

# ACE

■ ST ■ AMIGA ■ C64 ■  
GPC ■ SPECTRUM ■ PC  
■ NINTENDO ■ SEGA ■

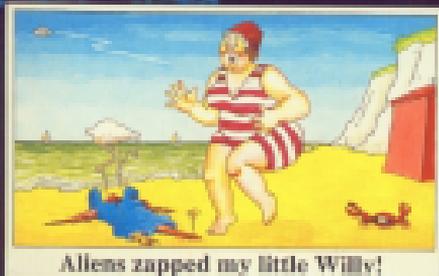
## HYPER ISSUE!

Fast-filled issues of Hypermedia  
- it's games revolution in the making

### ADVANCED COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

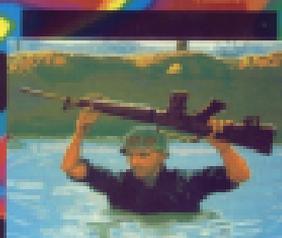
**EXCLUSIVE** Blockbusting  
CDI Bat-Fantasy  
from New York

**EGADS:**  
Britain's first hypergame  
generator in action



Allens zapped my little Willy!

Classic shoot-em-up blarls from the past,  
present, and far future



#### THE LOST PATROL

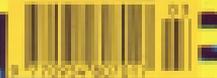
Ocean storm the  
jungles of Vietnam;  
plus all the latest  
releases captured and  
interrogated



#### HYPERGUIDE:

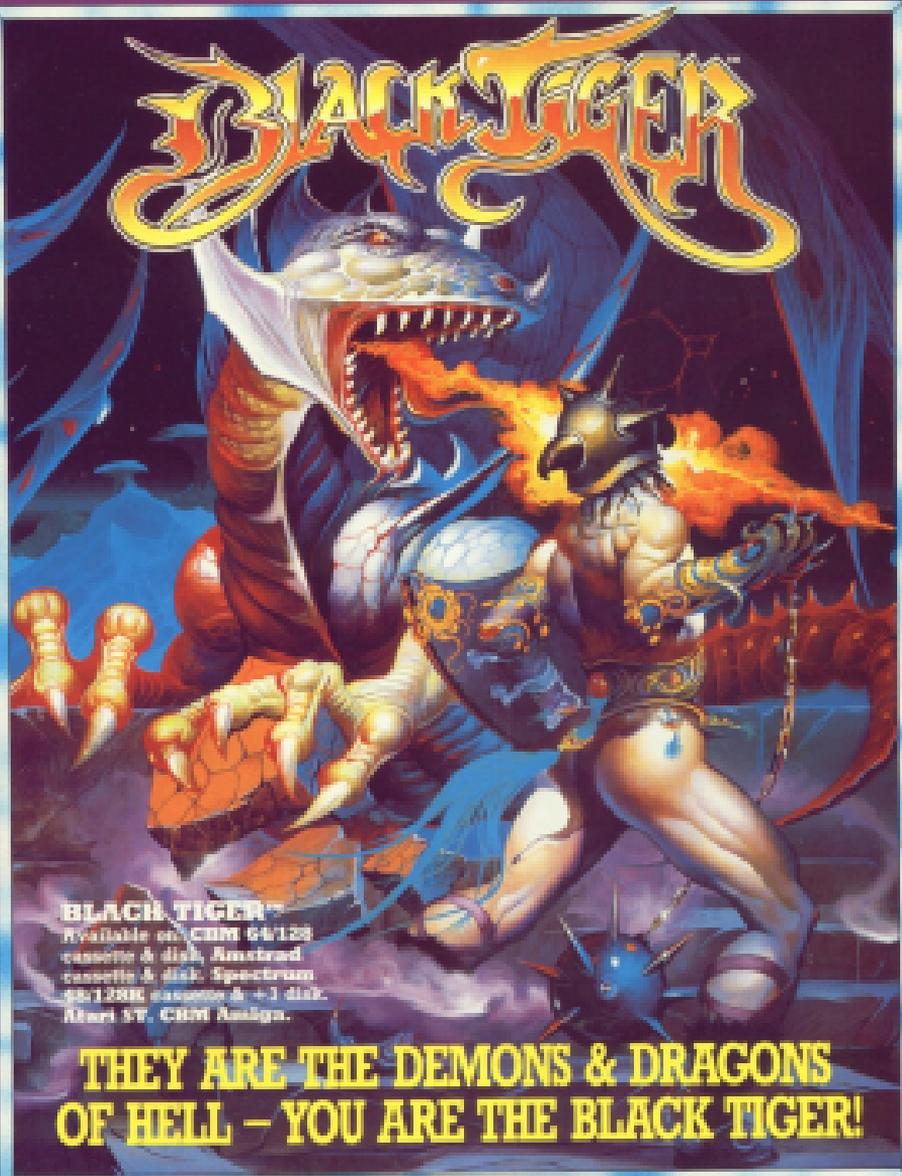
Hypermedia, Hypergames, Hyper-  
confused, Hyperexplained

# REPORTS



# MASTERS OF THE ARCADE

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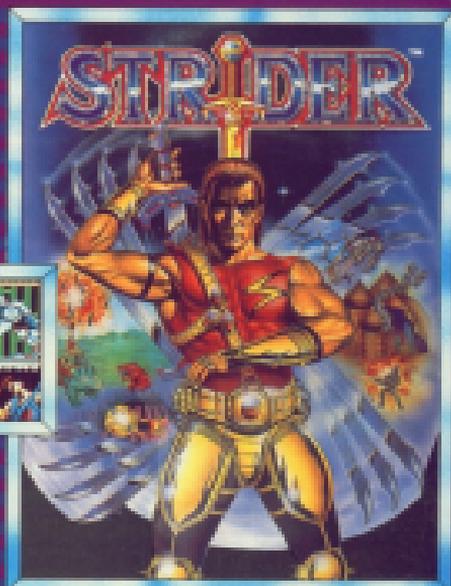
**THEY ARE THE DEMONS & DRAGONS  
OF HELL - YOU ARE THE BLACK TIGER!**

# ARCADE CHALLENGE!

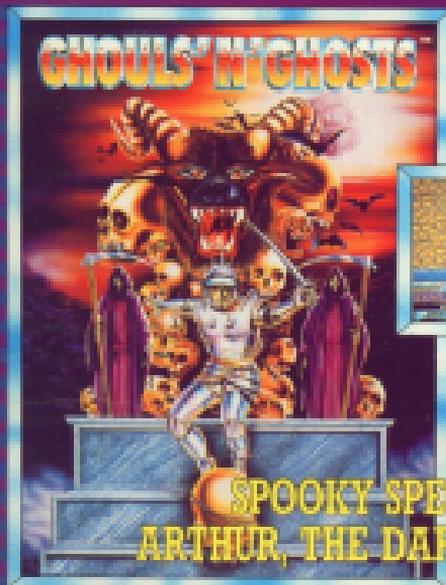
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# 31



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## SPECIALS

### CD-I BATTLEFANTASY.....34

Papa Momo, New York cartoonist, contributor to Heavy Metal and Thunder Cats (among many others), is designing the ultimate interactive comic experience.



### VIETNAMAHIA.....28

Not content with Vietnam, Ocean are now storming into Vietnam with The Lost Patrol. ACE followed them into the jungle.

### ACES HIGH.....17

ACE's undercover agent infiltrated the CES Show in Las Vegas and returned with a shocking exposé of 'tech-gone', featuring tomorrow's technology from today's international developers.

### BLASTS FROM THE PAST.....87

ACE meets the first ever end-of-level handy in the exclusive guide to shoot-em-up history.



Dragon...blast up to a score level of about one up and a long, long way from level one.

### FLASHBACK.....71

The decade that created computer entertainment draws to an end as we present the final episode of the greatest story ever told.

### MICRO-PRATCHETT.....28

We're absolutely no excuse for putting Terry Pratchett in the magazine, except he makes us laugh, writes great books (Colour of Magic, Discworld series...), and...er...uses a computer.

### MEET THE MAESTROS.....81

The ACE Conferences could change your whole attitude towards games, but only if you turn up.

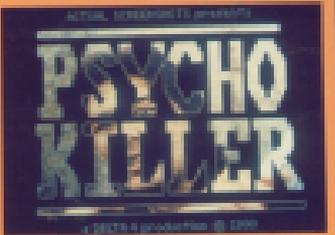
## GAMES BUSTING

This month's no-holds-barred reviews include the surprisingly good Pro Tennis from Ubisoft and the surprisingly disappointing Stanley Davidson from Mindscape. And we've introduced the new 1992's PRO technology to make ACE's reviews pages look even better than ever.

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## HYPER HORROR!

Fergus McNeill used to struggle with The Quill to produce homebrew text and graphic adventures, now he forges through woods with a video camera and a flagger, creating scenes for his first hypergame PsychoKiller, programmed using ORL's DASH generation. Find out more on page 15 and pages 84-87.



# WIN A VCR

To celebrate the launch of The Lost Patrol, Ocean are giving away a free

# APOCALYPSE NOW...

*It's started. Games-programming technology is reaching critical mass. The Big Software Meltdown is about to begin...It's all to do with the development of hypermedia and its games derivative: the hypergame.*

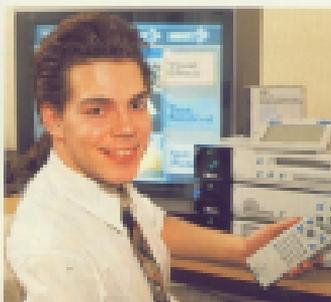
*You've already read about Cosmic Osmo in ACE. Now you can check out:*

- **Pepe Moreno, the New Yorker whose interactive comic is living proof of his claim that digital data is the entertainment medium of the future.**
- **The theories and facts behind hypermedia, CD-I, DVI, buttons, and much more in the ACE Hyperguide**
- **The beginnings of the UK software revolution: which companies are leading the race to develop new games technologies? And if that's not enough, just wait till next month, when we bring you exclusive location reports direct from the USA in a bumper American issue.**

## HYPER ISSUE!

### HYPERCONFUSED?.....57

Somewhere, someone is pouring millions of dollars into the development of games that will soon take over the world. Find out why, what, where, and when...



Alastair North (second) presenting the development of CD-I entertainment at Computer Entertainment. His workstation is a Philips CD-I with an enhanced 486-based PC.

### HYPER-DEVELOPED.....10

A quick peek at two new multimedia entertainments: Virgin McNeil's *Psychokiller* and Connect Software's *Calculus Book of Records*. We reckon these products are the spearhead of a revolution in entertainment software technology.

### GIVE US A CLUE.....61

You don't have to be a big boy to have it up. UKL are developing Britain's first ever hypergames generator.



## GAMEPLAY

### SCREENTEST.....32

Is *Scrapyard*'s worthy successor to *Jack and Isaac*? Does *Harley Davidson* rattle and buzz? Get the lowdown on all the latest games, plus the new PC Game design, and find out why we still aren't reviewing *Midwinter*...

### TRADE SECRETS.....54

If you've got *Chase PG*, get your foot down and feed for the first of ACE's in-depth profiles...

### BLOOD TRANSFUSION.....77

Maps, tips, poles and how to poke them - everything the mortally wounded ego needs to restore pride and high scores in today's toughest games.

### ACE NEW WORLDS.....83

Flaming Gary. Fat Remstarkey. Brave the RPG inferno of *Dragons of Flame*.

### TAKE COVER!.....9

Software houses open fire with news of new releases.

## REGULARS

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Lead ball *Doc* finally launches the superlative *Rain-Sea Islands*. *Hard Drivers* get extra tracks; plus all the latest whippersnappers from the world of advanced computer entertainment.

### LETTERS.....17

ACE readers open fire on a variety of topics.

### THE SUB CLUB.....82

Subscribers not only get a free issue, they receive a whole new range of benefits, including *InterACE* - an exclusive subscribers' newsletter.

### IN THE PINK.....91

The ACE Bookmarket: Britain's only games chart that goes by authoritative opinion, and not floppy sales; the ACE Crossword; the ACE Diary; in fact, a plethora of pleasures for your plebes.

## BAT-FANTASY!

Many thanks to DC Comics for helping us arrange our interview with Pepe Moreno in the US. *Batman: Digital Justice*, the comic, will be available in the UK in February; the Macintosh CD-ROM version should be out later this year. The CD-I version needs a suitable hardware platform to perform: watch this space!

All Britain's yours © DC Comics  
1993

# OCEAN GET IT TAPED - P31

VCR - AND a great collection of 'Nam movies. Grab a pen and get yourself into the jungle.



# ACE NEWS

PLAY BATMAN ON CDI, WORK FOR ACE, OR HELP DESIGN A GAME...

## BATMAN ON CDI

An ACE exclusive by Rick Haynes in New York



Batman Digital Justice © 1993 DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved

Warner Bros. and Sony are currently negotiating a deal to produce DC Comics' - a subsidiary of Warner Bros. - new cyberpunk Batman Digital Justice comic on CDi. The agreement may also include other Warner Bros. CDi projects in the future, which could be in-line with Prince music, Clint Eastwood Dirty Harry movies or Time magazine - all of which are a part of the giant Warner Bros. corporation.

The completely computer-generated Batman Digital Justice comic book is available in the stores later this month, and its smaller Paper Mayo is currently working on an interactive CD-ROM version for the Macintosh and PC. However, these hyperactive versions will use the same data as their paper parent. Morio explained to ACE: "It's all digital data, and digital data is very easy to manipulate. Digital is the art medium of the future."

ACE visited Paper Mayo's at his Manhattan studio in New York for an exclusive interview with the person who "helps the future of corporations", the creator of the world's first hypercomic - the article starts on page 25. For a full explanation of CDi and hypermedia turn to page 57.

## AT THE END OF THE RAINBOW...

Ocean is releasing the home versions of the fantastic Rainbow Islands later this month on all major home formats.

This 194-rated sequel to Bubble Bobble was written by Graefghel for Microzone last year - the ST version was released back in ACE 24. Unfortunately for Microzone the original deal with Taito fell through and it was unable to release its excellent share conversion.

Now Ocean has signed an agreement with Taito securing the home computer rights to the game, and has bought Graefghel's Rainbow Islands computer code from Microzone for an undisclosed sum (rumored to be in the region of £30000).



Bubble Bobble for another year of glory

## ACE NEEDS YOU!

How would you like to experience the thrills and spills of working on ACE under the Project Talent job-placement scheme? We're looking for a talented, enthusiastic and friendly young person to help us in all areas of magazine production, from advertisement to promotion. The ideal candidate will be able to learn quickly, work under their own initiative and under pressure, and possess an in-depth knowledge of Advanced Computer Entertainment. Get writing to: ACE PROJECT TALENT, Priory Court, 50-52 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

## SEGA SURPRISES

Sega has launched two new controllers for its Master Blat console. The Handle Controller is a multi-black two-handed deck with



Get a handle on Sega's new joystick



Assault City on Super Wonder



Super Wonder gets practice on the console disc



Super Wonder (right), Super ST in a game on the first Windows master rapid fire controller for £29.95. The £19.95 3D Commander is an upgrade for the normal control pad with an added rapid stick. Sega Master owners can also look forward to three new games: Assault City, Shocked, AC Grand Prix later this month.

## SYMBOLICS SIZZLERS

The ACE assistant - which doubles up as Rick's desk for all but the day we go to press - recently had the pleasure of receiving a stunning briefcase from Symbolics. This company provides professional 2D-3D graphic animation systems to the likes of TV and advertising companies. So just feast your eyes on what its systems can produce...



## GOTTA VIDEO, WANNA CONSOLE?

Activision's *Golden Axe*, the video mag series, is releasing a \$9.99 4-in-1 video box-set to compete with the Nintendo NES, Nintendo Game Boy, Sega Master System, Sega MegaDrive, PC Engine, Atari and Atari Lynx gamebooks.

## ACE IN USA

• Check out page 18 for a full report on the 2D Winter CES show in Las Vegas.

• Sega is rumored to be working on a handheld console in direct response to the phenomenally successful Nintendo Game Boy, the re-animated Atari Lynx and



Golden Axe on the Sega 32X console.

the just-announced NEC portable PC Engine handheld console. The Sega console could have a wealth of excellent Sega coinops converted to it immediately like *Out Run*, *Space Harrier*, *Power R&R*, *Afterburner* and *Golden Force*. No price or release details are currently available.

• Atari Corp. and Atari Games, the console and coinop companies that split in 1984 when Warner Bros. sold Atari Corp. to Jack Tramiel, have got back together in a deal to convert Atari Games' Tengen coinop titles to Atari Corp.'s Lynx handheld color console. Confused? You shouldn't be, what this boils down to is that company Lynx conversions of *Hard Drive*, *S&B's Runner* and *Cyberball*. Other possible conversions could include a regular 'home' set of coinop classics: *Gauntlet*, *Final Masters*, *Star Wars*, *Empire Strikes Back*, *Return of the Jedi*, *Inland Jones* and the



Windows on the Windows 95 desktop of the PC.

## ACE ON THE TUBE



A strong retail package in design: *Ace on the Tube*.

On a team writer's day, Steve and I'll head out for Putney to visit the domain of Denmark — and the local *Wayz* restaurant...

Denmark has a string of new multi-format releases. Out over the next few months, *Kill*, *Cyberball* from the Planet of the Robot Monsters, *Cyberball*, *Hard Drive*, *Extra Tractor*, *The Day After Loved Me*, *Wings of Fury* and *Castle Master*.

Featured in the ATI show report on page 64, *Kill* is Tengen's latest console release, a pseudo-3D television 'to-tele' game. The interesting aspect to this Denmark release is that it's the first time a console developer has licensed over a coinop conversion to a software company, six months prior to the console general release. Thus the coin-op and computer versions can go on simultaneous release.

A Danish spokesman on his ACE 1.1 disk set down the level of cooperation between us and Tengen. Other Tengen titles coming out soon are *Cyberball*, a Japanese 7-in-1 console version of the American bestsell played by giant robots 200 hit by left side — and *Escape from the Planet of the Robot Monsters*, a *Benzo* inspired arcade adventure with the latest *Shovel* *Blade* updates we've ever seen!

Also on the Tengen label will be the imminent release of the PC and Archimedes conversions of *Hard Drive*. Denmark is also bringing out *Extra Tractor* for the 32-bit version of *Hard Drive*, as



2-D-Ace, the video game book and digital book, never killing... (caption partially obscured)



Escape from the Planet of the Robot Monsters, using Atari.



...and on the Japanese.

price has yet been set but they're likely to be in the region of £10-£12.

Following is the Denmark initiative of James OST 2000 computer games, early summer will see the microcomputers of the *Day After Loved Me* movie. The multi-stage arcade game approach will probably be used again.

Set in the Pacific War during 1944, *Wings of Fury* is the new Broderbund game from the States. You pilot an aircraft carrier-based *Yellow* fighter bomber on a mission to knock out Japanese island installations in the surrounding 'neutral' is-

game play consists of the normal horizontally-scrolling, shoot-'em-up formula enhanced by the novel approach of switching between longshot and closeup views of the action.

Denmark is set to release other Broderbund games during the first half of '90, and following the success of the *Fastlane* *Arnie* graphics package (reviewed in ACE 27), the company also has plans to launch more titles in the future.

Last, but by no means least, comes the first game from the Denmark/Activision deal featured in last month's news pages. *Castle Master*, a recent incentive epic 'free-ranging' arcade super adventure, now incorporating 3D solid polygons to spice up the logical thinking.

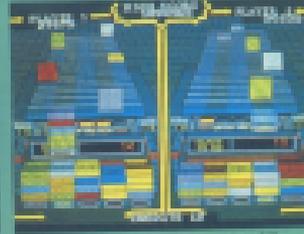
All these Denmark games will be out for the Spectrum, C&A, CPC, ST, Amiga and PC in the near future.



Spectrum updated on 1990 parallel.



Below: See Tractor in design: *Wings of Fury*.



Based on Atari action for the console versions of ACE.



Electronic Game & Watch systems from Micro Games USA

Temple of Doom, Super Sprint, Indicators, X-Men, APB, Road Runner, Escape from the Planet of the Robot Monsters, and Rolling Thunder.

• **Blaze Demos** is a fast-looking VGA PC graphic cyber-adventure set in the year 2010 from Access 'Leadboard' Software. It's also available for the C64.

• **Saga** has just converted its Saturn Ace backintosh comic into the Hot Games Magazine comic.

• **Tekla** has brought out from Simulation's ShogunGate Macintosh roleplaying game on the Nintendo NES console.

• **Double Dragon** is being developed for the Nintendo Game Boy handheld console by Tradewest.

• **Tengen** has released Rolling Thunder, Indicators and Road Runner coin-op conversions on the Nintendo NES.

• If you buy a pack of 30 Gary 3.5" floppy disks you get a free "interactive demo" of ACE's Monday Night Football software game.

• **Data East** is releasing EA's popular Battle Chess on the Nintendo NES.

• The award for worstest game title in America at the moment must surely be a toss-up between Hudson Soft's Princess Tomato in the Salad Kingdom and Namco's The Rugs Bunny Birthday Blowout.

• **Artisan** is bringing out Marble Beach Volleyball on the Nintendo Game Boy.

• **Micro Games USA** has launched a range of Game & Watch decks based on some popular NES games like Super Mario Bros., Donkey Kong Jr. and Tetris.

• **DSG Imagesoft** is developing Dragon's Lair for the Nintendo NES.

# ACE PREVIEWS

A preview in ACE is more than just a screenshot and a caption: we actually get our hands on the games as they're being developed...

The Amiga has a max. of 255, and an average of only 60.

## ESOTERROR



Ian Harting, the designer of Ocean's Last Patrol (take a look at page 28 for a review preview), is also working on a fantasy shoot-em-up called Esoterror. Some very stunning graphics are supplemented by a spell-driven version of Space Harrier. Harting is still working on the crucial graphics portions of the game and would love to have your comments and suggestions, write to Ian Harting, A. Aberdeen Road, Redland, Bristol BS16 6HS.



Esoterror's colorful conversion of Space Harrier's Spiritix on the ST

Red Hill is the 21-year-old programmer of the ST and Amiga versions of Scramble Spirits at Teos software development outfit. He originally started out writing boring 'C' programs for log 60 mainframes, but was made redundant last year. The ST version took him three months to develop, Amiga Scramble Spirits took five days! Although Hill immediately mentions the fact that everything - disk loader, key-board/joystick/mouse reader, text writer, ST program logic, etc. - was already "in place", all that needed to be rewritten were some of the graphics and sound routines. The Amiga version runs a lot faster than its ST counterpart - 25 frames a second as opposed to 17. This was accomplished through the use of the Amiga's better in the sprite routines. The original coin-op version of Scramble Spirits had a max. res. of 600x400 pixels on-screen.



## BLASTS FROM THE PAST

What happened in the bygone months of March...

**1982**

• **128 x 64** says your IBM 80 Model 1 arrives in ACE characters.

**1983**

• **Big Game** is set up to produce games for the Spectrum, C64, BBC, Am-586, VCS, Dragon, One and Texas TRN/4A.

• **Crown** signs up **Mega World** (Matsuda, Warner) to appear in ads for its printers and PR portable computer.

**2004**

• **Samurai** signs a deal with **Clive Sinclair** to assemble and distribute the ZX81 in South Korea.

**2005**

• **Fronted** releases a \$2.99 Spectrum compilation tape of the five worst computer games ever written - called Don't Buy This.

**2006**

• **Adman** buys adventure developer, **Invision**, for \$7.5 million.

• The first batch of **Freedom's Edge** on the CPC contains a bug which makes the game unplayable.

**1987**

• The **Harbor Fair** in West Germany sees the launch of the Commodore Amiga A500 and 2000, Apple Macintosh II and SE, and the Cambridge Computers' 386 laptop computer.

• **Thalonia** releases C64 Delta Shoot'em-up with superlative Rob Hubbard soundtrack and interactive music loader.

**1988**

• ACE runs a competition to edit the magazine for the day, and somebody actually applied!

**1989**

• ACE exclusively reveals the **Rock** console.

• Games developer **Bulldog** admit to using **Lego** to design the game world in **Papalou**.



# HY-PERFORMANCE

AGE CHECKS OUT TWO PIONEERING HYPERGAME DEVELOPERS

Could the games programmer soon be a thing of the past? ACE meets two development teams who believe that in the future games will be coded by designers, using powerful hypermedia engines instead of machine code and assembler routines.

**F**ergus McNeil is a name that may ring a few bells. Back in the days when people still played text adventures, Fergus was one of the few game designers to make maximum use of The Quill adventure generator, producing games like *The Buggy*, *Planet of the Shrikes*, and *Planet of the Rings*.

Now he's working on *Psychokiller*—

Britain's second hypergame (the first in the shop will be *Demals* with the Quill from OCL—see pages 51,52). The game has been created using the same software development system (EGADS) as *Demals*, but Fergus faced a far greater challenge. The scenario for the OIL game was already in existence; Fergus had to create his own.

The isn't as simple as it sounds. First, you're faced with similar problems to a film director. Visual material has to be recorded, digitized, and edited into sequences within the game. This involves location shooting, expense, and considerable hassle.

Then you have to change

roles and become a sound engineer. For the true multimedia experience, you've got to assemble your visual data into digitized, in-line sound. Finally, you take on the role of systems programmer and use EGADS to knit all the parts together.

Of course, all that amounts to start with you were creating your script development kit, storyboarding the whole game. Easy, eh?

No, it's not easy, says Fergus, but the system EGADS is good and the potential is enormous. For a big time role, you could have been tailored towards pre-defined limited products, but EGADS is limitless. That's the upside. The down side is that being given so much freedom can be frightening at first—but challenging at the same time.

Systems like this are also very easy to use. It only takes you ten minutes to learn—but when it

comes to designing up the best ways to use the system's potential, the whole process becomes very challenging.

## IT'S A RECORD

Ryder Scott, software developer at Pergamon Compact Solutions (PCS)—the Guinness panel and designer of the Guinness Book of Records project, feels much the same way about the new system.

"You ain't seen nothing yet," he asserts. "But the trouble is we don't know what you are going to see! Whatever happens, however, we're going to have to rethink from scratch our ideas about computer entertainment."

All this is a high price to catch on, the implications of hypermedia for games development are beginning to sink in. Stand by for hyperactivity...

## PSYCHO KILLER

*Psychokiller* is designed to be a real-time horror. In a John Carpenter type of game, with slight touches of Hammer, explains Fergus. "But we break down in the middle of monsters and a series of sinister happenings lead to the appearance of a psychotic killer."



Due to a shortage of staff in the testing department, the psychotic killer actually bears an uncanny resemblance to a digitized Fergus McNeil. The game is still under development, but will feature around 100 digitized screens together with numerous digitized sound clips.

One thing that's missing is animation, since that is yet to be incorporated in the EGADS system. As soon as it is, Fergus hopes to attempt a fully animated hypergame, using "holovision" techniques for the movement. Originally used in the Lords of the Rings animated film, this involves digitizing live subjects who are then painted over.

## GUINNESS IS GOOD FOR YOU



Microsoft. Now there's a familiar name, bringing total memories of some superb US-licensed products, including *Defender of the Crown*, *Ole*, *Dungeon Master* and *Imageworx*. Simon G. What isn't quite so well-known is that Microsoft share offices with a company called Pergamon Compact Solutions. And they've recently announced the establishment of a new multimedia development laboratory following a \$5m investment from Microsoft into PCS. This could be the most significant news for UK gamers this year.

Basically, it means that for the first time a UK software company with game expertise will have access to CD-ROM and CD-I expertise 'in-house'. PCS have already conceived many game-relevant techniques in their interactive version of the Guinness Book of Records. According to Microsoft boss Jim McKeon, the decision to head for CD technology was "...very similar to the decision we took four years ago to concentrate on 16-bit software."

It was a huge risk at the time, but it has paid off. "We're making the same decision now to build up our multimedia skills."

Will be bringing you regular updates on the emergent technology, and its implications for games, during the coming year.



Jim McKeon and Alanah Brewster, co-owners of PCS, bringing the future of games software.

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ATARI ST



C64



SPECTRUM



AMIGA

#### AMIGA

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### ACE CONFERENCES

ACE will also be acting as a communications link between you, the readers, and software houses during 1990. We're setting up a series of ACE conferences in which readers will be given the opportunity to meet software houses, and talk to them about their games (and you don't have to be public either) on an informal basis. Lunch will be supplied and admission will be free to subscribers, who will also receive priority allocation — a valuable bonus since space at conferences will be strictly limited. Each event will be fully covered in the magazine, so you could get your mug in the mag as a bonus!

### INTERFACE

Subscribers will receive, completely free of charge, a special quarterly newsletter put together exclusively for them by the ACE Team. This will bring you details of some of the topics that we can't, for reasons of space or security, mention in the magazine itself. Subscribers will have the chance to contribute to it if they wish. With ACE every month, and INTERFACE every three months, you'll really be at the cutting edge of the computer entertainment revolution.

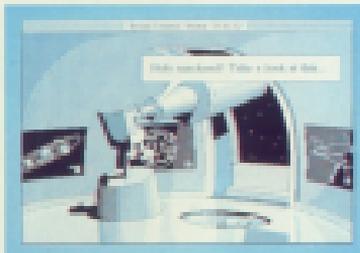
# THE ACE

Subscribe — and the ACE Team will plunge you into a maelstrom of discovery and excitement. Reporting direct from the heart of the entertainment industry, the ACE Team have ensured that their readers have been the FIRST to find out about many startling new developments in the games-playing world. Here's what you've been missing...

## THE TRAIL-BLAZING PAST

ACE was launched in 1989 by a small team of dedicated computer entertainment journalists. They wanted to produce a games magazine that would, for the first time, appeal to people who really took their games seriously and who, like the ACE Team, wanted to go beyond game reviews into the world of advanced entertainment technology.

One year later and the magazine was subtitled its rivals and being voted *Magazine of the Year*. In recent months, ACE has brought you exclusive coverage of:



**Hypergames:** the game style that began with *Masters of Magic* and *Comix*. Demo and its paving the way for CD-I entertainment — defined and described for the first time in ACE.

**The Flame Blenders:** the state-of-the-art games hardware that later became the heart of the Konix console revealed for the first time exclusively in ACE.

**Interactive Compact Disk Entertainment:** the Philips CD-I unit, previewed exclusively in ACE and due for release in the next few months at under £1000.

**Full Towers:** a 32-bit Japanese games machine with a built-in CD-ROM that carries a mean 486/Busmer conversion and a staggering technical specification.



# THE STORY

## pACE setting

One of ACE's prime goals over the next few years is to campaign for wider acceptance and coverage of computer entertainment. We've set up a broadcasting working party to take with TR and Paolo on behalf of our readers and we'll be keeping you updated on our progress throughout the year.

ACE will also be running a unique reader campaign in early 1990. If you've got a copy of the relevant issue, you'll be able to take part in the largest computer games publicity exercise ever: don't miss it! What's more, if you subscribe, you can take part in person at one of the ACE Conferences: join the Subscribers' Executive for more details....

**The ACE Challenge:** a £20,000 challenge to the hardware industry to give us a dedicated games machine which can deliver truly advanced computer entertainment. The list of the ACE Challenges will be giving us the full scoop at their second breaking news in the next issue of ACE.

**Interactive Video Tapes:** a new games standard in the UK that is turning video tape recorders into powerful interactive games systems....

...AND MUCH MUCH MORE....

## THE GLORIOUS FUTURE

**By subscribing to ACE,** you intend a great tradition of in-depth coverage of computer and electronic entertainment, from the latest coin-op blockbuster to hypergames and MIB music. Here are just some of the topics you'll be able to catch up on in forthcoming issues:

**Been in the USA:** an exclusive look at the latest state-of-the-art games software currently under development in the States for the new CD-I and SVI game systems.

**Beyond Paris:** an ACE exclusive report from the heart of Russia on Soviet computer entertainment.

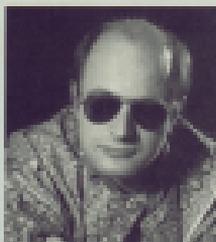
**Inside the Machine:** full technical details on the latest generation of intelligent coin-op consoles.

**Total War:** an in-depth examination of wargame psychology and the software, both established and under development, that could make this the fastest growing games area of 1990.

...plus a host of other exclusive, in-depth articles on the cutting edge of computer entertainment.

# New fACEs

Ever since ENAP bought ACE, we've been preparing for ACE's best ever year...



We've now got **Steve Cooke**, the original editor who, in conjunction with Pete Green, was responsible for the early success of the magazine. Pete will be supporting the magazine on a regular basis as a valued freelance consultant.

Steve knows the entertainment industry backwards. Not only was he one of the original Personal Computer Games team back in the early '80s, but he's also involved in script production for stage and film. His knowledge of these other industries will bring ACE readers exclusive highlights in the rapidly emerging world of CD-I and multi-media entertainment.

### Phil Haynes

Phil is ACE's deputy editor, and the man who really keeps his finger on the pulse of the computer games scene. He was previously the Features Editor for the weekly magazine *New Computer Express* and his background of investigative journalism will be bringing ACE readers the latest developments in entertainment technology every month, maintaining the magazine's excellent reputation for breaking the biggest stories first....



### Laurence Scotland

Laurence was chosen from over 150 highly qualified applicants (including many familiar names in the games business) because, as the new Reviews Editor, he demonstrated to us all that he was not only a highly experienced games player, but also a superb organiser. Each month, he'll be coordinating reviewers from around the country (and even from abroad), bringing you the authoritative reviews you expect from Britain's leading games magazine.



### Jim Willis

Now that we've got Jim as our Design Editor, we'll be ensuring each month that you not only get the best coverage, but that the design of the magazine also meets your demanding expectations. Jim's an expert in desktop publishing systems and is rapidly developing an individual style for the magazine using the latest state-of-the-art DTP technology. The new ACE is actually produced makes an interesting topic in itself: you'll be finding out more from Jim over the next few months as he lets you into some of his graphic secrets....



# WRITE TO REPLY

MORE THOUGHT PROVOKING FEEDBACK FROM ACE READERS

## OLD PILOTS NEVER DIE...

In response to Richard Harrison's letter in issue 26, I would just like to say that I also find that F-35 Central Fear is a rather tacky program with awkward controls, interceptor, although not fairly old, is a far superior game. It may not be such a realistic simulation, but it is much easier to play, with more accessible controls and a short, precise instruction manual which is easily comprehended. The sound in Interceptor is much better and the external views of the plane are a good function. I always have found Digital Integrations flight simulators a bit complex, even their first release, *Pilgrim Pilot* on the IBM machines. I am sure that there must be other ACE readers with a similar opinion, and that this is not just a merely case.

Robert Stevens, Truro

OK, for comments it would appear that we are beginning to identify two groups as far as flight sim fans are concerned: those who want a simulator to mimic the performance of the aircraft as closely as possible, and those who prefer a less realistic but possibly more accessible game, with additional features like auto-cockpit views. There is something to be said for both camps.

## ...THEY JUST PLAY FLIGHT SIMS!

Your reply to A.Turville's letter on commercial flight simulators (issue 26) was informed and incisive.

The problem as I see it is that those who see these programs as being have missed the approach by a few hundred thousand miles. The **fact** is that the art of flying any aircraft is seldom boring and certainly no game. Faced with a good simulation, which, not being a game, has no stated goal to be pursued, gamers do not have the foggiest idea what to do with it - hence it's boring!

I suggest that A.Turville should go for the Sub-logic simulator... the only simulator remotely near the real thing.

You are obviously unaware of Saboteur's forthcoming *Airline Transport Pilot* which will include Boeing 737, 747, 767 and Airbus A330.

Tony Green, Hyde

## ACE MACHINE

In keeping with the present trend of designing a mega computer, here is my design.

This computer is capable of:

- mega-efinite storage
- reconstituting in a very complex manner
- regurgitating itself
- making its own decisions
- moving to where it is needed most
- self repair
- regenerating itself
- working for several decades

What an amazing machine! But would be to design, although I am sure that very few people would profit from doing so.

David Fairweather, Blackburn

Well done - if you manage to get this off paper and into a book you'll be a made man. On the day it starts we guarantee that there will be no gaps in ACE, that IBM software will be affordable, and that the ad team will be good at **Kick Off!**

Thanks for your advice, which I'm sure will be of great interest to A.Turville and other readers. It would appear that the time is right for an in-depth look at available flight sims by a great journalist. So watch the pages of ACE in the near future for just that.

