragging his dinner!

## Arrow of Death Part 2 (Channel 9)

**Q:** How do you enter the grill on the stone slab?

**A:** You don't. You'll have to find another way in.

**Q:** How do you get past the water in the gorge?

**A:** You must first find the stone chamber with the iron wheel. Turn the wheel and return to the gorge for a muddy surprise.

## Ayflam (Scribbley)

**Q:** How do you use the map the Ayflam?

**A:** Use large sheets of 5 star graph paper. Each square represents one room. Draw the walls as you discover new rooms, but don't get too ambitious. Draw only the walls directly in your line of sight. Every time you turn left or right, turn the paper so that it is oriented in the same direction as

Garry Francis recalls thousands of hours of adventuring to bring you answers to 169 (count 'em!) adventure questions from A to Z!

you. Beware of teleport rooms! When the map overlaps or somehow doesn't make sense (such as the six-sided square), you have no doubt passed through a teleport. To find whether a room is a teleport, drop an object and note the degrees. If the object 'disappears', the room is a teleport.

**Q:** What use is the hypochondriac?

**A:** Hypochondriacs use drugs!

**Q:** How do you find the battery?

**A:** Scratch the foam in the Fax line, then go somewhere that uses a lot of electric current.

**Q:** How do you find the magnet?

**A:** Wear a disguise, then go to the phone booth and vandalise the receiver.

**Q:** How do you find the copper wire?

**A:** Get the router hot and ask for HELP.

**Q:** How do you find the candle?

**A:** Remember the footstep? Try trapping the corner of the footstep by locking all the relevant doors and see what happens.

**Q:** Where do you get the guard's uniform?

**A:** From the guard obviously, but NOT the armed guard!

Wander around with the camera until the other guard appears and give him a chance to fulfil his fantasy.

**Q:** Where do you get the platinum wand?

**A:** From the armed guard, but you must disguise yourself if you don't want to end up in electro-shock therapy. Remember when the loopy lawyer told you?

**Q:** What use is the mirror with no reflection?

**A:** None. It is probably a carry-over from the original TRS-80 version of Ayflam which had two mirrors. You had to make the first one disappear by wearing a novelty nose and inserting a round peg. You had to break the second one by hitting a ball with a bat. None of these objects are in the Atari version.

**Q:** How do you get rid of the entrepreneur?

**A:** Keep him tied up!

**Q:** How do you find the law book?

**A:** Go to the maze with the revolving doors and find the room with the banana peel, but do not pick it up. Leave the room and enter it a second time.

**Q:** How do you get the hand?

**A:** Let the ants loose upon the policeman.



**Q:** How do you get past the terrorist?

**A:** Have you typed **HELP?** Examined the knife? Given it to the terrorist? Subdued yourself with it?

**Q:** How do you avoid being splattered on the ceiling in the catnap room?

**A:** Catnap the bomb before catnapping yourself.

**Q:** Where do you find the jet?

**A:** It's right slap bang in the middle of the revolving door! Use the catnap to get there. (It is possible to get the jet without using the catnap, but a bug will prevent you finishing the game.)

**Q:** How do you get to the Master Alpine?

**A:** You must have solved all the puzzles in the game up to this point. Walk up to the locked door (you know which one that's you?), press the button on the Star Trek device and move forward.

**Q:** What do you do to the Master Alpine to end the game?

**A:** If the small rat you'll have to remove your slippers, but take the scroll with you.

**The Halls of Hallowpoop (Series)**

**Q:** How do you get past the carnivorous plant?

**A:** You need to feed it something found on the other side of the quicksand. Try **HELP** or **TALK TO PLANT** for some clues. You'll also need something from the store to help you get it.

**Q:** Can you get past the mountain in the river?

**A:** Yes indeed. Type **HELP** or **HINT** for a clue. You should have bought something from a rival location earlier in the game. Pour it in the river!

**Castle Adventure (Atari Program Exchange)**

**Q:** How do you get through the passage in the King's Chamber?

**A:** Try the smaller for size.

**Q:** How do you get through the thick mist in the small staircase?

**A:** A little bird told me that you should solve the first puzzle.

**Q:** What words are needed to pass the wall in the dungeon?

**A:** You can't have your cake **AND** eat it too!

**Colossal Adventure (Level 8)**

**Q:** How do you get the platinum pyramid out of the Flower Room?

**A:** You can't get it through the crack. Use a magic word instead. The word is found in the room description.

**The Count (Adventure International)**

**Q:** How do you stop the flagpole from breaking?

**A:** You don't.

**Q:** What use is the bottle of blood?

**A:** It would make a refreshing drink if you were a vampire, but you're not. Perhaps red herrings would be more to your liking!

**Q:** How do you get past the coffin?

**A:** You don't. Try opening it instead!

**Q:** How do you find the real life?

**A:** Enter the color eyes during the night.

**Q:** Where is the Count and how do you kill him?

**A:** Kill the Count? I refuse to answer a question where someone's life is at **STAKE**! I will, however, give you a hint to his whereabouts. The sign in the crypt says "Positively no smoking allowed here!" and yet there is a pile of extinguished cigarettes! Doesn't that strike you as being a bit odd? And what did the postman deliver on the second day?

**Crash Dive! (A.N.A.L.O.G. Computing magazine)**

**Q:** How on earth do you get out of the escape hatch?

**A:** Carefully read the background story in A.N.A.L.O.G.

Don't **HOLD YOUR BREATH** waiting for me to give you the answer.

**The Curse of Crowley Mason (Adventure International)**

**Q:** How do you open the ironwood chest in the parlour?

**A:** Uncover it with the letter opener.

**Q:** How do you get through the plywood wall in the small storage room?

**A:** Chop a hole in it with your hammerhead's tool.

**Q:** How do you get past the ironwood lock?

**A:** Read the old yellowed note in the ironwood chest.

**Q:** What do you do after passing through the plywood wall and the 'MID' door?

**A:** When you reach a dead end, summon the person mentioned in the book found amongst the ironwood instruments.

**The Dallas Quest (Datascot)**

**Q:** How do you get out of the dark room?

**A:** You can't get out while it's dark! Ask for a **GLUE** to see how you should turn dark into light.

**Q:** Where do you go from the Trading Post?

**A:** Look at the monkey. He's helped before, maybe he can help again! Also look behind the curtain before pushing on.

**The Dark Crystal (Sierra On-Line)**

**Q:** Where is Angler?

**A:** In his observatory.

**Q:** Where is Angler's observatory?

**A:** Listen to the bubbling brook!

**Q:** How do you cross the swamp?

**A:** Haven't you encountered something that floats on water? **PLAY LID** (swamp).

**Deadline (Infocom)**

**Q:** The court feels you have insufficient evidence to prove guilt for the first murder even though you know who committed the second murder. Any clues?

**A:** Second murder? Haven't heard! What sort of a detective are you? Perhaps you've gone **TOO** far!

**Dragon Quest (Atari)**

**Q:** Why is it that when you drop the gold you can't find it again?

**A:** Listen to the barman's tale about the magpie. You **CAN** find it again if you find the magpie's nest.

**Earthquake - San Francisco, 1906 (Adventure International)**

**Q:** Is the marble significant?

**A:** Yes. Lift the cover using the crowbar.

**Q:** How do you get past the fire zone?

**A:** It may be too hot at first. Move away some distance, return and try again.

**Q:** What do you need to reach over?

**A:** The creek.

**Q:** How do you get past the crack outside the tiled plaza?

**A:** See the previous question.

**Empire of the Obscurant (Avantes Hill)**

**Q:** What do you do after talking to the man in the cave and taking the blanket at the beginning of the game?

**A:** It is essential to read "The Rhyme of the Obscurant" before you start playing as this not only gives you the background story, but also gives you lots of hints. (Tough luck if you've got a pirated copy!) Also make sure you **HOLD** an object before trying to use it.

**Q:** How do you compare Obscurant?

**A:** Drop it in the lava pit!

**Emuchester (Infocom)**

**Q:** How do you open the jewelled box?

**A:** Remove the rope first. As it's no doubt been tied using a

magic spell, you'll need magic to remove it. There's at least two ways to do this. You could try the KULCAD spell, but then you won't have it later when you really need it. Alternatively, there's another magical item that will cut through the problem.

**Q:** What is the significance of the four mirror rooms?

**A:** They are a window onto another world – the world of Zoid!

**Q:** How do you safely get the scroll from the control room?

**A:** You can't, but one of your animal friends can!

**Q:** How do you get through the guarded door?

**A:** You could use the KULCAD spell, but again that's probably not a good idea. Have you ever had a dream of a nondescript room in which a cartoonish figure casually opens a simple wooden door and ascends the flight of stairs beyond? Could this be a message? Who could the cartoonish figure be? And why is it that the door is not an obstacle to him?

**Q:** What is the purpose of the adventures?

**A:** *Deja vu!* A touch of humour? Somebody to pinch your nostrils? He can also help you in many ways.

**Q:** How do you overcome Kold?

**A:** It sounds like you're missing a spell. Have you encountered the ancient Terror yet? If not, read the book in the library and work from there. You'll also need to get past the guarded door.

#### **Fantastic Four Part 1 Restoring Human Touch and Thing (Adventure International)**

**Q:** Is there any point burning the shack door?

**A:** No.

**Q:** How do you burn down the tent?

**A:** Throw a high flame at it.

**Q:** Can you remove the tar from Thing?

**A:** No.

**Q:** Can you extinguish the wall of fire?

**A:** Not permanently.

**Q:** How do you get the bio-guns or light the gas without being blown up?

**A:** You can't.

**Q:** What's the purpose of being able to shoot Thing out of the cannon?

**A:** If you do it properly, it allows you to get into the castle.

**Q:** How do you get into Dr. Doom's castle?

**A:** This is really tricky and requires considerable cooperation between your two characters. Starting off as Thing, you must carry the cannon to the entrance of the castle, aim the cannon at the castle, put the gaspistol on it, then climb in yourself. Change to Human Torch, fire the cannon at Blob, then throw a high flame at Blob. Make sure you have the graphics on during all this and you'll get some neat (and quite unexpected) animation.

#### **Feasibility Experiment (Channel 6)**

**Q:** What do you do as the dagger's last?

**A:** Shield yourself from the dagger's breath, then try fighting it.

**Q:** What do you do as the mine shaft?

**A:** Before you do anything, find yourself a key and a dagger to use down the mine.

**Q:** What do you do as the stone temple?

**A:** Read the inscription on the altar and pray in the temple.

#### **Silver Tears (Adventure International)**

**Q:** How do you get past the cartoonist on Beez Hill?

**A:** The item you need is in the jail.

**Q:** How do you find the silver cup?

**A:** Try dancing in the saloon when the time's right.

**Q:** How do you show the horse?

**A:** You need three items. The first is in the wall. Examine the

compass while holding this item and use your new found knowledge to break into the jail. Here you'll find the second item. Finally, by riding the horse, I know he's not shot yet, but if you SPUR him on, you may be surprised at the consequences – and find the third item to boot!

**Q:** How do you get to the Indian Village?

**A:** Ride a Pony.

#### **The Golden Baton (Channel 6)**

**Q:** How do you give the silver shape to the crab?

**A:** FEED CRAB.

#### **Golden Voyage (Adventure International)**

**Q:** What do you do at the strange fountain in the damp cave?

**A:** Throw the first stone tablet into it. Trust me.

**Q:** What do you do with the small stones?

**A:** There are three altogether. One is buried in the jungle, one is inside the stone statue and one is in the hidden chamber. Take them all to the hidden chamber and drop them next to the stone.

**Q:** What does the inscription on the second tablet mean?

**A:** Go to a location where you can see the item in the picture, then say the magic word.

**Q:** What do you do with the stone block?

**A:** You don't do anything to it directly. However, throw the second tablet into the second fountain and return to the stone block for a pleasant surprise.

#### **Grubs in Space (Stellar)**

**Q:** What do you do on Venus?

**A:** Lots of things. Start by tying the rope to the tree, then go E and D. Use the object you find here to get past the Venusian, then carry on Doctor's instructions.

#### **The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy (Infocom)**

**Q:** How do you survive the flying brick in the opening sequence?

**A:** Don't let Proust demolish your house! What do programmers really do? If you've led a life of solitariness or never taken an interest in environmental issues, then read "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" by Douglas Adams.

**Q:** What do you do in the Vagon Hold?

**A:** Consult the guide on a few things such as Babel Fish and Vogons. Obtaining the former leads to a greater understanding of the latter. Let the program lead you through the process of obtaining the Babel Fish, but you'll need your drawing gown and sword, Proust's number and the loose pile of junk mail.

**Q:** How do you prove your intelligence to the screening door?

**A:** You can't if you've got any common sense! Consult the guide about intelligence, but don't bother trying to solve the puzzle until you have nearly finished the game. By that time you should have an item and not have an item which will convince the door of your intelligence.

#### **House of Secrets (Page 6 magazine)**

**Q:** What do you do with the tapper?

**A:** Smack the table to calm your nerves then fire the crossbow while holding the telescope.

#### **The Incredible Hulk (Adventure International)**

**Q:** How do you pull the ring in the first dome?

**A:** Remember your nightmare before entering the dome.

#### **Kidnapped (SoftSide magazine)**

**Q:** Is there an error in the way the clock reads on the 9th floor?

**A:** Yes, there is. In line 1963, change T1 to TL, otherwise you'll get times like 15 P.M. Also, in line 1956, add a space between TV and the closing quote, otherwise you can't watch the TV set.

**Q:** What is the purpose of the locked door on the 6th floor?

**A:** This is the door to the pantry. That's where they keep all

the red herrings.

**Q:** Having got to the window of the dining room on the 4th floor, how do you get out the window with the umbrella?  
**A:** *UHM?*

**The Mask of the Sun** (Broderbund)

**Q:** How do you get the silver boat?

**A:** Go to the secret crypt containing the three stone sarcophagi and search it. Talk to the ghostly apparition when it appears, but you must do so before it fades, so type quickly. Listen to what it has to say, then go back and kill the skeleton with the iron it refers to.

**Q:** What do you do in the boiler room?

**A:** Nothing.

**Q:** How do you get past the pale green gas?

**A:** Try every direction. You can do this without getting killed if you type fast. Don't wait for the prompt before you start typing.

**Q:** How do you find the mask with the blue eyes?

**A:** After you've got the first mask (the one with the black eyes), search the altar.

**Q:** How do you get out of the Temple of the Sun?

**A:** Look at the altar while wearing the second mask.

**Q:** How do you get out of the maze after the shifting room?

**A:** Wear the red mask and move in any valid direction. Wear the mask again and move again. Keep repeating this until Bobolt appears. It will take quite a number of moves.

**Mission Impossible** (Adventure International)

**Q:** If you pour water on the disconnected bomb, it goes off. What do you do to defuse it?

**A:** Did you read the sign in the Control Room? "No beverages. Please see Break Room." Hmm...

**Murderer's Quest** (Melbourne House)

**Q:** Where do you find the iron pyrites?

**A:** Go SW, U from the enormous collector-filled cave. Make sure you obey the sign, then go W, W, D. Incidentally, I'd suggest you save the game before carrying out this sequence - just in case!

**Q:** Where do you find something to help you breathe underwater?

**A:** Go N, N, NW from the double beach and examine what you find there.

**Q:** How do you open the doors bearing the "No Entry" sign in the fantastic complex?

**A:** You can't.

**Q:** Where do you find the cigar?

**A:** Go to the metal chamber where you found the crystal orb and try leaving the room in every direction.

**Q:** How do you get into the catacombs?

**A:** Do your Clint Eastwood impersonation in front of the Empress.

**Mystery Van House** (Adventure International)

**Q:** Do you have to get through the gate to the parking lot?

**A:** Yes. Try moving the bolts with a tool found inside the fan house, then slide it open.

**Q:** How do you open all the locked doors?

**A:** You don't. There are five locked doors. You can open the one in the maze room with the rusty key, but the others stay permanently locked.

**The Paperoff** (Rami Corp. Bug Byte)

**Q:** How do you get through the window without the guard catching you?

**A:** Spread the trashy and read the newspaper on the window.

**Q:** Where do you go from the container after you've taken the money from the till?

**A:** Have you climbed the fence?

**First Adventure** (Adventure International)

**Q:** How do you open the crate?

**A:** There isn't any crate! If you mean the chest, then use the claw hammer to remove the nails and look under the rug.

**Planetfall** (Infocom)

**Q:** How do you get past the mutant infested bio-lab?

**A:** Read the memo in the lab office and follow the instructions. Make sure you are entering the item found in the desk, push the red button, then hit tail it to the Prison Office and climb the elevator.

**Pyramid of Doom** (Adventure International)

**Q:** How do you destroy the iron statue?

**A:** The moral in the same room says "Soak ye well the HEART of Iron". This is a clever play on words by Scott Adams, but what does it mean? If "well" is an adverb, it could mean "Soak carefully for the HEART of Iron", but if it's a noun, it could mean "The HEART of Iron should go to the well". Similarly, "the HEART of Iron" could mean "the heart made of iron" or "the heart belonging to iron" (as in iron statue?). Put it all together and you've got "Soak carefully for the heart belonging to the iron statue" or "The iron statue's heart should go to the well". Or both? What do you think?

**Sands of Egypt** (Dynamix)

**Q:** How do you get started?

**A:** Go north until you find a cliff. Go west until you find a shovel. Get it. Go north and clothe the snake. Go east until you find a canteen. The rest is up to you.

**Q:** How do you get the friends?

**A:** Check out the pyramid first.

**Q:** How do you get to the pyramid?

**A:** Find some transport.

**Q:** What are in the camel?

**A:** Transport.

**Q:** How do you ride the camel?

**A:** Feed it first then mount it.

**Q:** How do you remove the cover in the pool?

**A:** Examine everything first. Hook scepter to handle, then pull back.

**Q:** What do the hieroglyphics in the outer chamber mean?

**A:** Translate them!

**Q:** How do you get the ladder through the crack?

**A:** Due to a bug in the program, you must DROP ALL, then try again and you should be able to get it through. (Refer to the adventure column in Page 6 Issue 13 for an explanation.)

**Savage Island Part 1** (Adventure International)

**Q:** How do you rebuild the raft after it starts coming apart?

**A:** You need to be on shore to do it. Cut the existing vines and the raft will fall apart. Rebuild the raft with the second set of vines. (You did think to cut a second set of vines didn't you?)

**Savage Island Part 2** (Adventure International)

**Q:** How do you reach the rooms beyond the flickering forcefield before running out of breath?

**A:** You can't, unless you've got a much bigger lung capacity. Somebody else in the game has that capacity. See the next question.

**Q:** What do you do after meeting Angh?

**A:** Start by using the flower to break him out and drag him to the eastern red metal room. Now play around with the control console.

**Q:** After using the hoop to find two rooms (apart from the cramped metal area) and moving the lever in the gym, where do you go next?

**A:** Use one of the control consoles to fix the flickering

levelled so that you can get back to the time machine. Use this to travel back to the age of the dinosaurs (the alien device will help here) and blow the wings out of them!

#### The Sorcerer's Star (Brosderbund)

**Q:** How do you get the scrolls off the monks in the monastery?

**A:** I haven't played this game yet, but I've got some hints which seem to indicate that you DON'T get the scrolls off the monks in the monastery. However, after tea (or beer?) in the statue of Buddha. This gets you an audience with the Abbot. Ask him about the scrolls and you'll be taken to the library. Don't try to take the scrolls. Leave the monastery and find the wandering monk. Offer him some stamps, ask him about the scrolls, then accept HIS scroll.

#### Sleazy Adventure (Atari/Program Exchange)

**Q:** How do you get past the Dirty Alchemist?

**A:** Ask for a HINT, then give something valuable to someone less fortunate than yourself.

#### Snowball (Level 8)

**Q:** How do you get the backpack from the video viewer?

**A:** Use the screwdriver.

**Q:** How do you get through the trapdoor?

**A:** There is more than one trapdoor. Use the spanner to open the one in the watch room. Don't worry about the others.

**Q:** How do you kill the bird?

**A:** If you mean the nightingale, you can't. Just hide behind the curtain when you hear one coming.

#### Soft Purr (Sierra On-Line)

**Q:** Where is the lantern?

**A:** Enter the bedrooms in the lobby of the hotel.

**Q:** What's the trick to seducing the young lady in the disco? Flowers, wine and dancing don't seem to work.

**A:** Maybe that's not enough? Have you tried sampling her with candy?

#### Sorcerer (Infocom)

**Q:** What do you do once you've reached the top of the chest?

**A:** How did you ever get roped into this?

#### The Sorcerer of Claymorgue Castle (Adventure International)

**Q:** How do you get past the chandeliers?

**A:** Look at the ceiling to see where you've got to go. Use a spell to dissolve the rope, but don't hang around or you'll get clothed by the falling chandelier. (At least two spells will work, but only one is the 'correct' one.) Finally, step onto the fallen chandelier and use an splitting spell.

