

ATARI AGE

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EDITOR
Steve Morgenstern
DESIGN DIRECTOR
Al Conner
CLUB MANAGER
Jules Yingling

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New Cartridge Report

For Atari 2600

Pole Position



Video racing action the way you really want it—that's what you'll find in Atari's pulse-pounding Pole Position cartridge.

The programmers have really captured the unique feeling of arcade Pole Position and brought it home for Atari system owners. The player's viewpoint is from racing level. The onscreen images swerve as your car swerves — the mountains in the background shift in perfect perspective, the other cars and the signs along the road grow larger as you get

Even the readouts are complete — speed, closer to them. time remaining, lap time, and score are all shown and continually updated.

Gameplay is just like the arcade original too. First you run a qualifying lap. The faster you complete it, the better your position for the actual race. Go too slow and you don't make it into the Grand Prix.

In the Grand Prix itself, players must turn in a demanding lap time to qualify for extended play and remain in the race. As the miles tick by, the competition heats up—cars change lanes more quickly and your driving skills are pushed to the absolute limit!

Whether you're a budding speed demon or strictly a Sunday driver, the new Pole Position cartridge is a definite winner!

Battlezone



If you're not in the mood to drive a race car, how about something a little larger like a tank! Now you can, with the new home version of the classic arcade game

Like the arcade original, you are seated in the turret of a powerful tank looking out at Battlezone. the battlefield ahead. Keep one eye on the radar screen at all times — every blip that appears is an enemy looking for a fight. You'll face five kinds of enemies in

Battlezone, each posing its own special threat. First tanks and faster-moving Supertanks launch a punishing assault. They can

blast you from any angle, but you have to be

facing them to land a shot. When Flying Saucers appear, you have a big scoring opportunity—they're worth 5,000 points each — but they're awfully hard to hit. And concentrating on one of these elusive targets can leave you wide open to a

Then the Fighters descend and really put the heat on — they zigzag toward your tank Tank attack and, when they reach pointblank range, they veer to the side and fire right at you. Another formidable opponent in an astounding nonstop action challenge — Battlezone.

Krull



"Beyond our time, beyond our universe, there is a planet besieged by alien invaders. Where a young king must rescue his love from the clutches of the Beast. Or risk the

This is **Krull**, an extraordinary new movie death of his world." spectacular. Now Atari has captured the action and adventure of this unique film in

In Krull you become Prince Colwyn, the the Krull video game. hero who must conquer three different challenges to rescue your beloved Princess and save your planet from the ravages of the

The game begins at your wedding cere-Beast and his Slayers. mony. Suddenly hordes of Slayers appear,

wielding gleaming neon spears. You fight valiantly, but inevitably, their numbers overwhelm you. They kidnap the Princess!

You leap on a speedy Firemare, picking up weapons and extra lives as you approach the web of the deadly Crystal Spider. Only there can you learn the location of the Black Fortress, where the Beast holds the Princess

Survive this terrifying encounter and you must ride to do battle with the Beast himself. He hurls deadly fireballs at you, but you fight back with your enchanted Glaive, breaking a passage through the prison walls to free your Princess. Only then are you ready for your final challenge — eliminate the Beast!

A WORLD LIGHT-YEARS BEYOND YOUR IMAGINATION...



Enter a world of ancient prophesy and inhuman peril ... of hideous villains out equal. Enter the world of KRULL—the astounding movie adventure, and a beautiful Princess ... of evil beyond description and heroism with-

and the action-packed video game it inspired. THE GAME **THAT TAKES** YOU THERE!

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Club member price: just \$26.95

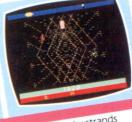




The peace of your wedding is shattered by invading Strattered by invaling Slayers with gleaming neon spears. You fight valiantly against them, but they capagainst them, but they cap ture your beloved Princess!



You ride to the rescue on a fleet-footed Firemare.



The web's sticky strands hold the secret to finding the Black Fortress — but watch out for the deadly Crystal Spider!



You've reached the Fortress — now hurl your Glaive and rescue the Princess. Then it's a fight to the finish against the Beast himself!

CALL **TOLL FREE** 1-800-538-8543



(CA residents call 1-800-672-1404) or use the enclosed Order Form

MEMBE

SwordQuest EarthWorld Prize Claimed by Atari Club Member Steven Bell



On May 2, seven SwordQuest EarthWorld finalists met at Atari headquarters in Sunnyvale, California. They were seated before seven VCS units, each containing a specially programmed championship version of EarthWorld. Their challenge—be the first to reach the twelfth and final level of the game. The winner's prize
—a solid gold Talisman valued at

\$25,000, studded with emeralds, diamonds, and other precious stones.

The contestants were given 90 minutes to complete the competition — when time elapsed, the player who had pro-

gressed furthest through their video adventure would be declared the winner. Many of the spectators thought no one could possibly make it through all the levels in the time allowed. But amazing everyone, just 46 minutes into the contest, Atari Club member Steven Bell of St. Clair, Michigan leaned back in his chair and smiled. He had finished the game—the Talisman was his!

Steven faced some formidable opponents in

his quest for the gold. The other finalists included two freshmen from the University of New Orleans, a California housewife, a U.S. Coast Guard lieutenant, and the youngest finalist a 16-year-old high school student from South Carolina. As the competition got underway, though, his primary opponent seemed to be Matthew Balasa, a 21-year-old chemistry major from North Central Michigan University.

"Gentlemen, start your joysticks,

and Matthew pulled ahead of the pack with an early lead. But the first player to reach the fifth level was Steven Bell.

His lead did not go unchallenged. Steven Dousse, one of the New Orleans freshmen, caught up while most of the players were stalled at level 4. For the next ten minutes the lead changed hands between Bell and Dousse, but by the ninth level, Bell had established what seemed like a comfortable lead. Dousse made another valiant come-from-behind rush, but it was Bell who solved the riddle of level 10 and moved within one level of victory. Nine and one-half painstaking minutes later, a contest judge declared Bell the winner as he conquered the final level.