## REVIEWS REVIEWED

Here is a chart of your reviews in issue 26:

01 Never Mind Psychopats	Eugene Lacey	50%
02 The Intoxicatives	Dorian	
03 Laurence Scotland		50%
04 Daniel		
05 The Edge	Eugene Lacey	50%
06 Iron Lord	Michael	
07 Laurence Scotland		50%
08 A04	Rainbow Arts	
09 Eugene Lacey		50%
10 Indianapolis 500	Electronic Arts	
11 Laurence Scotland		50%
12 Contact	14-843	
13 Laurence Scotland		50%
14 Star Company	Loggins	
15 Eugene Lacey		75%
16 Operative Thunderbolt	Ocean	
17 Eugene Lacey		75%
18 Mechanism		

Activities

Bill Hayes

72%

Why can't you print more reviews as good as the Never Mind review and not like the pathetic *Beauty With Clap* one?

I would like to congratulate you on your art games special. I found it very interesting.

I agree with John Wood's letter issue 26 that each review should have two comments instead of one.

Garrod Blyth, Bath

P.O. Box 116

P.O.S. Anyone wanting to join the *Save the Blue Smartie* Foundation phone 128 and ask for Preston Blue Smartie Ltd.

Thanks for your contribution on-line - it's nice that a number of software houses will be quite pleased to use the letters typed for once. As regards the comments in reviews, see our reply to McIlwain's letter. We haven't entirely ruled out the possibility of trying this at some stage in the near future, however.

## COUPÉ CAUTION

Before I start I must congratulate you for producing the best computer magazine currently available. The many articles present a varied, interesting, and unbiased response. I am also glad to hear about the new features which are going to be featured soon.

But what I am writing about is

the SAM Coupé. By the time you receive this, I will probably have received my new Coupé, but after hearing about other people's concern for the Coupé I felt I must put pen to paper.

The SAM Coupé seems to be an excellent and awesome machine, but will it be fully exploited? Many companies have promised to support the Coupé, but will we be seeing software from the predominantly 16/32 bit software houses?

The 2Mbit memory should allow for larger and more complex programs to be converted to the Coupé, and it would be good to see high profile classes also converted.

Let's hope that you will engage and produce the Coupé's software. I will still buy ACE because of its superior, mature journalism and quality articles. I would be interested to hear your responses as I view your responses as good advice that I can trust.

Jason (Smalwood), Yorkshire

Thanks for your praise - we are glad you are enjoying the magazine so much. If you check out the pages this month you will see that some of our promised new features have already been implemented - more on the way.

I can understand your concern about the Coupé, but to be perfectly honest with you, it is

not really possible to predict exactly what the response to the machine will be like. The first thing to bear in mind is that the machine's Spectrum compatibility means that there are literally thousands of extremely good games already available for the machine, and many more being released each month.

Of course, if you wanted a Spectrum you would have bought one, and not a GAM. Software specifically written for the machine is not likely to be at its best (apart from MCI's own packages) for some time. Most computers will probably wait to see how sales of the machine take off before they commit themselves. When that software does appear it is more than likely going to consist of exciting Spectrum titles which have been ported so as to take advantage of the GAM's advanced features.

It shan't then, you haven't got yourself a white elephant, but you are probably going to have to be patient as far as software support is concerned.

## THE TEXT ADVENTURE IS DEAD...

Lawrence Scottford comments in the opening paragraph of his *Future Wars* review (issue 28, p.55) that "...the text adventure seems to have finally died a death...". The factored there is truth, I can just see the massed ranks of arcade-masters clanking 4½g around the office.

"See he goes on to cite Level 9 as an example of the death of adventures! Level 9 have from time to time spoken about their writing arcade games. Their moving away from the genre is for their own reasons, not simply because of the "death" of the text based adventures.

Magneto Scripts and interactive illustrations are found and shrouded above the graphics of *Future Wars*, and coupled with the text, create a much better atmosphere.

As simple, more sophisticated adventures? The joy of a first level adventure is finding out how an object works, not simply OPERATING it from a manual.

I'm sorry to Gelpina/Peace if it's appearing to be hard on *Future Wars*, but sure it is a fine game. What I'm protesting about is the feeling that computer software must gravitate towards the centre. I can only hope this letter will start a debate as to what kind of industry we want, whether we want a choice of games with their own peculiar flavours of style, or whether we wish to follow the dis-

# SHORT 'N' SWEET

A few of the best zany bits...

## Sprite Endorsements

Here are my specs for my ideal games machine... 2 Sprites, a ring and a spaceship.

Steven Hopkins, Leighton Buzzard

Could this, we wonder, be an oblique comment on the current state of games software?

## The man with no name

I'll tell you... the wireless one who said in the top ten ads last month, I was wondering... could you please put my name first month, as my friends don't believe it was me! Please...

Simon Howard, Cornwall

The date, oh wireless one!

## Twelve year old genius?

I call twelve, born on August 5th, and in my spare time use it for my new hobby which is Chessing, and have written a number of programs... But if twelve year olds have a use for brain...

Matthew Crocker, Kent

Oh... what? Shouldn't you be reading *New Scientist*? You do! Oh... oh!

## Probably the best reviewing system in the world

I've suddenly struck by a totally new idea for reviewing games... make, say, fifty copies of the latest releases. Then send these copies to unbiased and trustworthy people and get them to rate the game...

Matthew Kearney, Cornwall

And me! My unbiased and trustworthy people (some hapless, and you're off!

## Unity?

Doesn't the uniqueness of computers make one want to shove a chip up your nose and say "LEAVE ME ALONE IM A BORN AGAIN CRIP BUDDY" that is, one better but it passes the time!

Paul Taylor and Nevil the Egg, Merseyside

What on earth are you on about?

## The Big 33

...as we look ahead to a future filled with consoles and 32bit computers, I say "Well done everyone, in a great decade of computing, may the show go on!"

Mark Russell, Southampton

How, how?

line of "one style, one product, one culture".

## Marty's Westwood, Interactive Technology

"Firstly Marty, I think you do yourselves a slight disservice to imagine us leaving about the office celebrating the demise of the First Adventurers. My comments in the review were aimed at merely an observation - not as a personal expression of rage! I agree with your comments on the quality of text-based games: I have enjoyed many myself, but I also feel that games like *Future Wars* have opened up the genre to a far more people, what do other readers think?... Meanwhile here is a lament for Level 9:

## ...LONG LIVE THE TEXT ADVENTURE!

What a disaster! Level 9 is about to bury their much-praised text-adventures! Adventures with great plots are selling adventures! How about trying a different approach Level 9?

## Jay Lee, The Netherlands

Oh, we couldn't agree more. Having said that we anxiously await Level 9's future arcade offerings.

## SINGLE-SIDED BLUES

Don't you think it is time that consoles, other software companies or magazines, found out how many single-sided disk drives there are still being used on the 3C?

As the games get better and are taking up more disk space it is now leading to unacceptable levels of disk swapping.

Surely by now even these people with single drives have upgraded to a double drive.

If the software companies made their programs on double-sided disks they would save thousands of pounds on blank disks, and may be able to bring the price of the software down because of it.

I bought a copy of *Police Quest 1* and it had three double-sided disks in it and a note from Sierra asking the people with sin-

gle-sided drives to send for six single-sided disks - now doesn't that sound a better system.

P.Hall, Harrogate

I am sure that there are many, many ST owners who sympathise with your point. Almost every month we look at software which is saved by the amount of disk swapping that becomes necessary.

You might be very surprised, however, at the number of single-sided 3T's that are still in use. Remember that it costs at least £50 to upgrade an internal drive - and that is if you buy the cheapest available unit and fit it yourself!

Yes, Sierra's system is quite a good idea, but think how frustrating it would be for single-sided owners to have to do this every time they purchased a game.

Unfortunately there is no easy solution to the problem, as it looks like both camps will have to grin and bear it.

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# FALCON



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### THE F-16 FIGHTER SIMULATOR

We've taken the best in the original FALCON, added 3D, enhanced, and improved features to bring you our finest. FALCON now gives you beautiful 3-D enhanced graphic displays. The enemy AIGs you encounter are more intelligent and very skilled. And if that isn't enough, challenge another pilot in the head-to-head option via direct computer link.

Multiple skill levels, technically accurate head-up-display, actual flight characteristics, multiple views, multiple targets, block box flight recorder, and complete weapons system are just a few of the features that set FALCON above all other flight simulators. Due to the unsurpassed realism of FALCON it has been selected as the basis for a simulator for the military. Whether you are an experienced "top gun" or a novice pilot, FALCON is for you.

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# Red-hot Hell

- NEC SECRETLY UNVEIL NEW HAND-HELD PC ENGINE
- OPTICAL TECHNOLOGY POISED TO ARRIVE ON CONSUMER SCENE
- CONSOLES DOMINATE SHOW FLOOR
- COMMODORE SHOW NEW AMIGA BEHIND CLOSED DOORS



Imagine wandering around 18 aisles of vendors that's a mind-boggling 800,000 square feet surrounded by the usual and wonderful offerings of no less than 1,400 major exhibitors. It's hell, but, if you like it hot, hell is where you have to go.

What's Consumer Electronics? Pretty simple, if Decca will let it - it probably qualifies: Toys, Video, Audio, Cameras, Office Equipment, Keyboards...and Computer Software and Hardware. And it's big, BIG business - with total over the counter sales of about \$40 billion in 1989. That's a lot.

Of that, around \$2.6 billion was accounted for by the home video game industry. That sounds sure too hot until you realize that \$2.7 billion of that was generated by the Nintendo system alone. The balance of the figure is made up of Sega and Atari ROM based sales - with entertainment software on floppy for other systems coming in at around the \$100 million mark.

On the face of it, that's enough to send the average Advanced Computer Entertainment consumer heading straight for the exit bag - I mean, who the hell takes the bag standard Nintendo seriously as a state-of-the-art entertainment machine?

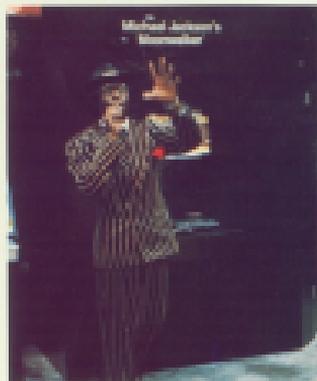
Judging by CES, everybody does. Nintendo drove home its dominance in this market by occupying almost half of the available space in the West Hall of the convention center, where all the entertainment software exhibits were housed, the next biggest stand being that from Sega, followed up by that from NEC, Hitachi, Sega, PC Engine/TurboGrafx. The message? ROM rules, or at least that's what it looks like for the immediate future. In the words of one of the MD of one UK software company "looking around here, you wouldn't think home computers existed!"

Does this mean we are all doomed to be playing Super Mario Bros III in years to come? Whatever hap-

At the dawn of the new decade, manufacturers from around the world gathered in Las Vegas to announce the latest, greatest, smallest, fastest, largest, noisiest goods for the technofreaks of the '90s. John Cook survived to bring you this report...

pened to innovation, technical excellence and bloody graphics and sound, you might ask? Well, the underlying message for those with their ears in the ground at CES was not so provocative as it might first appear.

The consensus is that optical disc technology - CD-Rom, etc - are going to revolutionize the home entertainment sector. But not just yet. The only home machine packing a CD right now is the TurboGrafx, but there are many others on the verge of release - the Philips CD-i system for starters, several MS-Dos systems aimed at the home market, plus the original Amiga with a built in CD Drive, unveiled by Commodore to selected developers (i.e. anyone who cared to turn up behind heavy closed doors).



Michael Jackson hits the stage.



Super Mario Bros. Pinball on the Nintendo shows off the power of the system as convincingly as the coin-up original and stands off Sega's increasing technical dominance of specialty pin games.

Give a feel that they still would maintain that machines such as these will not make a huge impact in the home market—with 500 MBites to stress around with, you can store a whole bunch of very nice graphics and CD quality sound that cannot fit, but impress Joe Pate's (below letter appears elsewhere in this issue).

#### INTENDED

Nintendo rules. OK? That was the message that was initially received here at the show. Nintendo estimates to have sold around 26 million NES machines (Nintendo Entertainment System) in the US in just over three years. It's at 37% of US households and intends to increase that figure to 27% by the end of 1990. The company is spending \$30 million in advertising in the first half of 1990 alone, to that end.

The NES is simply a phenomena, which with the incredible success of the Gameboy, might well become a self-perpetuating dynasty.

There was much new software for the Nintendo and it was generally agreed that the standard of programming and graphics had improved significantly over the past year. What disappointed many, however, was the lack of imagination displayed in the majority of the titles. How many variations on Super Mario and Contra can there be? The answer is...a lot.

There is more sophistication at the higher end of the Nintendo ROM market, however. Games such as

## PORTABLE ENGINE SHOCK

Behind the scenes, NEC was developing the big shock of the show: a hand-held version of the PC Engine.

In a private meeting with selected developers, the hand-held was revealed, in full working order. It undoubtedly blows away all competition presently around.

Full colour screen about three inches across. Two hand-held slots—about five inches. Full resolution screen—a true 400x240 display—which would connect to a portable TV with an internal tuner attachment. And the usual interesting news of all—fully compatible with existing PC Engine TurboGrafx software.

The downside? Battery life, at present only three hours. Price? No announcement—but you'd expect it to weigh in at well over \$200. Timing? No announcement of release date.

But there, it ends—and will be seeing the light out of Atari. It's also interesting to note that NEC are near the only videogame producers with a system that works in the arcade (there exists a JAMMA compatible board for the PC Engine), to be home-console and is also a hand-held.



Final Fantasy—an RPG with battery backed field in the cart, so you can save your game position. Undergate—is fit on 16-bit for ROM Software—has converted surprisingly well...rather better than One Mover's Soccer Ringer.

The US team who is the big daddy of Nintendo development worldwide—Rare—were also in evidence. The company that was Ultimate Play the Game and mysteriously dropped out of the home computer market at the top have programmed around 40 Nintendo titles since, all for third parties. The gaps must surely rate as the market (as well as victims) of all UK software publishers and developers alike.

Even beyond video games, Nintendo is firmly embedding itself into youth culture. There's a hit live action adventure/comedy series 'Super Mario Bros Super Show' airing on CBS stations in the US.



plus the animated 'Captain N—The Game Master'—There're movies featuring the Nintendo—'The Wizard' being the most prominent. You can eat Nintendo breakfast cereal, wear the Nintendo sweat shirt, hat, socks and jeans out on the Nintendo slippers, drink out of the mugs, caps and thermos flasks, sit in the Nintendo furniture and tell the time by the Nintendo clock.

There's one thing for sure, when Nintendo decide to make the step over the Atari with the NES and the Gameboy—either has the fragmented fee in the water approach taken at present—or aren't half going to know about it.

#### NEGA

Of all Nintendo's competitors in the US, Sega look like they have got the best act together here and now. With superior hardware in both the Master System and the Genesis, they are hoping, at the very least, to cream off some of the Nintendo market. Marking down the Master System to \$70 retail can only be a step in the right direction.

The real hopes for the future are undoubtedly

that as the buzz of night—make more are don't drink too much, or you might get into the rhythm in the body of the beat.

*In the last quarter of 1989, the Gameboy produced more revenue than the whole of the videogame industry in 1985. One million hand-held units sold, three million carts sold. 5 million Gameboys are expected to be sold in 1990.*

Things that videogames cannot do (see trends at the show, mainly games and ROM sections in a moment further). It's not so simple to play with ROM and CD content, but starting on.

See the highlight in Commodore's things (including the Amiga)



See World Computing deal in Amiga 286 at the Amiga—Johannes Wenz. With some overseas properties still in being (there's still several around in the world game—see near to the makers of all mentioned and limited time a month or so longer).



ported on the 16-bit Genesis, now with over 350,000 units installed in the US. All Sega needs is the software base to allow the machine off, so it's working on the cold hard of its own arcade hit titles - such as Golden Axe and Super Monaco Grand Prix - and a sprinkling of strong licenses, Spiderman, Dick Tracy (soon to be a Rumba Beauty/Madonna hit musical) and Moonwalker from M. Jackson, etc.

In Genesis, Sega have the most highly specced videogame and on the market right now, only history will tell if they can even begin to overturn the Nintendo month-to-month performance advantage.

#### NEC

The TurboDuo (3) for PC-Engine is beginning to become a serious contender in the videogame market. In a large booth it was proudly displaying an extensive range of new titles, many of which had not been seen before.

NEC's big launch (apart from the portable Engine - see separate panel) was the announcement of the CD-ROM player for the PC-Engine. On display was *Monster's Lair* with a boopy CD sound track - but more interesting was the Cinemascope production of *It Came From The Desert*, which will overlay live video action featuring real actors with computer graphics in a CD version of the game.

Cinemascope can integrate about 20 mins. of video action in with the existing game - and the initial effects looked very interesting indeed. On a separate track, Cinemascope are also contracted to produce the whole of the TV Sports range for the PC-Engine - taking advantage of the multi-player capacity of the machine. Five player TV Sports Football? Yes!

The NEC CDROM is the first optical product to make a big splash in the entertainment market - the industry agrees that one day, all games will be made this way - but isn't confident that the PC Engine is its present incarnation is the hardware platform to take it all the way. But it's a leap forward and congrats to NEC and Cinemascope.

#### ATARI

The fat cats of Atari had elected to take a route at the Mirage Hotel (complete with white tigers in the lobby), away from the show floor. There, it was strongly prob-



James Hill on NEC's TurboDuo/3e engine.



secondary what? (Hill's description of *It Came From The Desert* - the game that got the ball rolling in their wings that way.

# LIKE, WEIRD, MAN

CBS isn't just about computer games, of course - walking around the show sometimes feels like attending the biggest jumble sale on earth - with goodies on display ranging from the banal (does anyone seriously want a 5 foot by 3 foot photo printer?) to the truly weird.

The ACE board for the most seriously off-beam product was partly held this time around, by the Gateways Research Institute and Light and Sound Research Inc.



The other elements...

Gateways are into serious additional programming, with its Minivision™ series of products. Here's a hint to what it's selling - "Finally there's justification in spending endless hours in front of the TV" Yup, what Gateways will tell you.

**The 3265TFM was introduced at a new lower price of \$599. Regarded as ideal by the game publishers, the 3265TFM is best to give it any chance in the US marketplace.**

A number of IBM development teams have now become registered Minivision developers - this is an interesting offer programmed by developers (see above) (and to Minivision) - a single turn single game called test drive.



The effect: genuine fun and in a world of rapid sound and flashing lights.



The words (through images) - video also could light video. It's by the numbers!

It's a black box that feeds into your VCR and will play a tape of positive reinforcement into the TV program of your choice.

You can control how often the messages are flashed up - indeed you can adjust it so the frequency is just below the conscious threshold. Now it looks like you're watching normal TV - only your subconscious is being bombarded with positive messages and/or images of your choice.

Don't goggle. When subliminal advertising was first used in US cinemas in the 60's, it resulted in rapidly increased sales of soda and popcorn - even though the audience didn't realize what was going on (spooky, huh?)

#### TVS IN, DRIP OUT

Much alike is the MCI which comes as a kind of New Age walkman. Imagine a walkie with built-in shades. Shades that block out the light from outside and generate patterns designed to relax you. Combine that with some cool but synth music coming at you through the cans and you get the idea of MCI. I have no idea if this does you any good or not, but wearing some of these sitting around in deck chairs... Let's bring it in and dropping out. Let's be the most bizarre sight of Vegas. CDS.



This little box can take control of your mind and turn you into anything you're watching. That's the facts on public view. Subliminal. However, realize only subtle, subliminal control and subliminal messages (going to the world).



Subliminal messages. Back to your senses by MindVision can be easily observed, or completely invisible.



Player, moving on the USA.

ing the Lights hand-held with reports of very promising test marketing in the New York area around Christmas, with the full allocation of 70,000 sold.

Harari claims they'll sell another million in the next year. It's far to say that the industry is sceptical, being the only colour hand-held was a big plus - now NEC have opted that deliberately and quite (surprised with the focus of), on launch, being an established software base of PC Dupes software.

Is anyone going to shell out for a Lights knowing that the NEC reaction is around the corner? (How likely, they'll buy a Gameboy while they await development).

#### COMMODORE CD-ROM

Commodore was going nothing away at its modest show floor stand, but in the depths of the West Hall car park, tucked away in an unobtrusive nook, software producers were being shown a major development of the Amiga.

Basically, cynics has it to be an ASCII with a difference - not given the keyboard but an optional control, in comes a CD-ROM drive. This drive allows you to read CD discs, complete with a capacity of 100-600 MB/bytes of data. That's equivalent to around 300 normal Amiga floppy discs. And you could almost get a Sierra game on that!

Expected to be shipped in Europe first, later this year, this is an exciting development of the Amiga. More details as they trickle out.

#### COMPUTER SOFTWARE

Oh, so the show was dominated by consoles, more consoles and yet more consoles, but there were still the odd few people out there on the show floor doing it how we used to - on floppies.

The long, long, long awaited Hapcoos from 360 Pacific finally made it to market - and looks the best stringer level simulation to date. Out now on BM - to be on ST and Amiga in the fall/winter of time.

Best PC Graphics of the show had to go to Lucasfilm, and the job they've done on Doom, but in all, it wasn't a great show for entertainment software on floppy. As it goes back to lick its wounds after the pounding by BM, expect it to come out fighting in Chicago in June.



Remember last month's Billie and page, in which Steve (brother of Commodore) had his console had in event - except right!

So (approx)? The answer could be to a solution something from the way you'd always the inclusion of multiple software for the 64. In the Commodore's case to think.

64-Plus software for the 64? How that time something it's the

Remember this within the 64? Commodore's in Case From the Street at 20.

When there is no room left in Hell...  
...dead people come back to Earth



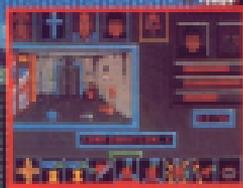
The nightmare has just begun

For mysterious reasons, dead people come back to life to feed themselves on the flesh of human beings. The Earth is inhabited by millions of Zombies, who are spreading terror, and by gangs of hoodlums, who are ready to do anything to survive. Yet four people didn't lose hope and decided to set away to new horizons.

"What a great game! UBI SOFT have taken a video nasty and an arcade/adventure, and combined them, coming up with a real winner in the process. Moving your four characters around the building, trying to find a way out, all the time fighting off attacks, from zombies, is very addictive. There are some good puzzles to work out and a hell of a lot has gone into the game. By all means, get hold of this game."

"Everything is nice and detailed, with the background graphics looking particularly effective."

AMIGA ACTION



Amiga screenshot

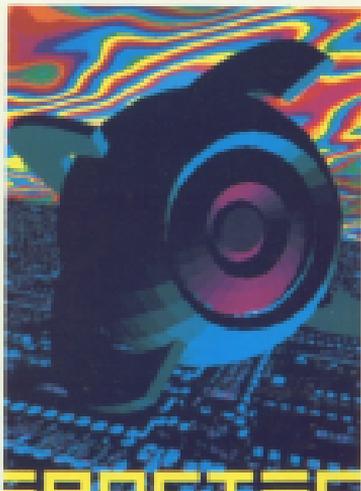


Available now for your  
ST, AMIGA and PC

UBI SOFT

Entertainment Software

# Digital Bat Fantasy



If you arrived in **1987** then you can look up more about this cool hypergame on page 117. Just look for a box with the date of the **Hypergame** award.

the Batman rights, DC Comics, part of the giant Warner Bros. corporation, but why Batman? "Batman is a very strong cultural icon with international appeal. I chose him because I wanted to reach the mass market—Batman's type will establish the technology a lot sooner."

"My plan is an overall tactical strategy. The use of a computer was a conscious decision because it's all digital data, and digital data is very easy to manipulate. It's an integrator—combining separate elements into one workable system."

## COMICS ON SCREEN

The traditional comic book takes about six months to develop. *Batman Digital Justice* took 18. "The way I portray the story is in a cinema-style which has more atmosphere than a normal comic book. More like movies on paper."

The *Batman Digital Justice* hypercomic is pitched between passive and active user-interaction. "Too many computer games rely solely on competing, interesting characters and motivating storylines are just as important factors as playability. With the hypercomic you'll have a more dimensional experience than you would with either a comic book or movie. There is too limited a space in a comic or movie to build or develop a character. Our development of interactivity and the user's access to all manner of information through a Hypercard environment will create a far more complex and interesting medium."

"*Quark's Cosmos* Dinner hypergame on the Macintosh was fully interactive but didn't have much interactivity to it," states Moreno.

The first versions of the *Batman Digital Justice* hypercomic are being developed for the Macintosh and PC micros on CD-ROM. "The Next machine is the ideal machine for my work because it already has the

Master Digital Justice is ©1992 DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved

Welcome to the  
entertainment  
medium of the 21st  
Century!  
Elk Hayes lies to  
New York for an  
exclusive ACE inter-  
view with the creator  
of the world's first  
interactive comic.

**P**rice Moreno is a 25 year-old Spanish born artist working and living in a crackling neighborhood of Manhattan. Not content with creating the entirely computer-generated *Batman Digital Justice* comic book, he is now using the book's digital data to produce the first interactive hypercomic.

## HYPERACTIVIST

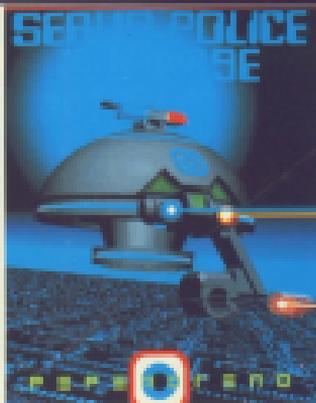
Moreno is totally absorbed in the possibilities of high technology and its application in the mediums of art and entertainment. "It's more a future than an artist. I sell the future to corporations," explains Moreno. "For years after *Hypermedia* for years, the idea is to finance the *Batman Digital Justice* hypercomic as a concept project."

"We're trying to bridge the comic book market and the computer game market—we hope to make this an industry of its own. I have no problems with competition but nobody else is doing this. Everybody knows it's going to happen—but the market isn't there yet."

The *Batman Digital Justice* computer-generated comic book and hypercomic project was started about 18 months ago when Moreno first entered negotiations with the holder to

"Gotham Megacropolis. Sometime into the next century. Welcome to future land! Take a ride on the progress express. Around you is an apparently perfect world - but this is a 'make believe' world with vengeance, a world with no soul and a heart that beats in binary code. One or Zero - God or the Void. A complex and wired world dominated by a tyrant code. A computer virus from long ago that has become the world's first Digital Dictator.

The only hope is a myth from the past, from a time of legend and superstition, long before the virus plagues. A new kind of hero, a program of 'clean' code and pure memory, a program written by a legendary crime fighter... A digital hero, one that can restore digital truth - Digital Justice!"



internal player," but Moore will cater for any machine capable of handling a CD device - if the demand and potential market is big enough. He's also interested in the new CD version of the Commodore Amiga launched at the Winter CES Show (see page 18 for a full show report).

The Macintosh hypercomic will be complete within six months. Moore is currently developing a HyperCard application to show it and is also working on CD audio and animation aspects. "I don't know much of the core technical stuff, I act as a kind of director. We're going to put in various soundtracks and sound effects, and animate various parts of the images. You'll be able to freeze it any time and go backwards or forwards through it at will. There will be different areas, like the Media Tower and Mayor Residence to give you a proper feeling of where you are in the fantasy universe. Instead of speech bubbles, the characters will speak with dubbed actors' voices and the hypercomic will be language independent - it will contain three or four language tracks for English, Japanese, German, French or Spanish."

There are also plans for a CD version of the Italian Digital Justice hypercomic, "as soon as Warner Bros. has finished negotiations, I'll be getting some of

## BRING BACK LOONY TUNES

Moore is influenced by the classic American animated cartoons of the 50s. "I miss the old Warner Bros. Looney Tunes cartoons. The Japanese have never understood what juxtaposing a character is, because it's not in their culture. The Japanese history test. Everyone's efficient or reliable, can not reproduce this. The western marxist individual is not part of the Japanese culture. The opening sequence in Roger Rabbit is back to the all-American cartoon - that's what it's all about. Hopefully computers will bring back home-made cartoons."

those CD units over here. I'm also in personal contact with Sony in Japan."

## SEX, LIES AND CD

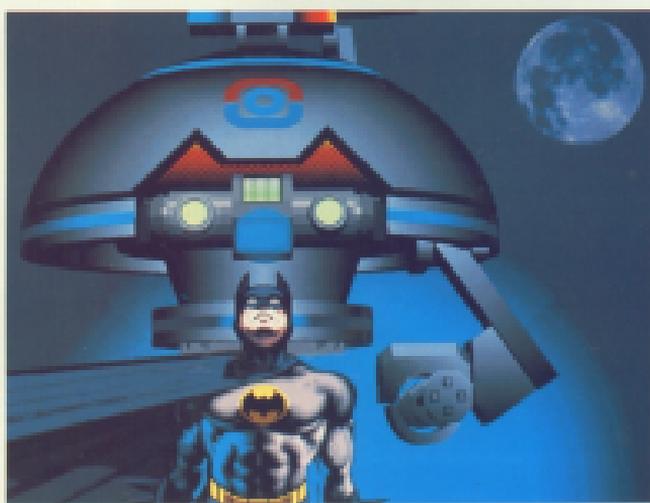
"Hypermedia is what it's all," enthuses Moore. "Imagine an electronic hypermedia version of RCI magazine. You load it up and see the code. The cover may have a little bit of animation to bring the point of the cover or articles to the fore. You go to the content pages. You click on the Japanese icon - the text is all translated into Japanese. You click on any article you like. Maybe it reads the article to you or scrolls the text in a window. You can read the article

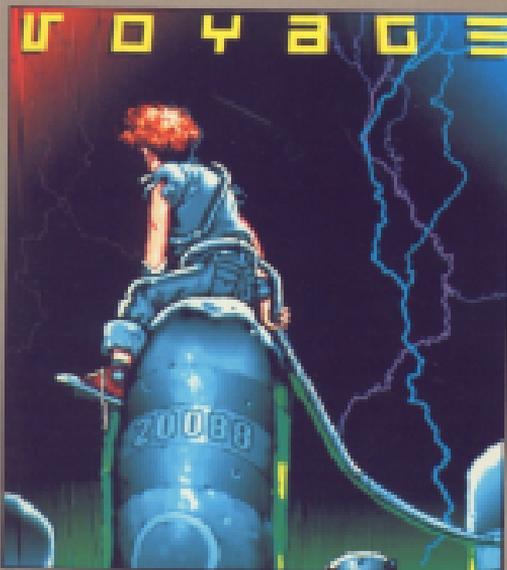


"I guess does it give explanations to anyone."



"I hope there's somebody out there trying to read my act - that would be nice."





Morales' digital illustration uses digital art just as often for abstract images of his own.

### THE BOHEMIAN TECHNOCRAT

Pope Morales was born in Valencia, Spain, and spent most of his childhood hooked on word and spooly art. After local work as a scribe in the Spanish Army was lost in North Africa and a European-studying DU Milano set out for the USA in 1977. Over the next five years, Morale got actively involved in the punk scene — playing bass in a punk band — while contributing numerous illustrations to *Crucy*, *Zeta* and *San Francisco* horror magazines. He also published the counterculture graphics magazine *HAAT* (Ha Art), and had several short stories published in *Heavy Metal* and *Star* (started in 1982; he moved from San Francisco to New York — driving coast to coast in a '67 red Cadillac — and produced three watercolor sci-fi comic novels: *Robot*, *Joe's Air Force* and *Clara King*. He then switched to animation, designing 16-bit, text and mutated characters for three US syndicated cartoon series: *Thundercats*, *Tiger Shakti* and *Silver Hawks*. In addition, Morale did several TV commercials for *Exxonmobile* and *Transamerica*. The next major graphics of the Amiga and the Macintosh fueled a creative renaissance for Morale, culminating in the *Ultarian Digital Justice* project.

while simultaneously accessing other articles for reference. You click on a photograph and a big video comes on or a playdate demo of a game starts. There is so much video footage these days which doesn't get used. You could be connected up to a worldwide network for machine updates or communication with other users. The potential is limited only by the imagination.

"The stuff is happening already, they used hypercard during the last elections. There were so many candidates and mass of related information that as TV audience could easily make a mistake during a live broadcast. So they put all the candidate data into a hypercard stack. You could click on the name and it would bring up what that candidate said in a live speech or TV appearance."

"People who love the money already use hypermedia."

#### DIGITAL ART

Morale proudly proclaims, "Digital is the art medium of the future."

"The essence of art is to communicate and motivate society through whatever medium. What you want is an artist and where your imagination takes

"You're on your own and creating something — that's how I think digital's going about."



### 3 SIRVOCOP



1. The helmet is made of a lightweight, high-strength material. 2. The helmet is equipped with a built-in communication system. 3. The helmet is equipped with a built-in navigation system. 4. The helmet is equipped with a built-in sensor system. 5. The helmet is equipped with a built-in display system. 6. The helmet is equipped with a built-in control system. 7. The helmet is equipped with a built-in power system. 8. The helmet is equipped with a built-in cooling system. 9. The helmet is equipped with a built-in heating system. 10. The helmet is equipped with a built-in oxygen system. 11. The helmet is equipped with a built-in carbon dioxide scrubber. 12. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air filter. 13. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air pump. 14. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air compressor. 15. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air storage tank. 16. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air regulator. 17. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air pressure sensor. 18. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air pressure control system. 19. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air pressure display. 20. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air pressure alarm. 21. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air pressure warning system. 22. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air pressure warning display. 23. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air pressure warning alarm. 24. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air pressure warning system. 25. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air pressure warning display. 26. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air pressure warning alarm. 27. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air pressure warning system. 28. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air pressure warning display. 29. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air pressure warning alarm. 30. The helmet is equipped with a built-in air pressure warning system.

you do one thing, it's quite another matter what the market will bear — it's a very important and difficult balance. Digital is the best medium to maintain the quality of the original concept throughout all the creative and manufacturing processes of producing a consumer product."

"I act as an art director and the computer does all the labour. I've become a better artist, with greater effect. It takes twice as long to produce art on a computer, but the results are like it took twenty times as much. If you're a methodical person you can cut the time in half."

"The good news about digital art is that it's sneaking behind the censors. Comics have a heavy censorship burden to bear, they're perceived by the Americans as pure kid entertainment. If they include some adult content people that you're trying to convert into, they're trying to break the taboo — giving it a broader appeal. We can do this today because computer-generated entertainment is difficult to control. But what about terrorism?"

### FUTURE SHOCKS

"In the future we will develop the computer-generated comic book and hypermedia in the same line — when we reach that stage I will probably be off doing other things."

"Future artists will preoccupy themselves, only with the content — the raw essence of the concept will then stay alive throughout the process of making a product. Writers will create the message as raw data and use that raw essence through Artificial Intelligence (AI) software to produce the story. The AI software will be able to create your own requirements. You'll be able to create your own stories without having to rely on Hollywood or TV script writers. The fictional universe will constructed by building a digital set, you'll build a virtual universe in 3D, including characters, vehicles and buildings. It's a very time-consuming effort but once you have all those 3D models constructed from a special space series, you can build the story to just bring camera pans through different places while retaining those emotional perspectives. I did build some of the environments for *Ultarian Digital Justice* that way, but I would have liked to build the whole of Gotham City. It's a great effort in the beginning, but you can turn that raw data just as easily into an animation as a static image. The idea is to build a digital set, then just let the wireless camera go anywhere in that fictional universe."



"Are you going to ignore the next medium of the next century?"

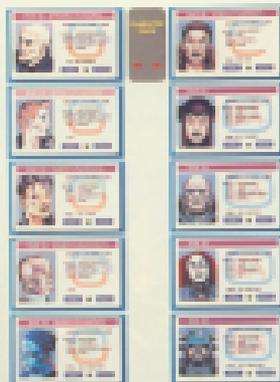
#### GAMERS OF THE DIST IC

"I use a great deal of art programs, with about four specially preferred packages. My approach is to use a suite of commercially-available off-the-shelf software tools. The bottom line really when you use the Macintosh is that to use single programs on it is all."

"I hope to encourage software developers to create the tools to keep up with me."

The *Batman Digital Justice* comic book has 114 pages with 88 pages of storylines produced from 200MB of clean data. Moreno started with the best local financial sketches to illustrate the story. He then used 3D modeling programs - Adobe's Super 3D and Pro3D - to create the buildings, machinery and backgrounds. Human characters were drawn on paper, scanned into the Macintosh, and touched up using Letraset's Image Studio. 3D's Studio II was used to combine and colour the images. The pages were laid out on QuarkXPress - ACE also uses XPress to layout all the editorial pages. Grafix Anywhere's colour separation software was used to produce the film.