#### Sourcruss (Infocom)

**Q:** Where is the mass detector output referred to by the computer?

**A:** That's the map that came with the documentation! It's labelled as the upper right hand corner.

#### Sourrags Odyssey (Adventure International)

**Q:** What use is the black hole?

**A:** A good way to get killed!

**Q:** What use is the methane incinerator?

**A:** I imagine a methane incinerator would be pretty cold. What could possibly live in such an environment? Return it to its home and see what it does.

#### Transylvania (Penguin)

**Q:** Where do you find some flies to catch on the flypaper?

**A:** Pour the weak acid from the clay jar onto the ancient stamp, then look at the stamp and follow the directions.

**Q:** How do you get the key off the table?

**A:** Give the flies to the butler and listen to what he has to say.

**Q:** What's the story with the unseen force that keeps shaking the table?

**A:** The vampire is the unseen force. If you haven't seen the vampire yet, it's probably because you've been annoying the gastic. Try leaving it behind.

**Q:** How do you kill the vampire?

**A:** Go to the castle, but don't take the gastic with you as it keeps the vampire away. Wander around in the castle until the vampire appears, then show him the cross.

#### Utopians and the Golden Flower (Sierra On-Line)

**Q:** How do you get to see the King?

**A:** Talk to the guard in the entry hall of the castle.

**Q:** Is there a key to open the jewel encrusted chest?

**A:** No. Try using some magic, specifically a magic word found near the altar.

**Q:** How do you get past the guard at the docks?

**A:** Try talking to him.

**Q:** How do you get past Neptune and Pluto?

**A:** Read the poem in the instructions. (Tough luck if you've got a pirated copy!)

**Q:** You can see objects after getting rid of the dragon, but it's not clear what they are. How do you get them?

**A:** You cannot get any objects after the dragon leaves.

**Q:** How do you get past the giant wall of fire?

**A:** Pour some liquid over you. (Oh, what a nuisance!)

**Q:** After giving the wine to the Cyclops, he still wants something else. What is it?

**A:** Tell him what the wine's made of so he can get some more.

**Q:** Where do you find some food to feed your hungry crew?

**A:** After escaping from the Cyclops, slaughter the sheep and cook it over an open fire. You'll need some items from the start of the game to build a fire.

**Q:** What do you do after passing past the Stegos, killing the Cyclops and freeing the man in the cage?

**A:** It sounds like you may have bypassed the Island of Siesta without being down towards the jagged rocks on the shore.

**Don't!** You need to listen to the Stego's song. Remember your Greek mythology - specifically Homer's 'Odyssey'.

**Q:** Does the man who gives you the outfit want something in return?

**A:** No. He is grateful enough to be free of the harpies.

**Q:** How do you get past the skeletons?

**A:** Use the enchanted sword.

**Q:** What use is the lantern and how do you get it started?

**A:** The lantern serves no useful purpose other than to prevent you loosing an object that you really need.

#### Voodoo Castle (Adventure International)

**Q:** What is the cast iron pot useful for?

**A:** For the contents and you'll soon find out! You can also try smoking it!

**Q:** What is the kerfey useful for?

**A:** Examining it could be a moving experience.

**Q:** What is the soup useful for?

**A:** It's a little more agreeable than the contents of the cast iron pot.

**Q:** How do you fill the crows after getting the stick, lamp, knife and claver?

**A:** You need two more items plus some instructions. Try reading the book for the latter. Still something missing? Try reading the advertising leaflet in the jail cell, but save the game before entering the jail.

#### Witchhinger (Infocom)

**Q:** How do you pass the troll at the bridge?

**A:** Naive!

#### Wizard and the Princess (Serra On-Line)

Q: How do you get past the snake at the start?

A: You should have received a small hint card with your game. Read it! The desert is a maze. There are thirteen rooms which all look the same except for the fire with a rock in them. These fire rooms are well distinguishable by the position of the rock. Look at the rock in each room and you'll find that all except one have a suspicion under them. Get the rock without the suspicion under it and use it to climbber the snake.

Q: What do you do with the lead (is it a frog)?

A: It's a frog. Remember your fairy tales!

Zork II (Infocom)

Q: Do insects play a part in things?

A: No.

Q: How do you get upstairs?

A: You don't.

Q: How do you use the granite walls?

A: There are two granite walls. A third one is not granite despite the implication of the graffiti on it. When next to a granite wall you can teleport yourself to the other one by saying the name of the room.

Q: Do the words "Hello sailor" mean anything?

A: Yes, but only in Zork III. They may also arise in an amusing scenario in Zork IV (obscure, I mean. Forthunter).

Q: When you try to kill the thief with the rusty knife, it turns on you and stabs you in the throat. What's going on?

A: Don't use the rusty knife to kill the thief. There is obviously some evil magic behind it (as its previous owner also found out). If you had your sword with you when you took the knife, the flash of light would have warned you of its danger.

Q: What do you do in the machine room?

A: The machine is used to make something valuable out of carbon, but I can't tell you what. Examine every part of the machine (inside and out), then play around with it. If you still can't work out what to do, pay a visit to the Technological Museum in Zork III.

Q: What's the third thing you need to do to get through the Entrance to Hades?

A: Sir Richard Steele once wrote that "reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body", or something like that.

Zork III (Infocom)

Q: What is the answer to the riddle?

A: What did the farmer say when he saw three holes in the ground?

Q: How do you get past the guarded door?

A: A key would help. And in the lined doorkeeper REALLY yowling at you or is it his stomach?

Q: How do you get the treasures out of the Bank of Zork?

A: Drop all your treasures. Try entering the Safety Depository from different directions, then walk through the curtain of light and observe what happens. You should notice a distinct pattern. Once you understood the pattern, you can collect your treasures and prance on out without any trouble.

Q: How do you find your way around the oddly-angled rooms? Has it got anything to do with baseball?

A: Yes, it does have something to do with baseball. Find the home plate (what would you expect to find at the home plate?), then walk in the directions that you would expect to follow when going for a home run. (I don't know much about baseball, but I think baseball fields are always oriented the same way. The home plate is at the western extremity of the diamond and the pitcher is at the centre. As the pitcher faces the batter, his left side is to the north, hence left-handed pitchers are known as 'south-paw'.) The diamonds show your

progress. The brighter they are, the closer you are to a home run!

Q: What should you get the dresses to do for you? Kill the wizard, get his wand or move the mailbox?

A: Ah, come on! You can't be serious! If in doubt, why not just save the game and try all three? They'll all work, but I'd recommend the second. The first lacks comparison and the third won't allow you to complete the game.

Q: You can get to the end of the game with the full 400 points, but the game doesn't finish. What's the story?

A: Scoring as you're so close to finishing the game, I think I should leave you in the DARK on this one.

Zork III (Infocom)

Q: How do you get the staff? Has it got anything to do with the broken timber?

A: Exercise some patience and trust in the staff. It's got nothing to do with the broken timber.

Q: Where do you find the key?

A: In the region south of the lake - providing you can get past the gnat.

Q: You can have all seven points, yet the Dungeon Master isn't prepared to see you. What's the story?

A: A point is awarded as an indication that you have the POTENTIAL to find a required object, not for actually finding it. You have probably found (or been very close to finding) all seven objects that the Dungeon Master wants to see, but you didn't have them all with you when you visited him.

There you have it, a meagre collection of adventure hints from A to Z. These are all real questions that real people have asked, not contrived questions that I've made up just to fill the space. If YOUR question isn't here, then drop me a line and I'll see if I can help you out, but please write neatly, ask explicit questions, tell me whether you want a hint or a straight answer and include two international reply coupons to cover the return postage.

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# Flying

Flight Simulation Book Reviews

## By The Book

by John S Davison

*Flight simulator fans can add new dimensions to their flying with these four new books. All are designed for practical use - you actually fly the exercises discussed, sharpening your flying skills and knowledge as you do so. They may seem expensive, but considering the additional use and enjoyment they bring to your simulation software they're well worth the price.*

### LEARNING TO FLY with Flight Simulator Compute! £12.95

Written by John Rafferty, a real-world experienced pilot, this book provides an ideal introduction to the world of Sublogic's Flight Simulator 1. (FS1). It's split into four main sections using a total of twenty six flights - with real airfields and routes used in traditional FS1 fashion.

Where appropriate, the dialogue you'd have with air traffic controllers is included - an invaluable introduction to the numeric language used. Real fanatics could even record this into tape and play it back at appropriate points for extra realism!

You start with basic training, taking you through all phases of a flight including taxiing, takeoff, climb, en-route cruise, approach, and landing. You then go on to building your aviation skills by learning about flight planning, airport traffic patterns, basic radio navigation, short field takeoff and landing, stalls, engine failure, and standard rate turns.

Then you develop precision flying skills, including precision landings and use of VOR and ADF radio aids for flying the USA's Victor Airways system. Finally, you're taught how to fly the professional way under Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) using advanced instrument flying techniques. This involves use of VOR, VOR/DME, DME arcs, NDB, the Instrument Landing System with procedure turns, and back Landing approach.

The final part of the book includes Victor Airways charts covering the four main FS1 flight areas, and around 90 aerial Instrument Approach Procedure charts covering many of the main airports in FS1.

I found the book very easy and enjoyable to read (and more importantly, to understand!) - even on the most difficult of radio navigation topics. If you want a good introductory book to help you get maximum enjoyment from FS1, then this is it.



## **FLYING ON INSTRUMENTS with Flight Simulator Compute Books!** **g9.95**

This book starts by explaining in detail the six basic instruments used in instrument flying and how to fly straight and level, climb, descent, and turn using them. It then covers en-route navigation and Instrument Approach Procedure charts, the latter looking impossibly complex until the book shows you how to interpret them.

Navigation by instruments relies heavily on radio aids, so the book spends much time teaching you how to use the various ones: VOR, DME, ADF, ILS, communications, and transponder radars fitted to the Cessna, Piper, and Learjet aircraft portrayed in FS2.

The practical exercises in instrument flight start with with instrument departures, en-route procedures, and VOR approach and landing. Later chapters cover the more difficult NDB approaches, procedure turns, and precision approaches using ILS. It then goes on to cover variations, such as ILS approaches at night, VOR/DME approaches, circling approaches, DME arcs, ILS approach after glidepath failure, and radar vectoring to final approach.

The book's text covers 83 pages, compared with 75 pages in the IFR section of the book above. In addition this book has over 140 pages of appendices containing takeoff minima, departure procedures and Instrument Approach Procedure charts for many of FS2's airports. For me, these charts alone are worth the price of the book.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book and would recommend it to anyone who's mastered flying FS2 in visual conditions and now wants to learn the secrets of instrument flying.

## **FLIGHT SIMULATOR ADVENTURES for the Macintosh, Amiga and Atari ST Compute!** **g12.95**

Written by three authors, this book is a straight copy of the format first produced by Charles Guldik. (See Page 6 (item 21 and 26 for reviews.) The main difference is that it's aimed at the ST version of FS2, so unlike Guldik's earlier books it includes flights in the graphically spectacular San Francisco area.

For those unfamiliar with the format, the book consists of a series of 'adventures' accessed using Flight Simulator 2. You're given the parameters to key into FS2's editor in-ait up each scenario, and then walked through the adventure as you fly it.

This book contains 48 such adventures, ranging over the whole of FS2's 'world' as supplied in the basic package. Some flights are very similar to Guldik's, such as those to well known

landmarks like the Statue of Liberty and Seattle's Space Needle. This isn't important if you don't already own Guldik's books, though.

The adventures cover a wide range of storylines, including straight sightseeing and 'fun' flights, flights with you as an air-taxi operator, mail delivery pilot, 'eye-in-the-sky' traffic copper, gateway pilot in a jewel robbery, and many others.

Overall, it's a nice way of exploring the world of FS2, but I don't think it's as well produced as Guldik's books. It doesn't include the same level of background information on the areas over which you fly. Nor does it exhibit the same level of warmth, friendliness, and enthusiasm evident in the originals. It's still good fun, though.

## **JET FIGHTER SCHOOL Compute!** **g9.95**

Richard Sheffield wrote this book with with Microsoft's F15 Strike Eagle in mind, but the material covered is equally valid with other jet combat simulators. Like the FS2 books, it's designed to help you explore the simulator to the full thereby maximizing your enjoyment.

It's presented in two parts - Ground School and Flight School, covering theory and practice of jet combat flight respectively. The first includes background material on development of the F15, basic performance and manoeuvring characteristics, weapons systems and capabilities, a brief history of its combat experience, and finally basic rules and manoeuvres of air combat.

Flight School puts you in the F15's cockpit trying out some of the theory. You start with learning combat manoeuvres such as aileron and barrel rolls, loops, split-S, Immelt-turns, stall, and break turns, inverted flying, and use of 'speed brakes'.

Having mastered the basics you then go on to learn ten offensive manoeuvres which use them, including head-on and crossing attacks; high, low and straight yo-yo's; and rollaways, pitchbacks, zoom and dive separations. Appropriate weapons to use are suggested in each case, and dive and pop-up bombing techniques are also included. Diagrams are provided showing exactly what the manoeuvre should look like.

You then go on to learn eight defensive manoeuvres to escape from an enemy closing in for the kill. These include high-G barrel roll, low and high speed disengagement, speedbrake reversal, spirals, linking a head-on incoming missile, and how to let an enemy behind you.

The last two chapters are written specifically for FS2, covering aerial combat scenarios used in the program. Many useful tips are given on risk reduction, limping home when damaged, using a two man crew, and other generally useful hints. Finally, each of the seven missions are outlined in text and suggestions made on tactics you might employ to achieve your mission and get back alive.

If you see yourself as a jet fighter 'junk' and want to increase your knowledge and skill in air combat then this book will show you how.

## 7. TITLE PAGES

There are many amateur programmers who write programs for their own amusement, enjoying the development of the program as much, if not more, than the end result. Many of these programs function very well but lack the finish of commercial programs. Part of the trouble is in the presentation of the program - there seems to be much less interest in making a program attractive to other users than there is in getting the code to work as conceived. You will, however, find that your master work is much more acceptable to your friends and to magazine editors if it has a bit of gloss.

The following items are all important in making your program more presentable:

- Debugging
- Code proofing
- Introduction and title screens
- Instructions
- Colour
- Sound
- End routines

These items can take almost as much effort as the code program itself. The aim must be to look at your own work objectively and try to make it not only work correctly but to be attractive as well.

### DISPLAY LIST

Although the subroutine uses a customised display list there is insufficient space in this short article to go into display lists in detail. If enough interest in display lists is expressed, the Editor might give them a fresh airing in future articles, meanwhile you can find more details in the Atari magazines and books.

To put it very simply a display list is a short list of instructions to a microprocessor called Amdt, telling it how to set up the display screen. Normally you do not have to worry about the display list as it is generated automatically when you give a GRAPHICS instruction, but it is not difficult to set up a custom display list to mix graphics modes on the screen. It is possible to mix any graphics modes, character (text) modes and map (pictorial) modes. In the subroutine I have stuck to a mix of CHR 8 and CHR 2 text modes as they are quick and do not take up too much memory.

### THE TITLE PAGE

The title page itself is in the second part of the subroutine. I don't pretend that it is particularly artistic or eye catching, in fact it is rather cluttered. This clutter is brought about because I wanted to fill up the available lines to make it easier for you to concentrate with your own text and to have a good idea where the text will appear on screen.

**Brighten up your programs by paying a little more attention to the presentation. Ian Finlayson shows you how**

Experiment with colour as well. The CHR 2 lines will come out in different colours if you use lower case or inverse characters, and changing the colour registers with SETCOLOR commands or POKes can give pleasing results. John Lowford's Colour Tutor in the last Page 4 (Issue 15) could be a help here.

### THE SUBROUTINE

**Line 11970** - Sets the graphics mode on which the custom display list will be based, then finds the address of the start of the display list (pointed to by the contents of locations 140 and 141).

**Line 11972** - The fifth and sixth entries in the display list (at DL+4 and DL+5) contain the address of the start of screen data. This location will vary depending on the configuration of your system so the values are saved the microemitter in the display list lines. The temporary variable I is used in the recursive loop which loads the custom display list. TT25 is set to the value in memory location 158 so we can restore it later. It is poked with zero now to turn off the screen. Turning off the screen has two effects, first it allows the computer to run faster, and second it ensures that the new custom screen appears instantly when the screen is turned back on so the process of setting up the screen and then putting the required text on it is not seen.

**Line 11974** - reads an item of data from the list in line 11964. If the item is zero it is the end of the list and we go to 11990.

**Line 11976** - pokes the value into the required memory location, starting at DL and filling every location from there till the list is exhausted.

**Lines 11978 and 11980** - These two lines put back the values we noted earlier into DL+4 and DL+5 so that we go to the right memory location for the start of screen data.

**Line 11982** - increments the counter I and goes back to 11974 to read the next data item in the list.

**Line 11984** - This is in effect the display list for this custom screen (except for the final zero which is only there to indicate the end of the list). This display list generates the following screen:

- 1 line of Graphics 0
- 4 lines of Graphics 2
- 3 lines of Graphics 0
- 4 lines of Graphics 2
- 2 lines of Graphics 0



**Line 1199** - Here we start setting up the title page. Poik 61.0 sets the left margin to zero - this makes life easier when mixing two modes. The default value of two gives a ragged left margin because the double width letters are inset two double spaces while the standard text is only inset two normal spaces. The smaller commands can be changed to suit your requirements. I have set 2 (background) and 4 (border) to be the same and also 1 (text brightness) in GR.O. You may want to set other options for GR.2 alternatives including lower case and inverse. Position 0.0 ensures the cursor is in the top left of the screen ready for text entry.

**Lines 1199A to 1206B** - These are the lines of text. Each line in the program creates one line of GR.O or two lines of GR.2 text. I have split the GR.2 lines into two halves of 20 characters each so it is quite clear what goes on which line. Basic thinks we are in GR.O and expects the screen to be 40 characters wide - this means that two GR.2 lines are treated as one line by Basic - we can, therefore, only type the second line of the pair as a continuation of the first. A carriage return anywhere in the first line of the pair will skip over the second. As Basic thinks we are in GR.O we just use Print (or T) to put the text on the screen for GR.2 lines as well as GR.O.

**Line 1206C** - clears the screen back on once all the text has been filled in.

**Line 1206A** - Looks to see if the START key has been pressed and if so it clears the screen back to standard GR.O, resets the left margin to the normal 21 and RETURNS to the main program.

**Line 1206B** - loops back to 1200A waiting for START to be pressed.

The subroutine can be run as it stands - although pressing START will give an error message as there is no GOSUB for the RETURN in line 1206A.

The easiest way to examine the title page for your own use is to type over the text in my subroutine without changing the length of the text strings. If you experiment freely remember that you can sometimes get into a position where you are not quite certain what is happening with a cursor display bit like this. This is because the bottom lines of the normal text screen have been pushed off the visible screen by the double-height GR.2 lines and the cursor is out of sight. A recovery can be made by pressing BREAK and blindly typing GR.O followed by RETURN - this restores the standard text screen.