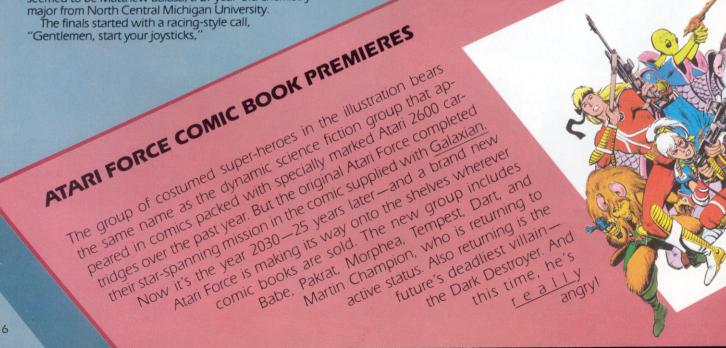
"I really thought it would be easier," Bell said. The 20-year-old champion said his winning strategy was to "take it easy,

because you can make big mistakes if you try to go too fast." He first read about the competition in Atari Age magazine and decided to enter because he loves to play adventure games.

Now he awaits the finals in 1984, where he will meet the winners of SwordQuest Fire-World, WaterWorld and AirWorld

in head-to-head competition for the Grand Prize, a jewel-encrusted

sword valued at \$50,000.





THE MYSTERY CONTINUES

"The Wraps Are About to Come Off"—that's what the brochure about AtariTel distributed at Atari's Consumer Electronics Show booth said. Rumors and guesswork have grown steadily for nearly two years now, as engineers worked in secret on the mysterious "Project Falcon." Now "Falcon" is the basis for an entirely new division of Atari and, while the company is not ready to reveal details of their new products, this much is certain:

- The company will produce "a new, dramatically capable home network for voice communications, communications management, appliance control, security and environmental control. The system incorporates new technology and features not available in other residential telecommunications products."
 - The AtariTel line will include conventional telephones with advanced features and styling.
 - Two of the world's leading industrial designers, Porsche Design and Morison Cousins Associates were commissioned to develop the product designs.
 - Customer shipments are intended to begin in early 1984.

There, now you know as much as we do!

ATARI VIDEO ADVENTURE NOW AT MARRIOTT'S GREAT AMERICA

Visitors to Marriott's Great America theme park in Santa Clara, California now have a memorable computer experience awaiting them, thanks to Atari.

Atari launched its three-phase attraction at the park in 1982, featuring an arcade with all the latest coin video releases and a store with every Atari game and accessory. Now the final phase of the Atari center at Great America has opened, and it is a real treat—a computer-interactive stimulation for the eyes, the ears, and the mind.

As visitors enter the Atari Video Adventure, they experience a "video kaleidoscope"—a carefully orchestrated montage of sound and images demonstrating the role of the computer in human life. The announcer's voice fills the room—"Today, we play at the speed of thought—discover magical kingdoms—test our powers over time and space. Our play becomes our work, and

our work becomes play."
From here we progress to Computer Painting, where visitors get hands-on experience creating mind-

boggling computer artwork with very

simple controls.

Intriguing sounds beckon us on from around the corner and we follow them to enter a Tone Tunnel. Rows of pillars line the tunnel. Each one you touch creates a different musical sound. With dozens of people walking through this environment, touching pillars and cre-

ating different tones, you might expect the result would be nothing but noise. But amazingly enough, this ingeniously designed tunnel produces captivating music out of whatever combination the many hands at the controls produce.

The final attraction is a truly eye-opening extravaganza of color and movement. Visitors stand before a wall-size screen and discover themselves on the wall—not as they ordinarily are, but as the computer recreates them. TV cameras take in a roomful of people at a glance, and feed the image to a computer which adds color, extends movement, distorts reality, and by doing so, creates a series of stunning computer graphic effects—and you are part of this creation!

This dramatic demonstration of the computer's potential to create extraordinary sights and sounds will long be remembered by anyone lucky enough to visit the Atari

Video Adventure at Great America.

AN ATARI CLUB EXCLUSIVE!



Introducing an exciting new bonus system for Atari Club Members — ARCS!

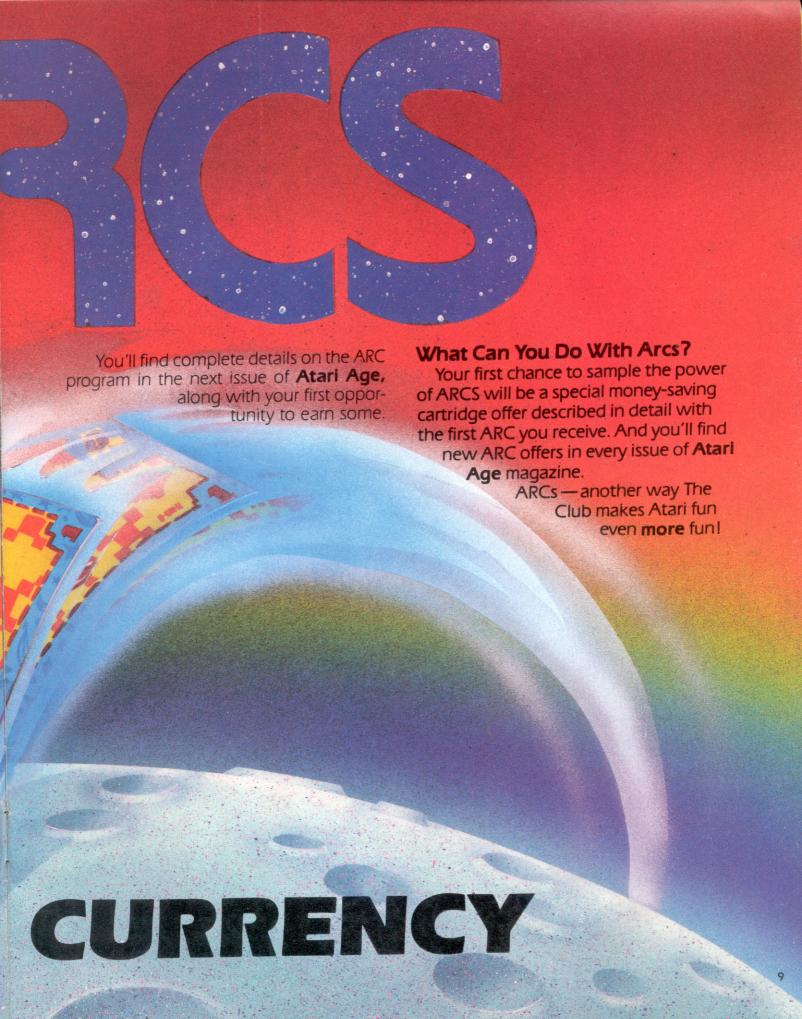
What's an ARC?