"I originated the data on its own, basically each panel is a painting. The foregrounds and backgrounds are created separately, then assembled into panels

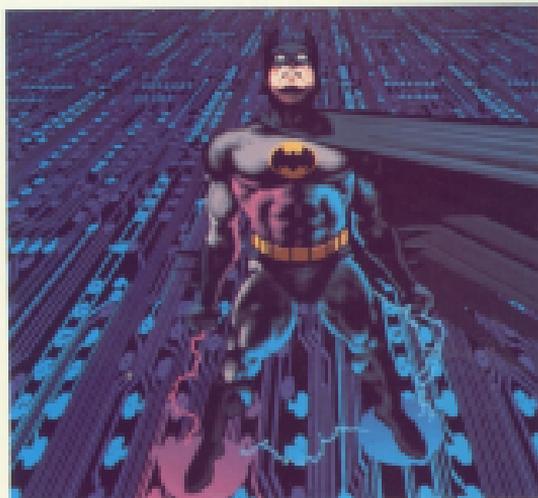


and pages at a later stage. As I was finally going to print, I realised every single picture to have the maximum amount of colours. I have 256 colours per page - I had to economise on data because the bigger it file is, the more hassled, you have to go through. A typical page takes 4000-5000."

"The 88 page story used to require 88 pages of artwork. With resolution independence, which came in at the later end of the *Batman Digital Justice* project, we could make the book go from 80 pages to 88 pages and have all these additional things at top of cinematic glory like close-ups of eyes and establishing shots. Because you have the same data, you can travel around camera-wise. Nowadays if I wanted to do an 88 page book, I would only do 4040 of raw data which could then be manipulated in a variety of ways. The art is rendered with detail. One panel could have its line by focusing on individual details contained in the original image by establishing shots, close-ups, etc."

Moreno uses \$60000 worth of hardware to create his works of digital art, including two 880 24-bit palette Apple Macintosh II computers with shared data file link via AppleTalk, Mass Storage 45Mb removable harddrive, 1/4-in and colour scanners, laserprinters and a Pantone colour monitor. The *Batman Digital Justice* data, including banners, fills 12 45Mb removable hard-disks.

Moreno's constant upgrading and investment in new software and hardware does ultimately pay off though. "If I were to do a sequel to *Batman Digital Justice* it would take me half the time..."



"I don't care how long it takes or how much it costs myself to create. I'm going to do this product."

#### DO ARTISTS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP?

"My friends and I are going to turn my fat into an electronic publishing multi-media studio. I want to integrate our visual and audio talents. This creative synergy is what really makes things happen."

"I believe the whole political change in the Eastern Block has more to do with personal computers in existence than anything else. They have the perception that if they don't catch up now they never will."

"People shouldn't be threatened by new technology, it's there to enhance their lives."

"4-definition TVs will have built-in computer chips 20-50 times more powerful than the Macintosh's 68000. Your remote controller will become more than a channel selector, it will become a mouse. You'll be able to interact with what's happening on-screen."

"I'd like to see all the 3D models I create sent through the wires to a computer with which would act a sculpture or manufacture a toy."

"Advances in optical medium and LCD technologies will make portable interactive electronic serial books feasible in less to three years time."

"With 12 million hours of entertainment in 80 - art and entertainment will become the key industries of the 80s and beyond."

"This stuff has got to be around in the year 2000 - I can't imagine it otherwise. Time is my only problem, I don't have enough of it."

# NEW! FROM ENCORE...

## BEYOND THE ICE PALACE

Spec. Cass. 2.99

CDi Cass. 2.99

Amx. Cass. 2.99

Release Date 7.3.90

© 1989 Elite Systems Ltd.

## IKARI WARRIORS

Spec. Cass. 2.99

CDi Cass. 2.99

Amx. Cass. 2.99

CDi Cass. 2.99

Release Date 21.2.90

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## WONDERBOY

Spec. Cass. 2.99

Amx. Cass. 2.99

CDi Cass. 2.99

Release Date 26.3.90

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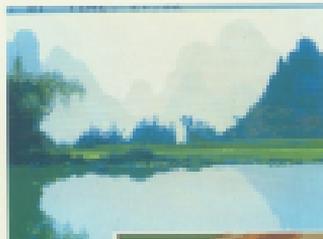
# ENCORE

Elite Systems Limited Anchor House, Anchor Road, Abingdon, Oxford, West Midlands  
WS9 6PW England. Telex: 254130 FLITT G. Companies Just One 0800 334244

# LOST PATROL

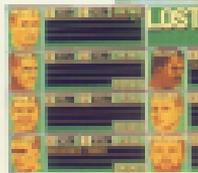
As **OMEGA** goes on a 'search and destroy' mission in Vietnam, Rick Hayes volunteers for a special recon preview

**J**une 1965: a US helicopter crashes in the remote Central highlands of Vietnam, leaving only seven survivors. They have little food or ammunition, no radio, and need to find a way to escape 50 miles of a wilderness that is also swarming with enemy soldiers and booby traps. That was the good news, the bad news starts here...



▶ Vietnam '65 is a photorealistic strategy sim that is very demanding, thanks for its high-resolution terrain and realistic (but) grainy look.

▶ Choose your units carefully: the electronic fuel gauges on each dog tag reveal the importance of different pieces of equipment (think 'Molotov') when it comes to your



## LOST P

▶ Even equipped to handle a full-on firefight, you'll need the leader of the patrol to give it some focus: the leader's own strength determines the

leader's health, but it doesn't end. The US is a tactical exercise in its own right, with a right-angle 3.75m and two 1.5m units, range of 100m.



▶ A map of the region shows the location of the crash site and the location of the patrol's base.





ACE AND OCEAN GIVE YOU THE UNMATCHABLE OPPORTUNITY TO WIN SOME 'NAM MOVIES AND A VCR TO PLAY 'EM ON.

# COMPETITION

## GOOD MORNING VIETNAM!

Here's a once in a lifetime chance to snatch up some recent 'Nam videos, together with your very own Video Cassette Recorder

Of late there has been something of a revived interest in Vietnam. The United States seems to be finally coming to terms with the full horror of the war it fought in. A whole spate of movies from Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* to Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket*, and Stone's *Platoon* have attempted to excise the ghosts of Vietnam that still plague the conscience of the American People.

There have also been a number of computer games based around the events in Vietnam. Ocean seems responsible for bringing us the superb *Platoon*, based on the film of the same title, and has now returned to the Vietnam

theme with the impressive *Last Patrol*. (See our detailed preview of the game on page 35 to 36.)

Ever since the company's inception, Ocean has grown from strength to strength. As a leader in the 3rd market, Ocean were quick to take up the challenge of producing equally impressive 1st and 2nd software (although they have never forgotten their commitment to older machines). Recent well-received releases like *Batman* and *The Untouchables*... as well as adventurous titles like *Last Patrol* are an indication of the continuing growth of one of Europe's most respected software houses.

## ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS...

...answer the simple questions below. They are all intended to test your knowledge of 'Nam matters, but to give you a fair chance we've given you a choice of three answers to each one.

Mark your answers on the back of a post-card, together with your name, address, and telephone number. Send your completed post-card to:

**ACE VIETNAM COMP.  
PROSITY COURT,  
30-32 FARRINGTON LANE,  
LONDON EC2A 3BA.**

1. Who was the star of the film *Apocalypse Now*?

- a) Charlie Sheen
- b) Martin Sheen
- c) Emilio Cervera

2. Who starred in the film *Platoon*?

- a) Charlie Sheen
- b) Martin Sheen
- c) Martin Glando

3. Who said 'Good Morning Vietnam'?

- a) Chevy Chase
- b) Steve Martin
- c) Robin Williams

### THE PRIZES

The first name to be drawn out of the hat will win the following goodies:

•A high quality VHS Video Cassette Recorder

•And these great films on VHS format video

- Platoon*
- Full Metal Jacket*
- Apocalypse Now*
- Hamburger Hill*
- Dear Hunter*
- Good Morning Vietnam*
- Green Berets*
- Uncle Boonmee*

### Notes

1. The closing date for entries is 1st March 1990.
2. Employees of OGNP or Ocean are not eligible for entry.
3. No cash alternative can be offered for the prizes.
4. The editors' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.



# LOCK & LOAD

# MAGNIFICENT

**ATYRUMBERG** - You've played the arcade smash - now experience the adrenaline-soaked realism of a New York-style cop at home!

Using your heat-seeking missiles and laser anti-air that first run you see the gut against super-heavy tanks & monstrous robots - and you'll have a hell of a time doing it!



**AFTER BURNER**

**WOLF**

DEATHS WOULD NOT ONLY be on the action and game play itself captures the feel of the first two minutes, making it one of the most addictive and fun you've ever had. It's a real Wolf!



**DOUBLE DRAGON** - One to glory combat with the fastest, meanest game of the moment! Double Dragon, the whatever weapons come to hand as you pursue the gang through the town, cemetery, and greatest puzzle of the day to the final boss! You'll never be the same! Confronted with the ultimate boss!



4

**HIGH CALIBRE GAMES IN ONE PACK FOR YOUR ATARI ST/AMIGA**



# SCREEN TEST

## ALL NEW PIC CURVE POWER

The PC... Predicted Interest Curve... is the most sophisticated reviewing tool around. And now it's entered the 80's...

As an ACE reviewer you don't just play a game... you experience it! The newly updated Predicted Interest Curve is the only review system that makes the use of computer fact important.

The PIC Curve has been redesigned to simulate your experience when you need a quick glance. To look at an item again, there is an expanded, in-depth comment at each stage of the game's playability. To make a detailed decision, including the player's subjective view after one minute, one hour, one day, one week, one month, and one year. The benefits you are offered for their just what your interest level will be at any given time through both objective and subjective means.

For example, a high review rating means that the game must be terrific and get you all excited from the start. That means it's probably a good game to invest in if the opportunity... after all, you probably aren't going to get more than a minute after when they'll get you back to reviewing other items. You can also read about these and other items the topics you're into.

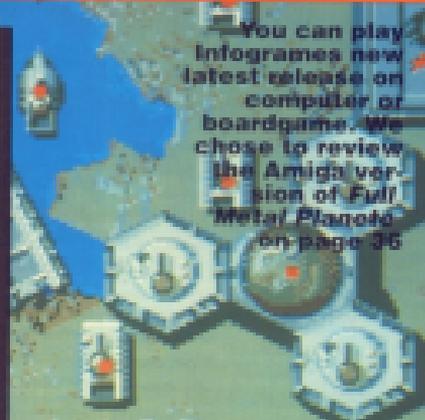
The review, too, and the ratings are all given a 100-point game test. It shows a 100-point, allowing a reviewer to get a game that has been a total getting into a set of comments and also the reviewer's reviewing quick and easy information. The graphics may put you off for a while and the graphics may be a bit. Check out the PIC comment to make sure.

Finally, you get the month and year up. The review a game that gives the most interesting of an objective review.

PC review information has also all other on the part of ACE reviewers. PC review is also a bit of a bit. The review is looking at all what you're getting when you make the decision to get an ACE reviewer's information. ACE-ACE has exceptional advanced 100-point software technology.



They've also changed the PIC comment. They've made it so that you can now see more than just one review when you're looking at a game. You can also see the game's review and the game's review. You can also see the game's review and the game's review. You can also see the game's review and the game's review.



You can play Infogrames new latest release on computer or boardgame. We chose to review the Amiga version of Full Metal Jacket on page 36.

UPDATES, UPDATES, READ ALL ABOUT 'EM!

Check HQ and Bomber luck-like C&A conversions from Ocean and Activision, and Ocean's Operation Thunderbolt blasts onto Spectrum - all on page 53...

## THE ACE REVIEWING SYSTEM

### PC CURVES

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Each review also comes with a review system that gives you a quick glance at a game's playability and a quick glance at a game's playability.

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We don't review anything until we are 100% certain that we've got it right. We've checked that out thoroughly - more you can too.

# CONQUEROR



Way back in Issue 9 we reviewed the original Archimedes version of *Conqueror* from Superior and were suitably impressed - the game achieved a rating of 931. Now, a year and a half on, Rainbow Arts have delivered the Amiga and ST versions. We put our tin hats on and tell you how well the game has travelled.

There have been three impressive tank simulators released of late - MI Tank Platform from Microprose, Omega from Origin, and now *Conqueror* from Rainbow Arts. While it is pleasing to note that all of them are extremely good pieces of software, it is also interesting to note how different they are.

Omega is not so hot on the graphics front, but the ability to actually program and design your own automated tanks is the sort of thing that will appeal to the technically minded. MI Tank Platform on the other hand is the sort of full-blown simulator that Microprose is renowned for. It has the reputation graphics and attention to detail that are characteristics of all the simulators that this house has released to date.

*Conqueror* offers something completely different again. While it

is a technically accurate simulation, it will prove to be a lot more accessible to most players than either of the other two simulators. This is due, in part, to David Braben's graphics system, first seen in *Zork*, which is used to generate the game's landscape and 3D objects. This uses a coloured path-matrix of cubes to construct a portion of visible landscape onto which are mapped the original filled vector graphics to represent trees, buildings, and tanks. The resulting three-dimensional view gives a very realistic feel as tanks disappear behind hills or judder across streams.

There are three basic games available at ten possible levels of difficulty, all set in a second world war scenario. These are Arcade, Action, and Strategy. The Arcade game allows you to get straight into play without too much thought. The objective is simply to hold out for as long as possible with a single tank against the computer-controlled opposition.

This game is useful for practising direct control of the tank, which can be tricky until you've had time to adjust. The default mode is control by keyboard. The initial key settings are actually very good (that is to say you can reach everything), and this is probably the best method of control if you only have a single joystick. There is optional mouse control of the gun turret in this mode, which allows a second player to control the firing, while the first player drives the tank.

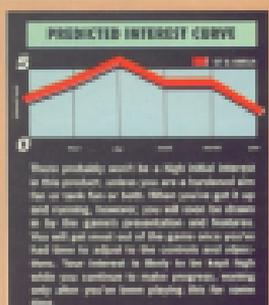
If you are playing on your own you can opt for either an automatic driver or automatic gunner. This allows you to concentrate on one aspect while the other is taken care of by the computer. It is nice to see a thoughtful feature like this being implemented, but I quickly got frustrated at having to

modify my actions to suit what the computer was doing.

One extremely good feature of *Conqueror* is the number of control options available. You can



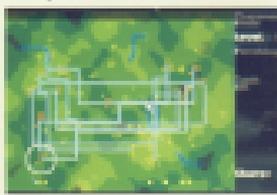
Practical game play: automatic buildings while reports come in from the rest of your army.



#### RELEASE DATE

AMIGA ST	E19,995	LATE FEB.
AMIGA	C19,995	LATE FEB.
PC	C24,995	TBA

For other versions planned.



The map on the Strategy game clearly shows the simulator area you must capture and hold.



Penetrating to exposed enemy units - the control is in the top-right-hand corner shows how many enemies you have left before you win the game.

you direct any combination of mouse and joystick control that you want to think of. Probably the best option, but one requiring two joysticks, is to have a joystick in either port and to use one to control each of the tanks. This works in a similar way to the old Mattelzone arcade game (and indeed the controls in real tanks). In this mode the sideways movement of the sticks is used to control the turret, so you can do everything you need to do without having to take your hands off the sticks.

Once you have mastered basic tank

## AMIGA

The game opens with a tutorial for the control and movement and goes on to explain how to play. Before this you have a good job at getting the Amiga's innovations working. The objective is to use with a joystick, you should expect a more fun 3D action experience than other strategy games.

CONTROL: 4 joystick, 4 mouse  
 SCORE: 7 HIGH SCORE: 1

925

## ATARI ST

In the graphics that there is only a slight gain the screen size for the Amiga. The control is quite a bit better and more enjoyable than the 3D strategy games in general. The Amiga's innovations provide an excellent alternative to the 3D graphics hardware for 3D graphics, and the ST hardware is a slight edge.

CONTROL: 4 joystick, 4 mouse  
 SCORE: 7 HIGH SCORE: 1

920

select a new tank for manual control on this screen.

Once you are ready for a really nasty game you can select Strategy. This is similar to Action, but there are two possible objectives: completely eliminate the enemy, or hold a target area for a minute. The latter is easier said than done, since the target area is of quite a wide radius and it is not easy to keep individual enemy tanks from wandering into it.

The other difference between Action and Strategy is the ability to buy and sell components of your force to achieve exactly the distribution of light and heavy tanks that you require. There are also other options like scooter planes and map fog (which involves heavy shading of enemy occupied areas) which add to the complexity and possibilities of the Strategy game.

There are some nice features in Conqueror that are peripheral to the main game, like the



The map shows landscape features and the first and second objectives that require capturing tanks.

rotating 3D tank displays and stats that can be called up at any time during play. Then there is the ability to attack German Tanks, against Russians, or American tanks and play for either side - that should keep everybody happy.

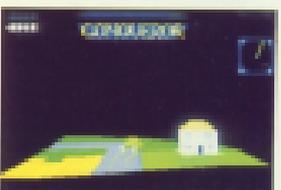
Conqueror is certainly a very impressive piece of software. It has been simulator fans I can recommend it wholeheartedly. If you haven't tried this sort of software before then the accessibility of Conqueror makes it an ideal place to start. If you're an old and out arcade fan though there really isn't much here to interest you.



The main goals show the objectives that you currently possess within chosen target along the front line available - if you have sufficient credits.

Whenever it is time to go on and back in the Action. In this game you have a tank selection of tanks comprising two light, two different medium, and one heavy. Your objective is simple to eliminate the opponent completely.

As well as having direct control over one of your tanks, you can direct the others by calling up the map display and moving the pointer to the required destination. It is also possible to



The player's information panel shows - note the enemy buildings that have been added.



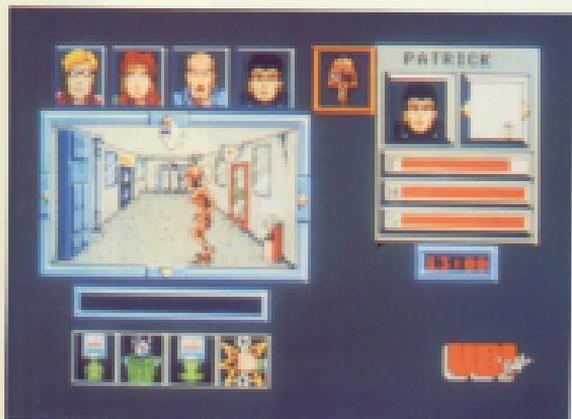
Control set in the arcade game - and the other shows that the objectives have already had

ACE  
RATED

925

COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT



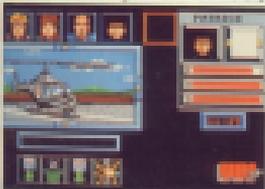


Pat, Patrick has an obsession of the Moody kind

# ZOMBI

**GEORGE** Romero will probably be remembered for his rather graphic zombie horror films. Thanks to their fictional basis they are quite entertaining and, occasionally, fairly gut wrenching if you are on the suspenseful side. His most lively game for recently been quite heavily influenced by these films. Supplied with the software is a rather chunky draw screen which relates events leading up to the start of the game.

The time is the 16th of April 1958 (could this be an indication of the length of time the project has been in development?). For some inexplicable reason the dead have become re-animated and are now eating the Earth to satisfy their craving for human flesh. Anyone who is bit is also becoming living dead. After a while only



The opening sequence, ready for which your team

Get seriously

scarified by

UMI SOFT's horror

feature

ly you don't have enough fuel for a prolonged journey. Your task is to find this fuel. There is, however, a real group also looking for fuel so you will have to contend with them as well as the zombies.

The play screen is divided into several windows. The largest shows a three-dimensional view of the area just in front of your currently selected character. You can collect and manipulate any objects you see by clicking the cursor within this window. This is also used for combat with the zombies.

On the whole the zombies just pace back and forth growling you, but occasionally they will turn towards you and attack. At the beginning of the game you have nothing but your fists to protect you, but there are a number of weapons which can be collected to afford you more protection. If you managed to shoot a passing zombie in the head there is a satisfying gust of blood before the thing collapses to the floor in a heap.

a few pockets of human survivors remain - to make matters worse they have to contend with each other for the few available resources they need to ensure their continued existence.

First to your green face box there is a helicopter which can be used to escape to a safer place such as a remote, uninhabited island. Unfortunately

**PREDICTOR INTEREST CURVE**

The initial impressions will be quite favourable - the program is extremely polished and the subject matter is intended to catch anyone's interest. Your initial reaction here will be more than justified when you begin to play and sample some of the game's more subtle mechanisms. Of course the steady bit will not offer a whole lot of excitement and it may appear when you begin the more intense and complex parts. This can have behind the game you are unlikely to get bored for it really makes it a more intense game you will benefit from.

RELEASE DATE		
ATARI ST	23.05.88	OUT NOW
AMIGA	23.05.88	OUT NOW

**AMIGA**

With this and the ST version you can play without difficulty. The graphics are alternative to impressive and give a distinctive feel to the game's quality. The whole thing is controlled with the mouse so you don't have to worry about making typing errors.

PLAYERS	1	2	3	4
MODES	1	2	3	4

**860**

Mounted is achieved by clicking on of the four coloured edges of the main window. The up and down arrows are control sensitive, so while they move you up and down if you are on a staircase, they will move you forwards and backwards when you are in a corridor.

Initially you play with a team of four people. You can only move one of them at a time, so you must first select the relevant person. Naturally enough, moving around in a zombie infested area is quite a dangerous occupation, so it is quite possible that one or more of your party will meet with either death or comatose during the early stages of the game.

What is immediately appealing about this game is its atmosphere - you really do get a sense of menace, especially when the moody David leftover soundtrack gets going. Lots of zombies pacing backwards and forwards are not exactly frightening, but the way they suddenly turn and attack you is well-associated with it. It is also quite fun to find yourself suddenly facing a whole horde of hungry zombies. This happens quite a lot if you stray too far from the main scenes in the game.

There seems to be quite a lot to do and plenty of places to explore in Zombi. The way that you coordinate your characters takes a little getting used to, but this doesn't really detract from the game. On the whole this is one of the more creative and atmospheric animated adventure games for home users recently and should provide some involved entertainment for general gamers as well as hardened adventure fans. Worth the wait.

• **Licensee Endorsed**



# SAMURAI™

The place: 16th century Japan. You are a Samurai, a warrior who lives for honour. Your world teems with opportunities to achieve it... or lose it. The ultimate honour — to become Shogun and unite all of Japan under your rule — is a prize worthy of only the greatest of Samurai.

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# HARLEY DAVIDSON

**PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE**

As an investment officer and like trader, I've always wanted a leg of my own. Fortunately, we recently found what we call the game that is both fun and very long for it is designed right down to ensure enough events to fit the open road.

Thanks to the way you play, it's riding, and the riding game goes just about to anyone - particularly if you're looking for a good time in the sun.

However, after a while the game tends to wear a little more than it does. After all, it's not the most exciting game ever. But if you're looking for a game that's fun, it's not the most exciting game ever. But if you're looking for a game that's fun, it's not the most exciting game ever.

**BILLBOARD BOX**

PC	DA 1994	OUT NOW
BT	DA 1994	APRIL 1994
AMIGA	DA 1994	APRIL 1994

**PC**

Development can be done on two 3.5" disks. Harley Davidson is not a commercial title and is not in any way affiliated with Harley Davidson. It is not in any way affiliated with Harley Davidson. It is not in any way affiliated with Harley Davidson.

REQUIREMENTS	1	2	3	4
SCORE	2	3	4	5

**675**

**BECOME** the Ultimate Biker God. That, and nothing else, is your aim in Harley Davidson. Gearless longhaired, greasy bearded, pebble-faced, leather jacketed, social deviants are right now heading a frantic path-way to their nearest software store to grab a hold of the world's best official Hog Simulation.

Talking of hogs, this one is a bit of a pig. The program aims to blend arcade-action bike riding style with strategy as you equip your bike, negotiate the rocky roads of Main St., encounter other brothers, and make your way to the great hog trough of Slugs, where your hard endurance will be rewarded. By taking the heads of chickens, no doubt.

You start in quiet RPG fashion by undertaking points between various essential bike skills, ranging from engine maintenance to charisma (evenly for picking up chicks, eh what?). You then take to the open road and head for the real test.

The road sequences aren't hard to master. Unlike some bike sims, this one is pretty easy to conquer. As the landscape scrolls by you change up and down your six gears by depressing the control and separate keys (alternatively joystick is recommended, a feature option is available but not so useful). Avoiding potholes, potholes, cars and other hazards you carry on to the next town, stopping on the way if you fancy to help a German in distress beside his broken-down vehicle. You can then if you fancy give

The open road: the throbbing Harley Davidson between your legs; the girls; the comradeship; the leather; the heavy metal... Can a game give you all this?

MINDSCAPE think it can...

for a lift to the real town for a reward (usually cash, but possibly an item of biker value).

Leaving at the next town, you refuel. This doesn't just have to mean refueling your bike - you can also top up your own pleasure circuits by rolling in the hay with the female filter attendant. This doesn't seem to result in anything (excepts not a graphic display) other than a higher bill for fuel. Slightly, it seems, hasn't been of HDG yet - or at least not in the game, they haven't.

After hunkering with the good time girl you can choose any of the other options available in town: shopping for parts (ranging from a helmet to a new engine), fixing your bike, and having a good time with the local brothers.

Using your bike simply involves steering the part that needs attention (shown on a special status screen that gives you a health bar) for each part's using your maintenance skill. Unless you're pretty stily (and set your maintenance skill level high at the beginning) this isn't likely to have too much effect.

The local brothers, however, have more to offer. You can indulge in any one of five events,



Just on the open road. Watch out for dangers on wheels on the range, stop long, appropriate to the real world.



The events are dropping in if you don't give HDG everything you've got. Harley said!

each of which offers you the chance to earn money, increase your standing amongst the bro's, and hopefully have a little fun in the process.

The events range from the tricky Slow Ride Contest which is probably harder in the program than it would be in a Hog. I know that Harley's like any hog (and are going to pick up at the time, but this is ridiculous) but I can't take me on to the Drag race, which was a bit more fun and simply involves getting the revs right up before stepping in the clutch. The game lets you lock in first gear at just about any engine speed, leading to crashes and a generally hairy race against the bro's.

Other events include Hill Climb (up hill is too gear, dodging mistakes from your 'broads'), Poker Run (grab cards from bystanders to get a winning hand, preferably without flattening them) and Hoarse Run, in which a non-vegetarian body snaffles frankfurters hanging on strings above the road as you shoot down the highway.

Finally, you can go party!, which is of more interest for the bro's it gives you energy (or else that it is for the Bro's larger fun).

Motocross have really tried to pack a lot into Harley Davidson. There's no shortage of outside attractions at every stage of the journey to Slugs, but, like most games that try to cramulate you with variety, none of the elements really impress by themselves. The strategic elements (buying new engines, increasing your standing with the bro's) aren't well-developed enough to compensate for the lack of punch and the arcade sequences are too janky and slow by modern standards. Like the real Harley Davidson, the game looks great, but once you've ridden it most people will start yearning for a highly toned Japanese reggae clone.

■ Steve Cooper



# SIDESHOW

**LIGHT** guns seem to be coming back into vogue these days. If you are a veteran gamer you will probably recall those ancient consoles with five or six built-in games. On the whole they were variations on Frog, but some machines also had simple target games which involved obtaining a large white flag that bounced around the screen. For the latter purpose a cheap plastic light gun was provided along with the paddles that controlled the other games.

When the early consoles began to lose out to far more sophisticated counterparts then the good old light gun went into decline too. Recently, however, there has been a resurgence of newer, more sophisticated light guns. Companies like Datasoft Marketing and Activision have been busy producing light guns for the Spectrum and CPC (although this is little more than a play to keep sales of that machine as healthy as possible).

The trend has been slow to catch on in the UK market - although you can readily obtain 16-bit, graphics packs, light pens and so forth for the more sophisticated machines, light guns are harder to come by. American company, Activision have now rectified that deficiency (at least as far as the Amiga is concerned), by producing a phaser light gun along with several games that support it. The latest of these is *Sideshow*, which, according to the manual, they developed as a contrast to the violent themes in their earlier console compatible games.

This game, as you might have gathered from the title, is based around the sort of target events where you take pot shots at things in an attempt to win a suitably funny but, probably costly, link to buy from the money you profit to win it in the first place (pshaw).

There are eight events you can play: *Balloon* has you popping them to find a hidden pattern; *Balls* involves shooting at green balls while avoiding red ones; *Falcooan* is the classic shooting gallery where you can pop off ducks, planes, and so on; *Strength* requires you to make weights shoot up posts to hit bells; *Money* gives you the opportunity to chuck sharp objects at a rotating drum (actually you're supposed to miss him); *Clock Shopper* gives you a chance to get your own back on all these

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ACTIONWARE



are mentioned that you don't try this at home, since a misaimed clock face is likely to prove a little strange sounding!

enjoying cuckoos by shooting them as they appear from their clock; *Planted* kill a another classic in which you stand at various spots and wait for they disappear and fall, but by no means hard, there is the *Duck Tank* in which quick shooting will give you the satisfaction of seeing your Nilly get wet.

Although there is a facility within the program to ensure that your light gun is properly calibrated, I still found it very difficult to shoot with any accuracy, even at a fairly close range. This could, of course, be an indication of my abnormal shooting skills, but I suspect that most people will actually experience similar difficulties. Playing with the mouse is a lot easier (and, indeed, the only option open to you if you do not possess the phaser).

You are not free to play any event as and when you wish. You begin with a limited number of tokens, and before you can play some of the more expensive events you must win a few tokens on the cheaper and easier ones. Unfortunately it is in no good just selecting an event you are good at and playing it until you build up a bundle of tokens, because a booth will be closed if you win it three times.

You also have to watch your hunger level - if this gets too low you'll have to pay a visit to the Food Stand to top up, which will also use up some of your hard-earned tokens.

On the whole, *Sideshow* is a highly entertaining game which will probably appeal to main, dad, and kid sides as well as seasoned games players. There is a lot of link swapping, which can be quite frustrating, but this can just about be forgiven considering the variety of gamemodes you are treated to.

AMIGA

Availability on computers from as far as possible (and is convenient). All of the graphics are very colorful and well designed. You get a real sense of depth in the clock faces, for instance. Indeed, it is really curious that, since there is no sound, music is the only audio feature. By this I don't give it the confidence that someone who has previously written a manual of a product like this might be leading.

GRAPHICS 8 SOUND 7

VALUE 8 FUN FACTOR 7

8.50

RELEASE DATE

AMIGA COLORA OUT NOW

For other reviews please

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Let's face it, *Sideshow* is not one of the sort of thing that are going to get your name going. However, if you're interested from the start, you'll find that your interest will rise as the game goes. This isn't saying it's a bad game, but it probably isn't. This is the sort of game you are likely to get back to eventually.

101 PHRASES TO STUN, MEN!



The Activision Phaser light gun for the Amiga is not available in the UK at the time of writing, but Electronic Zoo have plans to rectify that situation in the near future. They hope to be marketing the gun at about the same time as they expect Activision's real game, *Crashout*. They may also be bringing in some of the earlier Activision releases. The projected price for the gun is £24.95.

There are also a few bonus features thrown in, the random events, *Easter Eggs* with a secret purpose, and the ability to design your own face for Nilly in the *Duck Tank*. If you are looking for something a little different that will appeal to a wide age range then *Sideshow* is definitely worth a look.

• **Licensee: Outland**



For the youngsters to see the talking pot above on the settings wheel? Well, it's Activision's real-world game...

# CEREBRAL SOFTWARE



"As the disk loaded, I felt drawn into different  
worlds, an alternate universe where I assumed  
the identity of another."



## CONFLICT

The Middle East Point of Simulation  
IBM PC • COMPAQ 386 • Amiga • Atari ST  
by Mike Bell, by a consultant and strategist  
in oil and gas (Sheffer/Coates). The supercomputer  
powered "oil fighting" (and by oil we mean  
power) is the face of CONFLICT. It is the ultimate  
battle of wits. In CONFLICT you are in a  
world of oil, military and economic forces combine  
to simulate the multiple pressures that a national  
system under a modern national oil. You are  
in the role of one of at least five neighboring  
countries. A lightning and highly realistic  
war game.



## HUNTER KILLER

Amiga • Atari ST  
Experience the reality of commanding an American  
WWII combat submarine in the South Pacific.  
Master the controls of your vessel, then embark on  
a series of missions - from "search and deploy"  
series to detailed escort duties modeled on real  
MILCOMS. Minimize different submarines,  
fourteen separate missions to attempt, at a range  
of difficulty levels as well as practice controls, and  
take place during the day or at night. HUNTER  
KILLER has a host of features that outclass any  
other submarine simulation.



## GRIMBLOOD

Amiga • Atari ST  
Place yourself deep within the walls of Castle  
Grimblood, here rules a murderer, who is prying  
on those who lie by and keep the rituals. You, as  
the young Lord, Maximus, must rescue the female  
sisters in order that he can unlock the chains of  
terrible sorcery to the rituals of the castle and  
gain his freedom. If you fail you are certain to fall  
victim yourself to the waiting, awaiting lady...  
A gothic whodunit, written by Mike Singleton,  
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Illustrations may be taken from a different version.



Wander Sierra villages; the shopkeepers are off in the post-petting-arena

SIERRA take the system that created Leisure Suit Larry and add RPG concepts—surely this has to be a winning formula?



# HERO'S QUEST

It had to happen. Sierra, not content with being America's number one graphics-oriented adventure house, had finally softened its and introduced RPG elements into its games. In spite of Leisure Suit Larry, Kings Quest, Police Quest—all brilliant games—yet then add the excitement of creating your own character and leading him or her up while you play. Surely this has to be a recipe for unmitigated gamingplay-joy, right?

Unfortunately, where Heroes is concerned, the ingredients haven't quite done justice to the recipe. Here goes: THE OLD SIERRA ANIMATED SPRINGBOARD SYSTEM, COMPLETE WITH SUPERBLY DRAWN AND ANIMATED TEXT SCREENS. No, just wait, even if we do have to ignore the usual slow speed of Sierra games when running on anything less than a Cray M4, 10" or an equally unfathomable 386 VGA PC. Heroes, however, is reliably faster than the earlier products and the system that gave us Leisure Suit Larry can't grill it.

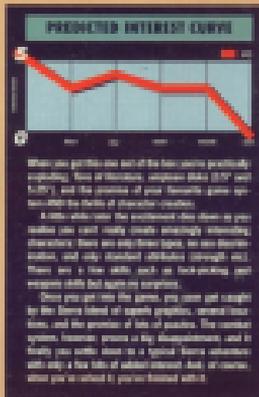
Next, read a scenario scenario. Okay, no gripping scenarios available. The thematic inspiration that gave us the child slave in Kings Quest II, the desperate Rosella in KQIII, or the doofus Larry Lafter in the Leisure Suit games has obviously run out here. Instead we get a chap who simply wants to be a hero in Spinning Hatbox will get you nowhere, Sierra! Heroes is



The combat screen; always direct and about maneuvering don't get the hero's hand getting so much as they should

PC	SEARCH: 1		SEARCH: 2		825
	SEARCH: 1	SEARCH: 2	SEARCH: 1	SEARCH: 2	
	SEARCH: 1	SEARCH: 2	SEARCH: 1	SEARCH: 2	

RELEASE BOOK		
LEISURE SUIT LARRY	LEISURE SUIT LARRY	LEISURE SUIT LARRY
KINGS QUEST	KINGS QUEST	KINGS QUEST
POLICE QUEST	POLICE QUEST	POLICE QUEST



Leisure games are fun a penny. What we want is character interest, chaps, and there ain't none here.

Next, ADD RANDOMIZED BOTS OR TWO WOOD sprites. Disaster. The sack of RPGs-Added interest is totally empty. Instead of giving us a ready team of adventurers as in classic Fate or Ultima, we have a single player character, he cannot recruit anyone and interact with other characters any more than any of the other normal characters in Sierra games.

Finally, look up-looked (control) screen and add, add, for you kidding? Sierra games have class, not less. In spite of the sparring combat system and related pop in a single screen with graphical opponents clumsily stabbing at each other, invoke a few routine dialog and stat manuevers, slow it all down nicely, display graphs of strength and stamina. Forget all about strategy; you can't really have any anyway, since there's only one player character and forget about action (it's too slow). Finally, make it all other easy to escape from if things get tough (they do).

All that is, in essence, the story of Heroes. But it's a story with a happy ending that you might have expected. Underneath the RPG pretensions you have another Sierra animated "adventure cartoon" with superior graphics, a weaker story line than other recent Sierra releases, loads of puns, and a healthy modicum of enjoyment. Forget, therefore, about the RPG innovations as they're not really up to the expectations they raise. The only nice addition is the ability to play a thief, magic user, or warrior which adds some variety and a few neat spells to the scenario. Otherwise, this is standard, but very beautiful, fare for Sierra addicts, who have quite rightly discovered that you don't need soiling yourself in the mire of superficial all-gamers to make a good game. For those who can afford it.