Have fun with your title screens. As always I will try to help with queries if you send a stamped self-addressed envelope, also I would be pleased to hear what you are interested in the future articles. My address is: 60 Mandelstam Crescent, E.Preston, W.Sussex, BN24 1DQ.

```

05 01000 REM **          PAGE 6          **
    ** SUBROUTINE TUTORIAL-7 **
    ** TITLE PAGE **
07 01010 REM ** CLEAR DISPLAY LIST **
08 01020 GRAPHICS: SUBROUTINE TUTORIAL-7:
0010
09 01030 TITLE SCREEN: REM ** TITLE SCREEN: COL 1-20:
10:11:22:33:44:55:66:77:88:99:
0015
11 01040 REM ** CLEAR SCREEN **
12 01050 REM ** CLEAR SCREEN **
13 01060 REM ** CLEAR SCREEN **
14 01070 REM ** CLEAR SCREEN **
15 01080 REM ** CLEAR SCREEN **
16 01090 REM ** CLEAR SCREEN **
17 01100 REM ** CLEAR SCREEN **
18 01110 REM ** CLEAR SCREEN **
19 01120 REM ** CLEAR SCREEN **
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03 01950 REM ** CLEAR SCREEN **
04 01960 REM ** CLEAR SCREEN **
05 01970 REM ** CLEAR SCREEN **
06 01980 REM ** CLEAR SCREEN **
07 01990 REM ** CLEAR SCREEN **
08 02000 REM ** CLEAR SCREEN **

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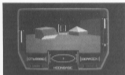
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# What's Happening

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Mastertronic's Ragnars

Recent or coming releases include **ROADWARRS** from Mastertronic at £18.99, **LEGION OF CONQUEST**, at £15.95, from Electronic Arts, a well respected computer-the-world strategy game which has been available on 8-bit machines for some time. **Sherogun** is still working on **DAMOCLES** which should be out in September. **Cascade** have **RINGWARS**, a 3-D space exploration game at £18.99. **STAR FLEET I** is a space battle simulation from Interstel that will not put back £24.95 and put you in command of one of 36 heavy galactic-crafters defending the the Alliance (you eat the NPPU from attack from invading Epyllan and Zaldren warships. More from Mastertronic are **MOTORBIKE MADNESS** and **WORLD DARTS** both at £14.99 plus **REDAWNSHIER**, an old Atari 8-bit title, at just £9.95.

If you haven't heard of **Atari's** summer offer on the ST yet, you might to check your savings and pay a visit to your local dealer. The bad news is that a 500STFM will now cost you £100 more at £299 but Atari will include in each "Summer Pack" over £60 worth of software absolutely free! It's not rubbish either, in fact it includes some of the very best releases around and also one or two games that have not been previously released. Games include **Superspin**, **Marble Madness**, **Defender of the Crown**, **Rampage**, **Strike Force Harrier** and many more - 22 titles in fact! So if you want to buy a computer that will keep you from visiting your local software supplier for the rest of the year get out those savings.

While ST software continues to pour in from all sides, one of the first companies to produce a serious package for the ST has announced that it is pulling out of the ST market.

**Castlink Software** produced one of the first, and one of the few, full accounts packages for the ST but have found the sales weren't up to expectations and so are retreating to the bigger money world of IBM. The original Castlink cost around £200 on the ST and Castlink will kindly give you a "special offer" to upgrade to the IBM version for an extra £200! Guess where the real money will lie!

**Rainbird** have some interesting releases lined up for the summer including follow ups to a couple of their **Modibooters**. The next one from Magnetic Scrolls is entitled **CORRUPTION** where you will find yourself in a modern adventure set in the world of high finance and intrigue. Having been framed by your partner and facing a spell in jail you will have to delve in the extreme to exonerate yourself, particularly as no inner drugs baron is also after you! They see this one as for "hardened adventures" so be prepared! On a more traditional theme is **LEGEND OF THE SWORD**, a new style of adventure from Silicon Software. Rather than following a character, the game tells of the chronicles of Anar, a mystical sword and shield whose magical aura protected the inhabitants of Anar for many years. With the kingdom plunged into turmoil by invaders you have to find the sword and shield to restore peace. The game is said to be a cross between role-playing and text adventures and has several unique features including over 500-unique illustrations, from driver comments and an innovative scrolling map. **VERMINATOR** is an arcade style game set in the trunk of an ancient oak tree! You have to get rid of all the wriggling and flying nasties in over 250 different locations in the tree from the roots to the top-most leaves! Finally comes one you may have been waiting for - **STARBLINDER II** - the sequel to the new fantasy (in fact masterpiece). Over 80 characters will be encountered in fast animated 3-D graphics set among a vast galaxy of planets with interconnecting tunnels. You will listen and hunt for the Space Whales in the upper atmosphere, blast orbiting Pac-Worms and discover the astonishingly graceful Manta Rays. Someone has definitely been reading Arthur C. Clarke, have a read of A Meeting with Moebius before buying the game! All these from Rainbird will be at £24.95.



Latest release from **Frontier Software** is this little beast which looks just like a hard drive with a slot at the front and effectively that is just what it is! The **Supra FD-10** is a 1MBb floppy disk drive that allows unlimited storage by simply using any number of floppy disks. The access speed of the drive is almost as fast as a hard disk which makes the FD-10 and ideal back up device for hard disks users or a useful alternative for anyone contemplating a hard drive. Price is £795.95 inclusive and the special disks required will cost £17.99 each.

## BOMB DISPOSAL



The designers, programmers and artists at Classic Software welcome you to a new concept in computerised entertainment. From the moment you first boot up *Bomb Disposal* you will realise that this is no shoot 'em up arcade game, you are the trained bomb disposal expert, who must decide how to defuse a series of explosive devices and stay alive. **WARNING:** This programme is not for the faint hearted.

## CLASSIC SOFTWARE

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### DARE YOU TRY ?

## FORGET-ME-CLOCK

Frontier Software

£22.95

Reviewed by  
Les Ellingham

Unless you are the fortunate owner of a Mega ST you will know the frustration of having all your files dated sometime in 1985 no matter when you saved them! Not helpful. Of course you can install the Control Panel accessory and set the time and date each time you boot up but, like most people, you will often forget. The answer is to install a clock card which will do most of the work for you although you must still remember to use a particular disk to boot up your system.

The Forget-Me-Clock from Frontier Software is currently the most widely available, and cheapest, clock for the ST and can be fitted relatively easily into all models of 520 or 1040ST. Concise fitting instructions are provided and almost anyone should be able to fit the clock in under 15 minutes. Fitting simply involves removing the cover, detaching the keyboard connector, removing a chip which you fit on the clock card and then plugging the clock where the chip used to be. Finally you place the fasteners in a suitable location inside the computer and connect them up. I say 'relatively easily' because it is a fairly straightforward procedure but I did find the chip to fit an extremely tight fit into the socket on the clock card and great care must be taken not to bend the pins when the chip is first removed. On your 15 minutes spend 45 minutes removing the chip!

Once installed the time and date are set with the software provided and you must then make sure that each time you boot up you use a disk which has the supplied AUTO-SET program in an AUTO folder. If you forget you can of course run the AUTO-SET program on its own at any time, as it does is take the correct date and time from the clock and update the ST system clock. All of your files will be saved in correct date and time order and other programs will be able to pick up the correct date and time. There are several public domain clock and calendar utilities you can use for different applications some of which are provided on the Forget-Me-Clock disk.

The Forget-Me-Clock is, at £22.95, one of the cheapest clocks available for the ST and, if time is important to you, should be a worthwhile investment.

## A FREE FORGET-ME-CLOCK!

PAGE 8 has FIVE Forget-Me-Clocks to give away to lucky readers, courtesy of Frontier Software. All you have to do is write down FIVE ST products distributed by Frontier Software and send the list to FORGET-ME-CLOCKS, PAGE 8, P.O. BOX 56, STAFFORD, ST16 1DR.

You'll have to be quick, as only have FIVE to give away and they will go to the first FIVE correct entries opened in this office on the 30th July. Get thinking and get writing, but do it quickly!

If you are not that quick, or lucky, you can still get a Forget-Me-Clock at the regular price of £22.95 from Frontier Software. Write to them at P.O. Box 113, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG2 0BB or ring them on 0423 67140.

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# WORLD of ADVENTURE

... ST STYLE



How does the ST adventurer fare when it comes to his or her favorite computer hobby? How many adventures are there on the ST? The first problem is of course defining what is meant by an 'adventure'. I will exclude for the moment the ' Dungeons and Dragons' implementations such as the Ultima series from Origin Systems and Dungeons Master from PTL which although wonderful 'adventures' in their own right are not what is usually meant by Computer Adventures. Nor will I include the so-called 'arcade adventures' which are mainly joystick/mouse driven and consist mainly of fighting ones way through mazes, finding artifacts to 'use' elsewhere in the game.

Even so, that still leaves a wide selection of adventures with and without pictures, and with varying levels of interaction with the graphics. I easily located over sixty adventures from over a dozen companies.

## IN THE BEGINNING WAS ...

It is all reputed to have started back in 1976 with Willie Crowther and Don Woods producing a game called Adventure. This was soon followed by a group of guys at MIT publishing a game called Zork in 1977, and Scott Adams amazing everyone by managing to fit his first adventure Adventureland into a 148K machine in 1978.

Two of those early games are still available on the ST. Adventure was re-released by Level 9 in this country and renamed *Classical Adventure*. They took a bit on the real (and if you can spot the hint), wrote two sequels (*Adventure Quest* and *Dungeons Adventure*), and over the years, improved the vocabulary and syntax of the games, added pictures, and published the trilogy as *Jewels of Darkness*. Level 9 have produced a number of excellent games over the years, many of which are not available on the ST. They have packaged six of their other old games in sets of three and, at 3-for-the-price-of-1, *Time and Magic*, *Silicon Dreams* and *Jewels of Darkness* are without doubt some of the best buys on the ST adventure market at the moment.

## INFOCOM AND ...

The other of those originals which is still around is *Zork*. The MIT guys founded a company called Infocom in 1980 and since then have produced not only *Zork II* and *Zork III*, but 30 other adventures covering virtually every imaginable genre

- Fantasy, Mystery, Science Fiction, Comedy, Tales of Adventure and, recently, Horror and Romance (which, my eleven-year old son assures me, are actually the same thing!). Although the recent games are excellent Infocom, for many years, classed their games as Introductory, Standard, Advanced, and Expert. If you are a beginner then you could try *Wishbringer* or *Spellbook*, if you want a real challenge then you should try *Deadline*, *Sarcross* or *Spellbreaker*.

Infocom adventures are all pure text. They believe in the power of the imagination to provide better pleasures than they could, and that a thousand words are worth a lot more than a picture! They have concentrated on improving the capability of the games to understand your input, and thus make the game more fun to play. Although some other companies are catching up in this area I believe Infocom still have the edge. The only catch, in this country, is that Infocom games are a little expensive. Look out for special offers or see if you can get a girlfriend in the States to send you some - they must be doing quite reasonably priced sets of *Zork I, II, and III*, and of the second *Zork Trilogy (Hatchery, Sorcerer, Spellbreaker)* earlier this year over there, and also a trio of *Science Fiction Classics* and a *Classic Mystery Library*.

The recent *Beyond Zork* offers a little graphical help with the mapping, but is still basically a text adventure - and one of their best!

Another of Infocom's recent offerings, *Hard and Bert Coude's Make Head or Tail of It*, is a set of eight short stories all involving sorcery - witches, gnomes, and other verbal trinkets - good fun if you are into that sort of thing and fancy a bit of variety.

## SCOTT ADAMS

The third of the original adventures, Adventureland, is not, to my knowledge, available on the ST. Scott Adams went on to produce over a dozen adventures, adding pictures along the way, culminating in *The Sorcerer of Claymore Castle* which I consider his best - albeit a trifle primitive when compared with the later offerings of the other companies. He then went on to produce the *Questprobe* series in conjunction with Marvel Comics, some of which are available on the ST. I don't know what went wrong, but they are nowhere near the quality of his earlier work (I suspect he didn't have a lot to do with them - they probably just used his name) and I cannot really recommend any of them.



The fact that both *Quest* and *Cultural Adventure* are still around and still popular says a lot for their quality – all serious adventurers should have a go at them!

A number of other companies are also producing new adventures of a very high quality, usually with pictures added. Foremost among these are the UK's own Level 9 (*Ginneso Ranger*, *Knight One*), and Magician Books (*The Power*, *The Guild of Thieves*). There are others such as Activision (*Borrowed Time*, *Windchime*) and Penguin (*Transylvania*, *Crimson Crown*), but I wouldn't put them in quite the same class. I would class all these as text adventures, since I use a rule of thumb when evaluating the graphics which are provided with adventures: if I turn them off, can I still enjoy the adventure? (The fact that *Knight One*, for example, comes without pictures on the *MSX1*, places it firmly in the text adventure category by my reckoning.) Personally, if the game is going to have graphics at least make them integral to the game!

## INTERACTIVE GRAPHICS

This now brings us to another range of adventures, those where the graphics form an integral part of the game. Prime examples of these are the excellent games from Sierra: *King's Quest I, II and III*, *Space Quest I and II*, *Police Quest* and *Leisure Suit Larry in the Land of the Lounge Lizards*. In these games you have to use the cursor keys or mouse to manoeuvre your character around the screen in order to solve certain puzzles and reach certain places, as well as entering text commands in the normal way through the keyboard. I found *King's Quest III*, especially, to be a superb game, and the fact that the three *King's Quest* games are currently being offered for the price of one makes them an excellent bargain.

The idea of interacting with the screen is also used effectively in *Time Times* (from Activision) and *Delta Yu* (from Mindscape) where normal text entry is augmented by the ability to use the mouse to point at items in the pictures, and to point at icons to indicate what you want to do with those items. The new *Monteville Manor* goes even further and provides you with pull-down lists of words as well. You issue all your commands without touching the keyboard! *Monteville Manor* also breaks with the tradition of using text on the screen to respond to your input – instead they use speech synthesizers to let the characters in the story talk to you! I understand Infogrames's *Midwick* is likewise all icon-driven. As I haven't yet played any of these games I can't really comment on how good they are. Time will show whether they are just gimmicks, or whether they will develop into whole new sub-genres of computer adventuring.

## THE ADVENTURE OF THE BOOK

There are many other adventures on the market – the ST appears to be well covered for. But I would just like to mention one other company at the moment. That is Telarium. For a company with a wide range of adventures for a number of different machines, they seem to get very little publicity in this country. Their titles include *The Swamp* (Agatha Christie), *Perry Mason: The Case of the Mandarin Murderer* (Eric Stanley Gardner), *Nine Princes in Amber* (Roger Zelazny), *Amazon* (Michael Crichton), *Dragonworld* (Perry Barrer), *Andromeda with Wings* (Arthur C. Clarke), and *Falchion* 451 (Ray Bradbury). But I don't recall seeing a review for any of these in any magazine! Telarium's President, C. David



Sierra, wanted more plot and character development and less 'guessing what word the parser is looking for'. He achieves the latter of these by the simple expedient of including a vocabulary listing with the game, especially useful when in specialised situations such as cross-examining a witness in *Perry Mason*, or indulging in a sword fight in *Nine Princes*. To get more plot he collaborated with acknowledged authors (but you probably guessed that from the list).

Some of the adventures are faithful simulations of existing stories (e.g. *Nine Princes*), other are specially commissioned sequels (e.g. *Dragonworld*). To be honest, it doesn't always work. I found *Amazon* particularly boring – in most cases you have to do just the right thing at just the right time then the plot swoops along to another decision point. *Falchion 451* and *Dragonworld* are the closest to traditional adventures and well worth trying. I found *Nine Princes in Amber* especially interesting (I may be biased since I enjoyed all the books) in that you can play it just like the books but there you don't win. You have to deviate from the book plot in a number of places to achieve final victory, and there are lots of other endings to find as well – a very cleverly thought out game.

All the Telarium adventures feature a number of happy little scenes, and lots of pictures, small ones and big ones, with text and graphics split either horizontally or vertically to provide a bit of variety. I would recommend trying at least one of them just to experience a different approach to computer adventures. However, because of the way they tend to lead you through the plot they will not be everyone's cup of tea.

So, plenty of variety, with only one catch. The cost. Most of the adventures on the ST seem to cost between £20 and £30 and 60 odd adventures will cost you a lot of money! Buy the three packs, shop around, or hope you get them as presents! Happy Adventuring!

by John Sweeney

With his last bits of mana (magical energy) Gethring blasted a poison blast which destroyed the last of the skeletons. We turned and moved down the corridor looking for somewhere safe to rest. At last an open door appeared. We stepped through carefully and froze as we heard an ominous click underfoot. A doorway in the right hand corner of the room opened slowly as we waited with bated breath to see what would step forth from the shadows. The door opened fully. Nothing happened. The room we had entered was quite small. An alcove straight ahead of us was inaccessible because of a deep pit which opened directly in front of us.

We stepped carefully to the right, avoiding the pit - another click! And with a rumble the doorway in the corner closed again. We examined the floor carefully but could see no more floor pads. Making our way to the door we looked through its bars and found that it led to a small room containing a key. Ninja immediately tried his usual subtle approach of attacking the door with his shield and hammer. Uebers, Maphus cast his mightiest OPEN DOOR spell at it. All to no avail. Leyla experimented with the pads and found that she could easily open and close the door, but never in such a way that it was open where she was inside it. (Unfortunately the party have to stay in a single group in one square so you can't leave someone by the door and use someone else to work the pads!).

Gethring then opened a lever on the wall by the door. As he pulled it there was a deep beam behind us and turning we discovered a blue haze in the air between us and the pit. He pushed and the haze disappeared, pulled and it reappeared. "Ah, well, nothing ventured ...", someone muttered as we stepped into the haze. ZAP! Where are we? Ah, in the alcove round the corner from the doorway! There was a click as we landed on yet another floor pad! Another rumble - the door was open again - but now we were stuck even further away - completely confined by the pit! Then Leyla found a small

# WHERE CHAOS REIGNS

the world of ...

button on the wall. Press it and the pit closed! Quick, does it lead to the first pad - Click - Whoops - that one opens the pit as well as the door!

Hold on a minute! We still can't get the key - to get back to the doorway we either have to cross the second pad that closes the door, or enter the blue haze which sends us back to the alcove! A noise behind us - a fireball flies past and explodes against the wall, we wait to find four fireballers bearing down on us, eyes blazing - back to the fight lead!

And so it goes on! You have enough information shown to work out how to open the door. Can YOU solve it? This is only one of many excellent graphical puzzles which you will find in the depths of Chaos's Dungeon.

You get to choose four characters in Dungeon Master. Their most important characteristics appear as small bar charts at the top of the screen beside their heads. Down the right of the screen you can see their position in the party, the spell syllables they can cast and the contents of their right hands - these are replaced by submenus of available actions when selected, and directional indicators for moving the party around. The main part of the screen shows you the view ahead down the corridors of what your party can see. The graphics are excellent and show all the details of the dungeons - and I do mean ALL - you need to walk up to walls and examine them carefully to find hidden switches and buttons! One of the movement options is to walk sideways - this allows you to scan long walls.

The mouse is used to point to any area of the screen to request an action via the left button. The right button allows you to examine the inventory of each of your characters - this replaces the dungeon view and it also shows in superb graphic detail. Your character is shown as a number of icons to

accommodate helmet, upper armour, lower armour, leg armour, boots, hand contents, quiver contents, pouch contents, backpack contents, etc.

When the mouse is positioned over the dungeon or inventory area it acts as a hand rather than a pointer. You can pick items off the dungeon floor, put



them in someone's hand or pack, throw them down the corridor, examine them by holding them to a character's eye, eat them or drink them, read them and so on. And all with the absolute minimum of mouse action.

Once you have got used to the system you begin to realize how well thought out it is. PTL have obviously gone to a lot of trouble to make a system that is easy to use and extremely efficient. This is a far cry from the multitude of games which have been written for non-IBM environments and then, when converted to the ST, have had some windows and mouse actions added on to make them look good - they are usually a real pain to play. No, this game was obviously designed with a mouse in mind and is the best use of a mouse I have yet seen in this type of game. Casting spells by choosing from the spell-syllable submenus, choosing an attacker and a method of attack, naming positions between characters and drinking them, all of these have been designed to be easy and fast.

And, boy, do they need to be! This



game takes place in real time – some of the usual ‘He can do that and she can do that, no, maybe that’ and then wait the fight and watch the companion play it out. The monsters march for fly or crawl or ... up to you and start attacking. You need to have weapons and spells ready and start selecting them immediately. You can give each of your characters one action that you must wait for them to recover – throwing a Shortcut is quite fast, doing a berserker with a battle axe takes longer – in some as each character is recovered by or she can be given another action (use an arrow, revive and cast another spell, change weapons, thrust with a sword, blast with a magic staff, the variations are endless.

You can also move the party during a fight, so to dodge a blow or a spell, try and get round the back of the enemy for a sneaky attack, back off while you take a quick wig at a healing potion (keep an eye on all your characters’ statistics bar/heads), or just plain run away until you find a door you can close behind you!

So the fights are great, the puzzles are interesting (but not too hard!), the graphics are excellent, the interaction capabilities – does it make a good game? Yes, they got that right as well. It starts off nice and easy – just pick up the mouse and start playing. The first level of the dungeon very carefully teaches you how to play by posing you very simple problems and fights so that you learn how to work the mouse and a bit about how Fantasy Role Playing all works. This aspect of it makes it especially good for newcomers to this type of game – try it and see how quickly you get hooked!

As you go deeper it gets harder and harder. There are over ten levels (I won’t spoil it by telling you EXACTLY how many) to explore with new monsters on every level and plenty of variety between nice open spaces and long winding corridors, with the odd maze or puzzle room thrown in for good measure. Saving and Pausing can be done at any time (HURRAY!). You should always have before going down a staircase – the new monsters

than the monsters – bows, clubs, daggers, staves, axes, staffs, and magical and named words of all descriptions – deciding which to use is half the fun! Likewise there are lots and lots of magical weapons and useful items.



There are also a number of artifacts which do not appear to have any direct use – contain randoms and create the instance – let me know if you find out what they do (if anything). There did appear to be one minor bug down deep – occasionally some of my characters would die immediately from a fireball which should have only reduced them from 800 hit points to 300! I’m not sure whether this is a bug, or intentional (as an occasional direct hit on a vital organ, or whether it is some subtle interaction between my spells and my artifacts – anyone know? Save regularly! (Death does not have to be permanent – you can carry your colleague bones to an appropriate place if you know how – but check your stats before and after – resurrection is not free – I prefer to Save!)

Examine everything you find, read all the scrolls (they are mainly for learning new spells but have other class as well), keep getting all your characters to throw spells whenever they have spare mana (as they practice they get better and gain levels – you need every hit point you can get!), give all your characters a go at being at the back, using the Throwing Stars, Poison Darts, Slings, and Bows (again practice means levels (Mana, in this case) which means hit points), and once you have cleared an area of monsters (albeit briefly – they do tend to keep coming!) make at least a rough map of the area – once you have found the next stairs down you should check for any large areas you haven’t searched – you may have missed a secret door.

But has I’ve had for ages. Why can’t they all be as good as this?

Explored by

John Sweeney

# DUNGEONMASTER

The monsters are nasty and varied and all fully animated as they attack you, they will chase you and can be tricked into pits or snatched with closing doors – it really is quite a remarkable game.

And all of this happens just as fast as you can move the mouse. You do need to make sure you are comfortable – I got terrible arm ache the first time and I started using a mouse mat on my lap.

You never need to use the keyboard – but a few keys have been implemented. The first thing I found had almost the mouse was trying to use it and draw a map at the same time – not to worry – they have implemented the arrow keys on the keyboard for just that! The second problem I found was when picking up all my sturbers, daggers and axes after a fight – redistributing them to the correct characters means just a few too many large mouse movements – they thought of that too! You can use your left hand on the Fkeys to switch between your various inventories. To see this all aspects of a game which has been well designed and tested, and where there were inadequacies they have been fixed.

will probably kill you and you learn which weapons and spells will work against them – it is well designed in that respect – if you have successfully solved most of a level you will probably have enough armour and power to survive on the next level, but if you rush down stairs too quickly you will DIE! Consume you do NOT have to completely solve any level – for example there are six keys on the second level (assuming the Hall of Champions as Level Zero), but you only need four of them to progress – the other keys give you access to bonus areas. Once you have explored most of a level you can also find extra staircases to make movement back up the dungeon easier – you do need to go up and down occasionally!

Of course there are some puzzles which you DO have to solve – your objective is to find the Princess, but once you have that what should you do? Should you bring it out? Try and find Chaos somewhere down below and defeat him? Or should you follow up the rumours about a Power Gem? And what would you do if you found it?

The mystery is even more varied!

# BEYOND

Infocom Activision  
£29.95

**John Sweeney  
discovers  
Interactive Fiction  
Plus<sup>®</sup> for the ST**

Sometime around 500 BC Zeno of Elea proposed the following: "Before a body in motion can reach a given point, it must first traverse the half of the distance, before it can traverse the half, it must first traverse the quarter, and so on ad infinitum. Hence, for a body to pass from one point to another, it must traverse an infinite number of divisions. But an infinite distance cannot be traversed in a finite time. Consequently, the goal can never be reached!"

Sometime around 1588 AD Brian Montague of Infocom built a bridge based on this principle! The 'body' in this case is YOU, and the 'given point' which you are trying to reach is the other end of the bridge. Even worse, once you have reached the middle of the bridge you will find that the end you started from is now also an infinite number of steps away! You know you shouldn't have entered the bridge when you read the sign at the entrance warning you that it was 'Zeno's Bridge!'

This is one of the many superb problems which face you at every turn in Beyond Zork, and whether you can spot the paradox or understand Eleatic Materialism is less important than your ability to master the magical artefacts you will find scattered around the countryside.

The story so far: A young adventurer made a name for himself as a great collector of treasures and solver of problems. Eventually, after completing his exploration of the Great Underground Empire (Zork I), and creeping the strange domains of the Wizard of Froboak (Zork II), he ended up as the Dragon's Master himself (Zork III). Meanwhile, on the other side of the Great Underground Ocean, a young magician found equal fame while becoming extremely adept in the use of magic, working his way from Endchanter (Zork IV) up to Sorcerer (Zork V). Rumour about this time we caught a glimpse of the past adventures of a young lad and a magic stone called the Wishbringer (Zork 0), with hints that this was perhaps the childhood of one of the two aforementioned sages? Then came the Ultimate Adventure - Spellbreaker (Zork VI). The Sorcerer, now master of his guild, is confronted by a terrible evil. His colleagues are transformed into Norns, Salamanders and other reptiles. Magic seems to fail, and in the final confrontation our hero is forced to destroy magic forever in order to save the world.

Hang about! Zorks always have magic. So, now that magic has been destroyed, how can there be another Zork? Simple: BEYOND ZORK actually takes place just BEFORE the end of Spellbreaker! The game opens with various events and salamanders discussing how they can preserve some of their Magic. The fabled Cocoon of Quesada, of which the Wishbringer was a mere seed, must be recovered and removed from this reality to "await the coming of a better age, an age beyond Magic, beyond science..." (Could this be a lead in to The Return of the Son of Beyond Zork Part III)? Anyway, you, a lovely peasant, get chosen for the job.