ARC stands for Atari Redemption Certificate. You can use these certificates to save on the latest Atari video games and other terrific Atari products. And ARCS are also your key to special Club offers and privileges — like previewing new Atari games before they're released to the general public, or the chance to win fantastic prizes in special ARC contests.

How Can You Get ARCS?

Lots of ways! You'll get ARCs as a bonus when you renew your Club membership—new members get some as a bonus for joining. You could earn more ARCs by becoming a Cub Reporter or Game-Grams Contributor for Atari Age. You might even win them in Club contests.

THE CLUB







HOT NEW GAMES COMING INTRODUCED AT CES ATTRACTIONS

Atari introduced an incredible 28 new games for the 2600 and 5200 systems at Summer CES, including adaptations of several hot arcade hits. Some of these are already available in this issue of Atari Age, including Pole Position and Battlezone. Here's a glimpse at some of the other arcade titles on their way to your home in the months ahead.



Also coming for the Atari 5200:

XEVIOUS TEMPEST ROBOTRON: 2084

DIG DUG





ATARI INTRODUCES FOUR NEW HOME COMPUTERS

Atari took a bold step forward in its home computer line by introducing four new home computers at the Consumer Electronics Show. They range from the 600XL, with price and features which

make it very attractive for beginning computer users, to the very sophisticated 1450XL, which comes complete with 64K memory and a built-in disk drive, direct connect modem, and speech synthesizer!

An extremely important consideration in developing these new computers was full system compatibility. This means that the full range of programs and peripherals will work with all four new models, and with the 400, 800, and 1200XL models already in distribution. Not only does this ensure a tremendous variety of software availability, it also allows users to trade up in the future to a more advanced basic computer, without sacrificing the investment they've made in Atari hardware and software.

Here are the new models in a nutshell: 600XL:

- 16K RAM (expandable to 64K)
- Full-stroke keyboard
- Built-in ATARI BASIC programming language
- 256 colors, 5 text modes, 11 graphic modes, and 4 sound voices
- HELP key and self-test diagnostics
 800XL includes all features of 600XL plus.
- 64K RAM
- TV and monitor outputs
 1400XL includes all features of the
 800XL plus:
 - 4 programmable function keys
 - Built-in modem
- Built-in speech synthesizer
 1450XL includes all features of the
 1400XL plus:
- Built-in double-sided dual-density disk drive
- Diskette storage space

LIGHT PEN AND DRAWING TABLET MAKE COMPUTER ART FAST AND FUN

Atari is making it easier for all of us to explore the eye-popping world of computer graphics. At CES, the company introduced reasonably priced versions of two devices which have traditionally been available only as expensive tools used mostly by professional graphic artists—the Light Pen and the Touch Tablet controller.

The Light Pen, designed and developed for Atari by Steve Gibson, allows the user to interact with the computer by simply pointing the pen at the TV screen. This capability can be used in programs to allow users to make selections directly from the screen, without ever touching a computer

A LATE

key. But probably the most exciting use of the Light Pen is in creating computer graphics.

As demonstrated to admiring crowds at CES, the Light Pen can

"draw" directly on the TV screen. Lines and colors appear instantly on the screen, and the pictures created can be changed over and over again, then saved with cassette recorder or disk drive

for future enjoyment or incorporation in a program.

The Touch Tablet also has dual use as a program input device or a graphics tool. The operator merely puts the stylus (supplied with the tablet) or a finger on the tablet's flat 41/2 by 6 inch active area, and draws designs and images which are displayed on the TV screen. There are three pushbutton switches, two on the tablet and one on the stylus which can be used as fire buttons or for menu selection input, start/ stop line drawing, or other programmable functions.

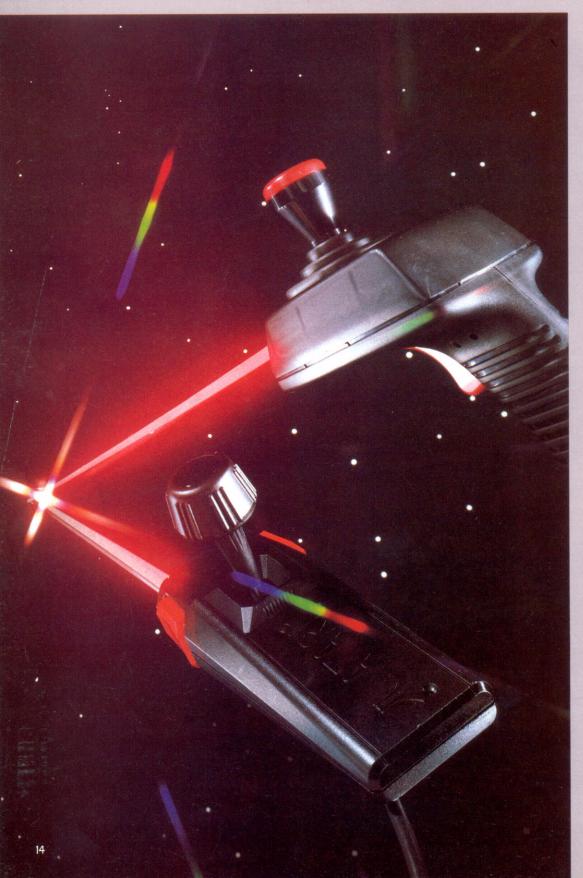
Cartridge-based graphics software will be packed with the Touch Tablet. Among the features of this software will be over 150 colors and patterns, selectable brush widths, and an easy-to-use menu system for making program choices.

13

PLAYERS WILL HAVE THEIR HANDS FULL be used to WITH NEW PRO-LINE CONTROLLERS Atari demonstrated the full line of PRO-LINE controllers at CES. There was one surprise addition to the system—a revolutionary controller called the Space Age Joystick. It features an 8-position joystick on top of a pistol-grip firing device. Extensive testing shows that the trigger-style action of the Space Age Joystick is less tiring to use than controllers with conventional fire buttons.

TAKE CONTROL!

ATARI PRO-LINE CONTROLLERS SEND SCORES SOARING!



ATARI 2600 SPACE AGE JOYSTICK

- Unique pistol grip contour
- Quick, reliable selfcentering stick action
- Fast-action trigger-style fire button
- Perfect for left- or righthanded players

SPACE AGE JOYSTICK (single) Item Code A73 Club Member Price: \$14.95 ea

BUY A PAIR AND SAVE!