—Steve Cozack

# TAKE THE LAW YOUR OWN

## THE FASTEST, MOST THRILLING 3D DRIVING GAME YET!

VOTED  
ARCADE GAME  
OF THE  
YEAR

Take the wheel of your turbo-charged Porsche as you and your partner go in pursuit of dangerous criminals. Driving an elite army of speeded-up roadsters.

Taito

### TURBO BOOST!

Need to catch up in a hurry? Add just one piece of your turbo-boost and send your cars in the back of your hood!

### BARRELLING THROUGH THE CITY STREETS,

you'll blaze along the roughest of dirt tracks and through busy traffic—if you can hold the line! The slow life can run, but they can't hide.

### WITH THE MATCHLES! VIGILANTEFT!



ALL AVAILABLE FOR ATARI ST · AMIGA

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## ENTERPRISE (PC)

A golden globe from (Lifehouse House (remember them?) which casts you as a merchant space pilot. Your aim is to earn enough money to retire to Paradise Planet. This is done by collecting minerals and selling them to the inhabitants of the inhabitable planets in the known universe. As well as building up a fortune you must also insure your ship and its contents, buy fuel and food, and make the occasional repair.



Once you have mastered the flying, jumping and landing on planets you can begin to converse with the aliens. At this point the game begins to bear an uncanny resemblance to a very ancient program called Eliza. This was a clever piece of programming that picked up on common parts of speech and analysed them to the extent that it was able to give you apparently intelligent replies.

What you have been is, essentially a poor man's Eliza. It has a few nice touches, but I wouldn't be prepared to lay bets on its long term viability.

AGE RATING: 500

## WORLD DARTS (PC)

Given half a chance, bored programmers will spend their time trying to simulate absolutely anything and everything on their favourite machine. The latest victim is the classic game of darts. In this implementation a hand holding a dart is a rather awkward fashion drifts with increasing rapidity across the screen. By using the cursor keys you can change its direction but you can never hold it still. Once it is positioned roughly where you want it a quick flick of the space bar is all that it takes to send the dart flying home.



The control method takes a little getting used to, but there is a fun game to be had here once you get the hang of it.

AGE RATING: 575

## SPEEDBOAT ASSASSINS (Amiga)

At first sight this looks and feels a lot like the old arcade game Road Blasters, only water has been substituted for tarmac. Your task is to fo-

# ALL FOR A FIVER!

Laurence Scottford looks at

six titles in the new 16-BitZ range published at £4.99 by

Virgin Mastertronic

visit four important harbours that have been taken over by enemy forces. There are three stages involved in achieving this.

First you are dropped off by helicopter and must guide your steamed speedboat through a narrow channel of floating mines to gain entrance to the harbour. It is easy to do this without danger by going slowly, but unless you take it at speed you will lose a substantial bonus.

Next comes the main meaty part of the game which involves you speeding across the harbour taking out mines and various craft. Your weapons can be upgraded by docking with the helicopter (not an easy manoeuvre when you're got the mines blowing hell at you!) You must destroy four red communication towers to retrieve the harbour.

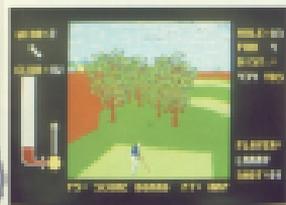
Once you succeed in this it's on to the final stage - blowing up the mines equivalent of an alien mother ship. Hit the battleship twenty to thirty times and you are off to the next target. This last stage however, is so difficult that there is more talk than skill involved.

On the whole a reasonable challenge, but it won't be long before your eyes are glazing over!  
AGE RATING: 450

## CALIFORNIA PRO GOLF (PC)

There have been several very good golf games available for a variety of computers over recent years. (Lambert and Jack Robinson for instance) and it seems to be becoming a popular past time for golf addicts who can't stand the rain. If you're a bit short of cash however, then this is a viable alternative. All of the usual features are here; both three and two-dimensional views of the hole, wind conditions, club selection and the ability to control shot power, hook, and slice.

On the whole (or should that be hole?) this is a pretty reasonable golf simulation for the price.

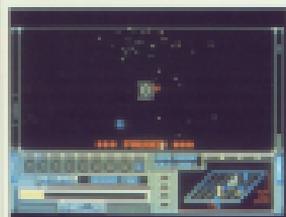


worth a look if you fancy a round without leaving the comfort of the seat.

AGE RATING: 700

## KELLY K (ATARI ST)

Way back in time when the Spectrum was still one of the best moves to be had, Imagine produced an odd little monochrome game with software graphics in which you played a space transporter sending 3D objects into a black hole. Kelly K also has you destroying pieces of floating space junk, and apart from the fact that the software graphics have been replaced with solid vector graphics the two games are



believeably similar (in fact the ancient Imagine effort was better as played). Five minutes will be enough to have you reaching for the next button.

AGE RATING: 350

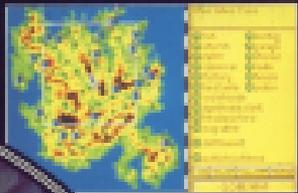
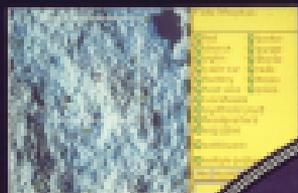
## ROAD WARR (ATARI ST)

I really can't understand the thinking behind the purchase of this game. It went down like a lead balloon when it was first released in a full price game, and even at this low price it just doesn't cut the mustard. The game has you speeding down a curved road shooting various rogue items, provided you can manage the steering controls that is. A complete waste of a fiver!

AGE RATING: 350

# THE NEW ICE AGE DAWNS





MASTER OF STRATEGY



# THE STRATEGY GAME

# MIDWINTER

## OF THE DECADE ARRIVES

As a new Ice Age dawns in Rainbird's gigantic new classic, strategy gaming also enters a new era. For *Midwinter* is a genuinely original concept that launches revolutionary techniques onto the home computer screen.

The scenario is convincingly realistic as a new Ice Age grips the world. Together with a small group of pioneers you have colonized the Midwinter Isle, a 100,000 square mile land mass now under threat from invaders intent on seizing your sanctuary.

Compelling action and strategy take place across a spectacular 3D fractal generated landscape with its stunning geographical



accuracy. You control 32 personalities, each with different qualities, skills and complex personal relationships. Enemy movements can be tracked, and battle plans made, using the incredibly detailed on-screen map.

In your bid to defend the life-supporting heat mines, you can ski, hang-glide, travel by snow buggy or cable car, snipe and sabotage the enemy. There is no easy way to win, but the game's unique depth and absorbing complexity will keep you trying until you do.

The deep Midwinter is upon us. Be prepared for a long and exciting battle against its elements.



# PRO TENNIS TOUR

**SPORT** simulations for popular sports have come and gone in recent years, although very few have left more than a fleeting impression before a player moves on to other games. The problem with sports simulations is that something as fluid and indeterminate as the performance of the human body is impossible to simulate with any accuracy. The joystick wiggling track and felt-type games come closest because they at least provide some sort of physical test. As far as other sports simulations are concerned, what you actually end up with is an arcade game that makes use of the rules of a sport, but otherwise bears little resemblance to the experience of actually participating in the game in question.

This has not stopped many programmers from making many brave attempts to do just that. One of the earliest attempts to capture the essence of tennis in a computer game was *Proton Match Point*. This employed a high-3D perspective and was quite fun to play, but didn't really slow for all the subtleties of the game. Then there is *Impassioned! Passing Shot* which is a conversion of the arcade machine. But while this is a good game it employs an overhead view—again, not exactly helpful for developing subtle shots.

Now *Ubi Soft* takes a ball-a-acking at a tennis simulation and comes out looking good. *Pro Tennis Tour* has been selling for some time now in France as *Grand Courts* and going down a storm—it is very surprising if the same thing doesn't happen here.

Again you are presented with a three-dimensional perspective view of the court, which works well apart from the apparently huge size of the ball when it is at the opposite end of the court. The joystick (or keyboard) controls your movement across the court. Shots are played by pressing the fire button to swing and then releasing it to actually hit the ball. Unfortunately you can't freeze the player while you are swinging, so you have to make sure that you are positioned correctly before you swing the racket. This can lead to some rather tricky shots if you have to slide right over to the other side of the court first.



Not an ace-in-the-hole? The score shows that this particular customer needs a lot more practice...



When's a ball-a-acking? The advice is should be there for you!

The direction of your shot is determined by your distance from and relative position to a cursor which marks the destination of the ball. This takes a little getting used to, but the system works quite well once you have become accustomed to it. Additionally the crossover can be switched off by selecting either Advanced or Professional, as opposed to Easy mode.

Serving is also accomplished with the use of a cursor, only this time you control its position. Again it takes a while to get used to this and you can expect to lose a few points through double faults while you are getting into it.

The main part of the game is tournament play which gives you the chance to sample several different surfaces: Grass at Wimbledon, Clay at the French Open, Cement at the Australian Open, and Cement either covered or uncovered at the U.S. Open. Its tournament play you begin ranked 80th and must play successive computer-controlled opponents. They play extremely well, so you are going to have to really develop a good technique if you are to stand any chance at all of winning a match.

Fortunately there are comprehensive practice options which allow you to improve your service, or return balls delivered by a machine using one of six different programs. You can also succeed to play against another person using the second joystick port. This does mean that one of you will have to play at the far end of the court, but this is alleviated so both players get a chance to play the long end. As with the tournament, the practice options can be played on all three surfaces.

What really makes this particular tennis simulation stand out is attention to detail. Witness the fine edges getting tennis neck, or the machine clapping if the ball strikes the net. The sprites are not that attractive, but they are realistically animated. This is easily the best tennis simulation to date and should keep Wimbledon fans happy during the winter months until they can get the real thing on their screens again. Highly recommended.

— Laurence Scottell

ACE  
RATED  
900

Anyone for tennis?

UBI SOFT/

BLUE BYTE are!

AMIGA

Although the graphics are not quite as pretty as the high-end titles, they are enough to convey the atmosphere of the real thing. The sound effects also help contribute to the atmosphere. Moreover, you do think of the ball being the general-purpose standard on most types of surfaces you are playing on.

GRAPHICS: 4 SOUND: 3  
GAMEPLAY: 4 OVERALL: **900**

PC

The sprites are a little more solid on PC, but again the graphics can't be faulted. In fact your service games are reminiscent of a retro ball game, but Blue Byte have done quite a good job of making it look out of the PC's frame buffer as they can't use actual texture maps. It really did appear nice to indicate which side of the net you are facing the game on. An adjustment for speed can also be made. This prevents you from having to return a maximum number in a shot.

GRAPHICS: 5 SOUND: 4  
GAMEPLAY: 5 OVERALL: **850**

## RELEASE DATES

AMIGA BT OCT 1988

AMIGA CD OCT 1988

SPECTRUM CD OCT 1988

CD32 CD OCT 1988

AMSTRAC CD OCT 1988

PC CD OCT 1988

## PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



All three sports simulations follow, and all three sports simulation titles are expected to rise after a while, however you are being asked to get into this sports simulation in really early years. The PC will also be depressed by the attention to detail, and features like the practice options. Although your reaction will begin to wane after you've had to sit in front of this title for some time, it will almost certainly still be playing like new long after other games have been consigned to the dustbin of old.

# MONEY FOR OLD ROPE

THE GAME AIN'T NEW, BUT THE CONVERSION IS GLEAMING!

## C64



### Bomber

**Artists:** £14.99us;  
**£19.99uk;** PC version  
retailed in issue 27, ACE rat-  
ing 815

Victor Griffin's superb flight sim, *Bomber*, emerged on the PC last year to great acclaim. Not only did it include four-teen planes but also featured incredible solid 3D vector graphics. There was also a variety of features to keep non-specialists happy (such as the out-cockpit view) and a mission designer. Although everybody seemed very excited about the program at the time there was a clear thought at the back of a lot of people's minds: This is fine on a 586 PC, but what will the 5-bit version look and play like?

Now that the C64 version has emerged it is time to either ally or confirm those fears. When the thing finally loads you are presented with the usual aircraft selection screen, and at this point things look good. It is only when you get beyond this point that some of the C64's deficiencies begin to show.

The most obvious thing is that many of the options available on the PC version are not available here. What that's to be expected because of the memory restric-



tions. When you actually begin to play, the reduced screen area and slow update speed are also painfully noticeable. However, it would not be fair to decry the program too much - it is still a remarkable achievement, but perhaps a little over-ambitious which may give existing C64 flight sims the edge.

ACE RATING: 775

### Ballistix

**Popclapper** | £12.99us,  
**£16.99uk;** Amiga version  
reviewed in issue 26; ACE Rat-  
ing 888



Popclapper's computer variation on *Concave* is back again, only this time on the C64. The idea behind the game is to repeatedly fire balls at a spherical puck, and knock it into your opponent's goal. You can either play against another person, or on your own, fighting against gravity. All of the elements of the other versions are here, the only difference being the slightly poorer quality of the graphics. The game is fast and furious and provides plenty of short-term fun. Not a lot of staying power though.

ACE RATING: 800

### Chase HQ

**Ocean** | £8.99us; Amiga and  
Spectrum versions reviewed in  
issue 28; ACE Ratings 840  
and 858 respectively.

Take a very simple idea for a driving game, add some fast high-quality graphics and lots of sound, stick the whole lot in an arcade cabinet and you've got something approaching *Chase HQ*. The comp-puter has done very nicely for itself thank you very much, as it was no surprise at all that Ocean made quick use of their Taito license.

The first two versions of the resulting game were pretty good. Ok so the graphics on the Spectrum (and even the Amiga) come to that don't come anywhere near



those of the arcade machine, but the conversions did retain its playability. The C64 version could easily have been the same, but unfortunately the only (and clear) graphics and sound don't help matters much. The game is playable enough but it doesn't really compare to the first two versions.

ACE Rating: 700

## SPECTRUM

### Operation Thunderbolt

**Ocean** | £8.99us; Amstrad and Amiga versions reviewed issue 28; ACE Rating 815 and 827 respectively

Taito's iconic 'n' gals racing *Operation Wolf* went down a storm with arcade addicts, who were all able to pop along to their local mall after a hard day's grind and practice killing the boss with an 'n' - very rewarding. Hardly surprising then that being able to do it with a friend in *Operation Thunderbolt* was even better. Don't miss waiting in Ocean's release of this game after the successful conversion of *Wolf*.

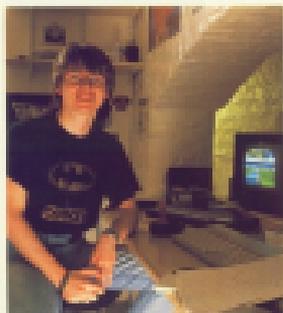
The best thing to say about the Spectrum conversion is that it is very competent and quite a lot of fun. In the end though I found that, as ever, the monochrome graphics began to get in the way of my full enjoyment of the game. When things get hectic it becomes almost impossible to pick individual figures out against the background. It's a shame that it is this totally unavoidable factor which spoils an otherwise superb conversion.

ACE Rating: 725



# TRADE SECRETS

A REVOLUTIONARY NEW WAY TO TAME A GAME



Trade Secrets is an exciting new concept in games hints and tips. In addition to your excellent Tricks 'n' Tweaks sent in to us, AOE will pick the most popular game released every month, and ask its programmer to reveal all the game's inner secrets. Every game taming play will be covered, from complete game maps to hidden cheat modes and bonus levels — told by the person with ultimate knowledge of the game... Its creator!



IF YOU KEEP MESSIN' AROUND L.D.W.E. ■



Keep your gear tamer's oil gauge filled up with the oilman's car. Try to fill the car up the whole without then he looks, you get an alarm that says you'll get a gas pump nearby, but the car's engine is normally never covered. It's better to take the car out.



## CHEAT AT CHASE

What better way to begin Trade Secrets, than with the top-selling computer game of Chase HQ? Chase HQ's Chase HQ racing site, complete with a manual, was reviewed in ACE 29, where it achieved a 100 rating on the Spectrum. Its Hayes developer and all Chase HQ's inner secrets by giving its programmer, John Oliver...



IF DEAD LOU ■



Watch to lose gear on the road. Chase HQ has three in total, the high gear is when you reach 100. The middle gear normally has the driver's name. From Chase HQ's gear, you'll be able to see the gear's speed in relation to the gear's speed.

## SPECTRUM AND CPC CHEAT

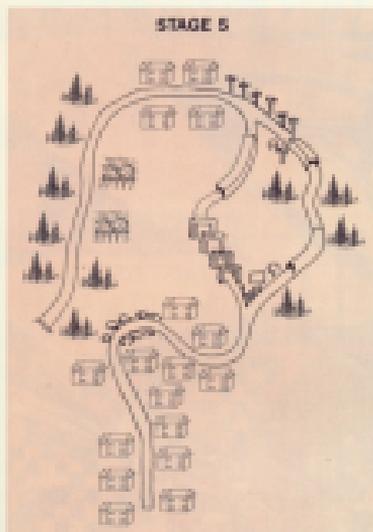
Go into the redline keys action and press **SHOULDER ENTER**. You should now get a menu selection screen allowing you to enter the high, medium, and low gear. If you press the red key, go straight to the red screen, get an extra credit, or enter the license table.



Take the wrong route to get more points. When changing routes, the Chase HQ's game will be possible because they keep on making while the car's engine starts.

You can cause more damage by changing the car's engine.





### FITTING THE PIECES TOGETHER...

Taking 6 months to develop, the Spectrum version of Chase HQ was written on a ST Mega 2 using Chase's custom-designed suite of development software, which includes assembler and graphics editor. Although the game's sprites and background graphics were designed on the ST, the leading screen was drawn directly on the Spectrum. A large percentage of O'Brien's programming time was spent writing Chase's complex "lisp" graphics language used extensively in the game, for instance when extending graphic objects on the roadmaps. O'Brien said,

"getting the speed while retaining the graphics in perspective was the hardest thing to achieve - it's shifting a bit of a hat". The sprites were designed by William Holman on the ST using Chase's in-house graphics editor. Once the monochrome Spectrum sprite editors were created, versions for the CPC could be produced. O'Brien's favorite sprite is the helicopter pilot perched in the control panel, because "it's very stylish and the colours work well". Jonathan Dunn translated four soundtracks from the console with O'Brien supplying an additional 25 sound effect-effects. Five more sound FX were directly digitized from the arcade machine using an Amiga sound sampler - the data was then inserted into O'Brien's ST source code. "This is one of the advantages in using our own 16-bit development system," enthused O'Brien, whose favorite sound effect is the thud of your car hitting the floor after jumping a hill (fortunately, the screen-update prevented the use of an in-game soundtrack.

Despite this flaw, the screen update runs at a staggering average of 13 frames a second - could Chase HQ be the fastest Spectrum racing game on the market? In the Spectrum programmers can only fit 80K of our normal address. O'Brien is most pleased with the firing lights on the game's title screen.

### C64 CHEAT

Similar to the ST and Amiga cheat, simultaneously hold down the fire button and type SPONKER. During play you can now visit the fire by pressing the T key.

"they all run in a single frame". He's less impressed with the game's steering control, "it could have been better if it wasn't for the update rate". In fact, the steering routines were executed 10 times during Chase's development. Sadly, a lack of time and spare memory forced O'Brien to settle plans for faster bonus and attract sequences in the Spectrum and CPC versions of Chase HQ. These features can be found in the original console and many Japanese console games - these are the types of games O'Brien prefers. When asked why gamers should buy Chase HQ, O'Brien unhesitatingly answered, "it could be my last Spectrum game" (O'Brien finished our interview with a tip for any potential game coders or designers wanting to hit the big time: "when you send stuff to software companies, leave out anything strange - people always remember your worst work rather than your best".

### CHASE HQ SPECS 'n' STATS

Version: Spectrum  
 Runtime Program Size: 320K multibank  
 Source Code Size: 140K  
 Program Resolutions: 204 Color, 798 Views, 1% Audio  
 No. of Levels: 5 stages  
 No. of Adventures: 1 crystal + 3 other cars on each level  
 Max. no. of on-screen Sprites: 50  
 Average no. of on-screen Sprites: 30  
 Max. on-screen Sprite Size: "Steady Hog" - the fastest is the biggest sprite  
 No. of Sound Effects: 15 + 5 samples  
 No. of Soundtracks: 4  
 Max. Soundtrack Length: 90 seconds  
 Average Screen Update: 13 frames a second

### ST AND AMIGA CHEAT

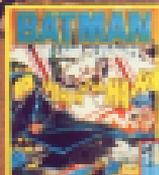
You'll need a friend for this one! Simultaneously hold down the fire button and left mouse button and type SPONKER. When you start the game, just press the T key to re-initiate the timer.



Each car has a different role, or team, speed depending on which lane it is in. Car get more and more damaged as the game progresses - they will rust and lose and even come to a full stop. You can get away with a full stop in the straight because you get pitfall rewards the opposing cars do not.

Don't worry too much about hitting obstacles - although they delay, they prevent a number of items from coming to hand.

ALL THESE SPECTACULAR IT'S GOTTA BE.  
HITS IN A SPECIAL PACK!



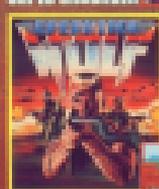
"Nothing else like it before! A beautifully-animated arcade adventure which is the best comic licence ever! - you'd be lucky to rub it." **CRASH SMASH.**

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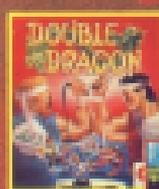
Here at S.U. we think it's about as close to an ultimate space blast as anyone will ever get. Fab. **SINCLAIR USER.**

© B&B CORP 1982.



"What more could anyone ask for in a shoot-em-up. Operation Wolf, simply is The Business." **CRASH SMASH.**

© TALENT CORP 1982.



"Skillful programming has taken the superb graphics and addictive game play of the monster arcade hit and faithfully reproduced it on the home computer."



**"THE RIZ"**  
THE GREATEST  
COMPILATION  
EVER



SPECTRUM - AMSTRA  
COMMODORE  
CASSETTE £14.99  
ALSO AVAILABLE ON  
COMMODORE DISK £19.99

# HYPERGUIDE

## LETTER

Dear ACE,

What the hell's all this rubbish about **hypermedia**, **CD-I**, and a **games revolution**. I've never even SEEN a CD-I machine. In fact, people tell me they don't even **cost**. Is this true? Are you just trying to **press my buttons** or what?

Yours sincerely,

Joe Public.

## FRAMES

This is another frame. All the boxes in this article are frames. Each frame is given a name, which is usually the same as the **button** that activated it.

## PRESS MY BUTTONS

Colloquial phrase meaning "attempt to induce a sudden state of uncontrolled emotion, e.g. anger, misery". The term **button** is also used to refer to an element in a hypertext system.



The joy of *Demio-Demo* is that you don't know where the buttons are, making them ideal for the concept of 'pressing shared' with a delightful attention of the cinema in the game.

## LINKED

You just followed a link to this frame. To find out more, check the **large** frame.

You just pressed a button - well, you would have done if this article was implemented in a computer **hypertext** system. And you got here.

## BUTTON

## TURN THE PAGE

## HYPERMEDIA

Hypermedia is a trendy catchphrase that really took off following the development of so-called hypertext systems. These are complex databases which present information to the reader in a format that allows him/her to browse through the information in the database in an unstructured, intuitive fashion. They work as follows...

Information in the database is stored as a series of **frames**, each of which contains a chunk of text. For example, the letter from Joe Public, outlined presented above, is a frame.

The information in each frame is, however, **linked** to related passages of information in other frames. So, for example, if you were consulting a hyper-text version of an encyclopedia, the frame containing the reference for *Arson* might mention the *Slingshot Brothers*, details of whom might be contained in a separate frame. The user could then click his mouse pointer on the words *Slingshot Brothers* and the system would automatically display the new frame with their details.

In this example, the words *Slingshot Brothers* would be termed a

**button** - clicking on buttons enables you to move from one frame to another along predefined links, and the process can be continued indefinitely. For example, the new *Slingshot Brothers* frame might contain a reference to *Biggles*, clicking on which would take you into a whole new area of reference: graphics programming. This movement from frame to frame, exploring the information in the database, is called browsing. Furthermore, each frame need not be limited in size except by storage capacity; of course, so clicking on a reference to *Orlando* in the frame about *Shakespeare* might call up a frame containing the text of the entire play. For this reason, CD-ROM, with its vast memory storage, has rapidly become associated with hypertext systems.

In a hypertext system, frames contain only text. However, people soon realised that they could hold other things as well. Given the right hardware, frames could contain sound samples (click on *Sail of Sails*, hear *Jazzie B.* graphics), or even other software systems (click on *Beach II*, play the game). When these other types of data are incorporated, you're moved from hypertext to hypermedia.

The most important development in games-playing history is now well and truly underway. It all started with something called 'hypertext'. Here's the full story...

How does this guide just work with the other, and how the link works with you too...

To help make things easier, we've broken the links between the frames on this spread and the previous page. If you want to follow your link from a button on page 57, just look for a frame on this spread with the same name as the button.



The *Interactive Book of Records* is a standard hypermedia package system that includes graphics, text, digital audio, and animation. See page 54 for more details.



## EXIST

Yes, this is unfortunately true: at least as far as we were able to ascertain at the time of going to press. None of the major CD-I systems are yet available for public consumption and the **development** systems in use (by software houses) are constantly being upgraded.

However, the software systems that will drive the new machines are already being developed using existing technology. This is the importance of games like *Cosmic Osmo* or **Apprentice**.

These games may look crude, but they really do represent the beginnings of a games revolution, because the concepts they are developing will later drive hardware capable of making your gaming-day dreams come true. Yes, it will be worth the wait.

## SONY

This company have recently been buying or full-owned film companies (left, right, and center). Expect to see interactive versions of famous movies in the near future. Soon you'll be able to Come With The Wind, instead of just going with it.

Sony were also collaborators with Philips on the CD-ROM and CD-I standards.

## PHILIPS

We covered the Philips CD-I machine in ACE issue 24. Scheduled for release during the next couple of years, it's promised at under 2000£.

## CD-I

**Make no mistake: CD-I is totally hyper-confusing! In fact, here in the UK it's common claims to know anything about it, you can be pretty sure they don't. Here are the facts...**

The laser disk technology that has given us compact disks for music, can also be used for computer data. Unfortunately, the **CD-I** is which it is, and has evolved in many different directions.

### CD-ROM

This simply means any CD that holds data in a read-only form, as defined by the Philips/Sony Yellow Book (see the Jargon File).

Microsoft, the company dominant in the PC market because of their operating system MS-DOS, are keen to maintain their exalted position in the future by further developing the CD standard. Amongst other things, they recently installed Greg Hahn (who previously headed up Electronic Arts' CD-I development division, so it's safe to say games considerations aren't entirely absent from their plans).

Microsoft have recently announced three levels of CD-ROM development: CD-ROM, which is really just the basic storage facility; CD-ROM XA, which allows audio and digital signals to be retrieved simultaneously; and CD-ROM XA plus full motion video. The latter uses a special chip that, by compressing/decompressing the data, can speed up the transfer rate.

### CD-I

Most people know that it stands for Compact Disc Interactive. All this means is that the hardware and operating system of the unit which accepts the CD is capable of taking data off the disk and allowing you to interact with it. In order to do this, however, you have

to be able to drag the data off at a considerable speed. It would be no use, for example, if the user wanted to click his mouse button on Wilko Jagger's animated lips and hear the vocals of Jumpin' Jack Flash if the system was so busy animating the lips that it couldn't get the sound data out at the same time.

This problem of data flow is THE big technical bugbear of ALL CD development. In order to animate a full frame of video, lay over a CD-quality soundtrack, and add in all sorts of clever computer wizardry (lighter, for example, or icons to control the system) you need to shift enormous quantities of data at very high speeds. Finding ways of solving this problem has led to a number of different standards being evolved, and this in turn is responsible for the confusion in the market and the fact that there (SPL), isn't a CD-I machine to be seen on the shelves in Dorset.

However, the best known standard is the currently being developed by **Philips and Sony**. So if someone talks about CD-I, they may be simply using the term loosely, or they may specifically be referring to the Philips/Sony system.

### DVI

In the search for rapid data retrieval, RCA developed a chip set that, when bolted onto a PC equipped with a CD drive, solved the problem. DVI can not only produce full frame animation, but it can also handle the sound as well, and - very important for us gamers - it has a superb graphics processor that produces really high-quality computer graphics. You can thus mix goals with video with ease and great effect, which is essential for many current game styles.

CD-I was recently purchased by Intel. Since Intel, Microsoft, and IBM are all closely linked in the PC market it has been suggested

that Microsoft's CD-ROM XA with full motion video is in fact the Microsoft operating system with DVI bolted on. There has, however, been no confirmation of this.

We thus have three main CD-I systems. The Philips standard, which is still under development, has yet to offer full-motion video (but will soon), and is now expected in the shops at the end of this year. But then, it was expected in the shops two years ago. The Philips approach is currently the only one that explicitly promises a unit for use in the home (and therefore for games as well as reference and education). When we will see it is another matter. Furthermore, the graphics processor on the Philips system is not exactly state-of-the-art, so if you're expecting Amiga-quality sprites in dance across your video background, forget it. This means in terms of CD-ROM quality then.

Then we have Microsoft's CD-ROM development program. This is currently targeted at the business arena and PC users in particular though there's no reason why it shouldn't be made available for other machines.

Finally, we have DVI, which is by far the superior system and which may turn out to be the single best CD-ROM XA (the third stage of Microsoft's development, that offers full frame video animation).

It would be lovely if all this confusion sort of itself out in the next couple months and left us with the best possible system on the shelves at the lowest possible price. But it won't. Remember the battle between Betamax and VHS or video recorders? Betamax was the better standard, but VHS won. As for the time schedule, this few years, and don't expect to see your 1990 Christmas stocking bulging with CD-I goodies.



Geiger (left) used to design games like *The Might and Doris* at Microsoft using software generators. Now he's focused on hypergames for systems despite the greater cost involved. (Challenge to technology isn't per se—innovation is.) (Read and write about hypergames on page 24.)

## GAMES REVOLUTION

Just why are games like *Menofish* (the *Claw* [see page 61/62], *Cosmic Dues*, and *Psychobiller*) so important?

These games represent the first wave of products developed using hypermedia principles. They may not be much to look at, but that's because the hardware they're running on has limited memory for digitized pics and sound. What's more, the storage medium is usually floppy-disk, so there's a horrible pause while each new frame is loaded in and displayed on screen.

Not much to look at, but if you're interested in playing staggering interactive epics with full-screen video and CD-quality soundtracks like these products, are more significant than any of the most ambitious 3D games currently on the market.

That's because these early hypergames are all using the software systems that will soon be driving even the most powerful CD-i machines. Not only using them, but developing them, refining them, and going games programmers the experience is working in a completely new way. In few years time, you'll look back at these games and cringe at their primitive appearance, but at the same time you'll know that without them you wouldn't be enjoying that CD-i fantasy you got for Christmas 1995.

**NOW GO TO PAGE 11!**

## JARGON

### ACT

In ORL's EGADS system (see page 63), a sequence of frames/actions.

### ACTION

An element within a frame which, when activated by clicking on it with mouse, for example, calls up another frame.

### CD

Compact Disk: a 12cm laser disk as used in standard CD audio systems.

### CD-COMPACT

A disk format standard that can be read by both Macintosh and IBM machines.

### CD-G

Compact Disk and Graphics: an early CD-i standard developed by Philips and offering CD performance with added graphics facilities.

### CD-I

Generic term for interactive compact disk technology. Also a standard developed by Philips/Sony, offering up to 660 megabytes of storage, eight hours of stereo sound, 32,768 colours for static graphics, 796 for programmed animation.

### CD-M

Interpret term, referring to CD-i with full motion video capabilities.

### CD-ROM

As a generic term, any CD offering read-only storage. More specifically, a standard developed by Microsoft and leading to advanced CD-i potential.

### CD-V

Compact disk video: an analog/digital system from Philips that can play CD-audio and accompany it with a full-motion video signal. Unlikely to have much significance for games.

### CD-VI

Digital video interactive: a chip set developed by BCI and used for property of Intel. Offers full motion video and sound together with graphics manipulation features.

### FRAME

In video terms, a single screen image, updated 30 times a second in NTSC format and 25 times a second in PAL/SECAM formats. In hypermedia terms, a single file within a hyper system that can be displayed on screen and which conventionally contains text/graphic data, however can also be used to contain sound or program code.

### GREEN BOOK

The Philips/Sony book of standards for CD-i technology.

### HYPERCARD

A simple hypermedia system developed for the Apple II/IIx, popular with yuppies, and now bundled free with the machine.

### INTERACTIVE VIDEO

A system that enables a video program and a computer program to run simultaneously under the control of the user.



The Philips CD-i workstation, viewed in 3-D at all.

### ITV

Interactive Video Tape: a hardware system (different versions exist) that turns a VCR into an interactive system by splitting the tape into

different tracks and switching between them under computer control. Covered in ACE issue 30.

### LINK

The connection between two frames, activated when a button is pressed.

### LDRAM

Lower Video Read Only Memory: an analog/digital system used for the BBC's Domesday Project.

### RED BOOK

The Philips/Sony book of standards for CD-audio technology.

### REFLECTIVE OPTICAL DISK

Disk technology whereby a laser inscribes stamper pits on a glass master disk. Copies are then pressed in plastic with metal stamper moulded from the glass master. The copies are then covered with reflective aluminium and sandwiched between layers of transparent plastic. Used for most CD-audio discs.

### SHOT

Alternative term for a hypermedia frame, used by ORL in their EGADS system (see page 61).

### TRON

The Real Time Operating Network: Japan's challenge to CD-i, yet to be seen, evaluated, or—possibly—even produced.

### YELLOW BOOK

The Philips/Sony book of standards for CD-ROM technology.

### YELLOW GREEN STANDARD

A mixed media CD-ROM format, so-called because of its mixture of techniques from the Yellow Book and the Green Book.



# Follow That Clue!

Let's be honest, now. CRL is not one of the country's biggest software houses. Right now, however, its putting together a hypergame system which promises that even the little guy's got hyper if you...

## THE GAME

Remember Dennis Wheatley? The bloke who used hair-wide hairy spiders crawling across the living room in search of innocent female flesh in *The Devil Makes Three*? Although best known for his Duke de Richleieu black magic stories, Wheatley (grandfather of Tomark's Dominic Wheatley, just in case you don't know) was also a prolific author in other areas and one particular oddity he churned out was a sort of SFY murder kit called *Heresith the Clue*.

Produced in collaboration with a Mr Lark, NYC came in a neat little folder that contained a number of documents, some photographs, some press cuttings, and various 'evidence' in little bags. The story centres round terrorists in London just before the outbreak of the Second World War. As Assistant Commissioner of the Met, you have received a tipoff regarding the bastards, and when one of them gets killed you have to find identity and locate the gang and then establish a link between each member before finally taking the pulp party.

When Clueset Chambers of CRL spotted this little artwork, the first thing that sprung into his mind was that it would make an ideal hypertext project. It has all the right characteristics (see the article on page 28): lots of visual and written data, all linked together and all creating logical 'pathways' for the would-be sleuth to follow with his magnifying glass on, in a hypergame, with his mouse.

The first thing to do, however, was to come up with a software system. As Clues says, hypertext...a quite unlike a normal game's programming project. With the latter, you get a lot of pre-programmed and

CRL have come up with Britain's first games-dedicated hypergame generator.

graphic artists sweating away for months on state-of-the-art graphics and sound modules... which are finally shown off to best advantage by a fancy game design. With a hypergame, however, the actual software system is comparatively easy to program: it's the data that's the problem. NYC offered all the data on a plate. All that was needed was the 'engine' to drive it.

## THE SYSTEM

Enter 35-year-old John Casey, who in six months produced Britain's first games-dedicated hypergame gen-

## Hardy Stuff

The next EGAD game comes from a novel and Philip K Dick and much of the material is drawn from an original novel and some black-and-white source material. The idea was to produce a game which would be a sort of a detective kit. This is a detective kit with a computer which would be used to identify the suspect at all later stages when the suspect's identity was known. One of the jobs of the computer was to help you to identify the suspect at all later stages when the suspect's identity was known. One of the jobs of the computer was to help you to identify the suspect at all later stages when the suspect's identity was known.