Armed with but a single Zorkoid (the local currency) you set off into strange lands to fight deadly monsters, collect mysterious artefacts, and solve some amazing puzzles.

Way back in Zork II you had to fight a Troll and a Thief. What they didn't tell you was that as you gathered treasures you gained experience and got stronger, healthier, and better at fighting. (Actually it DID tell you so on the original ManiacMania version - but the info got lost

during the conversion to the Micro - presumably you were supposed to deduce it from your general knowledge of D&D?) So while the Thief is impossible to beat at the beginning of the game, once you get near the end he is a pushover!

In Beyond Zork you get to know what is going on. You get 66 points to allocate to Endurance (Hit Points), Strength, Dexterity, Intelligence, Compassion and Luck. You start with Armour Class 1. All of these are measured on a scale of 1 to 99. Once you have chosen your attributes you find yourself alone at the top of a hill. You don't stay alone for long! As you wander the lands of Quesada you will encounter over a score of different 'monsters' most of which will attack on sight and are only interested in helping you to an early grave! Not to mention the numerous non-hostile folk with whom you can while away the time in stimulating conversation.

When you first play the game you will find you spend more of your time fighting monsters, working out the lay of the land, collecting treasures, and trading with the various shopkeepers for enough arrows, weapons and magic to keep you alive on your next journey into the wilderness. Once you have succeeded at that you need to work out exactly what all the magical artefacts you have found are capable of doing for you - the land is littered with wands, potions and scrolls.

Here we find one of the differences between Beyond Zork and a 'standard text adventure': it is different every time you play! With the game you get a large colourful map of the area of Quesada which you need to explore. All the important places are shown on the map, but the areas in between them, like the jungle and the marsh are unexplored - they change every time you return, as do the locations within these of the various puzzles, monsters, magic items and treasures. Once you have solved the problem of survival, you next major task is to work out how things change and how to identify your finds.

Your travel around the game and interaction with the local denizens is greatly enhanced by a number of new facilities. First, a map of your current location is shown in the top right of the screen. You can see where you are, plus all known exits, and the nearby locations. If you need more info you can ZOOM out to get a view of a wider area around you. Without this the varying areas might have been a little tedious! Secondly, you can move from location to location with the numeric keypad. Thirdly, you can define the F-Keys to be any commands that you wish, e.g. ATTACK MONSTER, PARRY,

**WAIT, GET ALL.** Lastly, you can specify what is to appear in the top left window, normally it shows your current location or your inventory, but you can request a display of your statistics in bar chart form, so that you can follow them during a fight - some of the monsters don't just reduce your Hit Points! The use of these facilities gives the game almost an arcade feel (although there is no need for fast reflexes!).

The variety of monsters and the different ways in which they attack you make those parts of the game great fun. However, after a little playing I was beginning to wonder if this was all there was to it! Never fear - the best is yet to come. Although you may have solved a few of the problems during your initial forays into the wilds, you will eventually come to a point where you have killed all the easy monsters, and explored all the easily accessible areas. Then you start asking yourself: Is there any way to reach the other side of Zork's Bridge? Is it possible to defeat the Monkey-Ghinder who dodges all my blows and magic with the precision of steel? Is it possible to escape from the Collos? Will I ever solve the Riddles? Is it possible to reach the Caves despite the sheer cliff walls below? What ARE all the mysterious computers and levers on the map for? Assuming I can defeat the Bloodmoon and Crossedblow, will I ever find a way of making the Jewels of Tars without being destroyed by the Idol? Will I ever make friends with the Unicon or the Paradoxi, or catch a Mink? Is it possible to get past the lightning into the Faith of Festiva? Do I need to find a clever way to increase one of my statistics in order to solve some of these puzzles? Can I ever get past the Christmas Tree Monsters who are too numerous to fight?

Christmas Tree Monsters? Yes - from the original Zork II Instruction Booklet, here at last are the legendary Christmas Tree Monsters, and I quote (from many years ago): "Trying the bizarre can be fun - a nonsense example: GIVE THE CATERPILLAR TO THE CHRISTMAS-TREE MONSTER. - THE CHRISTMAS TREE MONSTER IS REVOLTED AT THE THOUGHT OF ADORNING ITS BRANCHES WITH A CATERPILLAR." Well now you can finally try it yourself - if only you could find a caterpillar!

The puzzles really are excellent and well up to Infocom's usual high standard - I was stuck for days on some of them - this is without doubt the best game they have produced in the last couple of years. Easy to play, fun to play, lots of humour and excitement, well packaged, well presented, in fact it really is great all

round. Without doubt Infocom have set new standards for "text" adventures which the competition will find hard to equal.

But that is not all. Another really excellent feature of the game is the fact that many of the problems have multiple solutions! Once you have established a character and found a few artefacts you will find that there are no less than FOUR ways to leave the Collos, and FIVE ways to get off Zork's Bridge! Furthermore you don't actually have to "fight" any monsters at all. Assuming that by "fight" we mean go blow on blow against some creature with a conventional weapon, then over half the creatures can be deflected without fighting, and another half dozen can be taken out with a couple of your most powerful spells (unfortunately nearly all spells are limited use only). This leaves a few simple monsters which can be avoided.

Some of the monsters can only be deflected by using logic or magic correctly, with many others you have the option, IF you can find it, I got lots of extra fun after I had finished the game by searching for alternative solutions - it was only then that I finally discovered that you CAN get out of the Collos right at the beginning of the game!

Although you can play a long way into this game without too much thought, be warned - it ain't easy to finish it! There are traps everywhere which can lead you down blind alleys. If you are stuck then you should rest and not do ANYTHING which is not necessary. There are many actions which seem right but put you in a position where the game is unwinable, there are a number of sequences where you only get one try - if you didn't get it right you need to go back! This game is MILANI! Make sure you identify EVERYTHING you find or buy - take nothing for granted! And study the Lore and Legends of Qedor:

# ZORK

carefully - it is full of clues!

One brief granble - why are there so many items described in the text, and for which it does compute the words, but which it will not let you examine? Especially the horse which you can refer to while it is alive, but once it is dead and in your way is 'not here'? Nice little Infocom all. A minor flaw in an otherwise perfect game.

Your final recovery of the Coconut of Qedor would appear to coincide fairly closely with the end of Spellbreaker, so is this the end of Zork as we know it? The last thing you hear is "Better take a nap - you're going to need it", so somewhere I think that it won't be all that long before we find out what lies "beyond Magick, beyond Science" and beyond Zork...



# PROTEXT and POWER BASIC

## Two highly recommended programs

*Coming in the next issue are full reviews of two fine programs that are so highly recommended that I must give you an advance write-up just to ease you into their way to go out and buy some quality software for the summer.*

### A mini review

by Les Ellingham



Regular readers will know that I have bemoaned the lack of a decent word processor on the ST for some time but here at last is one that seems to fit most of what I consider essential in a word processor. It still can't do that elusive 'true ASCII' save but in almost every other respect it comes up to scratch and has finally persuaded me that the ST can be used for word processing after all!

Protext does not get encumbered with GEM and is thus much faster than most other word processors. It was developed originally for the Amstrad and this 'business' background shows through clearly, it is an extremely practical way to use such fine of gimmicks. A true word processor that allows you to get on with the job and do it well. Protext uses two modes of operation - Basic mode, where all the expected word processing facilities are provided and Command mode, in which several unique features are present. The program has an integral spell checker which can operate either on a document being worked on or a saved document and which, at last, contains true English spellings and such useful items as English country names. There are extensively easy to use keyboard macros which may be defined as you see fit, various program configurations which may be called at will, several printer drivers with the ability to easily create your own, sophisticated mail merge and much more. The features are well thought out and practical and it is the type of program that has made the Amstrad much more of a success in business users than the ST. Protext is a program that is simple enough for the every day user yet powerful enough for those whose requirements are much more demanding. As I say the only thing missing is that ASCII save but then if you have POWER BASIC you could quite simply write your own conversion program.

The ST has proved to be much more difficult to program than most 8-bit users expected and in my opinion there has yet to be a language that is so easy to use as Atari Basic, but Hi-Soft's Power Basic could be just what all an 8-bit user has been waiting for.

Like a great many owners I shied off programming on the ST for a long while because I simply did not have the time to learn another language or come to grips with Post Basic or GFA. I had almost given up when Hi-Soft's Power Basic arrived for review. It looked interesting. An editor similar to the familiar Atari BASIC editor (very little GEM overabundance!), use of line numbers or not, as you wish, the ability to run the program without compiling, to insert breaks, stops etc. to test sections of code and when it is all working to simply compile it all to a runnable .PRG file without ever leaving the editor! I sat down with the manual and started to write a program to convert ST WRITER files to ASCII, something that I feared I would never do. I wrote it virtually the same way as I would in Atari Basic, or more clearly Turbo Basic, and after a couple of problems in understanding string manipulations, had a program that I could run from the desktop within about half an hour! My first ST program and it was relatively easy. I couldn't believe it!

I am sure that most users familiar with Atari Basic will find Power Basic to be very easy to use at its primary level and, with a good look on GEM, should have little problem in producing all those windows and dialog boxes. The program has built in libraries to access all of the features of GEM and contains several example programs and materials to help you along.

It looks as if this could be the BASIC of the 8-bitners have been waiting for and the price is great - just £19.95! Check your issue for the review but if you can't wait I can recommend it anyway. If I can write my first ST program in half an hour, so can you!





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Sierra started with text adventures way back in 1978. They very soon started pioneering work with graphics which culminated in 1988 with their first 3-D Animated Adventure Game: King's Quest. Since then their graphics have gone from strength to strength and their forthcoming King's Quest IV: The Perils of Rosella is supposed to be even better!

In all Sierra's games the graphics really are integral to the game. You have to use the camera keys or mouse to manoeuvre your character around the screen in order to solve certain puzzles and reach certain places, as well as entering text commands in the normal way through the keyboard. Many of the puzzles are visual, requiring you to find routes around obstacles in the pictures. In all the games you should walk around the whole of any new screen and look at everything. The commands LOOK, ROOM or OBJECT can give different results - depending on where you are standing!

The pictures and animations are excellent, but do unfortunately take about twenty seconds each to load. This is not a problem when you first reach a new screen, since there is usually time to do so each screen, and the responses to your commands are always instantaneous. Waiting for all the intervening pictures to be loaded can, however, be a little tedious if you wish to cross a number of rooms quickly, especially when replaying a part of the game which you have solved. This delay is a limitation of the current technology and you just have to accept it if you wish to play this kind of game - SAVE frequently!

Sierra have obviously put a lot of effort into improving their graphics and animations over the years. Unfortunately they have not been quite so progressive with their input parser. Most of the time it is barely able to cope with VERB NOUN, confuses you by understanding a command in one room but claiming not to understand it in the next, and then accuses you by requiring you to type in a command like HIT THE BALL AT THE WALL WITH THE BAT (TWO prepositional phrases) which you didn't expect it to understand. Its vocabulary is also extremely limited, which results in spending a certain amount of time in trying to guess exactly which phrase it wants next. You should always make notes if anyone tells you to do something - when you want to do it you probably have to enter EXACTLY what you were told!

Most of the games contain a game within a game: Space

## Sierra's

# QUEST

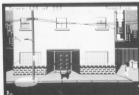
## 3-D ANIMATED ADVENTURES

Quest I has a slot machine, Leisure Suit Larry has Blackjack, Police Quest has draw poker. I found the slot machine a little tedious, especially since three skulls entitles a death ray (so, the animated sequence showing the cheating robot collecting your remains and slipping them out of the back window is rather nice, but is it sensible to have an adventure where you HAVE to HAVE so many skulls to win?), and the Blackjack wasn't a lot better. In both cases you HAVE to play them extensively since you need lots and lots of money.

All the Sierra games are very much stories that you have to live through, which does tend to make them a little sequential and you often have only one problem to solve at a time. If you solve it then the story moves on and you get a new problem. On the other hand they do often have multiple solutions. You don't always spot them when playing through because you only actually need to find one way, but if you compare your solution with someone else's you may be surprised at how much variation there is. When I compared my solution of Space Quest I to the one in ST NEWS (an excellent Public Domain Newsletter on a disk) I found they had solved three of the puzzles in a completely different way. The scoring is highly variable as well - I finished Police Quest with 99 out of 200 - this obviously gives plenty of scope for replaying, trying to find alternatives (higher-scoring?) solutions or how to get those last few points. My only real criticism of the games is that there is far too much of the "Bang, You're Dead" Syndrome - yes, the graphics and text which accompany your many forms of death are excellent, but I get awfully bored doing RESTORE - SAVEs frequently!

In the preceding paragraphs I have mentioned a few of the negative points of Sierra's games. As long as you understand these limitations, then all the games are well worth playing. Apart from being entertaining as adventures, they are all full of humour - it is always worth trying stupid things, occasionally they may actually be useful, but very often you will get a joke or sarcastic comment from the game.

If you like adventures and haven't tried a Sierra one yet, then you are missing out on quite an experience - you should definitely try at least one of them.







## SPACE QUEST & SPACE QUEST II

You are a hapless inventor caught up in a Science Fiction Adventure. In *Space Quest I* your problems include escaping from a doomed spaceship, surviving in a desolate alien desert, making enough money to get off the planet, and chasing and debating the space pirates who stole the super-secret Star Generator. I must admit I got stuck a couple of times, so thanks to *ST. NEWS* for the hints. In *Space Quest II* you are abducted by Volvad (apparently he was behind the plan to use the Star Generator to take over the universe) who wants his revenge. He also wants you out of the way so that you can't tell his new plan which is to flood the universe with hordes of pudgy Insurance Salesmen - **ARRRRGH!** Needless to say, you are faced with countless deadly traps, man-eating plants, hater's snare, acid pools, dark masses of mutants - and finally Sludge Volvad himself. The traps and the humor are great!

I don't think they've quite equalled *King's Quest III* with *Space Quest*, but both games are well worth playing.

## POLICE QUEST

This is billed as containing Adult Subject Matter - Parental Guidance suggested. There is quite a bit of violence, a little bad language, quite a few innuendoes, and the subject matter does deal with the squalid side of life.

Naturally it is like living through an episode of *Hill Street Blues* - complete with subplots and corny American jokes. You must patrol the city, handling routine cases and gathering information, until you are promoted to Narcotics and follow the druggie (I seem to have used that word quite a lot in this review - but it definitely fits) and to the final show-out with the head of the drugs racket - the Death Angel!

There are two modes, the normal one for moving around buildings and other locations, and an overhead view of the city street for when you are driving one of your cars. Apart from learning how to manoeuvre and where all the interesting places are, you also get involved in car chases to catch traffic violators, drunken drivers and stolen cars. (The only chance is that they make it too easy to crash - **SAVE** regularly!)

The packaging of all the Sierra games is excellent, but they

really seem to mean on this one. You get a Map of the City, a Reference Card for the Function Keys which control your car, your weapons, and your radio, a Reference Card to teach you how to play Five Card Draw Poker (and you DO need to learn how to win!) and a Policeman's Introduction Guide which not only details the correct procedures (which you **MUST** follow) for such things as Pulling Arrests but also explains what all the codes are that you hear on your radio (so you can work out what "31-99 is Carol's" means!).

*Police Quest* is extremely sequential - as you complete each task you get told what to do next, you have no choice but to follow the story line, and there are just really all that many puzzles to solve - if you make notes about all you hear and see, understand all the documentation, and do what you are told, then there did not seem to me to be very much scope for creativity solving problems. But it is good fun to play and is well worth looking at.

## LEISURE SUIT LARRY

The first thing you should be warned of is that this one is definitely **Adults Only!** Apart from anything else, unless you can answer five questions at the beginning of the game to prove you are an adult it won't let you play! Unfortunately, unless you happen to be an **AMERICAN** adult, there is a very high probability that you won't be able to answer the questions! I was fortunate to have been given a preview of most of the answers - I have sent it to the Editor in the hope that he can include it on one of the **PAGE 6** public domain disks.

The second thing that old Atari users should be warned of is that this is an **EXACT** copy of the old game *Soldiers: Past Adventures*. Of course that was **True** only, so you do get excellent graphics and lots of visual jokes, but you **DO NOT** get any new puzzles. I really do think it was a bit immoral of Sierra not to mention that fact on the box - it's a bit of a rip off if you were expecting something new.

The objective in this game is not to collect treasures or save the universe - it is simply to find as many women as possible and ... uh ... well, you can guess the rest! The graphics include close-ups of the various ladies whom you encounter - complete with animated smiles and winks.

Although the subject matter is undeniably dubious, the stress is on the word **SOFT**. There is little to offend an adult - and there is lots of humour throughout the game. Definitely good fun to play.

## Review by John Sweeney

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### LEISURE SUIT LARRY

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## OWS

### Mirrorsoft

£19.95

Reviewed by  
John Davison *jr*

Your job, in this latest release from Mirrorsoft, is to free the race of android slaves, known as OIDS, from their evil overlords the Bioerretts. You must pilot your V-wing fighter through the passages of the Bioerrett planetoids heading OIDS to pick up, and shooting Bioerrett installations with your Novaionoids and Nuclear Pulse Guns.

The best way to describe this game is that it is a cross between Lunar Lander, Chopflier and Asteroids. The basic controls are very similar to Lunar Lander, giving you left and right rotation and thrust. There is also gravity setting on your ship which influences its movement. The Chopflier element is the actual treating of the OIDS. First you must



shoot open a Bioerrett factory, land on the reserves available the surface and wait for the OIDS to run to your ship and get on board. OIDSs resemble the of Asteroids in just its 'look'. The way your ship looks, moves and shoots is very similar to the old classic.

The game's graphics are particularly impressive, from the excellent landing scenes to the tiny OIDS running around on the surface of the planetoids. When you see the game for the first time you will not think that the graphics are that good, however, once you have played the game for a while you will begin to appreciate the stereo link touches which make it just that

little bit more interesting than your average game. My only complaint about it is the way in which the screen scrolls. At first it seems to be quite smooth, but very soon you begin to notice that it slightly but perceptibly 'shudders'. The sound is not particularly impressive, the bare minimum of sound effects are present, but they are quite adequate and suit the game very well.

As well as several different planetoids for you to explore (supplied on the disk), there is also a game construction kit which allows you to build up your own mountainous terrain and place the various buildings and hindrances wherever you want them using simple cut and paste operations. These creations of your own can then be saved out and played in the same way as the supplied levels.

Overall, OWS is a really excellent game which is extremely playable and highly addictive. The graphics are superb and a lot of thought has gone into making OWS as interesting as possible. It is definitely worth the very reasonable price of £19.95.

## JUMP JET

### Anco

£14.95

Reviewed by  
John S Davison

Jump Jet was originally an 8-bit program, and was so useful it was erroneously known as 'Tank Jet', however this version for the ST is much better. Basically, it's a flight/combat simulator based on the Sea Harrier. You have to learn how to fly it, then defend the aircraft carrier on which you are based from enemy air attack. Primary flight controls are via mouse only, a per base of mine so there is no natural 'control' position, making accurate flying more difficult. All other controls are available through the keyboard or mouse buttons.

Five difficulty levels are available, the first being for learning to fly the aircraft in calm weather and sea conditions, and without the hassle of enemy attack. Higher levels give progressively worsening conditions resulting in your aircraft being swayed around by air turbulence. You also



have to be more accurate in your flying procedures, and there are more enemy aircraft to dispose of.

The program displays the usual flight simulator split screen, with the instrument panel in the lower half. The top half shows three different views depending on which phase of the flight you are in. It starts with a plan view of the carrier's deck, showing the Harrier sitting on its landing pad. After takeoff, at an altitude of 50ft, this view changes to show a split side rear view of the carrier, showing the Harrier's position relative to its pad. Once above 200ft the view changes again to the more usual through-the-astrodome view. The reverse sequence occurs on landing.

Instruments include the usual airspeed, altitude, pitch, roll, heading

and fuel indicators plus a few specialised ones showing position of recovered elements, flaps and undercarriage, amongst others. You also have a radar screen showing the location of your carrier and incoming enemy aircraft, and this has a realistic looking rotating beam and slowly fading 'blips' just like the real thing. It's important as it's used to guide you within visual range of the enemy, and back to your carrier after combat.

After leaving the incoming enemy aircraft you then have to bring him down with a missile or cannonfire. Meanwhile, he's trying to do much the same thing to you, but it's possible to avoid his missiles by dropping chaff to fool his radar. If he gets past you then he'll sink your carrier and the game is over.

Having disposed of all enemy aircraft you have to get back to the carrier and land successfully. This is probably the hardest task of all as positioning over the landing pad is very critical, and the situation isn't helped by having that mouse control.

Overall, Jump Jet manages to be a fairly rare-of-the-rail flight/combat simulator, although at the price it is reasonable value and doesn't have much competition.

**LEATHERNECK**

Microdeal

£19.95

*Reviewed by  
Damon Howarth*

This is one of those upward scrolling command-style games that contains more than at first may be thought. It has an attractive loading screen showing a selection of Rambo clones with appropriate bullet holes across the screen and has plenty of mixing music to accompany the whirring of the disk drive.

The package seems to be like most other games of the genre and the fact is noticed that up to 4 people may participate in the mayhem at once - that is, providing the optional interface is fitted. Even so the two-player mode presents an interesting challenge and offers a chance for teamwork not seen after the inception of Gauntlet. I was impressed by the responsiveness and speed of action even with a scrounged of action-mouse. The game has an internal control so that those characters



without direct control are killed off in the initial valley from the bad guys. At least that is what was meant to happen, except my copy would not kill main number three, which left me the problem of a character who would not move except by careful pushing by his companion. I later solved this problem by shooting him myself (and gaining several bonus points for such comradely behaviour!).

The tactics involved in this game include the adequate placing of team members to ensure accurate and enemy-destroying fire and the choice of the correct weapon for the correct job - that is L.M.G. or S.M.G. or the terribly effective grenades. With the weapon's choice goes the thought that

some bonus reward everything equally so that there is a great deal to be gained from the thoughtful use of armaments. Since the game has the team option it was gratifying to see that the four soldiers had been individualised so as to aid my recognition. The sprites are muscular, chunky and of good definition - even the enemy look fantastic. There is enough scenery to hide behind if the going gets tough, although slowing down loses a great deal of initiative.

This game also introduced me to a new idea in loading techniques in so far as the game would appear to be installed onto a permanent RAM disk which survives a soft reset. I am not sure if this is entirely a state of affairs I approve of since it can be a little disconcerting to discover that your next disk on is the same as the last game played and I am sure I remember some warnings from Atari members about excessive use of the main switch for hard-to-see. It was also unfortunate that towards the end of the review the game consistently refused to load, leaving me the black screen in front of me. If there are bugs in the program then Microdeal may have noticed and corrected them, otherwise beware!

**KNIGHTMARE**

Activision

£19.95

*Reviewed by  
Damon Howarth*

This arcade adventure game is based on the children's TV programme of the same name. The series sets teams of young teenagers against the riddles and problems of Trogard's castle and provides a forum for exceptional computer effects and some good riddles. The theme of this is of course Trogard who acts as a sort of wraith Leslie Crowther.

Bearing this writing in mind I looked forward to attempting the dread castle in game form. It would appear to be a straight 8 bit conversion and as such all the graphics seem to be somewhat blocky. Owing to the relative speed of its loading there is no fading graphics and so the user starts with a closed book facing him. The pages turn to reveal credits and subsequently the rooms of the dungeon.



The instruction manual contains some possibly helpful poetry and a great of incorrect instructions, a glaring example being the how to load the disk section with an autohot disk! This disregard of machine specifics carries over into the game controls and any new user would be well advised to use the space bar rather than the shift keys specified to obtain access to the limited vocabulary in the game. The control method is cumbersome and involves the selecting of a keyword from a menu and then a second word from a subsequent menu. These combine to form an order to the figure you control which quite often is confirmed as meaningless. Movement is by arrow keys or joystick and some

help is obtainable from the two snakes, one of whom lies while the other tells the truth both in riddling ways. As this game is meant to be a graphic-based game I felt it fair to judge some of its merits on this. The action takes place on a perspective background with a reasonable quality of large sprite and some extremely ordinary representations of Trogard and the oracles. I did not feel that this was a strong point of the game.

My actual playing experience with this led me to great frustration. I could find no way to unlock the second disc to continue my quest. I tried every combination of words including helping or hindering all that I came across and manipulating every object I found. The end result was always the same and I died repeatedly in the first two rooms. This I find worrying since the puzzle bears no resemblance to the program and would seem to present a challenge of unrealistically difficult level for the audience it is intended for.

My advice on this one would be a very long look at exactly what you are getting and do try and find some help with the initial problem.

## NORTHSTAR Gremlin Graphics £19.95

Reviewed by  
Daman Howarth

*Northstar* is a highly classified operation taking place in Earth's 25th Century, it crosses food for the population but now it has been taken over by insidious means and, as a cyborg, it is your job to save the universe. Such is the setting for this 'adventure' reminiscent of so many of the type. It seems to be a basic platform and hidden game with a cyborg hunting extra weapons to destroy creatures that look like offshoots from Darth Vader's space troopers.

The loading screen is loads in colour and brings the 8 bit Spectrum origins of this game, the controls are simple (which is something I found a change from many modern day games) and the style transported me back to several years ago when I was just starting to discover computer games. So it was