SPACE AGE JOYSTICK (pair) Item Code A74 Club Member Price: \$26.95

2600 PRO-LINE JOYSTICK

- "Human-engineered" design fits the shape of your hands
- Incredibly responsive joystick control
- Slim shape virtually eliminates tired hands
- Two fire-buttons for easy play by left- or righthanders

PRO-LINE JOYSTICK (single) Item Code A75 Club Member Price: \$19.95 ea

BUY A PAIR AND SAVE!

PRO-LINE JOYSTICK (pair) Item Code A76 Club Member Price: \$35.95



A SIX-PAC OF PAC-MANJOKES

What is Pac-Man's favorite TV show? The Pacs of Life

What is Pac-Man's favorite movie? The Hunchpac of Notre Dame

> from Barry J. Finck Harrisburg, PA

What is the Ghosts' least favorite music?

The blues

What's Pac-Man's favorite restaurant? Pac-Donalds

What's Pac-Man's favorite candy? Tic-Pacs

Where do the Ghosts go on vacation? To the Pokey-nose

> from John Janda Bridgeport, CT

NOT MY DAY

Alta Loma, CA

6H!NO!

I played my Atari but it wasn't my day, The ghosts in my Pac-Man all got

My soccer players kept losing the ball, And in Breakout I just couldn't break through the wall.

The Space Invaders landed their force, The Asteroids blew up my ships of

hard I tried.

My Combat team just up and died. Well I've finally had it, I lost my last fight, So I'm putting my Atari away for the

Tomorrow will bring a brand new day. I just know that I'll win every game that I play.

Finally

Im Beat you

SPECIAL THANKS.

kudos, felicitations, and a standing Cub Reporter contributions: Kim Eng Yeo, Jamaica, NY; Rob Johnston, Upper Marlboro, MD; Angie Singleton, Chandler, IN; Jeff Verdoin, Grand Haven, MI; Mario Rozzi, St. Clair Shores, MI: Velma Young and Dora Miller from Rochester, Ohio, for the superb Pac-Man and Ms. Pac-Man outfits; and a young computer cartoonist named Lukin from Staten Island, NY.







from Sean Dover San Pedro, CA



rom Jim James Orlando, FL



Master Strategy Guide

DEFENDER

One of the most popular games ever released for the Atari 2600 system is the award-winning *Defender*. Dozens of members have sent us terrific tips and tactics for high-scoring play, and we've chosen the best of them for this Master Strategy Guide. We're even revealing, for the first time anywhere, the key to unlocking the "secret message" of *Defender*.

You'll find a Master Strategy Guide for a different Atari game cartridge in each future issue of *Atari Age*, so send us your best gameplaying pointers—the address is The Atari Club, Master Strategy Guide Department, 1700 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103. As always, there's a free Atari game cartridge for each contribution we publish.

"Playing Possum" Baffles Baiters

If a baiter is above you and your spaceship is stationary, the baiter will land on top of your ship without destroying you. This trick can help if the baiter is "on your tail."

> Thomas Greenberg Rockville Centre, NY

Fire Control

Your laser can be "guided" after it is fired by moving the joystick up and down. I use this method to destroy baiters.

David Lui Middlebury, CT

What Happened to Hyperspace!

For some reason, you cannot enter hyper-space while carrying a humanoid. I lost many ships finding this out.

Jeff R. Wood lone, CA



Down
I have found out o Defender that if you g all the way up to the top of the screen untyour ship disappears you can go to the kill chen and get some chips or a drink and come back to plad Atari without gettin any ships killed. Yo can also go beneat the city (on the bottom) without gettin ships killed.

Lawton, O

EDITOR'S NOTE: B sure to eliminate an landers before you to this—otherwise the will snatch all your re maining humanoid while you're away.

Mutation Information

On fast waves, if a lander kidnaps a humanoid at the very edges of the scanner, let him mutate. He'd probably be mutated already by the time you got there anyway.

0

Romeo Casiple Houston, TX

Pod Position

Players should shoot pods from the right part of the screen (shooting toward the left), because most of the time the swarmers will not appear as close to the player as when the pod is shot from the left side (shooting toward the right).

Stanford Linn Greensboro, NC

More Right Advice

When you're in the hard waves, keep your ship on the right side of the screen. When you're on the right, swarmers, mutants, and baiters can't sneak up behind you. When you're on the left, they can.

Alex Northington Hampton, VA

The Secret Revealed!

I found "BP" in Defender and know how to get it regularly. What you do is in wave 25, catch a humanoid and hover at about the height where a ship appears when you either finish a wave or get destroyed. Move the ship up and down to find the correct spot. When you find the spot, all the aliens will turn to "BP."

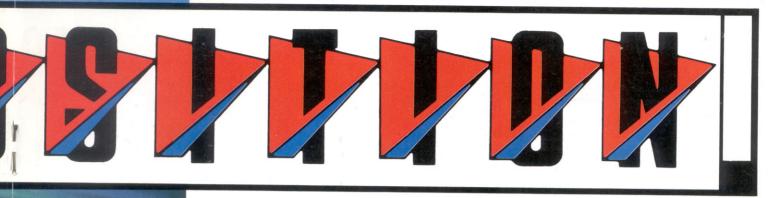
Todd Connor No. Oxford, MA

The More the Merrier

If at all possible try not to take on a baiter or a swarmer without a lander nearby. If you don't have a lander nearby (within sight on the screen), then the baiters and swarmers both move very fast—faster than if they were with a lander.

Thomas Campbell Walton, KY EDITOR'S NOTE: The height you need to hit is actually the 25th line of vertical resolution from the bottom—another example of the programmer using his lucky number 25. Don't worry too much about hitting the proper height exactly, though—you can fly up and down until you find it.







The #1 arcade hit in America is ready to roar into your living room — POLE POSITION!

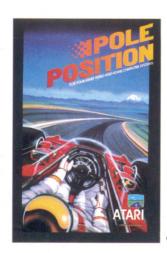
You'll feel like you're behind the wheel of a powerful Formula One race car in Grand Prix competition. Engine droning louder as you shift gears on the straightaway...tires screeching as you hug the corner on a hairpin turn...your speed hitting the 200 mph mark as you push that car for all it's worth to

complete the lap and win extended play.

Nothing can touch the hard-driving excitement of POLE POSITION—the most popular racing game in history—only from Atari!



EXCLUSIVE OFFER FOR ATARI CLUB MEMBERS!