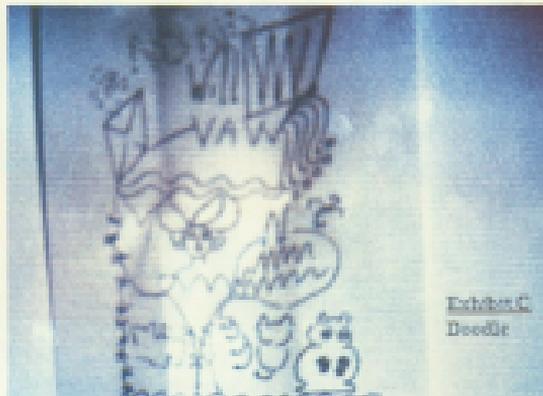
This shows a typical 300 baud dial-up development file screen. The window indicates the current location of business which, when clicked on by the player, will lead to new footage. Naturally these recordings are not developed during play but are either on floppy diskette or on hard disk.



One of the original pieces in *They Don't Sleep*.



One of the things in EGA2 takes a whole load of the user's details, checks his name, address, and then constructs the adventure with instructions to either forward to a chosen e-mail address. One of the designers at Intergraph is the ability to mix all sorts of different users for the user, email, mail, and local.



erator. Called EGAS, it allows a non-technical game designer to assemble data in the form of digitized images, text documents, Deluxe Paint files, sound samples and interactive video and then link them together into an interactive network of exploration and semi-static responses.

EGAS actually stands for Expert Graphic Adventure Systems, which might lead you to think that it was something along the lines of Intergraph's Graph-a-Adventure Creator, but in fact nothing could be further from the truth. There is no 'parser' or other adventure software-type features; instead you have a true hypertext engine, very similar in many respects to Apple's Hypercard system and quite capable of turning out a game like Merlin or Cosmic Sam's—but in colour rather than simply in black and white (Gems was monochrome only). It's also much easier to use than the game designer's point of view because it's tailor-made for producing games rather than the jack-of-all-trades nature of Hypercard.

EGAS uses typical hypertext terminology (see page 28-29). The more formal 'frames' is called a

movie amount to Hypercard standards and there isn't any animation involved (the real EGAS game will feature animation—see panel). Furthermore, in keeping with the time period, all digitized images are in slightly out-of-focus black-and-white. On the other hand, there's a lot of scope here for branching, and you're unlikely to finish the game in an afternoon, or possibly even in a month. You'll find yourself backtracking through various screens and following different routes (time and time again as you correlate all the references and build up your case).

EGAS should be available in February or March in the Actual Screen-sets label for £19.95 for the SE. Other versions should follow later. Watch out for the ACE edition of the first British hypertext game in the very near future. Meanwhile, we've only got one gripe: why not make EGAS available on the open market in the same way as the old adventure titles. The Quill and GRC were that, would really challenge the status quo?

## The System

The EGAS control panel is seen in the game developer. The first task is to choose a graphics frame, which can be any size (this is a Deluxe Paint file). Once loaded into the system and installed, it is displayed on the screen left of the screen and becomes the current view or frame.

The designer then uses the mouse to position buttons on the frame. For example, if you wanted the program to display another frame showing a gallery, you'd position with the mouse all required data items. The program retrieves on the job of status in the current frame, you would proceed as follows:

- 1 Click once, position the button frame in the position where you want the button to be (in this case on the job of displaying).
- 2 Click the two lines with the graphics label below data and the frame label line number, telling EGAS what they are called and where they are.
- 3 Repeat EGAS for additional data and frame lines. It is activated when the button is pressed.

4 Use the mouse to define the text button.

Other features include a control frame, so that if during play the status frame can be turned to another but then later on return for a specified predefined amount of time. EGAS will redisplay the previous frame.

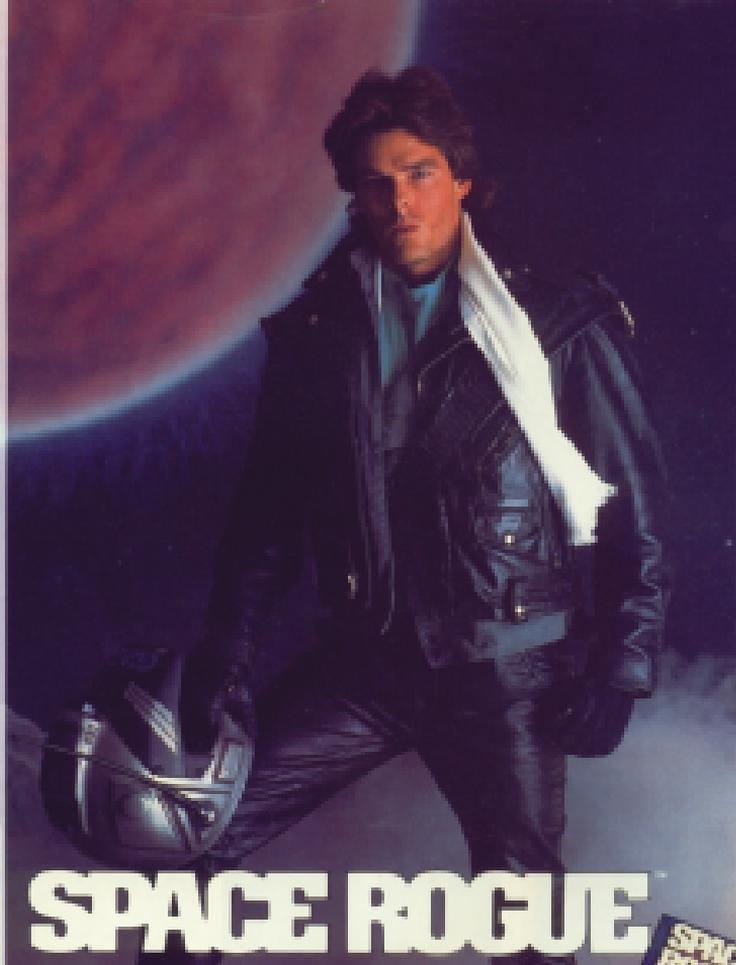
The user also may eventually be able to define a frame label and an action which, when pressed, can take the user to any one of a number of frames. The probability of moving to any particular frame can be defined to limit the response.

EGAS is very generous all things being equal, but it does not include the ability to do a rough guide, a digitized monochrome picture or even to illustrate the status below an object line.

EGAS offers several examples of how to use the system, which is around 10 screens of good quality content if completed in colour. The examples can be used as a guide, or you could have your own quality content. A price of around £5 sounds attractive and they can always be downloaded in colour.

Quill and GRC - Expert Graphic Adventure System, System 2000, Intergraph

CRG aren't logging their systems all so themselves, they've given a copy of EGAS to Pargue McNeill, the man who used to use adventure generator The Sloggs and Robin of Sherwood (see page 28). This connection between hypertext generation and the old adventure collections may not be entirely coincidental: is the hypertext the IPW's replacement for traditional subprogramming?



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# ACE AT ATEI

RIK HAYNES PLAYS THE SPRING CROP OF UK COIN-OP RELEASES

The Amusement Trades Exhibition International (ATEI) coin-op show at London's Olympia exhibition centre is the UK's premier arcade trade event, showcasing a myriad of new coin-ops, slot-machines and pinball decks, as well as the more traditional leisure gear like go-karts, inflatable castles and shooting galleries.

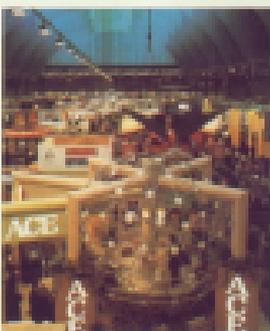
Visitors to the show consisted of middle-aged sales-libs, parties of flannel-wearing Japanese, and the obligatory teenage gamers, out for unlimited credit play on the latest coin-op consoles. Quite a few peeps from the computer software biz turned up as well - perhaps they were looking to snap up a licence or trying to get some inspiration from the games on display? They were unlikely to achieve either. The most refreshing aspect of the show's attendees was the large proportion of teenage girls playing coin-ops and enjoying the show - hopefully this finally dispenses the general preconception that arcade games are strictly a male-only leisure pursuit.

## LEADING LIGHTS

Bentley, one of Japan's major coin-op manufacturers, used ATEI to launch three new arcade games in the UK: *Alamo*, *Quartz II* and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. Based around the superlative James Cameron movie *Alamo* 2, the first of these games features digitised skills from the film and colourfully gruesome alien creature antics, as you clean up an alien-infested off-world colony with the help of ho-



Teenage mutant ninja turtles, get into gear...



ATEI at Olympia: the old-fashioned coin-op

gans, grenade launchers and flame throwers. The game is a simultaneous two-player multi-stage shoot'em-up which links between horizontal and vertically-scrolling backdrops and static, head-on sections. Its sprites and backdrops are very reminiscent of the film, but the action is a little repetitive despite the approach of multi-stage sections. Still well worth a look though, especially if you're a fan of the film. By the way, William Gibson - cyberpunk guru and author of the *Countdown* sci-fi novel, is currently working on a script for the *Alamo* 3 movie.

*Quartz II* is the latest in the classic Nemesis series of shoot'em-ups, featuring all the power-ups you've come to know and love - laser, missile and double, to name but a few. It will of course do a storm in the arcades, but its gameplay and visual style, rooted back in '85, are starting to look dated now when compared to the likes of *X-Multiply* and *R-Type II*.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles uses ACE 28 for more on Mutual model was the first Kluge-in game on stand. It's full of character and charm, as you move from your teenage turtle town dwelling to rid the city of villainous scum and save an ice reporter April O'Neil from the evil clutches of the Shredder - in a comic, simultaneous four-player martial arts beat'em-up. After all, when you live in a sewer and are trained in the art of Ninjitsu by a "radical rat mentor", you don't want to be turned into Turtle soup or wad!

The veteran US coin-op maker, Atari, produced two new titles to an appreciative audience. *Rite* is a 3D-perspective variation on the venerable theme, casting you a two-tactile game. Its graphics are bright and colourful, but the new random damage of *Interrogated* coin-ops may soon become *Bravo* - if it hasn't already. For more reading visit

Teenage mutant ninja turtles are back! (Illustration by Mike Jones)



Alamo 2 is the new coin-op

birds, the king and eagerly awaited successor to Superstars! Set fifty years after a nuclear holocaust, *Avastari* is a *Mad Max* road-warrior back action, featuring car customization options and eight tracks including city, desert and off-rover backdrops.

Alex's Namco subsidiary also has an interesting coin-up on show. *Fuutball* is a shobun (buggible) race simulator incorporating a thrilling new twist – simultaneous head-to-head competitive play with up to eight people. Many coin-up manufacturers are looking into multi-player arcade games at the moment and Namco believes its newly developed hardware used in *Fuutball* gives the company the jump over its competitors.

#### BEST OF THE BEST

Among the other interesting coin-up games on stand were *Saturn's Round Up* (a Super-Bella Force racing game featuring five-stage Chase HQ-style racing in a three-screen sit-down cabinet), Sega's *Up-N-Ritzy* Line of five and Sega's *Shimobiki Shadow Dancer*. Items excellent A-Type I also made an appearance.

*Final Fight* from Capcom is a Double-Drop-on-style save-the-girlie kick-'em-dead-'em-up set in 1990's Metro-City, a town set too distant to flee, rick with slums, uptown and bay area full of familiar-looking skyscrapers and scowling inhabitants. Nothing original to be found here, but fun nevertheless.

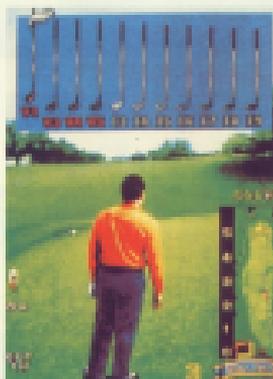
Recently out on computer formats and the Sega Megadrive, *Football* II finally made his coin-up debut and in the coin-up states, *Top Dog* came out tops with its 3-D scrollable arcade adventure featuring a kowalski monkey-escape hero complete with American Football helmet. Could this possibly be the New Zealand Story of 1990?

*Tennis* obviously has '90 in mind with its World Cup football game, strangely titled *World Cup 89*. The game looks a bit like *Autogen's* *Elite* Higher Soccer with a side-of-30 view, and plays like *Microprose Soccer*. Interestingly the player control is slow and jerky. When will Atari's brilliant *Kick Off* be upgraded to coin-up format?

The most off-beat coin-up of the show was Mitchell's *Pling*. You control a little chap (who looks a bit like the sports-out of *Atkinson's* fan-favorite *Pink Flamingo* computer game) at the bottom of a static screen trying to avoid a giant red sphere which bounces manly around the screen. If you shoot the ball, it splinters into two smaller spheres, thus doubling the chance of you getting hit. This continues until the



They are these people awaiting *Little Nippon* (left) / *Crash*, *Super*, playing the *Superstar* / *Crash* / *Superstar* / *Superstar* games.



Then come the old and game of the moment, *World Cup 89*.

sphere's get too small and they're destroyed with another hit – then it's onto another back-drop, only with more squawky birds and some on-screen obstacles. *Planet City* is what!

#### AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

As the amusement industry diversifies away from coin-operated machine entertainment, it has started to look back to its roots for inspiration. First there was the renaissance in pinball machines, even culminating in a *Robotnik* pinballer – are we taking *StreetView*? Now another old face from the distant past, has been resurrected, reimagined and related for the '90's little brown ladies: the go-cart!

Remember the good old days – the driving down to Southdown/Dea's go-cart track at Peter Pan's amusement park, the stretch of burning rubber sabbat, the obligatory broken brakes, the older drivers who deliberately slammed into your cart when their parents

weren't looking? Well don't get too nostalgic, 'cause all that's changed now as go-carts get cyber and become the latest "toy" for corporate leisure weekends. These days, go-carting consists of indoor Le Mans-type inspired races, yappers for whatever they're called this year, and four-wheel air-cooled 150cc, starts rapidly if speeds in excess of 40mph. I wonder when the updated *IndyCar* version they is due for release...



World Cup 89: the game of the moment, *World Cup 89*.



# 1

AM RAVE! AM RAVE! AM RAVE!

## RAVE!

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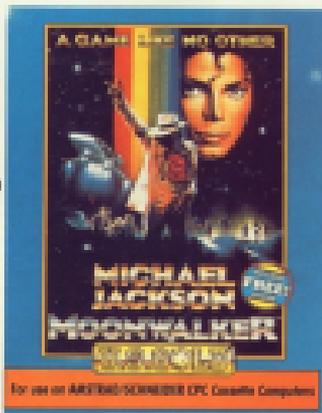
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# 3

### Michael Jackson Moonwalker from US Gold

After conquering the world of pop music, Michael Jackson channelled his energy and talent into making his first film. Now US Gold present the home computer version of that film, embracing the Superstar format. And the rhythm is Day 50. Transforms into a futuristic urban roller and ultimately beat the drug peddling MR DICK in the digital world of MOONWALK, also a game like no other.

You'll be unable to tear your self away from the screen even when it's time to endstage! Mark Higgins - BT Format



For use on AMSTRAD-COMMODORE CPC Casette Computers

#### Moonwalker

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# IG

# 2

## Laser Squad from Bolesoft

Laser Squad combines strategy with the use of grenades and a variety of automatic weapons to defeat your foe. You can take the part of hunter or hunted - play with a friend and take turns at tipping sides. One player online plays against artificial intelligence to fight a dozen 3 level!

Laser Squad is a side game that is equally playable and can definitely be recommended as one for the library of any gamer/player. **Andy Smith, Amiga Format**



### Laser Squad

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Amibool CPC	Cass	£ 9.95	0950090
Amibool CPC	Disk	£ 4.95	0951140
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Amiga	Disk	£ 9.95	0951508

# GET ONE FREE!

# 4

## Operation Thunderbolt from Ocean

Follow up to last year's 1st hit 'Operation Wolf'. The game brings you enhanced shooter up action for one or two players. Thunderbolt not only reproduces the fast-paced exciting gameplay of Wolf, but adds 3D action to the screen as you test your nerve against crawling jets, helicopters, tanks and many more awesome adversaries! See the laser light, or the battlefield war, but watch out for those air-borne invaders.

'Wolf' is the only way to describe 'Thunderbolt' - not a game for the faint-hearted!  
from the World Renowned Action

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Amibool CPC	Disk	£ 4.95	0950580
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# The Colour of Pratchett

OK, so what's our excuse for putting Terry Pratchett in the magazine, eh? He's brilliantly funny (well, his books are) and – oh yes – he uses computers to produce his literary gems. Definitely advanced computer entertainment...



Terry Pratchett, *Discworld*

**A**sk anyone in the street about Terry Pratchett and half the people will say "lots!" and the rest will say "yeah, but... but... but read all his books!"

Terry Pratchett grabbed his first slice of cult status with the initial *Discworld* book, *The Colour of Magic*, an introduction to the flat planet called the Disc and its wild magical lifestyle and characters. *The colour of magic*, as it turns out, is a sort of polyphonic, but the cartoon thread through all the books has always been, not the magic, but a very sense of humour: ideas that set you up pages before they hit you, coupled with a complete mastery of the footnote gag.

Up to date there have been eight *Discworld* novels, clearly to be joined by a ninth, *Missing Pictures*, but nowadays less time is free to actually write as Terry finds himself in demand as a speaker at sci-fi and fantasy conventions, doing signing tours, and answering the phone to people doing their GCSE projects on him.

**You get quite a lot of mail now, something like four times as much as you did last year. What do you get besides GCSE students?**

"Down the bottom of the pile to get answered are the people that think the way to write to a fictional author you like is to be rude, in what they think is a funny kind of way. Like 'Well, it's nothing to you because he got nothing better to do with his time'. Okay, before of the job, August 1993 we'll answer that one. The ones you like are the ones who say 'I never write to an author before', that sort of thing. You get some teaching ones, and very nice ones. But the thing is when I'm not messing around with the computer (thing to get it to do what I want, I can quite often spend a morning 'doing the office work', which means I'm not writing).

**What did you want to be when you were little?**

An astronomer. I thought it was all looking through telescopes, you see, but in fact what it is, is sitting in a hut in Completion doing mathematics. My daughter wants to be a Marine Biologist, and she thinks that's all swimming with dolphins. I said to her, it's all sitting in a hut in Completion doing mathematics. Funny thing is, I met someone who is a Marine Biologist and he told me that's exactly what it consists of.

**You recently collaborated with comicbook writer Neil Gaiman on *Good Omens*. You both use PC's as do you communicate by bulletin boards?**

"Obviously the number of you who get what I've done is a sort of literary feedback, but the public response always divides into two camps.

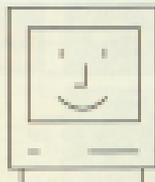
'When we were doing the early drafts we thought we'd be incredibly modern and Jerry Pincombe about it and open the stuff down the line to each other. Neil lives in West Sussex, and so we both live in a rural telephone area. We both use Prosemail, basically the same program, and we both had 9600. We ended up doing it at 300 baud because the modeme rate at 1200 was so high. By the time we kept ringing each other up late, and you turn yours on 9600, (because all I'm getting is a row of little boxes...) we might as well have 'modem'd' to each other in Morse code and it would have been faster. Anyway, the post is more or less reliable, you might as well just bring a disk in the post.

**Do you linker with your computer when you're supposed to be working on it?**

"I do an awful lot of tinkering, but largely because I'm neurotic about backing up. I've got three machines, large IBM, upstairs. I back up to all three, simply because I get so nervous about losing stuff. I lost Mord the day after I sent it to the publisher, because I foolishly formatted the hard disk. (So they had a real sense but I didn't. And when six months work nearly goes up the chimney it makes you a little nervous. Tinkering has it's place. You can't do there and pound out words every waking moment, so tending your head in frustration against a computer casing is the next best thing to a hobby."

**Where did the original idea for *Discworld* come from?**

"I damn, haven't the foggiest idea. No, I know where bits of it came from, that's straightforward into-European mythology. The rest of it just evolved. Now, since I actually work on ideas for *Discworld*, I say I'd like to write a *Discworld* book with Geoff as the central character, then think about how I'd go about it with the early ones, though, the stuff just formed up. I think that the *Discworld* in Geoff's hands is a much more interesting place than it was in *Colour of Magic*. I can do more with it now. It's very pretty impressive



**'I don't want a smiling face talking me to work. I want the thing to go bang!'**

from the kind of medieval cultivation which all high fantasy takes place in, to something which is rapidly approaching the Renaissance. This is okay, I think, because you can get more gags out of that.'

**You use an Atari Portfolio don't you, for taking notes and even writing on the screen? Do you find it reliable enough?**

The girl I have been one of the first people to have got one. There are undoubtedly certain traps in it, when I first got it, I took it to the World SF Convention in America, and it was great. I had about a thousand words and a spreadsheet on it and then it hung up. Rewriting wouldn't work, I tried everything, I even replaced the cells with the ones I got with it, which I now assume were dead, but couldn't get it back. Then when I got home I tried flash batteries and it came back. I was understandably curious about why I didn't get a Low Battery warning like it says in the manual. So I hung up the Portfolio again. And they say 'Oh yes, it's the batteries, see?' There's the problem. The slope is no steeper the Portfolio has trouble with it.' So essentially what they were telling me was that if I use Duracells, which are the logical choice, I might not get a warning 'til you supply long-life cells with it, I guessed. In the end I thought, what the hell. I made a joint offer that for not keeping the batteries in for longer than a month. So what's happened now is that, well I got one of the very first ones, and you know what happens to people who get the first ones of any machine?

**They basically dug-test the machine for the manufacturer!**

Right. It would appear that what Atari were telling everyone about the batteries isn't so. It's rather kind of lag you get when certain essential files get to a specific size. I have to say that once we got through that lagged stage it's been fine. I did have problems at American customs, but with them looking at the thing because they wanted a CD to do it, well trying to take it apart to see if it had a load of bloody bombs in it if I've been stung mightily like a 64X RAMcard from a shop that seemed to get NAT on before. But put it this way, if I dropped it and it broke I'd say another one the same day it's that useful. Anything bigger than the Portfolio is an item of luggage.

**What's it like to type on?**

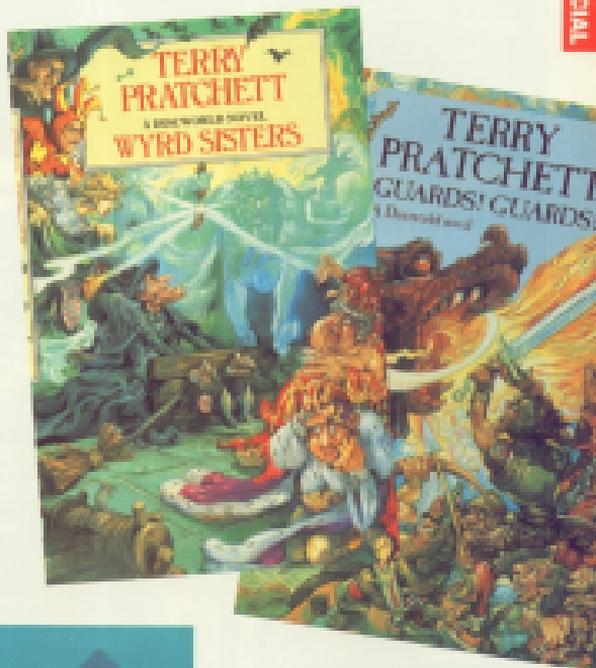
I can type very fast on it. I did 10000 words in 10 days, which isn't my average, but it's bloody good for spending a lot of time in airplanes and at conventions and stuff like that. I was still keeping up a healthy output.

**If you could write anything other than Discworld stuff, what would you do?**

In the early summer Good Omens, by myself and Neil Gaiman, will be coming out, and that's a departure from Discworld. It is fantasy I suppose. I don't know. There is no way I could be a serious novelist, which is a shame, because I have a rather good forensic horror obs. But I know I can't do it. I did think I should find some guy who can do it and come to some arrangement.

**What's your favorite type of music?**

Jim Steinman, or Jim Steinman or telling that Jim Steinman, quite often. I've got a lot of Jim Steinman and Musical. Alvin, heard of him? I got 'Halloween by Trans-Siberian Rhapsody, which was actually a CD of music. The CD-track was superb, but the rest of the album is pretty so-so. But it's okay.



**Sharghigan I've played that 33 1/2 hours!**

Sharghigan
The Color of Magic
The Light Fantastic
Equal Parts
None
Worldshapers
Guanying
Pyramids
Guards/Guards
Being Heroes last November 93

**New On Books**

Well, there was the latest Pagan calendar about 25 years ago the end, then there was Dark Side of the Sun in one of early cult books, the Thunderbolt Caric had some cult book, the most cut book, the fuckers' trips comprising of fuckers too new, big guys that need, and a whole lot of other things, volume nearly finished out of course. Good Omens last last Steinhilber, last last.

**Do you like computer games?**

I've yet to find a game on the IBM which comes close to a moderately good game on the Amstrad CPC. I've got we've got. Things like the original Batman, I used to sit and play that for hours. Blaster on the PC isn't too bad. I suppose, I've played that till it hurts. Oh, and there's a rather nice little game called Scowth—you just drag around trying to avoid enemy aircraft and bomb their installations. The graphics are dreadful, but the gameplay is extremely good. I've seen a lot of Amiga and Atari games where the graphics are good, but I'm not certain how good the gameplay is... I got want to do them and shoot them heavily. Dr. Mavis Winon, on the Amstrad was another one where I got totally addicted. I got through without the extra lives FONG, though.

**What would you like computers to do that they don't currently?**

They're not bright enough to anticipate what you want, I don't mind them if they're stupid, what you want my nose is a sensor of intelligence, but deep abiding stupidity underneath! The first time I looked at an Apple II/Book, I switched it on and a little smiley face appeared and words to the effect of 'Please wait...'. After about 30 seconds of this, I suddenly thought, I don't WANT a big smiley face telling me to wait, I want the thing to go BONG and there you are! I got very annoyed with the difficulty they put in your way. Well you're the thought of actually going back to a typewriter again! lol



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"DO ME A FAVOUR...  
PLUG ME INTO A SEGA"

# ACE FLASHBACK!

**T**ear your hair out, nostalgia freaks: this is the final episode of the great ACE Flashback, covering the entire decade of computer entertainment.

Never had great for computing the ACE Flashback, but inevitably we're had to omit some items due to shortage of space. However, we'll be glad to hear from anyone who's got a favourite 'nostalgia item' that's been missed out, and drop us a line at the ACE office, marked ACE Flashback, and we'll run as many of them as we can fit in future issues. The address is 30-32 Farnborough Lane, London, EC3R 3AL.

Now, for the last instalment, catch up on 1986-1989; the micro boom is over, but the 16-bit revolution is yet to come!

## 1986

### ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Launch of the year in the UK was the long-awaited debut of the Commodore Amiga, shown at the Commodore Computer show in May in its original A1000 configuration. Hard to recall that this beast would set you back a cool £1,699.25 at the time, and that Commodore was busy displaying its potential as a games machine. Meanwhile the rival S2002 was selling strongly at £800 (with a colour monitor) - Commodore had, in effect, given Atari another year's lead start.

The potential of the games console, back in a new and technically advanced form, raised its head with the arrival of the Sega Master System in the autumn. Other new machines were simply variations on a theme: Commodore added an initial disk drive to the C128 and called it the C129D, and later in the year (at the CES) into its now-familiar more compact-looking added another 256K RAM and a second disk drive to the PC20; the Spectrum became the Spectrum 128 in February and the redesigned Plus 2 version came out in the autumn (see below); Atari produced a magazine version of the ST, the 1040ST; Acorn upgraded the BBC standard at long last, bringing out the Master series.

### CODE MASTERS

Founded October 1986

Set up by brothers David and Richard Darling and their father Jim, after a year of writing for Masterlinker. Prior to that David and Richard had written 76, 200 games at Galactic Software while still at school.

Code Masters publishes on the pile 'em high, sell 'em cheap basis, lots of titles, at an impulse buy price. An extraordinary high profile PR campaign in 1988-89 by West End consultants Lyone Franks put the Darlings on TV and in the national press, making them one of the very few programming 'fabulous'. **First title:** SMS Simulator. **First ever seller:** SMS Simulator (all formats)



After 1986, master master became the ACE PR campaign.

### EVENTS

■ Alan Sugar buying out Sir Clive Sinclair was the sort of event that turns up in spoof predictions - in April 1988 it actually happened. Rumour was spread that Sinclair was being bought out, following the Maxwell debacle the previous year. That it should be Amstrad, whose chairman Alan Sugar had been seen to refer to the Spectrum as a 'bright yellow tin', made it the story of the year.

Amstrad spent £5 million on the Sinclair name, its stock and the rights to its technology. Sinclair Research continued to exist, and Sir Clive, free from the encumbrance of debts and warehouses piled high with Spectrums and QIs, went on to form Cambridge Computer to develop portable computers - the 286 came out a year later, and Amstrad was founded to further research into water scale integration. Amstrad dropped the QI. By a stone and took just four months to put together the Plus 2, with its conventional keyboard and integral tape deck.

■ The Festival hackers, Steve Gold and Robert Sullivan, made the news again when their case (see 1985) finally came to trial and the pair were found guilty of forgery. The fines totaled £1,300, the costs a further £2,000. Gold and Sullivan immediately appealed and the case dragged back into the courts.

The ACE Flashback covers the final stretch of the decade, and reveals the Amiga, the PC200, and the console conversion of Ultimate...



The Amiga Master system in the form intended to attract a volume of sales market targeted in the 1980s. Thanks to Hyper.

## Birth of the Home PC

Just as significant as the Amiga launch in the long term was Amstrad's decision to upgrade the study PC model with a range of 16-bit computer machines of progressively greater power. This meant that the software available for them. This was to have serious implications for consumers, and led only the US to build the PC as a home computer. But Amstrad's intention was to have the computer for a similar price to the other PCs.

Amstrad's initial, however, avoided the low-cost-home-computer set-up as well as, in fact, as a complete system (continued to that stage), the market was wide open for competing such as Spectrum with the British machines. One and finds a greater PC's games for prices between £100-£1,000.

Amstrad's PC1512, starting at £149, were even cheaper. In addition, you could pick up a PC 1512 from a high street store such as Decca's rather than going through a specialist dealer, and Amstrad's high profile in the press ensured that it was the one Amstrad meant to become Britain's computer computer in much the same way as Intel's meant to become America's. Amstrad's move to make PCs affordable may have deflated the reasons that the company encountered earlier, notably in the corporate market. It is a matter of weeks after the launch for word to spread that the PC1512 remains unbeaten.

General word with microcomputer business. Ray Sugar called the business a ball of fire, computers were bought and sold, and sold in Britain. Amstrad's computers, notably a coming for Amstrad PC1512, with Amstrad's Ray Sugar making suitably intelligent remarks about the need to be first in the first place.

■ In May, US Gold, software publisher with the Midas touch, slipped up. It had pulled off a coup in securing a computer games license to the 1986 World Cup and all was set for for a sunshine number one game when the company discovered it was unable to get an original game based on the World Cup out in time.

Delatantly unimpressed, the company went ahead with all the intended packaging - the logos, the scorecards, the posters - and in the absence of a original program included Amstrad's two year old World Cup Soccer. Which perhaps needs to have been a disaster in itself, but World Cup Carnival wasn't being billed as a re-release, and at £2.95, it wasn't priced as one.

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

### ULTIMATE SOFTWARE

Once the undisputed masters of Spectrum programming with hits such as *Blade Runner*, *Flight Line* and *Bliss II*. Dropped out of 8-bit programming, chiefly after being taken on by US Gold at the beginning of 1986.

Leading Ultimate personnel set up a new company in 1986, to develop programs for Nintendo game consoles. Near have no links with the British market.

## GAMES OF THE YEAR

Ironium was everyone's idea of the ultimate sports-smelling shoot 'em up. *Starglider*, with its 3D graphics and fast scrolling, was one of the first games to demonstrate the potential of the 16-bit machines. Access's golf simulation *Leisurelord* was a first favourite for its playability.

# 1987

## ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

The launch of the Amiga 500 and 4000 in March gave gamers a right choice between the 4580 and the 520ST as high specification leisure machines. Software houses backed down to produce titles for the two, although Amiga buyers were often frustrated by publishers' tendency to develop games for the ST and for the Amiga version to be something of an afterthought. But then, at the time, some people were still sceptical about the Amiga 500. It was £300 more expensive than the ST, which by then had been on sale for 18 months.

The Spectrum that everyone had been waiting for, the Plus II with a built-in disk drive, duly appeared in May. And, a year after that Amstrad layout, we see the fruits of Sir Clive's labours since then with the 286,



Ray Sugar, Amstrad's high profile and smart marketing director.

"It's the difference between people buying the machine or not. It's all a bloody pile in it. And if they say they want bright pink spots on it? It's that too. What's the size of the bagging my hand against a bank wall and saying, "Yes, I want the damn lot, wouldn't I?"

Ray Sugar, after the 1986 marketing campaign for Amstrad's PC1512. (Interviewed by Graham D. Hill)



Ironium really wasn't *Ironium*. The game was a remarkably smooth and challenging action shooter that was only, and in comparison to a number immediately market machines, ordinary that Amstrad was just a few lines of Amstrad's *Bliss II* in many of course from's named one of the few adequate ways to capture the power of the machine.

a laptop machine which had started life in another era as Pandas.

Amstrad enhanced its PC series with the launch of the PC1640, and a range of portable machines in the autumn. Atari introduced an updated version of the ST branded the Mega ST, and Commodore began to attempt to go back to its business roots with a range of PC compatibles.

All these machines were widely expected and with the possible exception of the 286 left little surprises. It was left to Amstrad, at all prices, to provide the year's most sensational launch with the first Archimedes machines.

The Archimedes 260 and 400 machines used Amstrad's own RISC technology - and were something of a world-first at the price. They ran at a terrifically 4-megs (millions of instructions per second), it could display 256 colours from a palette of 4,096 at a screen resolution of 640x512, and the eight voice digital sound could play in glorious stereo. And just in case it wasn't abundantly clear that here was the ultimate games machine made flesh, David Braben had run up a little number called *Zarch* to demonstrate the Archimedes' manufacturing capabilities.

The Archimedes as games machine debate still rages. The main problem for the original 300s was that while £1,000 was a startingly low price for a RISC machine, it was too high for a games price. Secondly was the problem of support: games programmers were not getting to grips with the complexities of the Atari ST, and had scarcely begun to tap the resources of the Amiga's custom chips. That they could be able to make RISC a their spare time was just too much to ask.

### ELECTRONIC ARTS

Founded 1982: 1982: 1982: April 1987  
The machine left its position as director of marketing at Apple Computer to set up Electronic Arts. The company aimed to produce products in the emerging entertainment and creativity market. Amstrad's games such as *Pinball Construction Set*, *MULTI* and *Arcton*, the paint, graphics, animation and music *Discreet* series.



Pinball Construction Set just Electronic Arts on the way.

has, in its various versions, become a classic. The UK division of Electronic Arts was set up in 1987, publishing European-developed product as well as programs imported from the US.

First title: *Pinball Construction Set*  
Best ever seller: *Worldwide Pinball Construction Set* (all formats): UK: Popshare ST, Amiga

## EVENTS

■ *Windows* hit the news for the first time in November, when Amiga gamers were startled by the message "Something wonderful has happened - your Amiga is alive". A *Wings* Killer package was duly programmed and distributed. It all seemed like a nice day wonder.

■ Now that PC's, such as Amstrad 2512 and 3640, were going into the home, it became worthwhile for

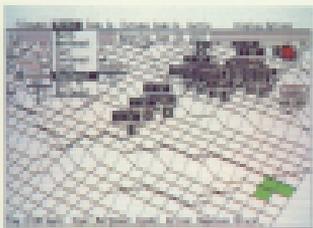
companies to start producing PC games software, or importing from the US, where the PC was still the ST and Amiga put together as a home machine. The UK, very slowly, began to catch up.

■ In July, Steve Gold and Robert Schifren, now collectively known as The Frontal Hackers, were able to appeal against their conviction for flagrant after breaking into Frontal machines back in 1985. British Telecom decided to appeal against the appeal, and the case went to the House of Lords.

The saga finally came to an end in 1988, after three years going through the courts, when the Law Lords ruled that the appeal which quashed Gold and Schifren's convictions, should stand.

## GAMES OF THE YEAR

■ Universal Military Simulator, from Rainbow, raised the myth that wargames, however intelligent, had to appear on-screen as though they were programmed on a Z801.



UMS - changing the face of war-gaming.

■ Incentive's *Order* proved that Great Leap Forward was still possible on 8-bit machines.

■ Roboko, from Hexxon, was a highly original arcade style game, well up to the company's usual standard.

■ Guild of Thieves established that *Magnetic Scrolls' Fate* was only the beginning.