that I started the game with double pre-conceptions. The main however was enjoyable and the plot effects were well placed and judged. The sprites were quite pretty in an inter-galactic sort of a way. The game was colourful and eye-catching and the aliens were fast and vicious. It soon became apparent that the game had a great deal going for it and my pre-conceptions vanished in a hail of laser fire.

It appeared that the most important things for me to acquire were the little blue balloons which contained a variety of useful bonus items. The figures of the protagonists were of a cartoon like quality which lent the game an air of humour. If a level is cleared then the hero is taken down to the next by lift or

most further errors. By this time I found most of his four lives were depleted and so new urgency would spur him on.

One of the main difficulties in the game was the fact that the aliens appeared very quickly from places unknown and owing to the amount of hoping that the cyborg needs to do they can be landed on with disastrous results which could be most frustrating. Nevertheless there was always the feeling that the last score could be bettered and that a little more of the map could be explored. Indeed this often proved the case and shows the subjective quality of the game becoming quite strong.

I find it difficult to rate this game up. Personally I found it very enjoyable. Perhaps this was just due to the fact that it felt like a game from an earlier era, because the game does not stretch the ST to any limits and does not contain any of the frills and techno-wonder that the big name games have, but it provided a challenge to simple playing limits and held interest for a long period of time. If you happen to be yearning for the old time it bit fun-style game then this is for you.

## CASINO ROULETTE CDS Software £19.95

Reviewed by  
John S Davison

If you'd like a flutter at the roulette table, but don't want to risk your hard earned cash, then this program could be just what you need. CDS claim it's a complete simulation of the internationally accepted French style table, so using it should be just like playing the wheel in any big casino.

Up to eight people can play, two of whom can be computer driven participants. Human players are free to use any betting method they choose, but the two computer players use the well-known 'system' described in the instruction booklet. Judging by their performance these systems are by no means foolproof!

The program is mouse driven, with menu items available to start, save, and load a game; select your position to bet; spin the wheel; clear the table ready for



the next round of betting; turn speech on and off and to display various sets of statistics on wheel and player performance. This can be useful for assessing the effects of that new 'cash' that system you've dabbled up!

The main playing screen shows the table on which your bets are placed, a set of nine chips with values from £1 to £500, and a list of players' names together with their cash balances.

Bets are placed by dragging chips of the required value to the appropriate place on the table. The only trouble with this is that everyone uses the same coloured chips, so when a group of you play it's easy to lose track of which ones are yours. Bets may be any of fifteen types allowed in the French system, covering the range from single numbers

(giving odds of 35 to 1), through various combinations of blocks of numbers down to betting on red or black (paying only even money if you win). As you place your bet, its type and odds are displayed on the screen, and your cash balance reduces correspondingly.

With all bets placed, a click on the Spin Wheel menu item causes a full screen animated picture of a spinning roulette wheel to be displayed, complete with the ball racing round its outer surface. Surprisingly, the wheel doesn't actually have any numbers marked on it, the winning number being shown when the river switches back to the table a few moments later. At that point the players' cash balances are updated with their winnings (if any!). There's no other indication of who's won what - unlike in a real casino where a winner gets a handful of chips shown to him by the croupier!

Despite the niggles mentioned above, Casino Roulette works well and is fun to play. If you feel the urge to try your hand at roulette, buy this program first - it'll probably cost you a lot less than playing for real!



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## SPITFIRE 40

Mirrorsoft  
£34.95

Reviewed by  
*John S Davidson*

Spitfire 40 for the ST is a result of the disappointing 8-bit version (reviewed in issue 26). The difference is unbelievable, mainly due to the vastly improved graphics. Just running the program's 'Demo' mode for a few minutes should be enough to persuade any flight simulator fan to buy the program.

In addition to 'Demo', it also has two other modes of operation. 'Game' mode is designed to give you practice in handling the Spitfire and in combat with the enemy. This isn't as easy as you'd think, as you need to use the technique of 'deflection' shooting, i.e. aiming ahead of the enemy to ensure your bullets and his aircraft arrive in the same place at the same time! You begin in the air close to an enemy aircraft, so you don't have to worry about the difficulties of take-off (or landing) and finding enemy aircraft.

'Simulation' mode has two options - Practice and Combat. Practice allows



you train yourself in the skills needed for a complete flight, i.e. take-off, general flying, and landing. When you can successfully do all these things you're ready for the full-blown Combat option which adds landing, fighting, and destroying enemy aircraft to the scenario.

Unlike most flight simulation programs, Spitfire 40 has separate through-the-canopy view and instrument panel screens. I found this a nuisance, but you can scroll between them fairly quickly when required. You can also arrange for airspeed and altitude to be displayed on the canopy, reducing the number of times you have to scroll down to the panel and back.

The superb instrument panel graphics have an almost photographic quality, and the view through the

canopy shows a background patchwork of fields occasionally overlaid with airfields and solid three-dimensional structures such as factories, churches, and other buildings. With full detail on view the display speed is slowed, so you can use the function keys to progressively reduce detail to get better response.

You'll encounter three different types of enemy aircraft - Heinkel III and Junkers 87 'Stuka' bombers, and Messerschmitt Bf109E fighters, each using different combat tactics in their attempts to outmanoeuvre you. They manoeuvre very realistically, especially the Messerschmitt which will try to get behind you. If it does you'll see him in your rear view mirror with guns blazing. Bombers have movable guns so can fire on you from any position. In fact, I found the bombers much harder to deal with, all too often they shot Mill down instead - even the supposedly poorly armed Stuka! If you do manage to hit the enemy, his aircraft tumbles spectacularly out of the sky.

In summary, Spitfire 40 is probably the most exciting aerial combat simulator available at present. It has shortcomings as a pure flight simulator, but don't let you off - if you enjoy flight combat simulation programs you'll enjoy Spitfire 40.

## ROCKFORD - THE ARCADE GAME

Melbourne House  
£19.95

Reviewed by  
*John Davidson jnr*

This is the latest in the series of 'Boulderdash' games starring the lovable little character Rockford. This version has been converted to the ST from the arcade machine 'Rockford' for Amiga systems. The basic concept came from the 8-bit machine version, which in its original form was a highly playable game.

'Rockford' gives you four levels of five different worlds. Within these five worlds there are four screens, giving you a total of eighty different playing screens. As in all the other games of this type you must move around the screen picking up objects and solving various problems. Unlike previous Boulderdash releases, the different



levels are parts of different scenarios which must be completed by taking on the role of a hunter, a spaceman, a doctor, a thief and a cowboy.

The game's graphics, whilst being very colourful and quite detailed, are a little obtrusive when compared to the original Boulderdash. There are, in my opinion, too many bright and flicking colours which cause the screen to look rather noisy. The scrolling of the screen is absolutely terrible, being jerky and painful to the eyes. Instead of scrolling as you move around, the screen only moves as you get very close to one of the edges, and only then does it move by a considerable speed. The

graphics are fairly good although they are not animated terribly well. There are however some nice pieces of animation at the beginning of each level and when you die, at which point an enlarged animated picture of your character is displayed.

The sound is one of the highest standard although it is adequate for the game. The spot effects are not outstanding but reasonable and the rate on the title screen is fairly uninspired and again, only reasonable.

What this game has attempted to prove is that the original 'Boulderdash' can be improved upon, however, in my opinion, it has failed miserably by trying to improve on what was to start with a perfect game. The original was a classic and one of the most playable and enjoyable games around. It was also one of my personal favourites.

Rockford has lost this playability and is now no more than a run of the mill scrolling game. I had high hopes for this game because until now all of the Melbourne House releases have been superb. Unfortunately, this one brought disappointment.

## INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

Microdeal  
£19.95

Reviewed by  
Damon Howarth

As I write this, the soccer season draws to a close so International Soccer could be ideal for any withdrawal symptoms. The game provides armchair sweepers a chance to obtain the feel of playing in front of a Wembley crowd without the violence associated with these events plaguing the mind.

International Soccer is most user friendly and provides a one or two player option both of whom have to use joysticks to control the teams and the initial choices as to weather, lighting, wind, team colours and duration of match. The screens are very well devised with the options screen showing two footballers in their strips, allowing the players to view the different colour combinations available. It is quickly obvious that the available colours include the whole ST spectrum



but the computer does not check colour similarities at this point and so some peculiar clashes of strip can be organised.

The stadium buzzes forth in the colours of the teams and if the crowd are watched at less busy times they can be seen reciting a Mexican Wave and cheering on their team. The electronic scoreboard takes up a full screen and conveys important messages such as the score, the awarding of a penalty or goal kick and other such useful facts. The game is controlled through the joystick, either dribbling with the man in possession or tackling with the appointed player. To gain control of a player the fire button needs to be pressed until a white marker highlights his fire. He will move in relation to the

stick and tackle on fire commands. Kicking the ball is resolved at one of three strengths pass, chip, and long clearance. The goalkeepers seem somewhat lacking in response and seem able to bounce balls off their chests rather than take possession.

One of the inherent problems with the game is that the player the computer assumes to be automatically nearest the ball is not necessarily so, as it would seem that relative positions are determined from the rectangle file and its peculiar workings rather than by proximity of the ball to a player.

In the one player game the computer provides a fast and difficult opponent but does show unimaginative thinking. There is a constant sound barrage as one of four selectable runs continues in the background. The updates are of more than adequate size and the game plays at a fair rate. It is, I feel, better as a two player game rather than as a player against computer creature since the machine will tend to win rather repeatedly.

I enjoyed this game and although some of football's basic laws are bent a little it seems to me to be the best of its kind presently on the ST. If you can't wait until August then the game is a must.

## SKYFOX

Electronic Arts  
£14.95

Reviewed by  
John S Davison

Skyfox is another of those games where only you can save the Federation from a fate worse than death. It's been around for a while on other machines and has been hyped up somewhat over its allegedly superior graphics, so I was interested to see the ST version.

The basic game play is very simply - fly Skyfox to find and destroy the enemy motherships which are dropping tanks and aircraft in an attempt to overrun your base. Once the motherships are dealt with you then have to stop the tanks and aircraft which have already disembarked. Naturally, they don't like this idea much and will try stop you first!

The game looks quite complex at first, but this is really an illusion due partly to the poorly produced instruction booklet. The main screen is



the pilot's view from Skyfox's cockpit, showing instrument panel and through-the-windscreen view. The instruments show current speed, height, direction, position, fuel, shield, and weapon status information, and the radar screen is there to help you locate the enemy.

You can call on the base computer to display a tactical map, showing the position of the base installation you have to defend and the positions of enemy motherships, tanks, and aircraft. By positioning a cursor on this map more detailed information may be obtained about the chosen enemy. Skyfox's autopilot may also be set to fly you to that location so you can engage the enemy in battle with your laser cannons, guided missiles and heat

seeking missiles.

There are fifteen different scenarios to choose from. Seven of these offer various aspects of training, allowing you to familiarise yourself with Skyfox's controls, weapons, and guidance systems. In these scenarios there are no motherships to worry about, and your home base can't be destroyed. The combat scenarios start with Small Invasion by use one mothership and if you master this you can tackle a Full Invasion.

Basic control of Skyfox is achieved via mouse or joystick, with keyboard used for selecting weapons, etc. When manoeuvring, the subjective flight effects aren't very good, the horizon tilting only slightly however instead a maneuver you think you're making.

Overall, I found the game a disappointment. The much vaunted graphics were not that good, using lots of bright colours and being rather chunky and cartoon-like in appearance. Sound effects were pretty poor too, particularly the laser cannon. In play, the game was strangely unattractive and I found I had no great desire to have 'just one more go'. Electronic Arts seem to have slipped up this time.



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## GOLDRUNNER II

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Microdisk  
£19.95 £5.95 each

Reviewed by  
Damon Howarth

It is fifty years on from the time of the original Goldrunner and now the subject is the grandson of the pirate-killing hero of yore. It is his job to recapture the stolen defensive robots from the pirates before they wreak their revenge on a defenceless system. This is the setting for the new shoot and up. The concept of the scrolling game is still there but this time it is a one-way scroll up and down! The control is fairly simple and greatly aided by the fact that a mouse can be used to manoeuvre the ship about. The speed of response that this generates is of great value in a game of this genre.

The game has speech to urge you on or give coaching if the instruction manual is used. It has a very catchy musical score which has to be turned off if the sound effects are to be used. I found these to be critical at some junctures of the game, and a plethora of other accessories to make the game more versatile are additionally available. Even the high score table has an element of fun about it whilst you are verbally chastised for not entering a name onto the screen.

There is a novelty in this game which precludes your fighters from being destroyed by being shot at and means that by careful flying and very fast reactions it is just possible to avoid the



cosmopathic effects of being forced into buildings and other destructive walls. A great deal of shooting across some varied backgrounds is needed to enable recovery of the lost robots and quick reactions are needed to make sure they are recaptured and deposited on the transporter pads. The scoring system allows you to win spare ships and as such presents a very playable game that the player can imagine completing.

Of special note in this game is the backdrop that the game is played over. The scenery is of high quality and in this basic game many interesting views can be seen since there is a near-life quality to the play. Some serious crashes can cause you to crash if collided with, and these are not always obvious - once discovered the player is then half-way to solving the problems in the game. A glance at the loading screen shows that a great deal of artistic care and time has gone into developing the backdrop for this game. There is a somewhat unusual find to the whole piece due to this effect.

The game had many qualities that gave it a 'let's try again' addictiveness, not the least of which was the feeling that the mouse was almost mastered.

Unfortunately, like all the show I felt that the game was still a very basic, albeit enjoyable, scrolling shoot 'em up. There seemed to be very few tactical decisions to make and as such the only major problems were how to deal with the machine ship and where to drop the robots once recovered.

The saving grace of the game is the incredible graphics which create the individual platforms or masses. It is probably these features more than any other that make the game as interesting as it is, so I was very pleased to be able to sample the additional scenery packs which have been issued to complement the main game. Each of the disks has its own theme and provides very different platforms to travel over. Scenery Disk 1 has the feeling of being created by a modern day Beethoven and contains colourful and confusing backgrounds to stimulate infatigable eyeballs and software. Gameplay is so different but the alternative positioning of a few blocks make some scenes of this genre feel new.

My favourite disk though was Scenery Disk II with it's depiction of hell and the faces of sinners in torment as a backdrop. The sound effects from this artwork made a shocking and effective contrast to the garbiness of the original. For me this particular disk enhances the game purely by the depth of the art and the recreation of the evil lurking to be defeated. I also discovered that with deft use of the second drive that the scenery disks were interchangeable, thus allowing an almost infinite variety of platform combinations for the game. If you buy Goldrunner II then the scenery disks are a must.

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# MORE ST SOFTWARE...

There's still a lot of ST software coming out and we have been unable to include it all either because it wouldn't fit in or because it was received too late to get out to our reviewers in time. Several of the following will appear in coming issues, meantime read on to see what's about.

**BIKE SIMULATOR**, one of Code Masters' biggest hits comes to the ST for £34.99. Bike riding on the ST can be just as thrilling as Grand Prix racing. **STOCK MARKET** from Tymsoft allows the more serious among you to make or lose a fortune with stocks and shares. It's only a game though and you won't get your £19.99 back! **MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE** from Grand Graphics at £19.99 - what more can we say, everybody must know about these characters based on the comics/cartoons/toys etc. **SHADOWGATE** from ICOM Simulations, distributed by Mirrorsoft tries to follow in Dungeonmaster's footsteps with an adventure in similar style for £24.99. **OBLITERATOR** is the follow up to two well respected Pygnosis games and looks to be as good. £24.99 will help you find out or you could wait for the review next issue. With **THUNDERCATS**, Elite Systems bring you more cartoon action, which the kids will explain to you if you don't know. Take the £19.99 out of their pocket money! **BATTLESHIPS** from Elite is ... battleships! Lots of good graphics but is the old standard worth £24.99? We'll tell you soon. **MAGIC DISK TOOLKIT** from MHO Computer Consultants is one of those disk utility programs which we haven't seen for some time. Lots of features including creating duff disks. Everybody should have at least one disk utility and, if this one does what it claims, it must be a good investment at £24.95.

**GFA ARTIST** is Microsoft's answer to the established art programs but at £49.99 it will have to be good to succeed. One wonders if there is room for another art package? On the more serious side we have

**WORDUP** distributed by HB Marketing at £99.95. Again one wonders if there is room for another word processor but this one seems to give you **WYSIWYG** on your printer as well as an screen which could make it rather special. **FONTZ**, also from HB Marketing, lets you design and use fonts for **WORDUP** and other programs such as **DEGAS** and looks excellent value at £24.95. **BEYOND THE ICE PALACE** is a platform type adventure game from Elite with some good looking graphics and it will cost you £19.99 whilst for the same price you can get your own version of the arcade game **BUGGY BOY** for some more thrills and spills. **THE BERMUDA PROJECT** is a 'stunning new arcade adventure' from Mirrorsoft which for £24.99 will get you lost in the Bermuda Triangle to face unold dangers on a

mystery island. **IKARI WARRIORS** is another from Elite that has a couple of Rambos on the cover eating grenades! Must be another vertical scroller where you updat everything as quickly as possible but it's probably fun and only £14.99. Back on the adventure theme we have **UNINVITED** from Mindscape, distributed by Mirrorsoft at £24.99. Looks to be an interesting graphic adventure with a repetitional theme which could frighten the life out of you! We finally get **UNIVERSAL MILITARY SIMULATOR** from Rainbird along with **GARRIH COMMAND**. Haven't looked at the latter yet but it comes with a stereo music cassette featuring the full theme to the game. If the game is as good as the music, it's gonna be brilliant! Great idea, disk and cassette for £24.95. From Firebird at £79.95 is **PANDORA**, an arcade adventure set on a space ship with excellent graphics. Finally ... here is Jeff Minter's **REVENGE II** which comes from Mastertronic. Full of the Master-Blaster's well known themes and words such as 'synergistic consciousness formed as the sum of sentient Galactic consciousness'. Heavy! Definitely too difficult for GTW to grasp. Just press the fire button!



# SWEENEY's *NOTEBOOK*

Many of today's adventures, while excellent to play, are not very user friendly when it comes to saving games or they seem to have odd bugs that can make it very frustrating to play. When playing or reviewing games I often come across a few tricks that may not be obvious to everyone and this seems an ideal opportunity to share them with you. I hope that some of the following will help if you are finding a particular adventure troublesome.

## TANGLEWOOD - SAVE/RESTORE

If you have two drives then SAVE/RESTORE is done using the last one that the game used - you have to guess or remember - at least the recovery is good and you can retry - but do keep your Tanglewood 4 disks protected! I use a copy of the B Disks for my saves and every time I load the game I do a RESTART which causes it to access the B drive. Thus, most of the time, I can SAVE and RESTORE without changing my disks.

## TANGLEWOOD - THE B-F AREAS

In all cases you should remember the standard mapping technique of following one "wall" - it can be extremely useful. Also if you are trying to map an area, don't pick up any items you find - leave them as markers. This is what you need out of the various areas: Forest (east of Coated Caves): 1 item - a rope through. Forest (south of swamp): 1 place, Swamp: 1 place. Below main lake: 1 item. Below main lake: 1 item. Main lake surface: routes to 2 parts of island. Somewhere Underground: this is a good one to practice on - there are only 3 locations unless you can get past the creature or the dark - no items. Mine: sorry, you'll need an accurate map of it all if you really want to solve it - great puzzle Coated Caves: lots of items and locations - again, you really will have to map it!

## MOEBIUS - SAVE/RESTORE

Each time you start a fight Moebius does an automatic SAVE for you, thus rubbing out your last SAVE. If you have picked a rough fight and die you just get returned to the same point and die again, and again... - If you want to perform a real SAVE then SAVE your position and come out of the game, create a new folder on a spare diskette, and copy BOOK.DAT (the index) plus each of the GAME\*.DAT's which you are saving from the B Disks to your folder. If you die you can copy them back to the B Disks and restart. You can have lots of folders for different positions. You can tell which GAME\*.DAT's you need by SHOSHIing them (circular-click from disk-top), your character's name is the first thing in the file.

## ALTERNATE REALITY - THE DUNGEON - THE DEVOURER

I have been bombarded with queries on this one - all you need to do is drop items until the Demons stop appearing, then never carry that many items again!

## ETERNAL DAGGER - SAVE/RESTORE

This has a strange update mechanism. Your SAVE (Tell The Master) only affects Diskette 1, so if you want a backup you need only copy that one. But the dungeons (Diskettes 2 and 3) are dynamically modified as you explore them. This is especially useful on the Underwater Dungeon - SAVE outside it, go in and clear out as many rooms as you can before you die, then retreat. Your characters will be restored to their healthy status, but the rooms will stay cleared out - you can repeat this process until you clear the way to the Demon World, then retreat and enter the Demon World with healthy characters (NB, you won't get to keep any points or artifacts from the Underwater Dungeon.)

## ETERNAL DAGGER - BUG ON THE FIRST DUNGEON

If you kill the Necromancer but don't enter the last room, the dungeons is loaded all however. Re-entering the Dungeon does NOT reopen it (Don't worry - there is nothing in the last room which you need to finish the game.)

## ROADWAR 2000 - THE FIRST PLACE YOU SHOULD VISIT

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## KNIGHT ORC - THE WALLET

Pick it up immediately you find it. Otherwise a bug in the logic prevents you ever using it.

## SPACE QUEST II - DIVING

There is a bug which prevents it understanding HOLD BREATH, you have to type in HOLD BREATH!

## POLICE QUEST - CALLING A TAXI

Remember which number the UK used for the Operator twenty years ago!



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# DEMON ADVENTURE

**Magic can be dangerous in the wrong hands. Anything can happen, even Demons may be released but can they be suppressed again? It's up to you to find out – if you live!**

by Adrian Cox

Demon Adventure is a matter of survival. As a wizard in the Duke's castle you know that to be experimented with magic has had very little success, due to his mistakes. Unfortunately, one of his spells has worked too well and a demon is loose in the castle. You have hidden in a tower room to escape the demons, but you cannot hide there forever. You must attempt to escape alive from the castle, preferably destroying the demon as well.

## GETTING STARTED

The program is written in standard Ascii Basic and should be fairly easy for desperate adventurers to follow. I have not given a list of variables, as this would make things too-obvious when typing the program in.

Type in the program using Typo 3 to check it as you go and save it to disk or cassette. Then RUN the program.

## PLAYING THE GAME

The game understands normal two word input such as 'HIT DEMON', 'DUMP BUCKET', 'KICK BUCKET'. Useful abbreviations are 'I' for inventory, and single letters for directions, e.g. 'N' for 'WALK NORTH'. Useful commands are 'LOOK', 'EXAMINE', 'LOAD', 'SAVE' and 'QUIT'. Load and save will need a blank cassette or formatted disc. Up to 10 games can be saved on one disc.

## HINT

Only one hint I'm afraid - Don't be afraid to try the obvious!

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1000 1000 DEMON ADVENTURE

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# THE SHELL SORT



In Issue 12 I described the use of the Bubble Sort. It is most useful for the sorting of small lists of data, and for those cases, it will often outperform many of the more sophisticated sort routines, which need to do more bookkeeping. As the size of the list to be sorted increases, however, so does the usefulness of other types of sort. For large lists, these are much faster and more efficient than the simple Bubble Sort.

The main problem with the Bubble sort is that although values move quickly in one direction, they may move very slowly in the other. Another way of thinking of this problem is that the largest out-of-place value in the list or sub-list being currently sorted moves quickly to where it should be, while the other values move more slowly, often 1 "space" at a time. For even moderately large lists, this makes the Bubble sort inefficient.

## A MORE EFFICIENT SORT

The Shell sort was invented by Donald Shell, and instead of comparing ADJACENT items, as in the bubble sort, it compares items with other items a fixed gap away i.e. it compares (and if necessary, exchanges) value  $X$  with  $X + GAP$ . Using this method, it can be seen that values out of place will move faster in the "right direction" than with the simple Bubble Sort, which always uses a gap of 1. When no more exchanges can be done with the current gap, it is reduced, and the process continues in a similar manner. The later passes, with smaller gaps then have less "work" to do. The final gap is 1, and this procedure is the basic Shell sort idea.

Now is as good a time as any to introduce some jargon. A sequence is said to be "h-sorted" if, starting at any point, selecting every  $h$ 'th value yields a sorted sequence. This means, in simple terms, that if, for example that  $h=3$ , then the 1st value is less than the 4th which is less than the 7th etc. Also, the 2nd value is less than the 5th, the 3rd less than the 6th, and so on. An example of a sequence which is 3-sorted is:-

(1 5 20 3 12 13 14 15 12 18 15 14)

As can be easily seen, this "h-sorted" sequence has 3 individual sorted sequences i.e. (1 5 14 18), (6 12 13 15) and (18 11 12 14). In general, an  $h$ -sorted sequence has  $h$  sorted sub-sequences. Phew!!

## Gordon Cameron returns to explain a more sophisticated sort

What this means is that the Shell sort actually  $h$ -sorts the given sequence with a given value of  $h$ . Then the value of  $h$  is decreased, and the process continues. In fact, the value of  $h$  is decreased by dividing it by a certain constant number in each turn, ignoring the remainder. We finish off with a value of 1, which in effect compares each number with its neighbour. Sounds familiar? It should do, as this final gap of 1 is very similar to the technique employed in the simple Bubble Sort. All we have to do is choose the starting value for  $h$  (the GAP), and the number that we successively divide by.

## LET'S TRY AND SIMPLIFY IT

To simplify matters, in my program and example, I have taken a starting value for the gap which is equal to half the length of the sequence. Consecutive gaps are calculated by taking the old gap, and dividing by two (ignoring the remainder). So starting  $GAP = INT(Length/n)$ , and the following gaps are calculated using  $GAP = INT(GAP/x)$ , where  $x$  is 2. (You may experiment with different values of  $x$ , in Issue 108). As I mentioned, this is a slight oversimplification, as there are certain sequences of  $h$  values or gaps that are known to work well. However, there are an infinite variety of these, and some work better than others, though nobody really knows why. If you are interested, there are many books on the subject...)

## AN EXAMPLE SORT

The Shell sort is quite easy to use once you understand the theory, but, if you are like me and prefer hard, concrete examples, read on.

The programs work with characters, but for this example I will use numbers, as the technique is more easily demonstrated in this fashion. I will start with the following sequence, which I will sort into ascending order.

(9 5 8 3 2 1)

The length of the sequence is 6 and in the examples the values which are being compared are in bold, and the arrowhead -> denotes a new list formation, if appropriate.