Order Atari 2600 or 5200 Pole Position from The Club and receive this tremendous 24 x 36 inch Pole Position poster absolutely free!!

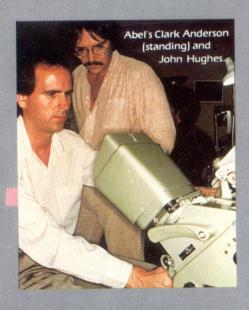
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TO ORDER:
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(CA residents call1-800-672-1404)
with credit card orders,
Or use the
convenient Mail Order Form
included in this magazine.



The Making of a High-Tech Ad

To sell this year's model, you can't use last year's commercial. by Michael Rozek



t begins like any television commercial: a simple film of real life. A designer of video games, played by actor Rod Davidson, sits in his office. He is swiveling in his chair, musing.

"I'll have a fly," he says suddenly, "a mutant fly." And with that, a huge, flying object that resembles a video-game creature looms in the air before himbuzzing and pulsating in a graphic

"Hello, Yar," Davidson says calmly, naming the fly. "You'll need some weapons." With this, the weapons — blades of flickering light - appear. "Because you'll have a formidable enemy—the Qotile."

Directly in back of Davidson, the Qotile sneaks into view. And suddenly a battle erupts: Yar versus the Ootile, both streaking, shooting, bursting with color and motion above, below, and behind.

It's all part of a new, two-minute commercial that Atari has produced for movie theaters. If the spot is as successful as the company hopes, it will move you to buy three new Atari products (including the game Yars' Revenge).

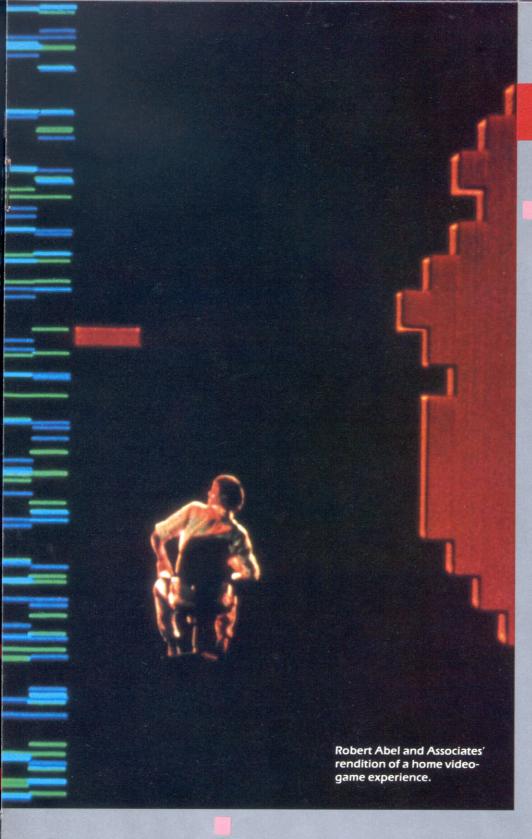
The company that produced the ad for Atari is the Los Angeles-based studio Robert Abel and Associates. When you visit Abel's shop, you see all the signs of a breakneck pace: 30 phone calls to the switchboard in 10 minutes, couriers to Tokyo cooling their heels as rush deliveries are hurriedly packaged. The demand for this work is high, even at an average cost of \$100,000 for a 30-second spot. As Bob Abel himself explains, "Firms have new technology to sell, and they realize they can't use an old-looking commercial to sell it."

Two of the Abel staffers behind the Atari commercial were designer-director Clark Anderson and codirector and technical expert John Hughes. "The Atari storyboard as we first received it was conceived in very flat terms," says Anderson. "But we knew we had a big theater screen to work with—twice as wide as it was high. And we have the E&S [Evans and Sutherland] machine, which we use to choreograph computer graphics to give an illusion of three dimensions." So Anderson redrew the storyboard to show what the team at Abel could do. "I knew that the game elements the character was creating would be more interesting if they were flying at him, or around him, rather than just happening in front of him."

Next the Abel team constructed an animatic: a full-perspective mock-up of the commercial displayed on the system's high-resolution, black-andwhite video screen. Explains Anderson: "In a commercial as complex as this, our pacing, timing of pictures to words, and camera angles all must be set in

advance. That's what the animatic shows us."

To create the animatic, the Abel staffers must enter line drawings represent-



ing the elements in the commercial (including a simple outline of the actor and his chair) into the E&S computer. A drawing of a particular object can be placed atop a data tablet—an electronic drawing table—linked to the computer and outlined by hand with a special stylus. Some shapes are easier

than others. "To express a square, for example," says Anderson, "I'll mark its four corners with the stylus. For drawing in three dimensions, I mark points for three views—side, top, and front." Some shapes, as Hughes notes, are created by typing commands on the computer's keyboard: "With our software, if an ob-

ject has curved surfaces, it's easier to create it mathematically."

Once an image appears on the video screen, Anderson and Hughes can move it around with a joystick or a series of knobs. "Motion-control cameras can only physically pitch and yaw a given distance," says Anderson, "but once you take choreography completely into the computer, you can fly objects on-screen all over the place and not worry about tangling up wires and equipment."

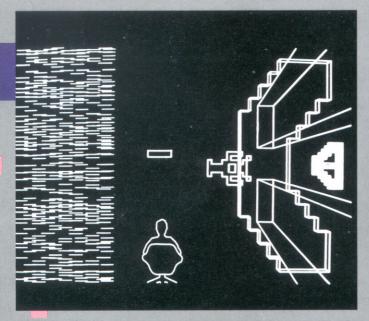
With the animatic as a guide, the elements for the final, on-film shoot are assembled. First, Abel's older, motion-control cameras are used to photograph the logo and titles. The camera slides toward or away from the titles on a track up to 50 feet in length. The titles themselves are positioned on a light box, which can move in the same roll-pitch-yaw configuration as the creatures on the video screen ("It's run by the same software," explains Hughes).

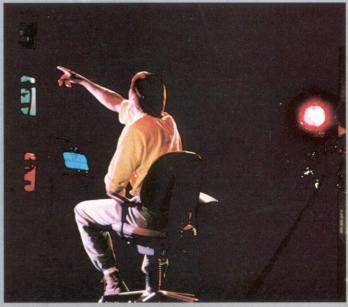
Then, in another room, the resulting footage may be streaked—the industry's word for the time-exposure technique that can make a network logo look like it has a vapor trail. "It's simple," Anderson explains. "You open the lens of your camera partway while it's moving, smearing the image."