# 1988

## ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

After the frenzy of previous years, 1988 was a quiet year for new machines. The games market looked settled with the Amiga and ST cutting it out for the high end market and the Spectrum, Commodore 64 and CPC taking care of 8-bit. The only unknown quantities were the much-expected return of the console - particularly the rather puzzling fact that while Nintendo was flexing its muscles and clearing up in Japan and the US, it was virtually invisible in the UK - and was there/ wasn't there a touch in PC games? Despite the fact that currently (in 1990) software houses are busy producing PC versions left, right, and centre, no-one really seems to know the answer to the last question. Here at ACE, we're keen to put out PC gamers, but how many there are out there remains a mystery.

In addressing the last question, Amstrad stepped in for the first time. At the same time as launching a set of PCs designed to give Amstrad its break in the

"From the instant you're born of you, Members of Spectrum have you. Don't worry - we're not - at Amstrad we want your money!"  
 With more features, superior graphics, better sound, Amstrad 1988 addresses yours.



Maximum value from yours is being more than a member, an Amstrad member! Regular research, professional advice, and Amstrad member are all your interests.

"I believe people are smart, not dumb. If you can give people things before the price of Volkswagen, I'm sure they will buy them."

John Forbes, Commodore's chief executive in 1988. Amstrad 1988 was a success story.



### PC 500 TROUBLE

Demarcated straight for the PC500s, when first users at the end of the graphics system built in its standard, the sturdy CISA display on the laptop PC500 - there was no more taking advantage. Here we had a PC intended for the games market but not clear that standard set it and its graphics were already out of date. On the other hand the use of a monitor - a nice-to-have extra that we'd not mention was almost a no-brainer.

As a result it was a machine that was not a machine. To make matters worse and even more under-estimated, when users of the PC500 (and Commodore) were more than interested, many found some operating system bugs. The PC500 got off to a start that probably never really recovered.

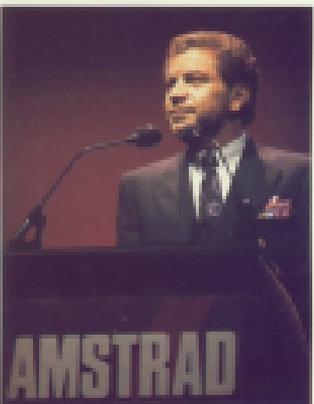
corporate market, it also lacked on a 'tower' PC, the Sinclair PC260.

## EVENTS

■ Alan Sugar, chairman and founder of Amstrad, and if you believe the Amstrad image-making machine, an East End barber boys made good, although more reliable talk would have it that the main drive comes from a chance A level, was awarded an honorary degree by City University, London.

■ After seven years in which the price of chips fell consistently, a succession of measures taken in the USA to protect its own semi-conductor industry against the flood of low-cost chips from Japan led to component prices rising and a worldwide shortage of DRAM dynamic memory chips. Harder to wire the low-cost PC clone manufacturers, with their large memory, low profit margins, Amstrad was forced to raise prices a couple of times during the year. Alan took the opportunity to put the ST back to £299 - see below. Only Commodore managed to remain unaffected from this pricing sea-rise.

■ In June Commodore finally brought the price of Amiga down to £299.99, and sales of the machine took off at long last. For the first time the ST and Amiga were selling on equal terms. The ST had been selling at a standard £299, but on fixing the price up to £299, Alan put the first of its multi-game four disc together, with 20 games in the box as well.



"We want your money," Alan Sugar.

## GAMES OF THE YEAR

■ Robotop, from Goson, seemed just like any other first licence at the time. It went straight into the chart at number five at Christmas - few guessed it would still be there a year later.

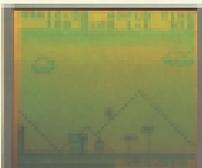
■ Miramax's Tetris was intriguingly developed in the Soviet Union, and proved to be one of the most addictive games of all time.

■ Dungeon Master took the computerised D&D game several steps further, while EA's Right/Combat gun-interceptor combined solid 3D graphics with harrowing aerial action.

■ What was the ST and Amiga version of *Zaxxon*, the game which had amazed everyone at the *Amstradworld* launch.

## AMSTRAD IN TROUBLE

Microtron's forerunners included Amstrad, now having a reputation of a cheap, 16-bit-but-not-earned, low-cost high-MSX/MSX2-compatibles into profits, but 1988 wasn't into computer era. First sales of low prices were a constant loss. The previous year, the announcement that for the first time since going public, profits had fallen. Then, as the company struggled to get the PC2086 into the shops, executives had to raise support for the previously-quiet but the controller in the 1988-89 and 1989 after the controller continued to rise up on problems. Chris Oxley, president of the company, had been confirmed as profits collapsed—CIS market would be a big factor in comparison to 1988 (1988/1989 market year), and Amstrad admitted it had 2000 million worth of debt in its warehouses.



Savage Wars' local map may look simple, but it's a real challenge. By D. Jeffrey, as well as the Savage Wars on the Amstrad's video screen.

## BAYNES OF THE YEAR

"Baynes won't (don't) move users to 32 bits."

Comments on the UK's  
New Computer Express, 14, 1989

It's dramatic gains in low hardware prices, but it's also a sign that the company is willing to do what it takes to supply reliable products.

The dramatic gains in low hardware prices, but it's also a sign that the company is willing to do what it takes to supply reliable products.



The Amstrad 486 computer system. Photo: Amstrad.

1989

## ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

As far as Commodore and Atari were concerned, business was slow. Commodore opened fire by introducing an 800 Mhz offer with the A500, Atari responded by bundling games like *Alien* with the 50000. Commodore put together a package around the much-hyped *Batman* film, Atari landed yet more games. Commodore announced it had sold 200,000 A500s in the UK, Atari dropped its figures.

Suddenly there were alternatives on offer. The console comeback actually happened—despite itself, its own use of the marketing muscle at its disposal to keep the Sega in the public eye, and Nintendo consoles finally began to move off the shelves (though according to ACE, reader research, they still account for only a fraction of consoles sold). NEC didn't launch the PC Engine, but people imported them anyway. Nintendo's handheld Gameboys were imported, lagged, borrowed and stolen, thanks largely to the inclusion of Tetris with the machine.

Atari caused another stir with its 'licensed' Ariston-derived machine, the A5000. Much selling and grinding of teeth from software house, press and the public—in £1,800 including a monitor, it's still not cheap enough. But Atari made some efforts to woo the mainstream software publishers and at the end of the year, the jury is still out regarding the A5000's future.

## EVENTS

• The virus problem became acute, though this was partly due to the surrounding hype. Publicly encouraged some programmers to devise their own viruses; fear of infection led some people to attribute any glitch, crash, or bug to a virus. The virus detectors - programs and people - had a field day.

Many recalled viruses, such as the Friday 13th program, appeared to be more the product of hope than a concrete threat. The full effects of the 'Aids' virus, which claims to be waiting to wipe hard disks, have yet to be seen.

• The Acorn Multi-System burst into the limelight at the Toy Fair in January with a prototype console and its imaginative 'addon', the hydraulic chair. The press and software publishers were captivated and magazine articles appeared. Konix went back to its headquarters high above (Mike Vale) and prepared for the Multi-System's grand launch at the PC show in September.

In the event, the 'grand launch' turned into a nightmare of embarrassment, as the system failed to turn up until a couple of preproduction machines stationed their own on the last few days. The chair was still a prototype.

Meanwhile the media remained relatively quiet, unwilling to broadcast the open secret that Konix had run out of money to bring the Multi-System into production, just in case adverse publicity caused the whole house of cards to collapse. The problem appeared to be alleviated as October when distributor Add-ons took a stake in the company. The Konix saga continues into the 1990s.

• Another machine for which much was promised and which nearly didn't make it in the 80s was the Sam Coupe, a Spectrum-compatible game machine with sophisticated graphics and sound capabilities devel-



Acorn's idea of what a modern office chair should be. The Acorn chair and the Acorn chair were never seen.

oped by Miles Gordon Technology. Like the Konix, Sam also suffered delays before an initial production run (just over 800 units shipped) out in December.

• Hacking should have been one of 1989's big stories. In the end it proved a non-event. Roy BP Gurus Nicholson gained a lot of publicity for her Private Member Bill, but whether it when it was apparent there would be no time to discuss it in the Commons. The Law Commission published a report recommending a maximum punishment of five years in prison for people convicted of altering computer data having gained unauthorised access to a system, but no authorising bill was included in the Government's legislative programme.

• Electronic Arts introduced 16-bit budget titles with back catalogue releases at £19.99, then £5 Gold with the success of its first budget label Pox, set up Harlow, also at £9.99. But who else had Microtron's should decide that this was far too much and at the end of the year launch a range of 16-bit games for £4.99.

## MICROPROSE

Founded: 1982; 1982; 1986

Major 'Bill' Bill Swales, management consultant and ex-UK Air Force, and Sid Meier, programmer with General Instruments, founded Microprose to develop flight simulator programs with an eye to detail and authenticity.

As part of the US Gold stable until the end of 1988, when Microprose set up in the UK, enjoyed success with *Command*, *Secret Service* etc, but underwent huge upheavals in 1989 with the acquisition of the £1.5m Microprose conglomerate and the departure of UK MD Stewart Bell and affiliate label Origin shortly afterwards. Now has 50 staff in UK.

First title: *Hotrod Ace*

Best ever seller: *Command* (all versions)

## GAMES OF THE YEAR

• *Poobah* appeared to be the megahitman in every one as you played God with your people and lands. Meticulous programming and some sound effects gave weight to this original effort.

• *Hardy* original, not winning all the plaudits for US, but playability was *hardy's* kick off with its smooth, fast, football action.

• Flight simulators have traditionally been of a consistently high standard, but Microsoft's *Falcon* showed there was still plenty to learn.

# DRAGONS BREATH



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# TRICKS 'N' TACTICS

BECOME PART OF THE DUNGEON MASTER LEGEND WITH TNT...



## The Ultimate DUNGEON MASTER Guide

### Part Two

#### ITEMS TO BE FOUND BEHIND THE TROPOUSAL DOORS ON LEVEL 7

- Door 1** - Gem of Aerie; Scepter of Life; Remedy  
**Door 2** - Dragon spit; A pair of Boots of Speed  
**Door 3** - Crown of Gems; Magic Box  
**Door 4** - Flamebait; Iron Blade

#### KEYS

There are many keys that must be found to pass through the levels, the most notable of which are these:

- All Keys** - These are found on levels 1, 7, 9, & 12. These keys open doors within level 7.  
**Master Key** - Found on level 12. Opens a door on level 7.  
**Ruby Key** - Found on level 11. Opens a door on level 7.  
**Winged Key** - Found on level 7. Allows access to Dragon Level (12).

#### CLOTHING

There is a vast amount of clothing to be found on all levels. Your characters should be fully dressed in the "toughest" items as they are found. Most important is the armor which should be worn by your level two characters (light and). The most useful worn items are listed below.

- Armor of Claws** - Found on level 12. Makes you harder to see.

**Armor of Life** - Found on levels 10, 11, & 12. Lighter in weight.  
**Flamebait** - a CL to Antiles.

Leg Mail, Leg Plate, Mittal Mail, Mittal Mail, Breastplate, Helmet - These items are found throughout the dungeon.

It is advisable not to wear the armor - dropped by Chaos Knights, as it is cursed.

#### SHIELDS

Shields are numerous and important for protection. They should, where possible, be carried at all times.

- Buckler**  
**Small Shield**  
**Wooden Shield** (dropped by skeletons when they die)  
**Large Shield**  
**Shield of Darts**  
**Shield of Life**

#### EXPERIENCE LEVELS

As you pass through the levels you gain experience in the four disciplines: Wizard; Ninja; Fighter; and Priest. Your level of expertise increases in the following order:

- Thieflife**  
**Wizard**  
**Apprentice**  
**Crusaderman**  
**Joanessan**  
**Artisan**  
**Adopt**  
**Expert**

#### CHARACTERS AVAILABLE AT THE START OF THE GAME

NAME	SKILL	HP	DMG	MP	WEAP
ALEX	App. Ninja New MAGE	50	27	13	Stick
ALC	New FIGHTER App. Ninja	61	17	7	Iron Sword 2 Dagger Robber's Foot
BORG	New Ninja App. MAGE	35	45	28	Musket
ORAN	New FIGHTER App. MAGE	47	43	20	Musket
CACON	App. FIGHTER New MAGE	100	45	4	
ELIA	New FIGHTER New FIGHTER	60	58	10	Wings Bow
SAVON	App. PRIEST New MAGE	39	43	25	2 Poison Darts
SOHWAC	App. MAGE App. FIGHTER	60	15	18	Crown of Night Helmet Wooden Club
WALA	App. FIGHTER	58	15	0	2 Arrows
WANA	New FIGHTER App. PRIEST	70	35	10	
WASA	App. FIGHTER New Ninja	50	51	5	
WAO	App. FIGHTER New PRIEST	48	55	11	Skeleton Sword
WAT	App. FIGHTER New PRIEST	51	10	7	
WETA	App. Ninja	48	40	3	Spear
WELAD	App. FIGHTER New MAGE	65	50	12	Spear
WOPAG	App. PRIEST New MAGE	55	44	18	3 Swords Staff
WOSAN	App. FIGHTER	65	10	2	Sword Oaken Axe
WSPAD	App. FIGHTER New PRIEST	70	30	0	Axe
WSPIN	App. MAGE App. MAGE	50	12	15	Apple
WTRD	New Ninja App. MAGE	25	45	36	Sword
WTRB	New Ninja App. PRIEST	45	47	20	2 Throwing Stars
WULP	App. Ninja App. PRIEST	60	50	30	Empty Flask
WYD	New FIGHTER New Ninja New PRIEST New MAGE	60	60	10	Teach

- Master**  
**LO Master**  
**UM Master**  
**DM Master**  
**EE Master**  
**PM Master**  
**MCH Master**  
**MOCH Master**

#### SPELLS

- Power:**  
12-DM DM EE PM MOCH  
**Elemental Influence:**  
14 WFLP FUL DES SO  
**Form:**  
VER DR VASH R-ORO GDR

**Alignment:**  
FG PDS DVM NCTH WJ GDR

#### POTIONS

- Health  
Stamina  
Poison Cure  
Magical Shield  
Poison Potion  
Wooden  
Vitality  
Dexterity  
Strength  
Mana

The character creating these potions must have an empty flask in hand.

## SPELLS

70L	Magical Locks
100 00	Magical chest Gloves
30	Opens Stone Doors
100 100	Poison Spell
100 100	Cloud of Poison
100 100	Anti-Ghost Spell (All non-material beings)
70 100 100	Magical Footprints
100 100 100	Lightning Bolt
70L 00	Fireball
70L 100 100L	Firestorm
100 100 100	Major Poison
100 100 100	Invisibility
100 00 00	Create Light
100 00 100	Create Darkness
20 100 100	Create Poison-to trap power gem!

## BEASTS OF THE DUNGEON

There are many different creatures to meet in your journey. It is not always necessary to fight them all, many can be run around, lured into rooms and shut in, or simply run away from.

All creatures are unique in that they all have their own abilities both in respect to you differently, some can be driven away while others are unrelenting in their pursuit and ferocity. The following is a complete list of creatures plus information to help you overcome them.

**Mummies:** The first mummy to be encountered. Easy to kill on all levels. Fight, range weapons to kill. Found on levels 2, 3 & 5.

**Screamers:** Easy to kill. Fight, three forms, range weapons. Due to the small damage they do to you and their slow pursuit, these creatures are ideal to practice all combat skills on. One room towards the end of level 5 regenerates them, an ideal place to practice. They can also be eaten. First found on level 2.

**Blue Gnomes:** These creatures are weaker than you and can cause serious damage to your party early on. Relatively easy to kill, not too fast in their pursuit of you. First found on level 3.

**Rock Monsters:** Hard to kill and poison you when they strike. Very slow moving and thus ideal for In/Out attacks, also use fireball. You can drop them into pits, found in "The Realm of the Gem". Found first on level 3.

**Ghosts:** Can pass spell in their pursuit and can pass through closed doors. Use thought, shield, DES DR, or vortal Mado. Found first



on level 4.

**Pink Storms:** Ferocious creatures that will do considerable damage and poison you. I favor fireballs, range weapons and rear attacks. Keep poison cures handy. Found first on level 4.

**Guard Wizards:** These are amongst the fastest creatures you will meet. Don't bother with In/Out attacks. Quite easy to kill, try to get off a fireball before they reach you. If forced to fight head to head, have poison cures handy. Found first on level 4.

**Green tentacle monsters:**

These strange looking creatures are fairly easy to kill and slow in their pursuit. They throw lamps of poison at you. Fireballs and range weapons are advised. Found first on level 5.

**Flying snakes:** Quick moving and ferocious, these creatures inflict serious damage and poison your party. Hit hard to kill, light and fireball. Found first on level 5.

**Wolves:** Most annoying creatures, they do no damage, but stall whatever you have in your left hand. If fireball, or if you are quick enough, a swift blow should do away with them. They giggle just before they steal from you, but if ignored, if you are asleep and any creatures attack you, you automatically awake - not so with pigs.

**Ghost Hags:** Quite resilient these beasts. They often attack in pairs doing considerable damage. In/Out attacks are advised, also range weapons, fireballs and lightning bolts. First found on level 5.

**Deholders:** Large tentacle eyeballs that float above the ground. Be careful of In/Out attacks as they throw magic over some distance. I prefer range weapons and magic. Worth looting in case it they are the only creatures able to open doors and gates.

**Widow Discovers:** Very fast of these will be encountered. Although slow they take a lot of hits and deliver a fair blow with

their tails. Fireballs and In/Out attacks map their movements. Found first on level 5.

**Small Screamers:** Not many to be found. They throw powerful magic at you but are quite easy to kill with magic and lightning. Beware when attacked they often transport a short distance, perhaps to your side, and hit you before you realize. Good Policy - if they transport, turn on the spot quickly to look for them. Found first on level 5.

**Golden Scooplers:** Very resilient beasts, wearing a lot of fireballs and In/Out hatching. Beware of that poisonous tail, they move fairly quickly when in pursuit. Found first on level 12.

**Insubstantial Trifids:** A non-material creature that fades in and out of vision. While solid, a fireball can be used but shield, disrupt, DES DR, and vortal Mado are preferred. They throw powerful magic at you. Found first on level 12.

**Ghost Spiders:** Although large, no great problem. A nasty bite but In/Out hatching and magic do the job. The morningstar weapon is quite effective. Found first on level 12.

**Chaos Knights:** Another hard one to kill. Often attack in pairs doing a lot of damage to you. Fireballs are favored along with dropping down pits where available. Don't wear the armor, it is supposed to be cursed. Found first on level 12.

**Water Elementals:** Pools of water that follow you, moving up and doing damage. Use a calm spell from a wand and in with the vortal Mado, DES DR, disrupt and shield. A few well blows on the foot of fear will cause them to retreat making attack easy. Foes! They can pursue through closed doors by floating underneath. Found first on level 11.

**Fire Elementals:** Non-material, nonmoving creature. DES DR, disrupt, shield, vortal Mado. Some regenerate after a short while. Found first on level 12.

**Stone Golems:** Only 5 of these exist, all on level 11 guarding the Tomb of the Fireball. Very hard to destroy, taking many fireballs to get rid of. They drop a stone orb which is too heavy to lift of any use.

**Devils:** Found only on level 13 guarding Lost Chans. They throw powerful fireballs and head to head combat is not advised. Cool fireballs at them from a distance.

**Dragons:** Average in its speed but unrivaled in its ferocity. Only one fireball is required to kill you. Chase him round the pillar on level 14 attacking his rear with many hits and multi-magic.

**Lord Ghast:** The man himself! All conventional attacks are useless, you must first activate him at a blue cage and take him with the Fireball. Many attempts may be required to hit him as he has the habit of transporting away those throwing powerful magic.

**Prince Gray Lord:** If you retrieve the Fireball and attempt to leave the dungeon you will meet this person, see what he does, but be advised, you won't like it.

**SOME COMBAT TIPS TO HELP YOU GET THROUGH LEVELS**

In most cases head to head combat is not advised, preferred is the In/Out attack as most creatures allow you to get in the first blow.

Trapping creatures under gates is very effective because it damages them along with your fighting.

Major Freeze Boxes and the Eye of Time should be used to good use, sometimes for escape, but better used when a creature is under a gate. This is very effective against the more resilient beasts knights, scooplers, spiders, stone gnomes etc.

Dropping creatures down pits is effective, but doesn't always kill them and they may step into a transport, reappearing at a most inconvenient time and bad place. Try to weaken them first before dropping.

Always have M potions on hand for instant curing along with 1000 Gold Pieces potions when fighting venomous beasts.

Beware of retreating into dead ends. Don't leaping into a pit may be more acceptable than fighting overwhelming odds, it gives you time to reorganize.

Frequent saving is advised, especially after a big fight or before a lengthy pursuit to save you having to redo the reach if you die.

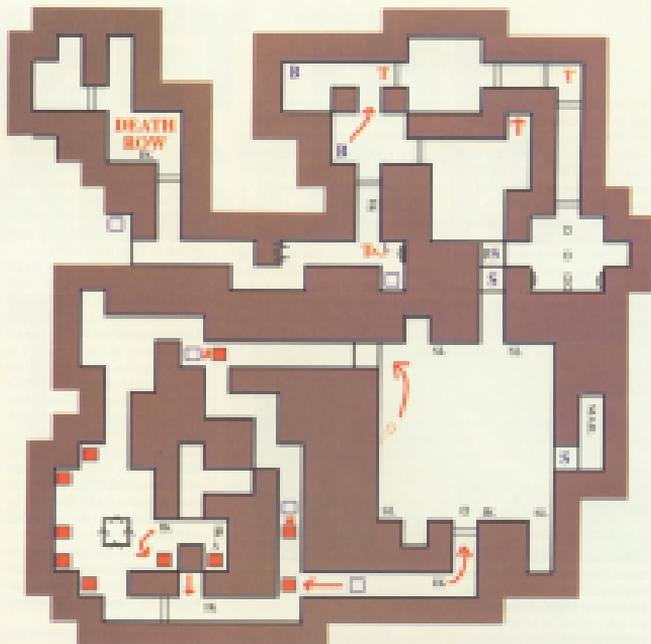
OK that's all for this month, in the next instalment we have a guide to the first eight levels of the game.

## NOT SO CHAOTIC CHAOS!

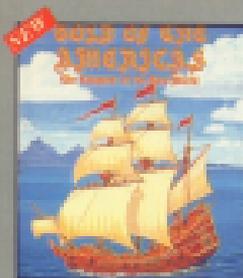
Would you believe it? There I am telling you that Chaos Strikes Back is the toughest thing since the Star of India and I've already heard from two people who have completed it. One of them is Ian Grayham of London who has supplied a map of the first part of level 1 in order to get you going.

### KEY

- L = Lever
- T = Teleport/Telester
- B = Button
- S = Slot
- = Pad
- = Pill
- A = Alcove
- F = Fountain



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## A TNT Survival Guide

We recently received a plea for help from **Smart Dow of Leicester**. He writes, "Your Tricks and Tactics section is my personal favorite, but I find it difficult to follow some items.... Some of us have only just arrived on the scene and... the mass of phrases such as Pike, Syles, Mls, etc. mean very little at first, and at worst nothing at all. So how about a section for beginners with some of the more common phrases and practices being listed and explained?"

This is quite a frequent request so we thought that it was about time that **TNT** gave a bit of a helping hand to those readers who occasionally feel the pages a little difficult to understand. If you are a more experienced reader then please bear with us, and remember that everyone had to start somewhere.

### A PIG OF A PORK

The word **PORK** originated as an instruction in the **BIASIC** computer language. It was the only way in the original **BIASIC** dialect, of

directly altering the contents of the computer's internal memory. Most home computer games and up to machine code programs down if they are originally written in a high-level language like **C** or **BIASIC**. This makes it difficult for the **hacker** to customize or adjust the program code. The easiest way to do this is by using the aforementioned **PORK** instruction to directly change parts of the program that perform specific functions (such as removing a life when you crash your maggieblaster etc.)

As an example, in a game written in **BIASIC** machine code, for the Spectrum or Amstrad CPC for instance, there might be some instructions such as:

```
LD A, LIVES;
DEC A;
.
.
LD LIVES, A
```

These instructions are stored in the computer's memory as follows:

```
34 00 00
35
.
.
32 00 00
```

Each one of these numbers is hexadecimal number - in base 16 it is known as a **byte**. Each **byte** has a number, known as an **address**, associated with it which indicates its location in the computer's memory. The **PORK** instruction directly alters the **byte** at one of these **addresses**.

Never mind about the exact meaning of the lines of code above, suffice it to say that each time the computer comes to them it removes another life. To make a new version of the program in which lives are not removed we would have to replace the **DEC A** instruction with a **NOP** instruction. This makes the computer do nothing at all rather than removing a life. Supposing that the **byte** representing this instruction resides at **address 32776**. The instruction to replace it with the code for **NOP** (such as 01 or **PORK 32776**).

There are two basic ways of using a **PORK**. The first, and easiest, is to use a device like **Premantic Robot's Multiface**.

This is a hardware device that plugs into your computer's expansion port and allows you to pause the program that is running and directly alter sections of the program. Because of the ease with which this is done, I recommend that beginners also can afford to do so too one of these.

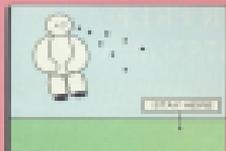
If you do not have a device of this nature you must load the program code in such a way that the game does not run automatically, then make the necessary alterations, and finally start the game running manually. The methods of doing this vary from machine to machine. Over the next couple of months I will be showing you techniques for some of the popular machines, as well as providing some more insight into the contents of these pages.

I hope that has enlightened **Smart Dow** and offers a little. One thing **Smart Dow** says in his letter is "please don't tell me to read a book so this only confuses me more". Well, point taken, but I do recommend that you buy something like **The Penguin Dictionary of Computers**, which provides reasonably comprehensive definitions of the terms used here and in other publications. **MOORE DATA SERVICES**.

**H**ere are a few little pointers for you, **Sage Master** System users from Andrew Barber of Essex.

### TIME SOLDIERS

On the last battle keep to the right of the screen when scrolling up. When you reach the first spike quickly run to the right and up so you are to the side of it. Run too continuously at its base, but watch out as it fires two red bullets every eight seconds. When it does shoot up then back down. On down, the second to last level splits balls so stay at the bottom of the screen. When he goes to the top bar and fire then repeat this last diagram. I think this game has the most unvarying and screen of all time. It just says: **CONGRATULATIONS**.



### CALCULATOR GAMES

- 1) Get 25000 or more on every go on the last page, do this:
- 1) Don't hit wall
- 2) And use hand stars
- 3) Keep finger on button 2 to do



handstars. The longer you hold the button, the higher you score.

- 4) Between handstars push down if going up and up if going down.

In the football event variety is the best way to gain points, so do different moves, not the same move all the time.

As soon as the surfing event starts push both buttons - this slows the board down. Push top the right (as per usual, do this and the water is left over the board and then let go of the buttons. Keep turning the board up and down to gain speed in order to get out of the water. Then do five normal jumps (851) and three or more (847) or jumps. Now turn the board through 90° about two or more times using buttons 2 and 1. I know this sounds like a lot to do, but with practice it can be done. If you do what I've suggested you can score 3.0 and be a mega buff like me!

Whenever there is an obstacle in the way in the skating event, jump it obvious really! But if an obstacle is to the side of you jump anyway

because you score as if you were jumping a full obstacle. After there are parts of the skateboard involving press the button as shown in the diagram. One 4000 can be scored in this way.

In the BMX event take the legs on the ground. Do back flips on the usual bumps (button 1 and right). On big bumps do forward flips (button 1 and left). See the diagrams for what to do with other bumps. At the end press button 2 and left.

In the bubble event always catch the bubble whenever. (See diagram). You get more points (350) in fact. Do this by pushing down when the bubble is half way on the screen and roughly one screen away.



# CONSOLE

# CORNER

# MEET THE MAESTROS

Now's your chance to confront the teams that code and publish the games you play...in person. Check out the ACE Conference program for Spring 1990.

**T**he ACE Conference offer you the chance to join a small, select band of ACE readers who will be able to exert real influence on the way games are produced in Britain. It's all part of the ACE 1990 Campaign: to improve communication both within the games industry and between gamers and the world at large.

Here's how it works. Each month we'll be arranging with a British software house for a group of ACE readers to visit them, meet the people who produce the games, ask questions, and make their own opinions known. Software houses are always keen to hear from gameplayers: now's your chance to make sure you're one of the ones they hear from.

#### WHAT HAPPENS

Once you've been selected for a particular conference (see What You Have To Do first), you'll be informed of the exact date and venue. You'll need to get there under your own steam so be sure to apply for conferences that aren't too far away from where you live. Don't worry if the current conferences listed are not in your area: there'll be more in the near future and we'll be covering the whole country, including Scotland, Wales, and Cornwall.

Conferences normally start at 12.00 noon and carry on to around 4.30. You get a buffet lunch and refreshments, and when you leave we'll also find an excellent ACE T-shirt into your pocket. The software house may well have some goodies to hand out as well.

Remember, the real goodies will come from being able to talk directly to the software makers themselves. They'll be ready to answer any questions you may have -



Dark Strike's 'Dark Strike' - just one of the games you can check out in this month's conference.

and to defend their corner vigorously if you get straggled! Obviously no-one likes to be dragged off for no good reason, but if you have constructive criticisms or strong feelings about a game, you can be sure that they'll be just as well-received as pieces of praise.

And, of course, you'll also have the chance to meet members of the ACE Team, who will be just as keen to hear what you have to say as the software boys.

#### ON THE PROGRAMME

Here are three conferences that you can apply for this month. They are mostly in the SE area - next month we'll be moving northwards.

##### Artbitwin

**Venue:** Reading area  
You should be able to talk to the company who produce a popular game, ranging from the classic *Elite Computer People* to the upstart *Crash Course* and the upcoming *Super-Hungry* too.

##### Demarc

**Venue:** Putney area/SE London  
Here we talk about getting the best out of the superb *Blue Hammer* you should be able to communicate with the original lead, and discover how close you'll find *Strike*.

##### Electricity Arts

**Venue:** South area  
Electric Arts is a great modern office building and an excellent site for a visit. We'll be able to talk to several of the people who produce the excellent *Dark Strike* series, to *Dark Hammer* and the upcoming *Interceptor*.



Dark Strike's 'Dark Strike' - just one of the games you can check out in this month's conference.

## WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO

Each month, we'll let you know about forthcoming conferences around the country. If you think you might be interested in attending one, all you have to do is send us a **postcard with your name and address clearly written, together with a daytime telephone number if at all possible.** You also need to tell us **which conference** you would be interested in attending (we choose only places and **your age**). We need to know how old you are so that we can ensure a good spread of age groups at each conference.

Unfortunately we have to limit the number of people attending each conference to 25. In addition, we have to make a nominal charge of £5.00 to help cover costs. All places are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. There is however an exception to both these conditions: as a special offer to subscribers we are giving three **priority allocations** for the first ten places in each conference, and they may also attend **free of charge.** You can find out how to become a subscriber on page 97 (and you get other benefits too - a free issue, a special newsletter, and guaranteed delivery).

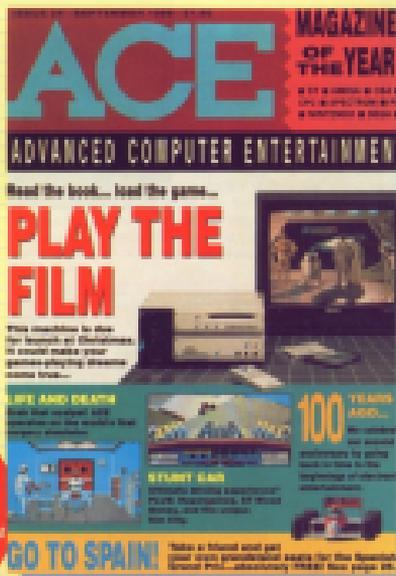
So look as we decide on a date and venue for a conference, we'll select the lucky readers from those who have applied and inform of the relevant details. If anyone can't attend, they'll be offered for a future conference and another selection will be made for someone who can take their place.

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\*Attendance limited. See page 98.

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# ACE NEW WORLDS

PAT WINSTANLEY CHECKS OUT THE LATEST FANTASY SOFTWARE

## DRAGONS OF FLAME

**F**orget what I said a couple of months ago about the hack and slay element being toned down in this follow up to the *Heroes of the Lance*. Having finally managed to get my hands on a joystick I've been hooked about and slain more times than I can count in the past few days. This game is fast!

You begin by controlling the eight Companions of the Lance: Loris the half elf, Cananon the fighter, Rastille the mage, Goldsmoor the cleric, Storm the braver knight, Riverwind the planesman, Flak the dwarf and Trenchfall the first of the impeccable Rangers. As you travel you will also meet up with several non-hostile characters who may join your party and offer information and fighting skills.

As you attempt to fulfil your quest, you may come across a variety of useful items. Equipping an item increases your experience points and once taken can often be used by



The graphics presentation of *Dragons of Flame* is superb, progressing nicely from the old game, but not over the top. Things are getting better... slowly.

### CHAOTIC HINTS & TITBITS

Any *Dragons of Flame* fans out there with an ST who haven't yet bought *Chaos Online* (back - shame on you). For those who have but are stuck, a few tips:

Counting the start as level 1 there are five levels below and at least 4 above.

Level (-5) has four main areas each of which has at least one exit through a solid wall which leads back to the main junction.

US GOLD continue the well received series of adventure games based around TSR's *Dragonlance* books with the sequel to *Heroes of the Lance*

accessing the menu. Apart from extra weapons and armour, rings and potions can be found to enhance a character's abilities or perhaps feed a needy mount. Since Goldsmoor's stock of healing spells doesn't last long you'll be well advised to find some potions, too.

While weapons may be used in different ways and have different ranges this is not always particularly useful. Obviously, keeping your distance from monsters is desirable, but doing so in practice is well nigh impossible. As combat is joined the display changes from overhead to side on and any sense of direction you might have had flies away. This wouldn't be too bad if monsters only came at you from left or right, but when they appear both in front of and behind you without warning you'll better

count the screams when you fail to judge the depth of drop.

Drop down a hidden pit in Dain and you'll find yourself apparently trapped between four walls - simply step backwards (and look out for worms).

At the Parting of the Ways, leaving the relevant objects in the alcoves lets you change your mind.

There are an awful lot of false walls! Anyone found a use for the "key of B" yet? - I've a chest full of the things.

Hope you're having as much fun as me - cancel everything for a month.

start praying.

As for the monsters, on the overhead map they appear very similar to each other but in close up there's a wealth of difference. Dracoyans come in two forms, Bazz and Skaaz. Of the two the unarmoured Skaaz are the more dangerous as they explode when killed igniting anyone too close. Other non-hostiles include giant woad, griffons, trolls and wyverns. Each monster type is best tackled by a specific strategy. Thus war dogs will fight to the death - unless you feed them in which case they run away.

With all this going on it's easy to lose sight of your objective, your quest to free the slaves of Pae Thakos and recover the lost Wyrmslayar. I can't see too many players getting that far unless they have the patience of a saint. Although more of an arcade adventure than a regular RPG like the *Dragons of Flame* a save feature is incorporated. Whether you'll last that long enough to make saving worthwhile is another matter.

As an avid fan of the *Dragonlance* books both *Heroes* and this follow up are something of a disappointment to me in both ways for more on joystick waggling than strategy. However those of you with faster reactions and more practice at arcade style games will probably find *Dragons of Flame* a good mix of exploration and combat.

<b>LANDSCAPE</b>	85
Through well drawn and colourful, movement in the design is made to improve handling.	
<b>ENGINEERING</b>	85
There's a good use for tactical warfare. Play well, but you are often dead before they have a chance to strike a blow.	
<b>CHALLENGE</b>	85
There's a real world challenge in any game that offers all around movement and steps down. It's the best kind for the average player.	
<b>SYSTEM</b>	75
There are many games which give no alternative to the mouse.	

### ACE RATING 7/20

The *Champions* are simply too weak to allow the player much satisfaction. It may be true (hardly), the fact is a game it will be far too difficult for most.

#### RELEASE BOX

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**W**hy back in issue 26 Steve Coste checked out a preview copy of EA's *Hound of Shadow*. Now that the finished product is here, how does it measure up? *Hound of Shadow* is presented as an RPG text adventure with full screen graphics in set and locations. The system allows you to create a distinctive character with which to tackle the adventure. Your character can be saved at the end of the game for use in future projects together with all the experience he or she has acquired while solving the Hound.