```

00 0 000 *****
01 0 000 0 FILE ENTER PROGRAM 0
02 0 000 0 FOR SORT SEQUENCE 0
03 0 000 0 FOR SORT SEQUENCE 0
04 0 000 0 *****
05 0 000 0 PAGE 0 SEQUENTIAL 0 CONTROL 0
06 0 000 *****
07 0 000 FILE CLEARED, SEQUENTIAL, BUBBLE
08 0 000 SEQUENTIAL, SEQUENTIAL, TO
09 0 000
10 05 FILE 00 *****
11 05 000000 *****
12 05 000000 *****
13 05 000000 *****
14 05 000000 *****
15 05 000000 *****
16 05 000000 *****
17 05 000000 *****
18 05 000000 *****
19 05 000000 *****
20 05 000000 *****
21 05 000000 *****
22 05 000000 *****
23 05 000000 *****
24 05 000000 *****
25 05 000000 *****
26 05 000000 *****
27 05 000000 *****
28 05 000000 *****
29 05 000000 *****
30 05 000000 *****
31 05 000000 *****
32 05 000000 *****
33 05 000000 *****
34 05 000000 *****
35 05 000000 *****
36 05 000000 *****
37 05 000000 *****
38 05 000000 *****
39 05 000000 *****
40 05 000000 *****
41 05 000000 *****
42 05 000000 *****
43 05 000000 *****
44 05 000000 *****
45 05 000000 *****
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62 05 000000 *****
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64 05 000000 *****
65 05 000000 *****
66 05 000000 *****
67 05 000000 *****
68 05 000000 *****
69 05 000000 *****
70 05 000000 *****
71 05 000000 *****
72 05 000000 *****
73 05 000000 *****
74 05 000000 *****
75 05 000000 *****
76 05 000000 *****
77 05 000000 *****
78 05 000000 *****
79 05 000000 *****
80 05 000000 *****
81 05 000000 *****
82 05 000000 *****
83 05 000000 *****
84 05 000000 *****
85 05 000000 *****
86 05 000000 *****
87 05 000000 *****
88 05 000000 *****
89 05 000000 *****
90 05 000000 *****
91 05 000000 *****
92 05 000000 *****
93 05 000000 *****
94 05 000000 *****
95 05 000000 *****
96 05 000000 *****
97 05 000000 *****
98 05 000000 *****
99 05 000000 *****
100 05 000000 *****

```

We start with  $GAP = INT(3/2) = 1$

```

1) 9 5 3 2 1
   -> 3 9 5 2 1
2) 3 9 5 2 1
   -> 3 2 9 5 1
3) 3 2 9 5 1
   -> 3 2 1 9 5

```

In this pass, we have executed exchanges, so we must repeat the pass with the same gap.

```

1) 3 2 1 9 5
2) 3 2 1 9 5
3) 3 2 1 9 5

```

We have no exchanges with this pass and gap, so we reduce the gap. Notice that the sequence is now 3-sorted (i.e.  $3 \cdot 9 \cdot 5$  and 1, 8).

The new gap will now be  $GAP = INT(3/2) = 1$

```

1) 3 2 1 9 5
   -> 2 3 1 9 5
2) 2 3 1 9 5
   -> 2 1 3 9 5
3) 2 1 3 9 5
   -> 2 1 3 9 5
4) 2 1 3 9 5
   -> 2 1 3 9 5

```

We must repeat this process, as swaps have occurred in this pass.

The only swap which will take place in the next pass is the 2 with the 1. The sequence is now fully sorted, but it will take the program one more pass to recognize that there are no more exchanges needed. The final sorted sequence is

(1 2 3 9 5)

This process takes 8 swaps in total, compared with the Bubble sort which takes 14, but completes the process with less total comparisons.

## DIFFERENCES IN SPEED

The example above is a little contrived, as most sequences are a lot larger. In general, for small sequences such as the above, the difference in time and efficiency between the two sort routines is negligible, but as size increases, the Shell Sort becomes considerably better. For 100 items, the difference is substantial, while for around 1000, the Shell sort may be up to 10 times faster. I did a short test using my bubble and shell routines using 100 lines, each containing a couple of words. The Shell sort took 60 seconds, made 2700 comparisons and 507 swaps, whereas the Bubble sort took 118 seconds, and made 9470 comparisons and 2003 swaps. Note the large difference in number of swaps. (N.B. These tests were conducted using Turbo-Basic, which is much faster than standard Atari basic).