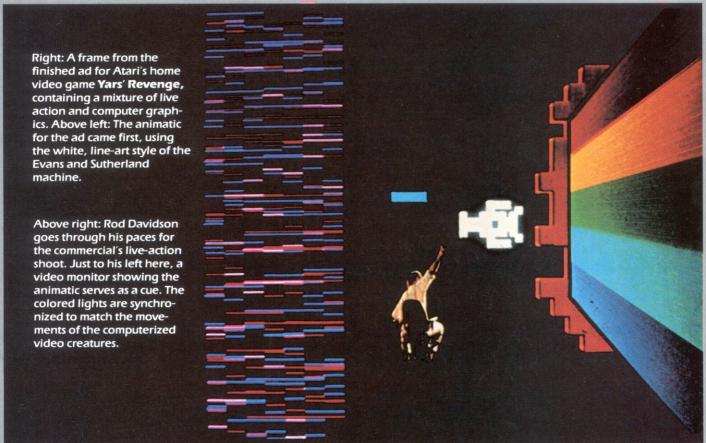
What about filling in all the objects outlined by the computer? Abel's vector-graphics system produces only white lines, not solid areas, so the computer is instructed to display a thicket of tightly packed parallel lines that, at a distance, resembles a solid shape. Then there is the task of adding color and shading to all these lines. "For most of the Atari job," says Hughes, "we simply placed color filters between the video screen and our thirty-five-millimeter movie cameras."

Finally, it's time to film the live-action part of the commercial. For the Atari spot, the live action was filmed in front of what appeared to be a blue, 40-by-60-foot light box turned on its side so the background could later be dropped out.

"In the finished spot, the animated effects would be zooming around the







actor," notes Anderson, "so as we shot him live, we also had to throw light on him from different directions. To pull this off in the commercial, we used a system of computerized lighting cues, like the systems used at large rock concerts. It coordinated eighty lighting

events in two minutes." For cues, the actor watched the animatic on a hidden video monitor. "It took three days to coordinate all of it and program the lighting," says Anderson, "but we did the actual shooting in one day." After the matting process blended the syn-

thetic and live-action footage, all that remained was to add the sound effects, make prints, and then produce copies.

"But the technology is not in charge here," says John Hughes emphatically. "All of the power is where it should be, with the designers."

Dear Atari Club.

Town an Atari Video Chess cartridge and found it's a lot of fun, but I also found out it "cheats." To verify my case, just select difficulty 6 or 7. This works best when you set it up at night. Keep your Atari on and your TV set off. Next morning turn your TV on. You will find 95% of the time the computer moved not only a few of its pieces, but a few of your own too

Salim Bhaloo Bryan, TX

Remember the story of The Shoe-maker's Elves? After reading your letter, we expected to find some of those little gremlins at work on your Atari unit. But when we tried it, we found out that you're absolutely right -the cartridge cheats! You can't blame it really - if someone left you alone in the living room all night with a chessboard, you'd probably move some pieces yourself, just to relieve the boredom.

-Editor

Dear Atari Club.

In your "Inside" article in the September/October issue, you showed the insides of an Atari cartridge. All the cartridges are made the same way, so why is there such a difference in the price?

Carl Carroll Cocoa, FL

Your simple question calls for a fairly complicated answer. Start with the fact that, despite appearances, not all cartridges are made the same. Some games require more memory than others—this means that they must have a larger capacity ROM chip to

store information, and more capacity means a more expensive chip. The amount of research and development it took to create the game can also have an effect on its price.

Another factor to consider is licensing fees. When Atari wants to create a home version of an arcade video game, or base a game cartridge on a movie or television show, they negotiate an agreement with the company or individual controlling the rights to the game or characters involved. Atari agrees to pay a percentage of their income from the cartridge sales to the licensor, and this affects the selling price of the game.

-Editor

Dear Atari Club,

My mother just brought up a point. She noticed that after a couple of days I had read everything in the magazine. So now I wait a month and a half for the next issue. I think your magazine is great and I think a lot of other club members do too. Could you consider issuing it every month?

> Mark Gales Farmington, CT

Before I answer, I'd like to assure our other readers that I have never met Mark, we're not relatives, and I didn't bribe him to say those nice things about the magazine. I would like to thank him, though, for his kind words, and take the opportunity to thank everyone else who has taken the time to tell us to "keep up the good work Your praise means a lot to us here at HQ

As to coming out monthly...well, you never know. There is so much happening at Atari at this point, it's getting harder and harder to cover it all in a bimonthly magazine. So far,

our response has been to add pages. Those of you who were with us at the beginning will remember the first few 16-page issues. You're now holding our first 36-page issue in your hands. Not bad for just over a year!

And frankly, before we consider the move to one-a-month, we have to get back on schedule! I wish we could lay the blame on your trusty mailman, but the truth is, we've had some delays in the past few issues, due mostly to some recent staff changes. Right now we're running like mad to get back to on-time delivery - then we'll talk to the people counting the money about turning Atari Age into a monthly

Dear Atari Club.

I have written about 63 questions. all different. Why haven't any of my questions appeared in your magazine under Game-Grams? Also, what happened to Flag Capture?

Joe Shake St. Louis, MO

As Atari keeps introducing new games and discovering ways to squeeze even more performance out of the VCS unit, some older titles have to be dropped from the catalogue. Flag Capture was a victim of old age -in the video game world, five years is an eternity!

As to why your questions have never appeared, just compare the number of questions we have space to answer in this column with the 5,000 plus pieces of mail we receive each month, and you'll have your answer On the other hand, here you are in Game-Grams, so there must be hope! Enjoy your free cartridge!

-Editor

Attention, Centipede smashers! We have the results of the bug-blasting Atari Club Centipede Contest which appeared in the March/April issue. There were dozens of entries tied at the top score of 683 points. Out of these, we drew our first prize winner-Joe

LET US HEAR FROM YOU, CLUB MEMBERS

Send your questions and comments about Atari games to Editor, **Atari Age**, 1700 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103. If we print your letters in the magazine, we'll send you an Atari Game Program cartridge of your choice.

H. Lucius of Inola, OK. His winning sequence: G,L,M,C,D,E,A,H,N,F. His prize: an Atari 1200 Home Computer. Nice shooting, Joe! Second prize of 10 game cartridges goes to Chris Raess of Mt. Prospect, IL. The rest of the winners will be notified individually by mail.