Character creation is quite separate from the game itself but has a profound influence on the way the plot unfolds and the difficulties you will face. You may choose from a variety of pre-defined characters which come with the game including an Americanish cop named Private



# HOUND OF SHADOW

Eye, a baronet with a passion for flying and a doctor's daughter making a living from writing novels.

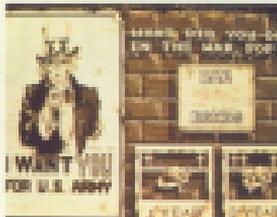
If you don't fancy any of these you are free to generate your own character who may have a profession such as gentleman adventurer or psychic investigator. You then define your skills which include riding, hacking, escapeology, archeology, anthropometry, photography and astrology to name but a few. These skills will determine the way you play the game as information is offered or withheld depending upon your skill range and strength.

Set in and around London in the 1870's the plot revolves around a mysterious and horrifying force which you first encounter at a seance. Although you are certain that the medium is a fake the apparently becomes personae during the proceedings and with a strange voice warns one of your fellow patrons that he bears the mark of the hound. Your companion recognises the voice used by the medium as that of a woman encountered in horribly mysterious circumstances in America.

Together you set out to find more background at the Reading Room of the British Museum while becoming more aware as time passes that you are both in deadly danger. Initially puzzles are few, as are objects and clues revolve around meeting different people at certain times to glean information. In fact the opening part of the game rather leads you to the river as you follow instructions given in the text. Only when you have collected all the information you need are you free to explore further aided in a more traditional way.

One aid to exploring is the existence of mysterious magical gates which are scattered around the playing area and act as teleport

Electronic Arts have finally released the definitive version of this RPG-influenced horror epic. The idea of a black magic, H.P. Lovecraft scenario set in the 1870's sounds like a sure fire hit...but is it?



British Games, who produced *HOD* for Electronic Arts, use Goto Elliott and Richard Edwards' names more out of the *Timeless* system than their!

ports. Instead of tediously catching a train from East Angles to London you simply step on a gate, chart the correct phrase and word! The gates are simply drawn in the ground and although you can't create new ones, making ones can be wiped away by enthusiastic graffiti cleaners.

The *Timeless* system itself has a few problems. In order to maintain the flow of the plot you occasionally find yourself in a kind of loop which will not let you out until you make the required action. Apart from being very frustrating this also spoils the atmosphere of the game. There also appears to be something of a random element involved. Using one of the pre-defined characters whose skills include photography I began a game from scratch text. In one session I discovered a camera in my room and wandered round London happily snapping away. In the second try - no camera!

Interaction of the parser with the plot flow can cause frustration too. A command such as ENTER H-OP will be obeyed early in the game if you make a useful linkshop. Later (presumably when all required actions have been performed) then the same command elicits a plaintive I DON'T POSSIBLE. Similarly the very useful GO command produces an erratic range of responses when used with identical destinations and circumstances. Having spent a good deal of time wrestling with the game I feel that many improvements and adjustments are required before *Timeless* is used for other goals. In the end, frustration with the system outweighed my desire to solve the plot puzzles. Having said that I do look forward to future releases on the system.

## RELEASE DATE

STAR 87 04/88 02/89

AMIGA 04/88 08/89

IBM PC 07/88 08/88

**LANDSCAPE** — 80  
Mostly atmospheric with digital graphics that they can't be forced to show you or read them. The text helps with those who get lost.

**ENCOUNTERS** — 80  
New shape characters simply appear you if you can't give them the right governmental ID requests. Communication is very frustrating.

**CHALLENGE** — 70  
From being told to the end entirely why you are suddenly plunged into complete freedom. This is not an easy game.

**SYSTEM** — 80  
As a parser *Timeless* just doesn't hang together and although it is convenient in the player saving you out of the box it is the absolute failure going to with the game.

## ACE RATING 800

As a text adventure with the *Timeless* system, *Hound of Shadow* is rather a mixture. This is not a game for beginners but could prove an enjoyable challenge for patient experienced adventurers.

# TIME

**A** text adventure falls into obscurity these days as being taken by sci-fi systems which, while making play more attractive for the novice and younger player, can cause immense frustration to those preferring more flexibility of input if they're not well-versed.

Set in the remote Midland as it travels its presenter's orbit around earth, your first task is to discover what you are supposed to be doing. It seems that time machines can now give access to the future through which it has been discovered that robots are going to devastate the earth unless they are stopped in the present. That's where you come in. By solving puzzles and talking to people you must get access to various time zones to stop the rot.

Screen layout consists of a small window showing your location and other characters in the game against various horizontally scrolling backdrops. Beneath this is a row of icons which allow you to get, drop and examine objects, direct your character's movements and talk to other characters.

Objects themselves are scattered throughout the game - but you can't see them until

EMPIRE break the time barrier. Should you follow them?

you pick them up. The only indication you have is one of the icons - an eye which opens as you pass something of interest. Clicking on the eye then shows the object but doesn't say what it is. Although objects are well drawn, their varieties can be something of a mystery. Thus what I thought to be a rather fat white ring to be seen actually turned out to be a certain brand of coin.

The only way to discover information is by talking to people - simply move next to your potential victim and click on the talk icon. If the character has something to say to you they will do so but you can't ask questions or direct them (except occasionally by offering them objects). Dialogue brings out a variety of personalities ranging from a receptionist who seems to be full in love with you to a small boy who, when bribed with a toffee, tells along

defined like an unwanted puppy.

Having found the time machines you can travel back to well known stories from the past which include the battlefields of the Crimea, the fairs of the Circus Maximus and even a beach with Mermaids. In all there are over 100 beautifully illustrated locations. To explore and numerous characters to meet and interact with.

Apart from the niggles about objects, the should keep you cooing happily for hours.

## LANDSCAPE.....PS

Beautiful graphics are very nice but finger-aches may be caused by object and icon icons that move around.

## INTERESTING.....SS

Adventure novel often interesting dialogue prevents from being character as time dimension personation.

## CHALLENGE.....TS

Puzzles often more 'trial and error' solutions rather than offering an exercise in logic.

## SYSTEM.....TS

Supports the capabilities of an 8-bit system, system, the game is easy to control with many nice touches.

## ACE RATING 7.50

While Time is nothing exceptional its moderate difficulty level should appeal to most adventures. Well worth a look.

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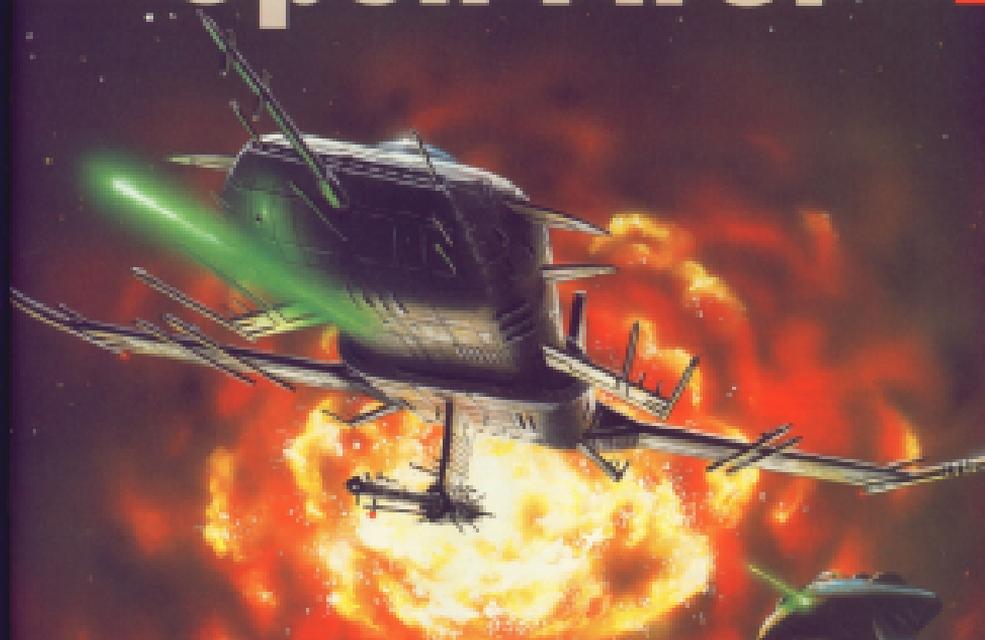


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# Open Fire!

SPECIAL



**Y**es, they all owe their existence to the shoot-'em-up genre: home computers, color graphics, sound, super-screen scrolling, power-ups... everything. The great-grandpa is the Big Red Alien Spacey of everything that exists in space.

Think we're exaggerating eh? Not a bit of it. It was the marriage between Nolan Bushnell's Atari coin-op games and home computing in the US that gave the Sector Specular de fusil boost to mass-market status. Computers were suddenly drawn out of the stock-broker's hobbyist arena and into the mass market by furies of peeping, squealing, capping alien craft. *See Space!* and *see this!*

Space Invaders, naturally, is where the great risk starts. Devised by a group of Japanese psychologists (who should all have been given Nobel prizes), it took the world by storm and simultaneously gave birth to microcomputer mania, providing endless (and priceless) amusement with its unthinking-to-destroy-and-yetful-anything-but-the-annihilation-to-destroy-computer entertainment as 'mindless blasting' - something they still do today though the target has been replaced by games that are anything but mindless.

For gamers fortunate, it was the beginning of the great strategy debate: Was it best to coast 21 ships before a satellite appeared? Should you go for horizontal 'treating' as opposed to taking out the invaders in vertical blocks? How could you bend out the formations? And how do you deal with a 'ship on the run' - that

is, single Space Invader that straggles at a red coordinate your gun target? These were weighty matters, each discussed in front of the listening audience in wailing tones around the country.

Where did you first see

parallel scrolling? Blast

into the past with Eugene

Lacey and the definitive

ACT: History of the Shoot-

em-up...

## SHOOT FROM THE LIP

Oh, so you feel you have something important to say? Then use the main question system throughout the article, but you can't answer that at all. The answer is to stop it!

1. Which game inspired the first home video shooting, and what was it called?

## THE GOLDEN AGE

Having challenged space invaders in the Spring and Summer of '78, while the punks were peering to the Sex Pistols the gamers were content to peep off now after the rise of Invaders as the never ending search for the highest possible score.

For the alien, however, some news to come. Christmas that year brought us glorious technicolor opponents. The Galaxians were blue, red and yellow, and flaunted their superior intelligence by sailing and swooping around the screen in curving formations. They paid for it with their lust.

The action in Galaxian set the scene for the complex graphics backdrops of the future: the action took place against a jet black story space scene, as opposed to the uniform darkness of Invaders. The improvements in sound, graphics, and graphics drew the gamers into pairs, 800 stanzas, and an party.

The success of Galaxian sent a clear message to the manufacturers - the gamers wanted more shoot 'em ups, better graphics and color. They would not have to wait long. November '79 saw the launch of *Alien Adventure* - a return to black and white graphics, but this time your ship could be made to move in any direction at over the screen. It was one of the great

- How much did it pay for the video rights for TV?
- Available with that introduction, 1980 was the first successful computer game outside America.
- Atari's computer collection.



**Asteroids** (1982)  
Williams' shooting laser shoot 'em up was the first game to feature parallax scrolling.

When Steve Jobs was getting together to do the first-ever home use of computer programs, you could count on developing the high hardware to have the big bang would require to complete the task. There were no available titles that were looking for the attention—pushed to the computer as you point and you have to do to attract a good score in Defender.



**Space Invaders** (1982)  
Space is beautiful! The shoot 'em up was the catalyst for the expansion of the graphical ability in the mid-1980s.

Space Invaders was not the only home game published in 1982. Namco's *Galaxian* in November. The game played point-to-point of a robot that could not avoid the screen in any direction and having scores to be tracked. Namco has been seen very soon, simple artwork was still high. The idea of *Galaxian* in December that could make players was later later replaced by the fully games in December, more recently, CD-32 and through Nintendo.

481 games from the Golden Age — it featured an effective "flashing effect" (music) that was later to be copied in stacks of Asteroids clones and in games like *Lunar Lander*, *Omega Race* and, years later, *Obs*.

May 1980 was the most significant launch in the shape of Namco's *Miss Control*. This otherwise unimpressive version of the old Galaxian game featured one major break through — it offered the first cover up. By blocking with another section of the year the power was increased, it was a fantastic midgame reward, and increased the playability by giving the gamer more to aim for than simply building up scores for shooting aliens. The gameplay improvement was not missed by other gamers or developers and *Miss Control* remains a point game in the development of the shoot 'em up.

#### ENTER DEFENDER

1980 was a key year in the Golden Age for a much more important game — *Defender*. When Eugene Jarvis ruled this game for the initial manufacturer Williams the shoot 'em up would never be the same again. It was the first game that could be said to be truly 'cut in' a niche, exotic, eye white at the same time commanding mass popularity.

What made *Defender* so popular was the challenge it presented — and what made it tough was its speed. You had a radar to show you the oncoming aliens but even with this aid you needed lightning reflexes to compete. The game also introduced the first reverse scenario in that you had to pick up the fragments that were falling towards the planet floor as well as dealing with the aliens. The game was played on a horizontal plane — something in both directions and with a 'wrap around' effect which meant that if your ship disappeared off the far right it immediately reappeared on the left.

*Defender* was also very loud. The colourful streaks of laser fire spitting out of your ship had a screeching sound effect. It was the biggest, loudest, most machine in the arcade and, if you couldn't play it, you were nobody. Its influence on later games was incalculable: the radar, music, 'wrap around' effects being borrowed in countless designs — from Namco's *Attack of the Mutant Camels* to Legend's *Star Wars*.

Spring '81 was the main competitor in the shoot 'em up wars taking place on the West Coast of America with a flurry of new Atari designs battling it out with *Defender*. *Ballistics* offered the first 3D vector graphics in a fast battle simulator and became an instant hit — few who played it will forget the first time their wilderness shattered as they were blasted from behind.

#### INTO THE HOME

By now Atari had realized the potential of converting their coin-op games for home use on their VCS system. *Space Invaders*, *Breakout*, *Defender*, *Galaxian* and

**Star Wars** (1982)  
Legend's space shoot 'em up game was one of the best ever made.



**Star Wars** by the Edge (1982)  
Legend's shoot 'em up game was one of the best ever made.

*Asteroids* could all be played at home for about £20 a throw. It was the beginning of a link between the arcade and the home that would never be broken. It also made a fortune for Atari. By the end of 1982 they had sold ten million VCS's in America alone and several more million cartridges.

April 1981 provided Atari with the funds to develop several more classic games, the VCS sequenced one vital, original game in the history of classic shoot 'em ups. The game was *Star Raiders* and was developed by Fernando Herrera. This was the first 3D, deep space shoot 'em up. It was a precursor of *Elite* in that it had many of the same features, including a comprehensive scoring system and a galactic map. Above all, it gave us that swirling and passing space battle action with the alien emerging from the centre of the screen as they docked and growing larger as they approached your cockpit.

Meanwhile in the arcade, these companies that didn't have a local home system to provide were not going to the ground. *Centuri* released *Phoenix* in March 1981. It looked a lot like *Galaxian* in its earlier levels but had one very important difference. After downing several squadrons of aliens you were confronted by a giant ball that you could only kill by taking sufficient missiles into its mouth. This was the first mid-level rally. Since *Phoenix* didn't even shoot 'em up has had an end level nearly of some description.

#### HOME SWEET

There were still other shipping the classic *Scramble* in April '81 and following it up with *Super Cobra* in July. *Blind* not quite as big as *Defender*, *Scramble* was another highly significant game in the development of the shoot 'em up. It was the first game in which you had to have a high regard for flight controls — as well as a quick finger on the bomb and shoot hot bars. Your ship had to be maneuvered through an intricate level of narrow, unrelenting corridors and passages, finding a path as you flew. This feature was copied on stacks of clones both in the arcade and in the popular home systems of the day. It is still a feature of the scrolling shoot 'em up — from *Galaxian* to *At-17* — flight control is so much a part of the challenge as blasting them.

Midway clambered back into the limelight with *Galaga* at the beginning of 1982. *Galaga* represented another giant leap forward in the development of power ups. There were now several sections to be collected on your ship — including a shield power up feature with two ships joined together doubling the fire power at your finger tips.

#### WORTHY GRANTS

In the four short years since *Space Invaders* the 80's had come a long way in game design. They were now far more challenging with much more to do than the simple left-right shoot 'em ups. But the graphics were still fairly basic. In those days you went into the

arcade to see what game challenges were to be had. It was not like today where you can stroll around and enjoy the graphical wonders on display without even buying a pin.

All this began to change in March '82. Sega launched *Zaxxon*. It was the first of the 16-bit look-alike "grainy" games. Its pseudo 3D city onto hillside-a-gull-winged space ship flying over a cityscape—through fences and over walls blabbering the robots that came towards you. Its graphics was pretty low-end—but it looked fantastic. The games that were to follow had to look good too, and it was in this period that graphics began to take precedence over the design of the game itself. There were one or two exceptions. But—*Tarzan* and *Cyber* had generally the watchword had become the prettier the better.

Williams' *Blaxx* Patrol was a summer hit with its super's later landscapes and "junkie printing"—giving for the first time the authentic effect of the foreground moving faster than the land in the distance as the motor buggy rumbled along the planet surface. This has become so much a part of modern gameplay that it is now a dedicated graphics landscape feature on modern 16-bit consoles.

Metalic effects—later to be used to such great effect in games like *Lethal*—first surfaced in *Mani Mania* in April '83 in what was the first of the modern style vertical shoot 'em ups. The landscape featured colors with shadow, changing terrain of forest, desert and sea with metal domed alien structures for you to bomb. Power ups were to be gathered on the way with a giant robot-like foe to deal with at the end of each level.

Literally hundreds of games on a variety of systems have copied the basic design of *Mania*—but as we can see *Mania* itself was no more than a collection of the ideas that had gone before. It was not, in fact, a particularly good execution of the best of shoot 'em up game play features. That would come later in 1984 and 1985 in games like *Tenno Cresta*, and *Starlight*.

#### SHOOTING TO KILL

By late '83 licensing was beginning to effect the shoot 'em up in a big way—both in home and in the arcade. In September of that year Atari shipped *Star Wars*—a video graphics challenge in which the player had to destroy the Death Star by flying down a tunnel and delivering the laser missiles.

This was also the first use of speech synthesis in a game (but the Force be with you). Everyone thought that it was the beginning of a boom in talking games. The reality is that the computers were not powerful enough to incorporate speech to any extent—a fact that is still largely true today. Though games like *Star Runner* (Warlord) still make effective use of short speech samples.



**Blaxxon**—a 16-bit title that games didn't quite reach the super-hit status of *Mania* but *Blaxxon* did.

## GLUNG HO!

1982 saw the introduction of the relatively cheap yet so much less popular 16-bit market. All of the year was Eugene's *Commando*—an abstracted version from style shoot 'em up. Several game sites actually were built on the idea of endless foe soldiers coming at you *Commando*—resembling a certain prevailing through '80's progress to avoid a battle in the battle was the main aim.

The genre's first real stars were abstract bits and abstract vehicles giving the player something to shoot at and to manipulate the wonder like it was the greater ups on command that too soon proved to drain an impressive share of the arc-light market. Like *Commando* (and *Blaxxon*). Some *Commando* shoot 'em ups have been taken a common shot at even from major industry houses.

The abstract was also an approach to (semi-abstract) *Blaxxon*. *Blaxxon*'s great look was mainly the tanks, tanks, and submarines were to be seen from above, except that it made through the air. The idea was to see what the graphics would be like in the real life world. The idea was to make the first into the graphics world and that was the main aim of the game—*Blaxxon* (and *Blaxxon*)—that *Blaxxon* was the first, and away from things that were able to be seen in real life.

Despite the 16-bit 1982 market for a 16-bit game to become a selling point after a while in the arcade, the few game releases required to make it with a profit is also available on the PC, home, and the Super Nintendo game consoles. The system is the best-known version of *Blaxxon*. Game sites were created on any form—a small number of shooting bits and graphics features.

1. Who produced the first two versions, and what was it called?
2. Eugene's game, programmed by Eugene, was produced in what format and what?



**Blaxxon**, Atari's first attempt at the abstract, was also the first to be made in a format that was not a 16-bit game. It was the first to be made in a format that was not a 16-bit game.

## EARLY ALIEN BIRDS

All in all, it is an interesting, rather than a game that was the first to be made in a format that was not a 16-bit game. It was the first to be made in a format that was not a 16-bit game. It was the first to be made in a format that was not a 16-bit game.

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*Blaxxon* (Blaxxon) is a 16-bit game that was the first to be made in a format that was not a 16-bit game.

Sega were continuing to make things look pretty in '83 but still failing to introduce in the game design department with games like *Super Zaxxon*, *Star Wars*, and *Blaxxon*. But sticking to the 16-bit shooting would later pay dividends later with games like *Space Invaders* and *Blaxxon*.

## HOME FRONT

By the mid 1980's the home computer was riding high. Video game consoles had crashed and shoot 'em up action shifted to the home computer as things also began to settle down on the console market at the same time. *Bug Byte* had won the race to bring the first game for the Spectrum by writing it in large part on the basis of the manual—without even seeing the computer. Naturally the game was a shoot 'em up, a result of the desire of them of entitled *Spectral* invaders.

High-tech in the arenas of '84 and '85 were the extraordinarily pretty *Blaxxon* and its sequel *Blaxxon* in *Blaxxon*. These games used the format of 8-bit. A return to horizontal scrolling with stacks of power ups and tremendous effort put into the graphics of the creatures. Snakes, worms, and oddball insects. Items of unusual and game play reliability the coin ops had made a quantum leap forward. It would take another two years before the home systems would start to catch up with the launch of the *3D* and the *Amiga*.

## IMPACT

The use of power ups was becoming increasingly appreciated. Capson's 1947 was a World War II aerial shoot 'em up. Flying up the screen you had to attack the Japanese shipping whilst taking out their fighters and bombers. First the power ups gave you additional fire power—but pretty soon you had additional items (abilities) accompanying you flying in each ring, and the most powerful (smart) bombs you could imagine that would everything in a deadly circle of flames. 1943 was to follow in '86 and *Flying Shark* in '87 but the military shoot 'em up had peaked—the bit of the year was *Capson*.

Atari's *Guardian* was the first four player shoot 'em up with a Tolkien style scenario. It featured a Toy

if option, let you could join in the mayhem if there was a spare joystick by simply inserting your coin. You would then appear in the midst of the fight and could start blasting away against the trolls, goblins, and other assorted nasties that occupied the maze.

#### WELCOME TO THE MODERN WORLD

If 1976 to 83 represented the Golden Age of shoot 'em ups then 1987 must go down as the beginning of the new wave.

The year opened with *Side Arms* and *Soldier of Light*—two shoot 'em ups that pushed the genre up to the limits. The programmers were working with new hardware which enabled them to draw and animate huge sprites in full colour. New sound chips were also on stream which facilitated a huge range of sounds. As the year progressed these features became even better in games like *History Road*, *Legendry Wings* and *Slap-Fight*.

The developers were starting to innovate again as the air became filled with new ideas. Data linked three screens together to make one constant play area allowing for brilliant, long streaks of laser fire. The game was called *Darius* and was a huge two-player hit—even if the vast size of the cabinet meant that a lot of arcades couldn't find room for it.

*Darius* was clear evidence of the increasing sophistication of the shoot 'em up. It featured a global map which the player had to become familiar with—knowing the best route to take from level to level if he



**Darius**—epicure.  
The shoot 'em up that set a number one in the house and the arcades of the year 88.

was to have a good chance of clearing it. It also featured extremely tough mid-level items that had to be systematically destroyed piece by piece in the correct order. The days of flying from left to right, collecting power ups, and blasting anything that moved were over.

*Space Harrier* in 1987 proved that Sega could make things move faster, better, and more convincingly in glorious 3D than anyone else in the world. The addition of a hydraulic seat and the choice of a super-cool jet fighter proved an effective combination for Sega—giving them the coin-op hit of the year in 87 as the shape of afterburner. Dunderbade followed the following year—with Sega also managing to squeeze in the driving game hit of the decade, *Out Run*.

Brilliant as they are the Sega Shoot 'em ups offer little to the development of shoot 'em up games play other than the 'gameability' of the graphics. They are more of a sight seeing treat than a challenging game. However, it's probably too early to judge Sega's contribution to the development of the shoot 'em up. They have an excellent engine in the shape of their 3D knowledge and we can only hope they start to develop their sophisticated scenarios to take advantage of it.



**Darius II**—Blastzone drive.  
It shows 'em up in play on a home that is right up to date with the latest developments in the genre.

#### QUIZ ANSWERS

1. *Space Harrier* for Computer Entertainment, being a programmer from outside the world.
2. *When the lights go off* was offered to the top trade show executives and then everyone along to the waiting area in game-charge. They paid 25 million dollars for the rights to a console that was seen as the next big thing.
3. All of them. *Darius* dominated with a number 1 sales 1987 and was the first to use a hydraulic seat. *Legendry Wings* used a similar hydraulic but treated the huge in the cabinet such as 1987.
4. *Out Run* that was given 'all up and under' status. The game company also featured other games better than they had previously with the comparatively good 'em ups.
5. Sega went on to produce the further games—*Out Run* the sequel to *Dunderbade* and *Rescue*—a hybrid that was not up until dominating in the top 10 arcades. One of these games topped arcades but it was not the best-selling game but it was the most successful since the up of *Space Harrier* in the present day.

#### THE FUTURE OF THE SHOOT 'EM UP

There are both hopeful and gloomy signs as the 90's gather steam. On the down side, stacks of copy cat Operation Wolf clones are about to hit the arcades. Games like *Blaze Masters* from SNK, and *Line of Fire* from Sega offer little enhancements to the Wolf original.

On a more positive note from continue to lead the good fight for a more intelligent and challenging shoot 'em up. *Demolition* offers many more innovations—like moving wings that fire in the gust of wind caused by the movement of your ship. These constant deadly things that can kill the serpent by blowing against them—forcing the player to develop his fight skills as much as his shooting skills.

*Dragon's Breed* introduces the first remote controlled power-up by letting you send your dragon off to a certain position to breath his fiery breath in a little bit of time whilst you blast away elsewhere on screen. You can summon your dragon back anytime you like, top on him and fly off to another part of the screen.

Best of all, *Wings II* is about to ship to the arcades as we go to press. The game offers more carefully planned shoot 'em up action. It also adds an even more sophisticated power up in the shape of the *Snake Cannon*.

Meanwhile, we can all accelerate progress towards the modern shoot 'em up by voting with our dollar. Seek out the good games and support them with your hard-earned dollar. If the history of the shoot 'em up proves anything, it is that the developers only start to innovate when their revenues start to fall.

#### R-TYPE—THE ULTIMATE?

The game *R-Type* is the shoot 'em up toward modern-day other in 87 award winning in graphics and other graphics. It remains an immense commercial success, the definitive shoot 'em up. *R-Type* by Namco.

What makes it special is the combination of skills that demands from the player. Its variety of play means that the player must learn more and shoot at right, correct situations as effectively as in speed when everything is coming at you. None of the successful *R-Type* games that show how and when to use the power up.

The best reason for this is the great game play that must be described—kill by 87—1000 times. This is programming in the—being able to do this to improve your power-ups—blowing enemies weapons that fire to see around—required. This is the best game going around, being able to get the best possible score from the game.

*R-Type* game is generally too hard to play to offer maximum interactive enjoyment. Equipped the shoot 'em up—being demonstrating this innovation—leads to the fact that the game has moving without a screen. Every 1000—making a long time in the other—developed to follow the best lead.

# IN THE PINK

## THE ACE STOCKMARKET .....182

Which games are currently hitting the highspots? Find out in Britain's only games chart that tells you which titles are getting the **best reviews**, not just which titles the banow boys are forcing onto the shelves.

## GAMES YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE.....92

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growing more popular each month since we managed to start printing the right grids! Grab a pencil and see if you can win a prize.

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## ASK MEL!

We now have a full-time Pink Pages reader's taster officer! Melissa Cooley, who will happily (or fondly) help you out with problems about Reader's Pages and our Pink Pages magazine difficulties. If you're a dealer and would like to place an advert, meet in the pink or arrange a voucher offer, contact Jerry Kufner 01 290 6333 (x. 146).



# THE GAMES YOU HAVE TO HAVE...

SOMETIMES YOU KNOW YOU'VE GOT TO FACE UP TO THE TRUTH. YOUR SOFTWARE COLLECTION IS GETTING YOU DOWN, YOUR DOG'S SICK, YOUR FRIENDS ARE CONVINCED IT WAS YOU THAT LOST THE WINNING POOLS COUPON, YOUR MOTHER HAS DECIDED YOU NEED TO CHANGE YOUR IMAGE, AND YOUR GIRLFRIEND (OR BOYFRIEND) HAS JUST BEEN EATEN BY A ROTTWEILER...THERE'S ONLY ONE THING FOR IT...GO OUT AND GET A NEW GAME. AND TO MAKE SURE YOU REALLY SEE THE BRIGHT SIDE, HERE'S A LIST OF GAMES YOU'VE JUST GOT TO ADD TO YOUR COLLECTION.

## ARCADE STYLE

Including coin-op conversions. Games with a high fun factor and plenty of addictive action feature in this category.

### ARKANOID

Atari ■ Spectrum  
£7.95 ■ C64 £8.95 ■  
£12.95 ■ Amstrad  
£8.95 ■ £13.95 ■  
Atari X/ST £8.95 ■  
Ami CD £14.95 ■  
MSX £5.95 ■ MSX PC  
£13.95 ■

Consider how advanced the coin-op, in its turn the best version of the classic bricked bricks in concept, the player controls a ball at the base of the screen, whacking it left and right. The object is to keep a small ball in play, bouncing it off the ball to destroy formations of bricks in the top half of the screen. Eliminate all the bricks and move on to the next of 33 screens. Game extra features can include the addition to a ball's initial velocity. Arkanoid comes out hot, but for a different slant on the same theme and some fine music, try ACE Impact, which also looks as the officially best more probably. ■ **ACE RATED 90**

### BOULDER

Gremlin Graphics ■ Spectrum  
£7.95 ■ C64  
£8.95 ■ £12.95 ■  
Amstrad £8.95  
£13.95 ■

A great arcade (coin-op) game, and very addictive too. The guide is full on it because from one job level to another, high above the vertically scrolling landscape. Level reworked appears and you can stay still longer in game (boulder bonus). It is in a game or 10. One of the game's many modes, however, and you'll love it. It's Boulders learning to roll at the end of each level help you get the most, and those tough game really keep you coming back for more. Bright, with graphics, great music - and it's so playable. ■ **ACE CLASSIC**

### BUBBLE BOBBLE

Taito ■ Spectrum  
£1.95 ■ C64 £8.95  
£12.95 ■ Amstrad  
£8.95 ■ £14.95 ■  
Ami CD £19.95 ■

Playability in the essence of this two-player coin-op conversion. You and a friend play bubble-blowing dragons, breathing through 320-megabyte platform screens, fighting through 320-megabyte platform screens, fighting through 320-megabyte platform screens, fighting through 320-megabyte platform screens. You and a friend play bubble-blowing dragons, breathing through 320-megabyte platform screens, fighting through 320-megabyte platform screens. You and a friend play bubble-blowing dragons, breathing through 320-megabyte platform screens, fighting through 320-megabyte platform screens. You and a friend play bubble-blowing dragons, breathing through 320-megabyte platform screens, fighting through 320-megabyte platform screens. ■ **ACE RATED 90**

### CONQUEROR

Capcom ■ Amstrad  
£14.95 ■ Amiga  
£14.95 ■ £17.95 ■

Direct descent in your very own land (Bible) the strategy is clear and simple and your strategy for the campaign. This is a tricky game to get to grips with, but if you persevere you'll find you soon become mesmerized by the thing. If you can't get a 386 Amiga through - forget it. ■ **ACE RATED 90**

### ELIMINATOR

Atari ■ Spectrum  
£7.95 ■ £12.95 ■  
C64 £9.95 ■ £14.95 ■  
Amstrad £8.95 ■  
£14.95 ■ Ami CD  
£13.95 ■ Amiga  
£13.95 ■

Graphically wonderful roadway shoot-em-up by John Polak, which will test your joystick made-up. All you have you are doing on the ending. Though it's tough to get to grips with at first, the addition leads to so great you'll keep coming back for more. ■ **ACE RATED 90**

### EXOLON

Atari ■ Spectrum  
£7.95 ■ C64 £8.95  
£12.95 ■ Amstrad  
£8.95 ■ £14.95 ■

Graphically superb shoot-em-up in abstract art, dark and gungy war was along a planet's surface blasting away at alien defences. It got a 100% score (and a 100% score) to beat the boss, but if things are still too tough then you can grab an invulnerability for extra protection and the power. ■ **ACE CLASSIC**

### NEW ZEALAND STORY

Ocean ■ Spectrum  
£8.95 ■ C64 £9.95  
£14.95 ■ Amstrad  
£9.95 ■ £17.95 ■  
Ami CD £19.95 ■

Although played at the point in a land to land with Rainbow Islands, New Zealand Story is not a game to be ruled-out. The immense variety plus, provides lots of varied action across many levels. Definitely worth checking out. ■ **ACE RATED 87**

### ODDS

Atari ■ Ami CD  
£13.95 ■

A magnificent French shoot. The odds are always in your favor, but the bonuses aren't going to let them go without leaving missiles, rockets and a number of other weapons at your disposal with the program is an excellent facility that allows you to design your own playables - great stuff. ■ **ACE RATED 90**

### PITSTOP 2

Days 103 Gals ■ Amstrad  
only ■ C64 £9.95  
£14.95 ■ Ami CD  
£19.95 ■

In competition with the other Games and Games Games 3. Telling racing game where the screen is split into two and you can race the computer or a friend. Lots of different Grand Prix circuits, 100-lap races and of course the all-important pitstop game to give you hand controls and your brain is real racing fun. ■ **ACE CLASSIC**

### POWER-DROME

Electronic Arts ■ Ami CD  
£24.95 ■

This superb arcade-style futuristic driving simulators will have you enthralled for months to come. It may not be the best to get straight into but it's well worth persevering with. Worth playing this for months. ■ **ACE RATED 90**

### PURPLE SATURN DAY

Ocean ■ Ami CD  
£24.95 ■ Amiga  
£24.95 ■

A terrific mix of games that delivers punch both audio and visual. The can instantly good graphics ensure you'll enjoy playing each sub-game time and again. It's a little tricky to get the hang of, but master it and you'll be pleased you persevered. ■ **ACE RATED 90**

### RAINBOW ISLANDS

Atari ■ Spectrum  
£8.95 ■ £14.95 ■  
C64 £9.95 ■ £14.95 ■  
Amstrad £8.95 ■  
£14.95 ■ Ami CD  
£19.95 ■

The appeal to Bubble Bobble lies in nothing about the title. The graphics and sound are superb, as is the gameplay. One of the best and easiest arcade games.

sons of the year that should not be missed  
**ACE RATED 95+**

## RVP

Macintosh II 234.95  
 Amiga 229.95

RVP offers a near endless supply of fun-paced R&D action as you race your rocket/VTOL through a total of 25 out-of-atmosphere take-offs with your order being the take off path. Start after a crash (re-enabled via CD update and simulation) • **ACE RATED 94+**

## SPIDRON-IC

Experimental II 499  
 IIx 129.95

Guide your spider-like character around the game area, collecting colored gems in the correct order. The built-in instructions can mean you're looking out your two eyes (or the ears, come home) • **ACE RATED 92**

## SUMMER GAMES

MS-DOS 680+ CGA  
 239.95 or 234.95 • **MSFC 129.95**

Eye-opening simulation on high quality but now hard-to-capture the playability and spirit of the original Summer Games used to imitate succession. Summer Games 2: One to be able to get two parts in high end, gymnastics, spring boarding, clay pigeon shooting, swimming, pole vault — and others — with truly large graphics and smooth animation throughout. Control of your athletes can be complex or simple as you see fit. • **ACE CLASSIC**

## SUPER SPRINT

Dos, DOS 234  
 23.95 • 214.95  
 Amiga 229.95 Spectrum 239.95 • Amiga 174.95

One of the better-looking racers is currently available. With up to three players competing at once, the action is fast

and furious and it will take a fairly talented car to come close to some of the more far-fetched circuits that appear later in the game. • **ACE RATED 94+**

## THRUST

French Spectrum  
 22.95 • CGA 21.95 • **Amibid 21.95**

Surprisingly sensitive car balls and a large helping of wacky physics make this budget title an absolute must. Flying down through the curves of an ornate field, you have to pick up fuel and destroy hostile gas tanks without crashing into the tunnel walls. Tough enough as it is, but then you've got to make the interplanetary with a heavy fuel being under your control. Very clever, very addictive. • **ACE RATED 92**

## URIIDIUM

Macintosh Spectrum  
 22.95 • CGA 23.95 • **MSFC 23.95** • 214.95

The game is an intricate of scrolling shoot-'em-ups. But the breakthrough and attacking ships while dodging around any large structures. Great mathematics throughout and the smooth scrolling will have you put the head and shoulders above the opposition. A game not to be missed, especially now that CGA versions come packaged with the excellent

## Procedural ACE CLASSIC

## ZARCH / VIRUS

Apicom Software • **Amibid 219.95** • **French 23** and first normal Amiga 229.95 • **Amia 174.95** • **MSFC 174.95**

A solid three-dimensional shoot-up with such graphics on the border and 16-bit add-on game play that it became an instant classic. Now the 1.5-MB version has arrived and it's just as good as the 32-bit version. • **ACE RATED 92+**

# ADVENTURES

After a brief surge of RPG-related popularity, the traditional text-entry adventure is rapidly disappearing. But for those of you who savor the powers of the imagination, the verbal twist, and the thrill of encountering other characters, this game genre still has much to recommend it. Here are some of the all-time great computer fantasies...