```

01 1000 FOR *****
02 1010 FOR N = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
03 1020 FOR M = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
04 1030 FOR P = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
05 1040 FOR Q = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
06 1050 FOR R = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
07 1060 FOR S = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
08 1070 FOR T = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
09 1080 FOR U = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
10 1090 FOR V = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
11 1100 FOR W = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
12 1110 FOR X = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
13 1120 FOR Y = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
14 1130 FOR Z = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
15 1140 FOR AA = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
16 1150 FOR AB = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
17 1160 FOR AC = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
18 1170 FOR AD = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
19 1180 FOR AE = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
20 1190 FOR AF = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
21 1200 FOR AG = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
22 1210 FOR AH = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
23 1220 FOR AI = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
24 1230 FOR AJ = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
25 1240 FOR AK = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
26 1250 FOR AL = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
27 1260 FOR AM = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
28 1270 FOR AN = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
29 1280 FOR AO = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
30 1290 FOR AP = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
31 1300 FOR AQ = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
32 1310 FOR AR = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
33 1320 FOR AS = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
34 1330 FOR AT = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
35 1340 FOR AU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
36 1350 FOR AV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
37 1360 FOR AW = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
38 1370 FOR AX = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
39 1380 FOR AY = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
40 1390 FOR AZ = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
41 1400 FOR BA = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
42 1410 FOR BB = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
43 1420 FOR BC = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
44 1430 FOR BD = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
45 1440 FOR BE = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
46 1450 FOR BF = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
47 1460 FOR BG = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
48 1470 FOR BH = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
49 1480 FOR BI = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
50 1490 FOR BJ = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
51 1500 FOR BK = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
52 1510 FOR BL = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
53 1520 FOR BM = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
54 1530 FOR BN = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
55 1540 FOR BO = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
56 1550 FOR BP = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
57 1560 FOR BQ = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
58 1570 FOR BR = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
59 1580 FOR BS = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
60 1590 FOR BT = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
61 1600 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
62 1610 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
63 1620 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
64 1630 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
65 1640 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
66 1650 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
67 1660 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
68 1670 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
69 1680 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
70 1690 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
71 1700 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
72 1710 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
73 1720 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
74 1730 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
75 1740 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
76 1750 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
77 1760 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
78 1770 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
79 1780 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
80 1790 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
81 1800 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
82 1810 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
83 1820 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
84 1830 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
85 1840 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
86 1850 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
87 1860 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
88 1870 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
89 1880 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
90 1890 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
91 1900 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
92 1910 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
93 1920 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
94 1930 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
95 1940 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
96 1950 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
97 1960 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
98 1970 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
99 1980 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
100 1990 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10

```