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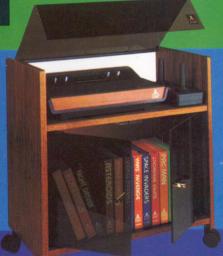
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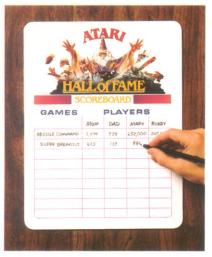
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Critics' Choice

We're introducing an exciting new feature in this issue of Atari Age "Critics' Choice." We will choose one of the best cartridges from the Atari game library, reprint the comments made by independent magazine reviewers, and offer Club Members the selected cartridge at a very special price for a limited time only.

Our first Critics' Choice cartridge is Berzerk. Originally released in Fall '82, Berzerk is a wonderful recreation of an all-time arcade classic.

The game is a space-age shoot-out on the distant planet Mazeon. You are a prisoner, trapped in a maze where the walls are deadly to touch. Grim robots hunt you relentlessly. You must pulverize them with your laser gun before they eliminate you with theirs. And there's even more danger in the form of Evil Otto, who looks like a bouncing smiling face, but attacks without mercy, and kills on contact!

Electronic Games Magazine

1983 ARCADE AWARDS—Certificate of Merit Winner "It was a happy day for gamers when Atari announced it was bringing Stern's Berzerk to the home screen. But that joy was nothing compared to the glee with which arcaders greeted the actual arrival of this flicker-free maze shoot-out.



"This is by far the most faithful translation of a popular arcade game for the VCS."

Joystik Magazine

****(FOUR-STAR "GREAT" RATING) "An excellent adaptation of a classic arcade game...a winner."

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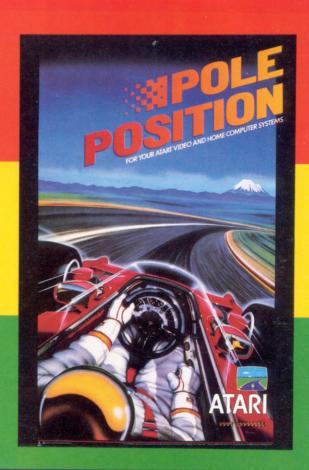
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"SEND US YOUR FACE"

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What! Oh, the sweepstakes? Sorry, I got carried away... guess I've been spending too much time with our friends at DC Comics. But I was explaining this issue's sweepstakes. You see, we are going to make three Atari Club members famous by including them in a real DC comic book! All you have to do to enter is send us a clear photograph of yourself. It can be any size, in color or black and white. Sorry, none of your photos can be returned.

On October 15, 1983, your own true editor will grab three envelopes from all those received by September 30, rip those entries open and, as long as the photos contained therein are clear enough to work from, personally deliver them to the merry crew at DC Comics. The DC gang will draw our winners into a future issue of the Atari Force comic book—they'll be famous! And to



help them answer all the fan mail they'll get, we'll toss in the Atari Writing System—that includes a brand new Atari 600XL computer, the Atari 1027 Letter Quality Printer, and the AtariWriter word processing system. Not only that, but we'll frame the panels of original artwork depicting our winners and give each of them one to keep!

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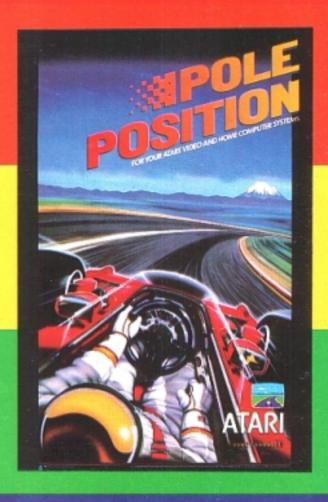
be received by September 30, 1983. Winners will be selected in random drawings conducted by the Editor of Atari Age whose decisions are final, All prizes will be awarded. Only one prize per family. There are no prize substitutions permitted, nor are the prizes transferable. Taxes on prizes are the sole responsibility of winners. Odds of winning depend on the number of entries received. Prize winners will be required to sign an affidavit of eligibility and release which must be returned within five (5) days after being notified of winning. Winners, by submitting their photos, hereby grant permission to Atari, Inc. and Atari Age and DC Comics to use their name, city and state and/or photograph for publication in connection with this sweepstakes and similar promotions without additional compensation. Additionally, Atari, Inc. and D.C. Comics, Inc. reserve the right to reproduce in whatever manner they see fit the likeness of any entrant in this sweepstakes without restriction. All photographs become the property of Atari Age and none will be returned.

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3. Winners will be selected in random drawings conducted by the Editor of Atari Age whose decisions are final. All prizes will be awarded. Only one prize per family. There are no prize substitutions permitted, nor are the prizes transferable. Taxes on prizes are the sole responsibility of winners. Odds of winning depend on the number of entries received. Prize winners will be required to sign an affidavit of eligibility and release which must be returned within five (5) days after being notified of winning. Winners, by submitting their photos, hereby grant permission to Atari, Inc. and Atari Age and DC Comics to use their name, city and state and/or photograph for publication in connection with this sweepstakes and similar promotions without additional compensation. Additionally, Atari, Inc. and D.C. Comics, Inc. reserve the right to reproduce in whatever manner they see fit the likeness of any entrant in this sweepstakes without restriction. All photographs become the property of *Atari Age* and none will be returned.

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5. For a list of winners, send a stamped self-addressed envelope to Winners List, The Atari Club, 1700 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103. Also, the results will be published in the January/February 1984 issue of Atari-



STARWARS.

You knew it was here, somehow—you felt the tremors in the FORCE. And now, from the Atari galaxy, the most exciting coin video game of the year has arrived—STAR WARSI

Grasp the custom controller with both hands and fly off into a lifeand-death battle with the forces of the EMPIRE.

First you must fight DARTH VADER and his legion of TIE-FIGHTER pilots in a laser-charged battle above the threatening DEATH STAR.

Survive this onslaught and you swoop down to the

DEATH STAR surface, darting between laser towers and bunkers, trying to knock out as many tower tops as possible. Then it's into the trench, in a thrilling reenactment of LUKE SKYWALKER's climatic race to bomb the DEATH STAR's single weak point.

The graphics in **Star Wars** are incredible—bright color Quadrascan images which move in perfect perspective as you soar over, under, around and through fighter-to-fighter combat and the armaments of the DEATH STAR itself.

And the voices! Atan has used the most advanced sound synthesis chip technology to perfectly recreate the voices of the movie. You'll hear Luke say, "R-2, try and increase the powerl" as you careen through the trench. The voice of DARTH VADER menaces — "I'm on the leader." Finally, as the DEATH STAR blows up in a kaleidoscopically colored explosion. OBI WAN KENOBI reminds you that "THE FORCE will be with vou...always." It better be — there are new, even harder DEATH STARS to conquer as you make your way toward JEDI mastery in Atari's extraordinary STAR WARS coin video game.



Rrabian

Atari has taken a page from the 1001 Tales of the Arabian Nights for this new coin video game. In fact, they've taken four entire chapters — four different exciting episodes to challenge a fastrunning, kicking and jumping little prince in

Evil genies in brass jugs, swooping roc birds, and purple ghostlike creatures called "oscars" threaten the Arabian on every page of the story. He begins his journey at the bottom of a ship, trying to climb to the top of the mast while collecting jugs and evading his foes. Reach the

top and the page turns — now you must crawl through a cave loaded with danger. Survive the cave and the page turns again — you must scale the walls of a castle by leaping from flying carpet to flying carpet.

Survive that challenge and you reach Page 4—your Princess beckons from high in a tower, and you must ride flying carpets and climb ropes to reach her. Succeed and you've won—the first round, that is. Now try it all again, with faster, angrier genies and more roc birds and oscars to block your progress.

COIN VIDEO RECORD UPDATE

No changes in the existing coin video records to report this time. However, we do have an official high score for one of Atari's newest games to announce. On **Food Fight**, 20-year-old Perry Rodgers scored 4,474,200 points in just 40 minutes. It happened on May 12, 1983 at Martini's Family Fun Fair, San Luis Obispo, CA.



First it was a computer game. Then it became a home video game. And now...it's a comic book! But it's much more than an ordinary comic, as the illustrations on these pages testify. Writer Elliot S. Maggin and artist Jose Luis Garcia Lopez have taken the gameplay of

Star Raiders and expanded it into a deluxe 62-page epic, full of action, adventure, and breathtaking graphics.

Allow us to introduce the team of Tommy Hardtack (the one with the eyepatch) and Jed Poole (above), a pair of lonesome rebels in



search of recruits to battle the evil Zylon menace. They meet Ezekial Vicker (left), an ancient survivor who, aided by an army of loyal Hukkas, uncovers a way to destroy the insectoid Zylons (right)—even though Zylons can regenerate themselves when they're destroyed!





Though the strength of even a single Zylon far surpasses any mortal, Tommy and Jed finally manage to dispatch their foe by using Ezekial's unique strategy (above).

Now charged with a new sense of purpose, the two comrades soar off in search of new recruits—only to find the most ragtag crew imaginable (right).

With only a bedraggled handful against the mighty Zylon empire (below), the odds are definitely <u>not</u> in their favor. But our rebels have a secret weapon—in fact, a weapon so secret even they aren't sure what it is.

We can't tell you what happens during the climactic conclusion of **Star Raiders**—you'll have to find out for yourself in the pages of DC Comic's graphic novel. But we promise that once you read it, you'll never forget it.



TELLYOUR FRIENDS-



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Membership in The Atari Club means inside information about Atari video games—all the details on hot new releases, and "Sneak Peeks" at upcoming games and systems months before they're released.

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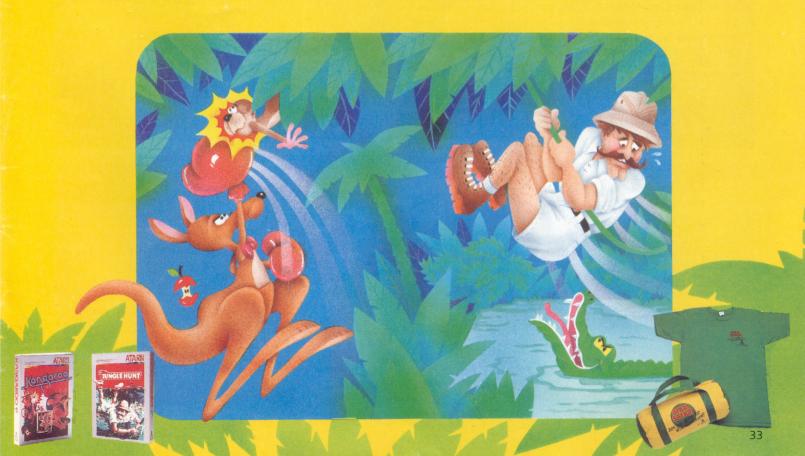
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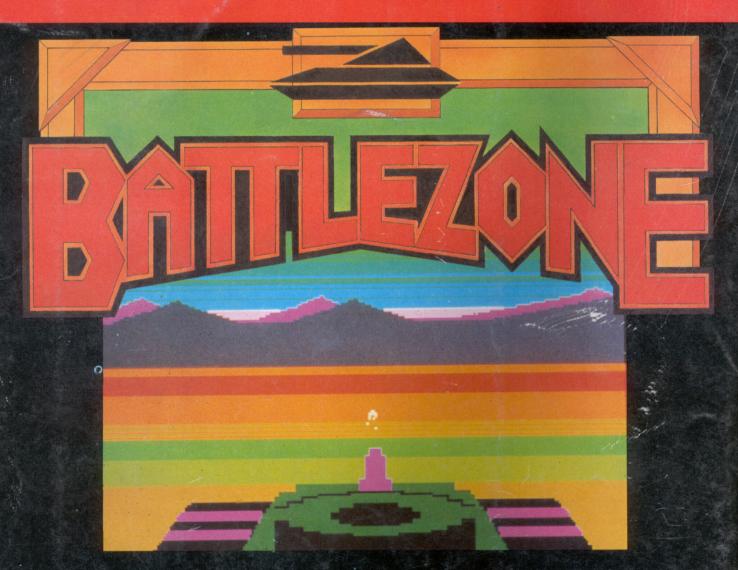


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approach. It's a Supertank, and he's got you in his sights! You fire quickly, then race to the right to avoid his shot. Suddenly the radar screen is lit up with dots — Tanks, Supertanks, and Flying Saucers to challenge your skill. And what's that low buzzing sound? It's a Fighter, zig-zagging towards you at incredible speed!

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