```

01 1000 FOR *****
02 1010 FOR N = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
03 1020 FOR M = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
04 1030 FOR P = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
05 1040 FOR Q = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
06 1050 FOR R = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
07 1060 FOR S = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
08 1070 FOR T = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
09 1080 FOR U = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
10 1090 FOR V = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
11 1100 FOR W = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
12 1110 FOR X = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
13 1120 FOR Y = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
14 1130 FOR Z = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
15 1140 FOR AA = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
16 1150 FOR AB = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
17 1160 FOR AC = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
18 1170 FOR AD = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
19 1180 FOR AE = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
20 1190 FOR AF = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
21 1200 FOR AG = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
22 1210 FOR AH = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
23 1220 FOR AI = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
24 1230 FOR AJ = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
25 1240 FOR AK = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
26 1250 FOR AL = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
27 1260 FOR AM = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
28 1270 FOR AN = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
29 1280 FOR AO = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
30 1290 FOR AP = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
31 1300 FOR AQ = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
32 1310 FOR AR = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
33 1320 FOR AS = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
34 1330 FOR AT = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
35 1340 FOR AU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
36 1350 FOR AV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
37 1360 FOR AW = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
38 1370 FOR AX = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
39 1380 FOR AY = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
40 1390 FOR AZ = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
41 1400 FOR BA = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
42 1410 FOR BB = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
43 1420 FOR BC = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
44 1430 FOR BD = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
45 1440 FOR BE = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
46 1450 FOR BF = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
47 1460 FOR BG = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
48 1470 FOR BH = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
49 1480 FOR BI = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
50 1490 FOR BJ = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
51 1500 FOR BK = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
52 1510 FOR BL = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
53 1520 FOR BM = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
54 1530 FOR BN = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
55 1540 FOR BO = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
56 1550 FOR BP = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
57 1560 FOR BQ = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
58 1570 FOR BR = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
59 1580 FOR BS = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
60 1590 FOR BT = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
61 1600 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
62 1610 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
63 1620 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
64 1630 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
65 1640 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
66 1650 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
67 1660 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
68 1670 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
69 1680 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
70 1690 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
71 1700 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
72 1710 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
73 1720 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
74 1730 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
75 1740 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
76 1750 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
77 1760 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
78 1770 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
79 1780 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
80 1790 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
81 1800 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
82 1810 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
83 1820 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
84 1830 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
85 1840 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
86 1850 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
87 1860 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
88 1870 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
89 1880 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
90 1890 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
91 1900 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
92 1910 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
93 1920 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
94 1930 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
95 1940 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
96 1950 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
97 1960 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
98 1970 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
99 1980 FOR BU = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10
100 1990 FOR BV = 1 UNTIL 1000 STEP 10

```

## USING THE PROGRAMS

There are three listings with the article. The Shell sort and Bubble sort (revised) modules plus a loader. Type in and save these as you would a normal program. The Loader program should be ENTER'ed to merge with the sort you are using or, if you prefer you may type in each sort and loader at the same time and SAVE normally. If you wish to make practical use of the programs, I suggest removing the PRINT statements, as these slow down the processes considerably.

Just a reminder on how to use the programs which was explained in the last article. The loader works on files which have lines of maximum length 79, terminated by RETURN. The segments to be sorted must be started with a \$ sign, and end with a # (up arrow) sign, both followed by Carriage Returns. You can use Mini Office III, Superscript or whatever, and the program will sort the source file, and write it to disk so that it can be loaded by these word processors. Alternatively, you can use your own programs to write the file.

The source modules look for an array FILE# which contains the text to be sorted. Each line occupies 40 characters. Hence, you can incorporate these routines into your programs with little modification, to sort whatever you wish, however if you do not want to modify the program, the loader and source modules will do all the work for you, so don't worry.

If you are interested, then you may try using an index array which contains references to the main array of text. Segments are done as THIS array, and not the file itself, and when the file is output the index array is worked through sequentially, and the relevant line of text output. This method is much more flexible, but it leaves it to you to try!

Finally, a small tip. If you wish to output the sorted file to the screen, type B at the prompt for an object file.

Well that's it for this issue. The Shell sort is simple to apply, but for large sequences is a lot more efficient than the Bubble sort. The Quick sort is even more efficient and faster, and this I will hopefully be able to describe in a forthcoming issue!

If you have any problems with the programs, contact Issue 11 of PACE 8, or write to me at 19 Main Bank, Strath, Perthshire, Scotland.

References:  
 Introduction to Pascal 1st edition by Neil Graham  
 Computer Algorithms and Methods by J.P. Flowers

# Mark Hutchinson's



## FIRST STEPS

For some reason the readers of this column have been very reticent about writing to let me know what they would like explained, so I will include myself with something that has always fascinated me.

Over the past few years, I have had several letters asking me about backup programs. Quite a few people have been mystified as to why DODS, which has a duplicate disk option, cannot copy bought software. I will give you an explanation of how some protection schemes work, but not how to crack them, and about some floppy nasties.

### PROTECTION TECHNIQUES

The ATARI drives have a special chip onboard that will read different types of format when told what to look for. It normally cannot write these formats directly and a hardware modification is needed. Software copiers are limited knowledge in what they can do and chip modifications are not cheap.

When ATARI software first appeared, the main protection was the non-removable disk. This was done by disabling the Break key and System Reset. The way around this was by forcing an untrapped error. A trapped error will erase from some point within the program but an untrapped error will go to a GRAPHICS 0 screen as normal. By hiding the variables and directory listing, and by compiling Basic programs the listing was kept secret.

Next came the bad sector. This sector had bad data, either by recording at a very high or low speed or assembling the data by moving the disk during write operation. Later the sector number was removed. This protection was bad for the sectors as the drive would continuously try to read or find the sector until time-out, giving out the dreadful noise called "seeking". It was finally, and thankfully, superseded. As a protection, it was cracked easily and quickly, except for one software house which made every other sector bad. Try spotting the necessary one out of 360!

Then, all at once, came better and more advanced techniques.

**BAD DATA MARKS** - Data marks are used to identify the type of data to be found in the sector. Anything other than 0FFh is classed as bad data.

**CRC ERROR** - This is when the cyclic redundancy check does not match the data on a sector.

**DUPLICATE SECTORS** - When two sectors have the same ID number.

**FUZZY or UNSTABLE SECTORS** - The data on these sectors seem to change constantly. Also known as phantom sectors.

**SHORT SECTORS** - Those with less than the normal 128 bytes of data.

**OVERFILLED TRACKS** - More than the normal 18 sectors per track.

The last four methods are extremely hard to overcome, yet the corrupted track was easily cracked by the old technique of slowing the drive. This could separate in about three extra sectors. Hardware mods were still needed to overcome duplicate sectors. A track with a mixture of the above is very hard to crack, but some companies had pre-defined tracks as part of the copy software. This is easily defeated if the packages have protection sectors stored by one sector.

Probably the hardest to crack is the straight or hardware key. This is an unencrypted ROM, plugged into an I/O port and read by the program. It will normally self-destruct when opened or any attempt is made to read it. A bit too high tech for the ATARI! Not if it is PAPER CLIP from Banerico Inc/And!

### A FEW NASTIES YOU MAY ENCOUNTER

We have all read about "hackers" who break into systems. Many do it to see how far they can get, the cheeky ones leaving messages to say how they did it. Some just break in to look data, however a few are really evil and will try to destroy the data. Up until recently, many BBS's were not buffered and lost all their programs through such destructive hackers. Even worse was to follow.

**WARNING** - Downloading from a BBS can be very dangerous to the health of your system! Many programs contain in-built routines to copy themselves onto other disks and multiply. They are often loaded onto a BBS with some interesting name, but with a nasty bit inside. Such a program is called a Trojan Horse, but it more often referred to as a virus and will quietly stay on your disk and then suddenly, and without warning, start to corrupt data. You may not notice this the same time. Indeed, you may think it is a flash of the drive. By this stage a lot of programs may have enough bytes corrupted to be unusable, and all of your backups will be infected. Here are a couple of examples of this type of program.

**PROGRAM WORM** - First written in the late 1970's, it was used to check network security. It was supposed to travel between computers and replicate itself, however it got out of hand and crashed around 100 systems - mainframes, not desktops. One solution is to send in a "killer worm" program to destroy the original program. One famous program was "Killer DODS", the worm in the Apple!

**LOGIC BOMB** - This originated as an advertising method. A software company would distribute, free of charge, items of

# EXPANDING YOUR ATARI

We have had to put a hold on this series for the time being for various reasons, not least of which was that the circuit diagrams for the second part were a bit too complex for the editor to grasp! There were also some errors in the first article which were pointed out by the author and other readers. Thanks go to Jim Foster who provided much information and revised diagrams. Corrections or clearer diagrams are as follows.

software that would cease operating after several runs. Many of these would format the disk and then wipe the data. This program is well known to big computer firms where a disgruntled employee leaves the job and leaves a software surprise as well.

Believe it or not, these programs started out in life for legitimate uses, to track out old, unused code and destroy or update, for diagnostic testing, limited use libraries for advertising and testing primitive life simulations.

## TRYING SOME PROTECTION YOURSELF

None of the techniques mentioned are beyond the scope of the ordinary user but you can do a little to protect your own programs. If you try these out, make sure you do it with a backup.

Firstly, disable the break key by POKE 16,128 and POKE 1674,128. This can be circumvented by system reset, so POKE 188,1. This will reboot the disk when reset is pressed so you will need an AUTORUN.SYS file. All this will stop the program being listed but not copied.

You can take things a step further by customising your DOS 1.0. Location 4226 is the pointer to the low byte and 4229 is the high byte. I have only tried out the low byte, you can try both. If you are using DOS 2.0, the low byte is 4171 and the high byte is 4174. The default value is 005 and points to 061, so to change the directory use the following formula to change the directory start sector.

POKE 4226, (new sector number + 185 - 061)

Make sure that you have wiped the original directory in sectors 060-068. Better yet, use a newly formatted disk. Go to DOS and save the change by using option H to write DOS to the disk. You could also keep the old directory and change the starting sector, thus allowing only certain files to be accessed, or copy a directory from another disk using a sector copier. Use an AUTORUN.SYS file to boot your program.

I hope that this has been interesting and use too technical. Next month we can start again on the basics, that is if any of you would be kind enough to let the Editor or myself know what you would like to see in this column. Remember, this column is to help beginners. They must help themselves by asking me to explain things that interest them. Some things might be too involved for inclusion here but then, that is why you have my address.

Mark Hutchinson,  
1, Hollymount,  
Etrivale,  
Pinegry,  
Belconn,  
ACT 2601

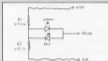


Figure 1 - Logic Probe

Using this circuit the red LED will illuminate if the probe is connected to +5v and the green if connected to 0v. The supply for the logic probe is best taken from the computer by two flying leads fitted with crocodile clips clipped onto any convenient +5v and 0v rails on the computer.



Figure 7 - Monitor Output

It is possible to connect the computer to the AUX input of a HI-FI without using resistors but if distortion occurs the circuit above should cure it.



Figure 8 - HI-FI input from monitor output

Our apologies to any readers who had problems or frustrations.

# ATARI IS BACK!

Atari have proved their commitment to the 8-bit by releasing for the first time on ROM some of the games that made Atari great



Rescue on Fractalus



Ballblazer



Blue Max



Rescue on Fractalus

Last Christmas saw Atari launch their new XE Games System (but little else) — an 8-bit machine based technically around a 6502 computer but supplied in its most basic form without a keyboard. Owners of an unattended system must therefore depend solely on cartridge based software, and with this in mind, Atari have been busy converting some of the best ever computer games into ROM format.

The new ROMs are coloured to match the XE range, and don't have the tab activated covers found on the old style cartridges, thus leaving the PCB edge connectors permanently exposed. Each game is attractively packaged in a colourful box with a glossy instruction manual. Among the first games to be re-released by Atari are BLUE MAX from Banderband, ARIZONA from Electronic Arts, and BALLBLAZER and RESCUE ON FRACTALUS from Lucasfilm Games. They have all been modified, where necessary, to require only joystick or console key inputs.

BLUE MAX became famous for its diagonally scrolling graphics, a technique originally pioneered in Sega's Zaxxon, and used in both cases to create a superb 3-D effect playfield. The game is set in World War One, when RAF ace Pilot Max Chatterworth saw his entire squadron cut down by the enemy, and vowed to avenge the loss of his comrades. The Axis powers learned of Max's lone crusade and offered their highest service award — the Blue Max — to anyone who could successfully shoot him down. This earned Max the nick-name 'Blue Max', and in the game you adopt his role and fly his RAF fighter bomber bi-plane through war-torn Europe. Your objective is to destroy as many enemy installations as possible, especially certain primary targets which must be hit for progression onto a subsequent sector. Ultimately you must destroy three marked targets in a German city.

Weapons consist of unlimited gunfire and a generous supply of bombs, but these can get damaged if you get hit by ground-fire. Extra supplies of fuel and bombs can be collected by landing on friendly airstrips, where any damage will also be repaired. Initial options include skill level and manual reverse controls. Originally, the latter option was incorrectly set, but this fault has now been resolved. BLUE MAX shows very few signs of its age, and I can



recommended to young and old players alike.

Very few games can claim to be truly unique, but **ARCHON** is just that. It's a mixture of strategy and arcade action for one or two players. The strategic element involves you and your opponent manoeuvring regiments of 18 mythical creatures around a strange board of eighty-one squares. The opposing regiments - known as the dark and the light - are not identical. Each creature possesses unique characteristics and abilities. A creature's strength will increase if it is located on a square of its own colour, but some squares will alternate between light and dark, so skill is required in taking full advantage of the board. The ultimate aim of **ARCHON** is to either destroy all of the opposing side's regiments or to simultaneously occupy five special squares where magic 'power points' are situated.

The fun begins when two opposing creatures meet on the same square. This causes the square to immediately expand and fill the entire screen area, to form the combat zone. You must then use your skill and dexterity to fight the opposing creature to the death, at which point the stone returns to his rightful place on the board, and play continues. **ARCHON** was a top-notch package back in 1983 and still remains one of the best two-player titles available today.

Activision caused a sensation in 1980 when they obtained the rights to release a range of Lucasfilm Games titles, a name considered by many to be synonymous with excellence. **RESCUE ON FRACTALUS** was, and still is, arguably the finest 8-bit computer game since Star Raiders. Your mission is to rescue stranded Earthcorp pilots shot down by the Juggles on the extremely sophisticated planet Prevatlas. Not only does the air contain of thick cyanotic acid but the Juggles have developed an impressive defence system of gun emplacements and firing sensors. I bet you'd need a Valkyrie Class Fighter with go-bait Drive Mirror Shield and AMB Torpedo system to combat that lot! Well actually, you'll need one with an Interic Navigation System too!

Far from being a run-of-the-mill shoot 'em up, **RESCUE ON FRACTALUS** is a masterpiece in every conceivable department. The view from the window of your Valkyrie Fighter over the rocky landscape of Prevatlas - in 3-D of course



- has simply got to be seen to be believed. No detail has been spared, from the stranded pilots with space suits and helmets in the various lights and dials on the instrument panel of your fighter.

Sound effects are equally gratifying. System levels are initially adjustable, but there are plenty more after that and one or two interesting surprises along the way!). Even if you only ever buy one computer game, make sure this is the one. You won't regret it!

If you only ever buy TWO computer games, make sure the second one is **BALLBLAZER**: The year is 3090 and the location is a multi-gravity arena in the binary star system Kalamon and Kalamon. That doesn't really matter though, as you're about to engage in the fastest, meanest, closest sport in the known universe: Ballblazer. Soon you'll be traversing a massive grid in your regulation Motorfol, trying to intercept the Phasmor's before your opponent does likewise. When it's your possession, make for the goalposts at the edge of the grid, line up and fire for a perfect over-the-topline goal. Five more like that and you'll be worthy of the ultimate title any bring can possess: Masterblazer.

Usually, **BALLBLAZER** is completely mind-blowing. The screen is split into two halves, giving each player their own unique 3-D view of the proceedings. Prior to the start, there's a brilliant animated opening sequence showing the Motorfol's in action. Only the disk version included this originally.

After this sequence, there's some fantastic music - 'Song Of The Grid' - and you may then choose the length of the game, and either a human or droid opponent. Whichever you decide upon, **BALLBLAZER** will give you hours of enjoyment. A true classic if ever there was one!

All of the ROMs mentioned above are available as an RRP of £14.95 each. Expensive, yes, but remember these are all true games of distinction. If any of these titles are new to you, and you're still unconvinced, consult Jim Storr's lengthy reviews in FACIL 6 issues 28, 29 and 30 if you can get hold of them. Buy them anyway - you won't be disappointed!

Paul Kisser

**BLUE MAX**  
**ARCHON**  
**RESCUE ON**  
**FRACTALUS**  
**BALLBLAZER**

Various publishers - licensed to Atari Corp.

**£14.95 each**  
on ROM cartridge

## THUNDERFOX

Introducing yet another gem for the shoot 'em up fraternity, this time brought to you by the boys from Railway Terrace. Not before time, I hear you say. But it seems Atari Corp. have been busy supporting the 8-bit after all, adding the finishing touches to their new game THUNDERFOX, and very impressive is the result.

A heavily defended Space Transporter carries Delectable Energy Crystals for the approaching Photon Mothership. Once installed, they will power the dreaded Photon War Machine (or Zylonian War Machine, depending on whose story you believe!) and this is certain to spell instantaneous destruction for the entire Solar System. Eliminating the Energy Crystals won't be easy, as they're protected by the awesome Crystal Guardians, who lurk in the far regions of the Thermo-Nuclear Laser Room! Overall access to the Transporter is restricted by two Anti-Gravity Stabilisers and these in turn are defended by various enemy installations and fleets of fighter craft. What a predicament! Sounds like a job for... Thunderfox!

The game kicks off with some excellent, original music and this is followed by a sequence showing Thunderfox being launched into action,

from both side-on and over-head viewpoints. At first, gameplay is rather like a simplified version of Tynesoft's *Mirax Fleet*, the screen scrolling horizontally over the surface of the Transporter as you attempt to locate the Stabilisers and bomb them five times each in order to destroy them. You only have a limited capacity for carrying missiles, so you must return to a loading bay when the initial supply has depleted. There's no need to waste missiles by firing them at enemy craft though - a quick joystick manoeuvre switches over to rapid laser-fire for this purpose.

At first, the task of knocking out the Stabilisers seems impossible, but once you discover the technique, it's a doddle. You'll soon be heading for the Laser Room, where you'll have to guide Thunderfox through a series of animated barriers. Touch one of these, or any of the surrounding walls, and your ship is destroyed, so a steady hand and accurate joystick are essential here. Don't take too long though, or the Radiation will cause an alternative end to the mission. Once inside the Energy Crystal Room, you have to shoot the guardian's polluting load ten times through a moving wall while avoiding the return fire. Again, this seems difficult at first but once you get the hang of it, the task becomes fairly

routine. The opening demo will provide you with some hints.

Success in destroying the Crystal is rewarded by a hefty points bonus and the opportunity to attempt the next level, where the Transporter has taken on new form and colouring. I'm not certain how many levels there are in all, but judging by the first two they are graphically first-rate. The lower third of the screen contains various status information and below this, a long range scanner shows the distance of the Mothership from the Transporter. I've already passed the music, but I shouldn't let the sound effects slip without a mention, as some very interesting ones are included. I seem to recall some similar effects in English Software's *Starglitch*.

If I had to criticise THUNDERFOX, I'd have to say that the three available files are simply inadequate for a game of this nature, especially since it's very easy to lose a ship by crashing into a ground installation that wasn't clearly marked as being poisonous or otherwise. Even so, the overall package is a splendid effort from Atari Corp., and I hope their subscribers will be justly rewarded. And let's hope there's more to come!

Paul Riscoe

Published by Atari Corp. - £4.99 on cassette - 1 player with joystick

## TWILIGHT WORLD

This one was written by Matthew Trimpe, who also programmed *Crystal Raider* for Mastertronic. The basic theme hasn't altered, but the author has improved on the graphics and playability aspects a thousand times over.

Unlike the majority of games, TWILIGHT WORLD has no incredible plot involving Aliens or super heroes. The principal objective is simply to guide a nameless character through a series of interconnecting dungeons, in search of the elusive exit. This is invariably blocked by one or more locked doors, so a correctly coloured key must first be found to open it/them. Along the way, sparkling gems may be collected to increase your score, and an extra life is awarded if you manage to find every single one.

Naturally, there are plenty of irritating noises scattered throughout the

dungeons. Contact with these will put a severe drain on your 'visibility', so it's important to replenish any loss by consuming food items, dotted sparingly around each level. For disposing of these particularly obnoxious adversaries, you are armed with a 'weapon' (imaginative stuff!) with which you are able to blast everything in the immediate vicinity. An accurate joystick can be used to good effect, too. If you get really desperate, you can activate your 'white-egg' once only per life, making your character impervious to adversity for a limited period.

The game boasts eleven different levels plus two alternative settings of difficulty. On the advanced setting, you are obliged to collect all of the gems to complete a level. If you do not end of lives and have to start again, you can opt to re-start on any of the levels you've

previously completed. The dungeons become progressively more challenging, with logic problems and confusing layouts adding to the fun on higher levels. Visually the game is presented in a very competent manner. Your character is big, bold and colourful, and the actions are well defined and animated. Sound isn't quite so impressive, but it's adequate for the purpose.

TWILIGHT WORLD will be well received by fans of Mastertronic's *Revenge* and similar 'find the key' type games. Although it's not a true 'twilight' release, Atari are, at least, moving towards the right lines. Show your support for this one and who knows what will happen...?

Paul Riscoe

Published by Atari Corp. - £4.99 on cassette - 1 player with joystick

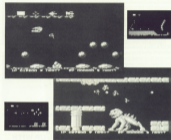
# ZYBEX

## THE BEST BUDGET GAME OF ALL TIME?

If someone told you there was a game available with superb graphics, great sound, multiple levels, a two player facility, highscore table and loads more besides, you'd probably expect it to cost ten pounds or more. But you'd be wrong! Zappellin Games' ZYBEX has all these features, and yet it's priced at under three pounds. So what's the catch? Well, there simply isn't one!

It's essentially a shoot 'em up, but its format is quite unlike anything you'll have seen before. The story centres around two rebels - Kaiser and Crowbar - and their desperate attempts to shake domination by recovering the powerful Zyben crystal that will ensure their captors remove the death rings from their necks. Don't ask me why you should want to be helping two rebels, or how the Zyben crystal would aid their plight, because I haven't a clue - and I'm not sure Zappellin have either! Anyway, before the rebels can reach the Zyben, they must first penetrate the lairs of many strange worlds, collecting teleport crystals as they go.

This is where you enter into the proceedings. You control one of the characters via a joystick as mine upon wave of Alien beings swoop scintillating down in front of you. A second player can help you dispose of them by controlling a second character simultaneously. If you're feeling really ambitious, you can even control both characters using two joysticks yourself! Some Aliens must be destroyed, others can be avoided by careful manoeuvres. Autofire joystick controls won't be overruled to learn that this format is already built into the weapons in ZYBEX. At the beginning, you are armed only with an Orbis Weapon which delivers an intermittent pulse of bullets. By firing over certain symbols which sometimes appear when you destroy an Alien wave, you can also obtain further weapons, these having differing strengths and methods of destruction. Collecting symbols of the same type will increase the weapon's fire power, but if you get killed, the power of your current weapon is reduced. Weapons are selected using the trigger buttons to highlight an appropriate icon above the main



playfield (or below it for player two).

Having completed the first level, you may opt to tackle the next eleven in any order you wish. To enter each of the final four 'restricted' levels however, you need to have obtained three tokens. You can find one token at the end of all the preceding levels, so it doesn't take a mathematical genius to work out that every level will need to be completed ultimately, in any case. Lastly, all Bonus points and extra lives can be collected in the same fashion as additional weapons, and believe me you'll need as many lives as you can get! ZYBEX is challenging enough to begin with, but the climax to each level is even more tricky! Live on, when it comes to game addiction, this one really takes some beating!

A great game then, but what of the graphics? In a word: brilliant! Your character is small but well defined and you can even choose his colouring at the start. Most levels feature a horizontally scrolling futuristic landscape, expertly

drawn in high resolution in several shades of a single colour to produce a magnificent backdrop. A status line below shows all the necessary data regarding your score and number of remaining lives. The attacking Alien waves are superbly animated, each in an individual manner. In fact, you could almost mistake the action for the later revisions of Jeff Minter's *Colossus*! As the beginning there's a terrific piece of original music and other aspects of the game such as the 'game over' and level indication prompt screens are accompanied by jingles of the same mercurial standard.

Zappellin Games promised to provide high quality 'budget' software, and they have kept to their word. ZYBEX is the sort of game that makes reviewers with their wits more cooperative in the dictionary: 'What more can I say, except, go out and buy it immediately!

Paul Rixon

Published by Zappellin Games - £3.99 on cassette - 1/2 players with [joystick/s]

# FIVE OLD CLASSICS

## ATARI COMPILATION TAPE

Atari's compilation cassette was previously marketed as an exclusive companion to the 1500E starter pack, but is now available to existing 8-biters via most reputable Atari stockists and Atari Corp. themselves. The compilation contains five 100% machine code titles, mostly dating from the early 1980's when 48K/68K computers reign'd supreme—**TYPO ATTACK**, **MISSILE COMMAND**, **CENTIPIDE**, **TENNIS** and **STAR RAIDERS**.

Heading the line-up is **TYPO ATTACK**, a deceptively simple but addictive attempt to encourage users to develop their touch typing skills. Animated "Typo" invaders descend from the top of the screen towards eight bases. You have to activate each base's defense system to destroy an incoming invader, by typing in the character that appears below the appropriate one. The characters change periodically, and as the speed of attack increases, you have to rely increasingly on your touch typing abilities rather than searching for the necessary key. **TYPO ATTACK** is most suitable for young children who will not be deterred by the very simple graphics or annoyed by the blipping sound effects.

Similar in theme, but greatly superior in implementation is **MISSILE COMMAND**, for one or two players. Six major cities require defending from intercontinental ballistic missiles, laser satellites and bombers. Facing your limited supply of aerobically-minded missiles into their paths will temporarily slow their advance, but each level will see the enemy's tactics becoming ever more calculated. It's an uncomplicated routine but demands a well-trained trigger finger, and ranks highly in terms of addictiveness. KE Games Systems even actually got **MISSILE COMMAND** built into their machine along with Basic and the OS, so Atari are obviously quite keen on it. Although it's not mentioned on the inlay, you can also connect up a Track-Ball and press Control-T to enter TB mode. **MISSILE COMMAND** is the only game to date offering true Track-Ball compatibility.

If you're ever tired you might like to inhabit an enchanted mushroom:



### THE BEST OF THEIR TIME STILL UP WITH THE BEST TODAY?

**CENTIPIDE** might well be the game for you! An evil Centipede descends the screen towards you. Meanwhile, spiders, flies and scorpions mount vicious attacks as you attempt to blast them into oblivion! Every segment of the Centipede must be destroyed before it reaches the base of the screen, in order to advance into the following, more difficult, level. Graphics are lifted above mediocrity by the cleverly animated Centipede as it meanders across the mushroom patch. **CENTIPIDE** isn't as entertaining as the Atari coin-op original, but is still quite addictive, and fairly challenging on the higher levels.

And now for something completely different, as they say! **TENNIS** is still my favourite sports simulation next to Leaderboard (golf), not least because of the clever 3-D effect graphics and realistic ball travel, an innovation at the time of the game's initial release.

**TENNIS** allows a vast variety of shots from angled volleys to overhead smashes, all selected by the joystick. Additionally, singles or doubles matches can be played against human or automated opponents. Normal Tennis rules and scoring apply, except that the ball is never called "out" because it will always stay in court until one player misses a return shot. Play **TENNIS** by yourself or with friends, either way you'll find it's a whole load of fun. It's one of those games that you'll keep returning to long after the latest revision of "mega-games" has been discarded!

Last, but by no means least, **STAR RAIDERS** is a game that will surely be celebrating its tenth birthday, having become one of the most revered about mega-games of all time. For many, this was the game that persuaded them to buy their first Atari computer. No wonder it is still held in such high regard.

Humming (is that word yet again?) by the evil Zylon empire, and only you can save mankind by hyperwarping through the galaxy in pursuit of Zylon fighters, cruisers and base stars. In addition to the joystick controls, a whole host of keyboard inputs control various facilities such as scanners, shields and automatic tracking devices. As you can imagine, the game becomes increasingly challenging on the higher levels, so much so that Byte magazine once published a five page article on how to improve your technique! Some incredible though the window message graphics put many a modern release to shame, but then you'd expect that of an all-time computer classic. **STAR RAIDERS** is a definite "must have" for any self-respecting 8-bit owner.

In conclusion, Atari have an offer five titles, admirably unapologetic, that aim to provide the inspiration for many of the computer games released this decade. As such, they represent excellent value for money at just under a pound each, a sixth of the current cost if purchased individually. It's nice to see Atari getting their pricing policy right for a change. Now, how about a disk version cheap?

Paul Dixon

Published by Atari Corp. - £4.99 on cassette - 1/2 players with joystick(s)



# ADVENTURE

# ROUND UP

Do you know how many adventures are available for your game? Even if you have played quite a lot, there will be many on this list that you may not have even heard of. They are all genuine adventures that have been, or are, available. Finding some of these, though, could be an adventure itself! The adventures are the standard 'new' adventures and so do not include arcade adventures and the like. Where graphics are available I have indicated by using 'Illustrated'.

You will I hope find the list reasonably complete but I am always interested to know of any other adventures. If any reader knows of others please drop a line to the Editor.

**Missing an Adventure? Or just looking for something different? Check our mammoth Adventure survey**

## Adventures in Time

Phantas  
Text  
\$-50 cassette or disk

## Adventure Quest

Level 1  
Text  
\$-50 cassette

## Adventureland

Adventure International  
Text or Illustrated  
\$-50 cassette or disk

## After the Fire

Classed 8  
Text or Illustrated  
\$-50 cassette or disk(?)

## Alien Egg

Axis Program Exchange  
Text  
\$-50 disk

## Antares

Telefun  
Illustrated  
\$7 disk

## ARMED: Adventure

A.N.A.L.O.G. Computing  
Text  
\$-50 cassette or disk(?)

## Arms of Death Part 1

Classed 8  
Text  
\$-50 cassette

## Arms of Death Part 2

Classed 8  
Text  
\$-50 cassette

## Asylum

Sceneploy  
Illustrated  
\$-50 cassette or disk

## Baldpate

Infocom  
Text  
\$-50 and \$7 disk

## Beyond the Infinite

Classed 8  
Text or Illustrated  
\$-50 cassette or disk(?)

## Bayou Park

Infocom  
Text  
\$7 disk(?)

## Beats of the Phoenix

Phantas  
Text  
\$-50 disk(?)

## Black Castle

Storm On-Line  
Illustrated  
\$7 disk

## The Blade of Blackgate

Infocom  
Illustrated  
\$-50 disk

## Booker Stone

Infocom  
Text  
\$-50 and \$7 disk(?)

## Brumsted Time

Activision  
Illustrated  
\$7 disk

## Brooklyn

Broderbund  
Text  
\$-50 disk(?)

## Bromstone

Broderbund  
Text  
\$-50 disk

## Buckaroo Blunder

Adventure International  
Illustrated  
\$-50 disk(?)

## Burrowsbury

Infocom  
Text  
\$-50 and \$7 disk

## The Caskbook of Howard Searns

Illustrated  
Text  
\$-50 disk

## Castle

Axis Program Exchange  
Text  
\$-50 disk

## Chained Phoenix

Axis Program Exchange  
Text  
\$-50 disk

## Class

Classed 8  
Text  
\$-50 cassette

## Clock of Death

Big Bits  
Illustrated  
\$-50 cassette

## Colored Adventure

Level 4  
Text  
\$-50 cassette

## The Count

Adventure International  
Text or Illustrated  
\$-50 cassette or disk

## The Covered Mirror

Program  
Illustrated  
\$7 disk

## Creative Mirror Adventure

Amiga  
Text  
\$-50 cassette or disk(?)

## Crossing Gears

Program  
Illustrated  
\$7 disk

## Critical Mass

Infocom  
Illustrated  
\$-50 disk

## The Curse of Crowley Manor

Adventure International  
Text  
\$-50 cassette or disk

## Cuthberts

Infocom  
Text  
\$-50 and \$7 disk

## Cyborg

Infocom  
Text  
\$-50 disk

## The Dallas Quest

Illustrated  
Text  
\$-50 disk

## The Dark Crystal

Storm On-Line  
Illustrated  
\$-50 disk

## Deadline

Infocom  
Text  
\$-50 and \$7 disk

## Death to the Carthians

Micro Lab  
Illustrated  
\$-50 disk

## Deix To

Midway  
Illustrated  
\$7 disk

## Dragon Quest

Amiga  
Illustrated  
\$-50 disk

## Dragonworld

Telefun  
Illustrated  
\$7 disk

## Dungeon Adventure

Level 1  
Text  
\$-50 cassette

## Earthquake - The President, 1980

Adventure International  
Text  
\$-50 cassette or disk

## Escape! 1st

Level 1  
Text  
\$-50 cassette

## Escape of the Drowned

Amiga HD  
Text  
\$-50 cassette or disk

## Excalibur

Infocom  
Text  
\$-50 and \$7 disk

## Escape Part 1

AD 600  
Text  
\$-50 cassette or disk

## Escape Part 2

AD 600  
Text  
\$-50 cassette or disk

## Escape from Palace 1

Classed 8  
Text  
\$-50 cassette

## Escape from Treason

Adventure International  
Text  
\$-50 cassette or disk

## Evans

Broderbund  
Text  
\$-50 disk

## Exterminator 81

Telefun  
Illustrated  
\$7 disk

## The Fantastic Four Part 1

Grabbing Hercules Torch and Thing  
Adventure International  
Illustrated  
\$-50 disk

# compiled by GARRY FRANCIS

## **Flexibility Experiment**

Classical  
Tape  
5-10 cassette

## **Futuristic Opera**

Priority  
Tape  
ST disk

## **Four-in-one Sampler**

Infotrac  
Tape  
5-10 and ST disk

## **Gateway**

Dynasty  
Illustrated  
ST disk

## **G.F.S. Successes**

Jordan Hill  
Tape  
5-10 cassette or disk

## **Global Trends**

Adventure International  
Tape or Illustrated  
5-10 cassette or disk

## **Golden Sampler**

Level 9  
Illustrated  
5-10 cassette or disk and ST disk(2)

## **The Golden Years**

Classical 8  
Tape  
5-10 cassette

## **Golden Young**

Adventure International  
Tape or Illustrated  
5-10 cassette or disk

## **Graphic Space**

Simon  
Illustrated  
5-10 disk

## **Grid of Illusions**

Random  
Illustrated  
5-10 enhanced density disk and ST disk

## **Headliner**

Random  
Illustrated  
5-10 disk

## **The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy**

Infotrac  
Tape  
5-10 and ST disk

## **Hyperland Hikes**

Infotrac  
Tape  
5-10 and ST disk

## **The Incredible Staff**

Adventure International  
Illustrated  
5-10 disk

## **Isabel**

Infotrac  
Tape  
5-10 and ST disk

## **The Jamboree**

Scansbury  
Illustrated  
5-10 disk

## **Jamboree of Darkness**

Level 9  
Illustrated  
5-10 cassette or enhanced density disk and ST disk

## **Jester**

Random  
Illustrated  
5-enhanced density disk and ST disk

## **King's Quest**

Simon On-Line  
Illustrated  
ST disk

## **King's Quest II: Romancing the Throne**

Simon On-Line  
Illustrated  
ST disk

## **King's Quest III: To Heir is Human**

Simon On-Line  
Illustrated  
ST disk

## **Knights One**

Level 9  
Illustrated  
5-10 cassette or disk and ST disk

## **Labyrinth of Crime**

Adventure International  
Tape  
5-10 cassette or disk(2)

## **Lego Philosopher**

Artisoft  
Illustrated  
5-10 disk

## **Legend Goddesses of Phobos**

Infotrac  
Tape  
5-10 and ST disk

## **Letsme Visit Larry in the Land of the Living Legends**

Simon On-Line  
Illustrated  
ST disk

## **Lords of Ravens**

Simon Hill  
Tape  
5-10 cassette or disk

## **Lords of Time**

Level 9  
Tape  
5-10 cassette

## **The Lost Kingdom of Zhal**

Trilog  
Tape  
ST disk

## **Luther's Realm**

Scansbury  
Illustrated  
5-10 disk

## **The Lurking Horror**

Infotrac  
Tape  
5-10 and ST disk

## **The Mists of the Sea**

Random  
Illustrated  
5-10 disk

## **Magnavox**

Priority  
Illustrated  
5-10 disk(2)

## **Microworld**

Scansbury  
Tape  
5-10 cassette or disk(2)

## **Mid Winter**

Classical 8  
Tape or Illustrated  
5-10 cassette or disk(2)

## **A Mind Forever Voyaging**

Infotrac  
Tape  
ST disk

## **Mindbender**

Artisoft  
Illustrated  
5-10 and ST disk

## **Mintchuck**

Random  
Tape  
5-10 disk

## **Mishkin Asteroid**

Simon On-Line  
Illustrated  
5-10 disk

## **Mishkin Improbable**

Adventure International  
Tape or Illustrated  
5-10 cassette or disk

## **Moonbase**

Infotrac  
Tape  
5-10 and ST disk

## **Murkin's Quest**

Artisoft  
Tape  
5-10 cassette

## **Murville Manor**

Random  
Illustrated  
ST disk

## **Mystery Fox House**

Adventure International  
Tape or Illustrated  
5-10 cassette or disk

## **The Neverending Story**

Random  
Illustrated  
5-10 disk

## **Miss Princess in Amber**

Trilog  
Illustrated  
ST disk

## **Nord and Herr Guldin's Magic**

Random  
Tape  
5-10 and ST disk

## **On Eagles**

Priority  
Illustrated  
ST disk

## **Open House**

Big News  
Tape  
5-10 cassette or disk(2)

## **Original Adventure**

Simon Hill  
Tape  
5-10 cassette or disk

## **The Paradise**

Scansbury  
Tape  
5-10 cassette or disk(2)

## **The Pever**

Random  
Illustrated  
5-10 enhanced density disk and ST disk

## **The Pzy Doll**

Big News  
Tape  
5-10 cassette or disk

## **Perry Mason: The Case of the Murderer's Murder**

Infotrac  
Illustrated  
ST disk

## **Perry and Andrews**

Classical 8  
Tape  
5-10 cassette

## **Piran Adventure**

Adventure International  
Tape or Illustrated  
5-10 cassette or disk

## **Pleasant Hill**

Infotrac  
Tape  
5-10 and ST disk

## **Plundered Hearts**

Infotrac  
Tape  
5-10 and ST disk

## **Polly Queen**

Simon On-Line  
Illustrated  
ST disk

## **Powerman**

Random  
Illustrated  
5-10 cartridge

## **The Prince of Magic**

Level 9  
Illustrated  
5-10 cassette

## **Pyramor 1**

Artisoft  
Illustrated  
5-10 disk

## **Pyramid of Doom**

Adventure International  
Tape or Illustrated  
5-10 cassette or disk

## **The Quest**

Priority  
Illustrated  
5-10 and ST disk

## **Quest for Uncanny**

Big News  
Tape  
5-10 cassette

## **Red Moon**

Level 9  
Illustrated  
5-10 cassette



# ROUND UP

## All the Atari Adventures

### Numberous with Names

Telefun  
Illustrated  
\$7 disk

### Number to Eleven

Level 9  
Text  
\$4.95 cassette

### Next Number

Adonis  
Text  
\$4.95 disk

### Eight's Revenge

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Detail price inc. V&T	£79.95	£39.95	£45.00	£45.00	£24.95	-
GEM Editor	No	No	Y	No editor	Y	Y
Max string length	No limit	No limit	256	256	256	255 bytes
Max multi-DIM array size	No limit	No limit	64k	64k	No limit	64k
Complete ASCII & VDI access	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Produce stand-alone programs	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Assembly language support	Libraries	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Sound constraints	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Joystick access	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Quick reference card	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Double precision floats	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Multi-statement lines	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Multi-line statements	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Line numbers allowed	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Line numbers optional	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Load and use resource files	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Create Desk Accessories	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Program profiling	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Average I/O wait/blank time	0.47	0.47	1.4	0.6	1.0	3.0
INTE Code (floating-point) time	1.37	1.37	6.23	3.33	7.14	19
Compatible with	ST BASIC & Microsoft QB3		GFA Basic	GFA Basic	IBAC Basic	

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