## BEYOND ZORK

MS-DOS/Amibid • CGA 23.95 • **FC 23.95** • **Amiga 23.95** • **Amia 23.95**

Wilson's attempt to translate it on the following market is a great failure. Locate the Madon. Control of Zorker that game that combines the wit and ingenuity of one of the world's most original software companies with state-of-the-art punning and gameplay. Try any text with an accurate mapping to life. • **ACE RATED 90**

## CORRUPTION

Amiga • **Amia 234.95** • **Amiga 234.95** • **FC 234.95** • **Spectrum 234.95** • **CGA 217.95** • **Amibid 234.95**

The tale of under dealings, industry, and brooked business deals is unlikely to appeal to adventure, who prefer to explore through well-developed worlds, seeking treasure. But for those who are fed up with traditional adventuring, it's the ultimate of text or. Superb graphics, great atmosphere and a walking plot makes this a terrific game that goes from the start. • **ACE RATED 92**

## FISH

Magical Worlds • **CGA 234.95** • **Amiga 234.95**

More graphics than Corruption, better game design than Zorker, and not as quality as The Firm. This is definitely

## QUILD OF THIEVES

Amiga • **CGA 214.95** • **Spectrum 229.95** • **Amibid 219.95** • **Amiga 229.95** • **Amia 214.95** • **FC 224.95**

One of Britain's newer adventure software houses — Magical Worlds — managed to produce a traditional treasure hunt with superb graphics and some very tricky puzzles. Some 3-D game helps to create a convincing game world with humor and insight too. • **ACE CLASSIC**

## INCHY'S BACK

Lord 9 • **Amia 234.95** • **229.95**

A great follow-up to Queen Ringer Lord's first really got to grips with the use of character in their games and how to program them very effectively. • **ACE RATED 92+**

## JEWELS OF DARKNESS

Amibid • **CGA 212.95** • **Spectrum 126.23** • **Amia 229.95** • **FC 179.95** • **Amiga 219.95** • **FC 179.95** • **Amia 219.95**

Lord 9 have put together one of their classic releases. Golden Adventure, Dragon Adventure and Adventure Quest is

one month. The games have been updated with graphics and larger vocabularies and are a close to the original spirit of adventure in your hobby to life. • **ACE CLASSIC**

## LURKING HORROR

Amiga/Magical Worlds • **CGA 234.95** • **FC 234.95** • **Amiga 234.95** • **FC 229.95**

## TIME AND MAGIC

Amibid • **Spectrum 214.95** • **Amiga 214.95** • **CGA 214.95** • **FC 214.95** • **Amibid 214.95**

**214.95** • **Amia 214.95** • **MSFC 214.95** • **FC 219.95**

The completion of the Lord 9 games, Lord Of Time, Red Moon and The Price Of Magic have been to contend with better punning, bigger vocabularies and perhaps added Super-verb if you don't already own them. • **ACE RATED 94+**

## ZORK ZERO

Wilson revisits the old about now. Make this game for you who, rightly enjoyed with a variety of challenges that make for instant addiction. A 30 more-character interaction would have made this a real triumph, but this is a close call of the best games of the year so far. • **ACE RATED**

# PUZZLES

If you're after a game that will provide you with a real challenge, without necessarily requiring large doses of strategic thinking, then it's a puzzle game you want.

## BONE-CRUSHER

Superior Software • **CGA 219.95** • **Amiga 219.95**

At first sight the recent release may appear to be nothing more than a good old-fashioned, however there are a number of innovative gameplay features which give Bonecrusher a feel of its own. Highly recommended for those who prefer to solve problems rather than shoot them. • **ACE RATED 94+ — AMIGA**

## BOULDERDASH

From Leisure Corporation • **Spectrum 22.95** • **CGA 22.95** • **Amibid 22.95**

A game that has every thing — instant addiction, long-term challenge, its

real excitement as the clock ticks down and ultimately victory nearby. Its multi-color graphics feature a camera, dipping away earth and loaders to get the stone boulders on the and cause you serious damage, while the game is often feature seemingly impenetrable walls. Complex but great fun. Boulderdash is a clear choice you can afford to miss in its budget release list. • **ACE CLASSIC**

## DEFLEKTOR

Genesis/World • **CGA 239.95** • **Spectrum 239.95** • **Amia 229.95**

Optics are the order of the day here but the speed of the panels on the player lists to control a laser beam in a mirror and at the same time destroy a

number of odds that are on screen as well. You'll need to make full use of the mirrors, fire spots, bombs and polarizing and reflecting blocks if you're to achieve star-8. Clear the first screen and you'll only have 10 more to do. Fascinating stuff that'll surely addict you.

• **AGE RATED MS - 87**

**NEBULUS**

Hardware • C64, 486 PCs  
\$24.99 (Mac) • \$21.99 (C)

Guide dogs to the top of eight towers using the best of platforms, lifts and ladders that form the route. It's a highly original game that strikes a fine balance between frustration and addiction, added to which is the subtle good, that having it a good-looking, playable version of a game.

• **AGE RATED MS - C64**

**SENTINEL**

Hardware • Spectrum 48, 65 cc • C64, 486 PCs  
\$24.95 (Mac) • Amstrad 48, 65 (Mac) £11.99 (C) • Atari ST £14.95 (C) • Sega £19.95 (Mac)

Bombs and competing strategy games played out the obscured surface of a planet dominated by the Sentinel. Funds naturally you have to shoot enemy while trying to blow the Sentinel from orbiting orbit. It does look and feel bigger for a game both necessary in the very original and unique 10000 possible land masses - game.

• **AGE RATED MS - AMSTRAD**

**SKULL DOGGERY**

Hardware • Am ST £19.95

Beautiful-looking but completely useless the original machine, portable machine. Again (and that's almost enough) you're digging for diamonds in caverns over a hundred different rooms - with a time limit for each screen. SkullDoggery scores on playability because screens to begin with and a choice of starting point and its entertaining playover

option.

• **AGE RATED MS - BT SCORE**  
Hardware • C64, 486 PCs • Amstrad 48, 65 (Mac) • Spectrum 48, 65 (Mac)

The winning combination of strategy, heated blasting and great graphics make Spore a really full priced release - what a bargain that is for you to pick it up for £1.99.

• **AGE RATED MS - C64**

**TETRIS**

Hardware • Spectrum 48, 65 (C) • C64, 486 PCs  
£11.99 (C) • Amstrad 48, 65 (Mac) £11.99 (C) • Atari ST £19.95 (C) • Sega £19.95 (C) • PC £19.95 (C)

A fascinating geometrical oddity, the Russian puzzle form the obscure mathematical concept of packing into a cube game. One at a time, shapes fall downwards into ever-narrower playing area. Left to their own devices they'll pile up and they'll reach the top of the screen, your task is to guide them down projects from light to dark doesn't happen. Different variants have proved to be rather versatile in their available levels, but the brilliantly simple view behind them means they're well worth a look whenever your machine.

• **AGE RATED MS - C64**

**THINK!**

Hardware • C64 £1.95 (C) • Amstrad £1.95 (C) • Spectrum £1.95 (C)

Originally released by Apple back a half price, but now available as a fraction of that from Think!. It's a lovely little arcade game played on a dual grid - either one or two players - in which you attempt to connect four counters, horizontally, vertically or diagonally.

• **AGE CLASSIC**

**XOR**

Hardware • BBC 18 (Mac) £12.95 (C) • Amstrad 48 (Mac) £14.95 (C) • Spectrum 48 (Mac) £14.95 (C)

Extremely tricky maze game looking the player

containing two levels, and collecting marks through 15 mazes, which increase in complexity as you progress. As you enter stages, fish and chickens in a row, often forcing themselves and just waiting to fall on you.

**SPECIALS**

Original works that are simply unclassifiable feature in this section.

**ATF**

Digital Integration • C64 48, 65 (C) £12.95 (C) • Amstrad 48, 65 (Mac) £13.95 (C) • Spectrum 48, 65 (Mac) £13.95 (C)

Excellent combat flight simulator that's a bit of a change for Digital Integration. The simulator operates. The simulator is an odd action, the result being a war for it.

• **AGE RATED MS - SPECTRUM**

**DARK SIDE**

Hardware • C64 £9.95 (C) £14.95 (C) • Amstrad 48, 65 (Mac) £9.95 (C) • Spectrum 48, 65 (Mac) £14.95 (C)

The second game using the free-to-play program using system, which is also one of an arcade that large. The 3D graphics are again superb as are the sounds and music.

• **AGE RATED MS - AMSTRAD**

**ELITE**

Hardware • C64 £14.95 (C) £17.95 (C) • Amstrad 48, 65 (Mac) £14.95 (C) • Spectrum 48, 65 (Mac) £17.95 (C) • Atari ST £14.95 (C) • Sega £14.95 (C)

Still the best space trading game. Elite set a standard for other companies to follow. One of the first space games to use vector graphics. It's a shooting and trading effect set across several galaxies, with plenty of variety in the game play, the core trade-fight goods in both body code systems, or not the quality of graphics - the game's danger spots with your total list of contraband. Other was

being one used in systems beyond later on. Being limited as to how many ports and only complete special job. Simply trading, simple graphics. You can require playing to complete successfully.

**AGE RATED MS - SPECTRUM**

**QUDEX**

Hardware • C64 £9.95 (C) £14.95 (C)

In the impressively that brings game you must cover a notable ball through ten different screens of music, bonus and obstacles, all within a set time limit. This simple game concept has a host of add-ons to make it particularly pleasing, you can carry over unused time to the next screen, for example, and take the all levels screens in places if any order you wish. Excellent graphics and utterly absorbing play.

• **AGE RATED MS - C64**

**INCREDIBLE SHRINKING SPHERE**

Electronic Dreams • C64 48, 65 (C) £14.95 (C) • Amstrad 48, 65 (Mac) £14.95 (C) • Spectrum 48, 65 (Mac) £14.95 (C) • Atari ST £14.95 (C) • Sega £14.95 (C)

A mini-maze world where maze, size and mirth combine to provide endless gameplay. Truly unique and endless early video should have you riding around in delight.

• **AGE RATED MS - C64**

**MI TANK PLATOON**

Melbourne • PC £29.95 (C)

This is a real-time battle from flight view, that breathes enough detail to keep you the most competitive shooter game out of the genre but has a wealth of challenge and combat scenarios that should satisfy the most serious shooter. It wins.

• **AGE RATED MS**

**MAGNETRON**

Frontier • C64 £9.95 (C) £14.95 (C) • Spectrum 48, 65 (Mac) £12.95 (C)

Physics and action there's better said. Save the world by dismantling light barriers. Blast your way through many traps and hazards. You can shoot and blast it's made your job a little easier. The final game for Spectrum fans looking for a similar, new challenge.

• **AGE RATED MS - SPECTRUM**  
**QUDEX**  
Hardware • C64 £9.95 (C) £14.95 (C)

In the impressively that brings game you must cover a notable ball through ten different screens of music, bonus and obstacles, all within a set time limit. This simple game concept has a host of add-ons to make it particularly pleasing, you can carry over unused time to the next screen, for example, and take the all levels screens in places if any order you wish. Excellent graphics and utterly absorbing play.

• **AGE RATED MS - C64**

**SPINDRIZZY**

Electronic Dreams • C64 48, 65 (C) £14.95 (C) • Amstrad 48, 65 (Mac) £14.95 (C) • Spectrum 48, 65 (Mac) £14.95 (C) • Atari ST £14.95 (C) • Sega £14.95 (C)

Remember that when your spinning ball over tough obstacles and over 60 levels, against a finish line first. The game landscape is a mix of platform, jumps, traps and traps like surrealistic level design and 90 safety cuts. Floor switches activate the end-stage traps, but trying them in the right order can be harder than think. A few final goals and a 90-0 race finishes, but the excitement of the thing.

• **AGE CLASSIC**

**STARGLIDER III**

Hardware • Am ST £24.95 (C) • Amstrad 48, 65 (Mac) £24.95 (C)

One of the best examples of a game using vector graphics to their full advantage. Gets you the real 3D treatment and comes and looking every bit a winner that you've got a large task to complete and there's plenty of Ego's to destroy, making this combination of shooting and exploration that should have above the competition.

• **AGE RATED MS - BT**

**STAR TREK V**

Melbourne • PC £34.95 (C) • Mac £34.95 (C)

This is easily the best alternative to Star Trek out. The graphics provide a beautiful and challenging look of fun. A final for Trekkers and an interesting space strategy format for for everyone else.

• **AGE RATED MS**

**TAU CITY ACADEMY**

C64 • C64 £9.95 (C) £14.95 (C) • Amstrad 48, 65 (Mac) £14.95 (C) • Spectrum 48, 65 (Mac) £14.95 (C) • Atari ST £14.95 (C) • Sega £14.95 (C)

Flight simulator 'shoot 'em up' and its sequel which are both incredibly smooth and addict together. The attention to detail is impressive as you sit off on the main mission in a space robot. It's actually you get to shoot your own space defense craft as well.

• **AGE CLASSIC**

**TOTAL ECLIPSE**

Hardware • C64 £9.95 (C) £14.95 (C) • Amstrad 48, 65 (Mac) £14.95 (C) • Spectrum 48, 65 (Mac) £14.95 (C) • Atari ST £14.95 (C) • Sega £14.95 (C)

The third game using the FreeSpace system out of a departure from the first two but it's still an incredible game. It's a full-on space battle game in a 3D space you're battling against time limit in the 1900's being to prevent the moon's destruction. For arcade adventures, the FreeSpace system is a great one.

• **AGE RATED MS - AMSTRAD**

**WIZBALL**

Hardware • C64 £9.95 (C) £14.95 (C) • Amstrad 48, 65 (Mac) £14.95 (C) • Spectrum 48, 65 (Mac) £14.95 (C) • Atari ST £14.95 (C) • Sega £14.95 (C)

Second Mizball and the new 'color creature' which you shoot or shoot the spectrum and shooting the landscape play and dots. One of the most playable game around, despite the simple graphics.

• **AGE CLASSIC**

## RPG

Role-playing games have exerted an enormous influence on modern game-styles. They combine the atmosphere of text adventures with the action of arcade games and the brain exercise of strategy — but their graphical presentation tends to be weaker than other game genres. Gameplay centres around developing characters by raising their experience and skill levels in conflict with other, computer-controlled nasties. All that — and a great too...

### THE BARD'S TALE II

Electronic Arts ■ C64  
23.95, Amiga 224.95db

The highly successful previous incarnation of *The Bard's Tale II* has the advantage of being slightly easier to win than. The Amiga version introduces some very well-crafted music charts when you enter a temple and excellently coloured graphics. And of course, you can usually visit friends' characters, their attributes and equipment to use in BT II. ■ **ACE RATED 900**

### THE BARD'S TALE III

Electronic Arts ■ C64  
24.95db

The latest *Bard's Tale* game offers a number of enhancements over its predecessors but of which an old hand worth taking notice look at first, the graphics are better animated. Second, there are revised combat moves which take careful account of the distance between you and your opponent. Finally, the game's large and repeatable reward value for money. ■ **ACE RATED 900**

### BATTLETECH

Brooks, PC ■ 229.95, ST

BattleTech features some excellent cut-scene sequences, an ACE style editor, role play and strategy to start a con-

clude, full game, it took about 1800 purchase items though it involved not an Ace rating. ■ **ACE RATED 800**

### DUNGEON MASTER

Electronic Arts ■ C64  
24.95db

Quoted as being a 'milestone in Advanced Computer Entertainment', *Dungeon Master* offers 34 levels, loads of spells, atmospheric graphics, and sound. All going to make *Dungeon Master* one of the best role-playing adventures to have appeared on any machine. ■ **ACE RATED 900**

### POOL OF RADIANCE

ST ■ 222.95, C64  
231.95db

ST will never try to let it attempt to capture the complex concept of the ACE system on a computer, but they managed superbly. An RPG which used game that will succeed to not only ACE fans but to anyone looking for an interesting game that will keep them playing for months. ■ **ACE RATED 850**

### ULTIMA V

Origin Systems/Microprose ■ C64 234.95db ■ PC  
229.95 ■ ST/Amiga to be announced

Amazing level of detail in the role-playing world

world etc. How much? Starting the 'opponent' and seeing the 'physical', 'social', and 'group' social scenes that will enable you to defeat the forces of evil to bring ground. Superb music.

great setting offered, and tough strategic games. ■ **ACE RATED 900**

### WASTELAND

Electronic Arts ■ C64  
24.95db

Charge around isolated, 3D wrapping mutant hordes and later some further interplaying sets. The atmosphere may not be as good as the *Bard's Tale* series of games, but the very direction of

strange issues the cut, dark and well beyond of the BT series was behind. ■ **ACE RATED 800**

# BRAIN GAMES

Feed up with mindless blasting? Want a game that offers you an opponent who's worthy of your skills? Then this is your section...

### CHESS MASTER 2000

Electronic Arts ■ C64  
29.95db ■ C64 Plus  
31.45db ■ Amiga 234.95db ■ Amiga  
ST 224.95db ■ IBM PC  
224.95db

Strategic chess game on the Amiga, with excellent graphics, 20 or 30 view-point, 13 levels of difficulty to end at the playing surface you could wish for. This same fairly hefty speech-synthesiser. ■ **ACE RATED 900**

### COLOSSUS CHESS 4

Orion ■ C64 29.95db  
234.95db ■ Amiga 29.95db  
234.95db ■ Amiga  
ST/Amiga 29.95

Best bet for that machine owners, with a choice of 20 or 30 sets, optimum levels of difficulty, and a

myriad options which enable you to play, watch, work out chess problems, etc against a live computer opponent. ■ **ACE CLASSIC**

### COLOSSUS MAH JONG

Orion ■ C64 29.95db  
23.45db ■ Amiga 29.95db  
23.45db

Reminiscent oriental game of strategy and chance, A MAJ program and a short manual make this an easy to use and highly entertaining pack of software for windows and windows. ■ **ACE RATED 800**

### INFOGAMES' BRIDGE

Infogrames ■ Amiga  
21.95db ■ C64 29.95db  
23.95db

Graphically the best of all contract bridge simulations, with logic playing cards depicted against a suitable green table-top ground. Plays a good game for a computer which offers also a bit short in the imagination and few departments, and features a wide range of options and bidding variations which you can begin to understand by your play. ■ **ACE CLASSIC**

### POWERPLAY

Orion ■ C64 29.95db  
23.45db ■ Amiga 29.95db  
23.45db ■ Amiga  
ST 23.95db

If you want to try out your game of knowledge, we reckon you'll be better off with the original and cheap long combination of

strategy game and card that with the extremely modest selling price the odds. Powerplay is people only very rarely in its selling on *Amiga* Olympus, home of the Gods. ■ **ACE RATED 900**

### SCRABBLE

Lawson Games ■ C64  
22.95db ■ C64 Plus  
23.45db ■ Amiga 29.95db  
23.45db ■ IBM PC  
224.95db

The highly popular word game is available very successfully only on the Amiga. First, excellent display, and a supporting large variable key-board. ST also include some strategic bidding cards on some extra special. Good enough to get over strong human opponents to tough game of the higher levels. ■ **ACE CLASSIC**

# WAR GAMES

Fancy yourself as a master of grand strategy, marshalling hordes of troops and sending them off to do battle on your behalf? Look no further than the ACE war games section...

### ANNHEM

CCL Spectrum 29.95db,  
Amiga 29.95db, C64  
29.95db

One of the oldest quality wargames featured in the section. *Annhem* was one of the best in the field. It has all the expected strategic options, but separate scenarios and one of the toughest computer opponents you could wish to meet. A thoroughly pleasing wargame which can be played on one of the old masters. ■ **ACE RATED 900**

### CONFLICT EUROPE

Microsoft, ST 29.95,  
Amiga 229.95, PC 129

The 10-year progression of *Theatre Europe*. Lots of strategic options and sound effects. The computer controlled intelligence was magnificently sophisticated but still enough to give a challenging game. The correct balance between strategy and pleasure throughout. Good for beginners and intermediate players. ■ **ACE RATED 900**

### THEATRE EUROPE

PSL Spectrum 29.95db,  
C64 29.95db, C64 Plus  
29.95db, Amiga 29.95db  
23.95db

The perfect game for 50 owners who go green with envy when they look at *Conflict Europe*. *Theatre Europe* is the successor to the excellent 10-year game. The graphics and overall play are not as sophisticated, but in the whole it is in one block of a game. ■ **ACE RATED 900**

### UNMS

Barrett, ST 229.95, PC  
224.95, Macintosh  
234.95, Amiga 229.95

Probably the greatest war game to date. UNMS uses 3D systems enables the creation of almost any land sea or history, to well as a very sophisticated computer opponent, yet for the first time is on a standard and a very real construction kit to keep you playing for ever longer. An excellent purchase. ■ **ACE RATED 900**





# FLIGHT SIMULATIONS

How about flying the latest US Stealth Fighter on a mission over Siberia? Or perhaps a quick flight over Hawaii would be more relaxing? Computer flight simulations can fulfill any flight of fancy

## BATTLE-HAWKS 1942

Leadspan/Comet/3D Gold  
 ● ST 224 995 ● Amiga  
 224 995 ● PC 224 995

A WW II NAVAL AIR COMBAT SIMULATOR CONTAINS THE MOST IMPORTANT BATTLES OF THE 1942 PACIFIC WAR. FOR SMALLLY-BATTERED ACTION FANS ONE HAS EVERYTHING — THE SENSE OF BEING THERE IS THROUGH THRILLING AND UN-PROFITABLE ADDICTIVE STUFF.

▲ ACE RATED  
 920

## BOMBER

AtariSoft ● Spectrum  
 114 995 ● ST 119 995 ●  
 C64 214 995 ● Amiga  
 214 995 ● PC 214 995  
 ● Amstrad 214 995  
 219 995 ● ST 224 995  
 ● Amiga 224 995 ● PC  
 224 995

For Joe Gault has spent a long time on this one — and it certainly shows. The game puts the balance just right between controlling simulation and enter-taining game. Highly recommended.

▲ ACE RATED  
 925

## CHUCK YEAGER'S ADVANCED FLIGHT TRAINER

Electronic Arts ● Spectrum  
 ● C64 ● CPC ● ST  
 ● Amiga ● PC 224 995

An analogue of aircraft from an early 1950s to the Space Shuttle. It's certainly different from your standard flight sim and there's so much in this game that it will take many hours of instruction for its experience and master of the available options.

▲ ACE RATED  
 913

## F-16 COMBAT PILOT

DigitalIntegration ● ST  
 224 995 ● Amiga  
 224 995 ● PC 224 995

This took two years to develop, and you can feel that quality of work when playing it — it's one of the most realistic flight sims on the market. If you are a connoisseur of flight simulators then this is an essential addition to your collection.

▲ ACE RATED  
 920

## FALCON

Spectrum Hobbyist Micro-soft ● ST 224 995 ●  
 Amiga 224 995 ● PC  
 224 995 ● Amstrad

If you really want the best, simulator and their everything happened

once completion of combat. This game delivers. Make no mistake, this game is the real thing. An essential purchase for flight fans.

▲ ACE RATED  
 945

## FLIGHT SIMULATOR II

Softdisk ● C64  
 224 995 ● ST 249 995 ●  
 Amiga 249 995 ● PC  
 249 995 ● Amstrad  
 249 995

The flight sim that put the genre on to the map. The highly realistic flight sim of a domestic Cessna plane, which is accompanied by flight schools to train would-be pilots. Classic

enhanced by a variety of scenery disks.

## ▲ ACE CLASSIC

## INTERCEPTOR

Electronic Arts ● Amiga  
 224 995

A few brief flight sim with a touch of Jet-Powered may dispute the label 'simulator' for — it certainly doesn't train you to fly a real life fighter — but this program combines realism and gameplay for too well for that to matter. If you want to feel the stress of combat action, this is the best graphics and sound on the market (training period, but no further)

▲ ACE RATED  
 934

# RACING SIMULATIONS

In You can't have too much of a good thing, even if the excitement is liable to give even old ticker a good going over. Racing sim's have really come into their own over the past couple of years — and this is where you find out how to get the best of motor racing action — all from the comfort of that armchair in front of your computer...

## LOMBARD RAC RALLY

Bandana ● ST ● Amiga  
 ● PC

Race through many types of terrain, such as mountain-top, forest, and through many types of weather conditions, such as fog or night. The game has a nice atmosphere, and though the variety of gameplay may feel a little too, it's still a game you'd be playing for a good while.

## FERRARI FORMULA ONE

Electronic Arts ● ST  
 224 995 ● Amiga  
 224 995 ● PC 224 995

A bit of the real deal, but still a game that was way

ahead of its time to start with. Take the wheel of a Formula One racecar on some of the most famous racetracks in the world. A true Formula level.

## R.V.R.

Microstyle ● ST 224 995  
 ● Amiga 224 995

The champion in the Best Sprint Based Racing Game (1991), and a superb time killer, this one puts you into the world of professional Motor Man racing on some other than the track. MP 350. Brilliant graphics, brilliant sound, brilliant game.

## STUNT CAR RACER

Microstyle ● Spectrum

22 995 ● C64 224 995 ● ST  
 22 995 ● C64 224 995 ● ST  
 224 995 ● Amiga  
 224 995 ● PC 224 995

This game built on the spirit of computer history of being one of the most amazing simulation to watch, all done play. The game is first person perspective, with the outside world made up of really nice, realistic-looking cars, and the experience of watching is unbelievable. An amazing experience, and a clear winner. Where can things go from here!

## SUPER HANG ON

Electronic Dreams ● Spectrum  
 22 995 ● C64  
 22 995 ● Amiga  
 22 995 ● PC 22 995 ● ST 22 995

● Amiga 224 995.

Not to much a simulation as a perfect arcade conversion of a brilliant racing game with up. Great game, excellent conversion.

## THE DUEL, a TEST DRIVE II

AtariSoft ● C64 ● ST ●  
 Amiga ● PC ● Amstrad

Accurate track right at the Test Drive engine with the concept, and it's tested. They're successful. They're making sense, about the game. It's just a bit of fun. It doesn't claim to be technically or visually accurate, but only about it.

## THE BOOKS YOU HAVE TO HAVE!

- If you ever feel it possible to drag yourself away from your computer and watch the TV instead you might have seen a programme on BBC last month about computer games — those people who just can't get enough of their screen and are quite happy to turn the midnight of just to be with them. The program suggested that such activities might be unhealthy (couldn't be true!), never being a magazine to promote it health. We've decided to back a sensible, solid activity, namely **BOOKS**. So here goes with the books you have to have:
  - Doctor Doom's ABC — A very colorful read, and just the right place to start if you've never done any before.
  - Pass in Size — A tongue-lashing Dr. Doom book for more advanced readers.
  - Dragon and the Blue Car — Probably the best book ever written (and, with pictures provided).
  - Day After Black — Any hours you spend with the glow of the tube are hours well spent. At the library you may find it placed in a 'controversial' item.
  - The Tale of Pook — All that ultimately required



# DANCE DIARY

ALL THOSE IMPORTANT DATES, RELEASES, AND BIRTHDAYS FOR FEBRUARY/MARCH.  
DON'T FORGET: IF YOU'VE GOT AN EVENT YOU WANT TO SEE PUBLISHED IN THE DIARY, LET US KNOW!

## FEBRUARY

### WEEK ONE

#### 10 SATURDAY

All Formats Computer Fair, New Horticultural Hall, London SW9 (cheap and out-price software)

#### 11 SUNDAY

#### 12 MONDAY

#### 13 TUESDAY

Chuck Yeager, first man to fly faster than the speed of sound, born this day in 1923. Licensed his name to Electronic Arts' Chuck Yeager Advanced Flight Trainer - a superbly tight sim.

#### 14 WEDNESDAY

St Valentine's Day. The original St Valentine lived in the fourth century and there is nothing in his life history (or in the legends surrounding him) to suggest why he might have acquired the practice of sending Valentines, which are more likely to have originated as an ancient pagan practice.

#### 15 THURSDAY

Anniversary of the introduction of decimal currency, in 1971.

#### 16 FRIDAY

Birthday of John McEvoy, 1958

#### 17 SATURDAY

Birthday of Barry Humphries, or should that be Dame Edna Everage, 1934.

### WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

**Firebird: R47** - Thunderbolt (Amiga, ST) Second World War air combat action, from the Japanese side.

**Star Wars Trilogy** (PC compatible) Compilation featuring the three Star Wars arcade games.

**Mindscope: Gin & Collage** (Amiga) **Rebels: Millennium** (PC compatible) Mike Singleton's latest, a tale of strategy and confrontation in the new Ice Age.

#### 18 SUNDAY

National Day, Nepal Independence Day, Camba Birthday of Rabby Robinson, 1933

#### 19 MONDAY

President's Day, USA

#### 20 TUESDAY

#### 21 WEDNESDAY

Friend Day of St Peter Damian, renowned for his serenity. Known for representing one bishop because he was indulging in the most frivolous of activities - chess.

#### 22 THURSDAY

#### 23 FRIDAY

#### 24 SATURDAY

### WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

**Impassioned Renaissance** (Amiga, ST) **Rebels: Tower of Babel** (Amiga) ACE rated at 900 last month, arcade puzzle game by Pete "Tau-Cat" Cooke.

**Wild Dreams** (CDI tape and disc) Explore your nightmares in this arcade adventure. **Boomers: Alled DeVille** (Amstrad) 3D race featuring speed and stunt tracks (including the infamous loop the loop) translated onto the super-fast, super-smooth Arc.

#### 25 SUNDAY

National Day, Kuwait, Feast Day of St Ethelbert of Kent, the king who built the first St Paul's cathedral in London.

#### 26 MONDAY

#### 27 TUESDAY

Shrove Tuesday, Pancake time, everyone.

#### 28 WEDNESDAY

Ash Wednesday - beginning of Lent, Birthday of Barry McGuigan, one-time world flyweight boxing champion and of Barry McGuigan's Boxing (Amstrad) game, 1981.

## MARCH

#### 1 THURSDAY

St David's Day

#### 2 FRIDAY

#### 3 SATURDAY

Anniversary of the Throne (National Day), Morocco

### WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

**Christmas: Amiga** (16b only) **Art Attack** (2) Come From the Desert data disk. Repeat in the acclaimed 18-month regional Christmas title. The arts are back in all their platinum-glittered glory. Requires the original disk and a 1Mb Amiga to operate.

**Mindscope: 77 Sports Basketball** Basketball action simulation.

**Firebird: R47 - Thunderbolt** Spectrum, C64, GPC. Second World War air combat action, from the Japanese side-up.

#### 4 SUNDAY

Birthday of Kerry Douglas, 1961

#### 5 MONDAY

#### 6 TUESDAY

Independence Day, Ghana, Daily Mail Ideal Home Exhibition opens (continues until April 1)

#### 7 WEDNESDAY

#### 8 THURSDAY

#### 9 FRIDAY

#### 10 SATURDAY

### WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

**Electronic Arts: Powerdrome** (PC compatible) Futuristic racing game set in an outer galaxy.

**Demarc: Hand Deville** Extra Tracks (Amiga) More stunts, more levels and turns in this hand Deville's secondary disk.

**Rebels: Rebel Dreams** (PC) Arcade adventure in the realms of the subconscious.

**Tower of Babel** (Amiga) Hard to define puzzle game, with an ACE rating of 900.

**Meltdown** (ST) Mike Singleton's latest, a tale of strategy and confrontation in the new Ice Age.

### GET YOURSELF IN THE DIARY!

Whether yours a different issue with a bunch in a club or with friends, let us know and we'll put you in the ACE Diary. Write to the ACE Diary, 20/21 Faringdon Lane, London, EC9P 8RL. Post deadline: the second Tuesday in every month for the issue in the diary in the following month.



# THE ACE STOCK MARKET

THIS MONTH WE INTRODUCE SOME MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE STOCKMARKET LISTINGS, DESIGNED TO MAKE THEM EASIER TO USE AND EVEN MORE INFORMATIVE. AND DON'T FORGET: YOU CAN WIN A PRIZE IF YOU CAN PREDICT NEXT MONTH'S TOP GAMES AND SOFTWARE HOUSES.

**T**his is the fourth time the ACE Stock market has been published, and we've made some big changes.

But first, are you confused? Well, sit down and relax... because it's all very simple. Here's a brief explanation for everyone who's still chewing their fingernails off. It's in two parts. First, how the Stockmarket works, and second, how you can win prizes.

## HOW IT WORKS

Each month, ACE researchers read EVERY major British computing magazine. They note down all the review ratings, for the games reviewed that month, together with the name of the software house, the machine the game runs on, and the name of the magazine the review appeared in.

They then feed this information into a spreadsheet and calculate the data that makes up the charts you see on these pages (called Counters), because this is a market, right?

There are three counters that deal with games. First, there's the MACHINE COUNTER. This tells you which games have been getting the highest review marks for each machine.

Remember - unlike other charts, this one is based on reviews, not on sales figures. This makes it much more useful to you, since you can see at a glance which games are likely to be the best buys for your machine. Of course, in an ideal world, the games that get the

best reviews should get the most sales, but for various commercial reasons this doesn't happen and as a result charts based on sales are NOT a great guide to what you should buy - they're just a guide to what the shops are selling.

In addition to the Machine Counter, there's also the two processor counters, which simply show you which are the best-reviewed 16-bit games and the best 8-bit ones. You can draw some interesting conclusions about 8-bit and 16-bit games by comparing these two charts.

Finally, there's the COMPANY COUNTER. This one is a little more complicated, but still it's really quite basic stuff.

The aim of the Company Counter is to tell you which software houses are currently going strong (and the most successful ones). Each company has a THIS MONTH rating, which is calculated according to the reviews its games have received during the current month. A company whose games are all rated highly will have a high THIS MONTH score.

The next rating of the company counter is the SHARE PRICE. This simply tells you how well a company is doing relative to its past performance. If a company gets worse reviews this month that last month, its price will drop. If it gets better reviews, the price rises. Companies who get no reviews at all have their price decreased each month until they get reviewed again.

Associated with the share price is the +/- rating, which simply tells you how much that company's share price has risen or fallen this month.

Finally, there's the company's INDEX RATING. This shows how well a company's games have done this month compared to the average score gained by all the other games reviewed. If it's this rating that determines the position of a company in the charts. The average score for ALL games reviewed each month is called the SOFTWARE INDEX and it's printed at the top of the Company Counter.

In other words, if a company's index rating shows a + figure, that's because its games have scored higher than the industry average during the current month. A minus figure shows that its games have scored less well than the average.

That's all there is to it. Now if you need to know it's time to see where you can find out on page 105, as well as seeing some of this month's...

## HOW IT'S EVEN EASIER TO WIN!

Yes, you now only need to fill in your predictions for the top three entries at each chart if it used to be five. And you don't even have to get them all right to stand a chance of winning. See page 106 for details. The entry form is on page 112.

## THE COMPANY COUNTER

To get into the share price listing, companies need to be releasing product consistently by magazines. To see their fortunes rise, they need to be consistently improving their product. In the short term, the 'best sell' award will seem to do well, in the longer term, consistency will pay off.

Company rating 100 and marked \* are new entries. They haven't featured in the Company Counter before, and a company's launch share price is always 100. Companies with an existing share price, but who have no review ratings at all in a particular month, will have ten points from their share price for each month that no reviews appear.

This month, we also see the first appearance of the Software Index.

This chart the performance of a company's titles relative to the Software Index rating. This figure is an overall average mark for all the reviews given in the previous month. The Software Index shows how many marks above or below the average rating each company's titles rated.

Graph's leap to the top of the ratings comes from an enthusiastic reaction to a pair of Commodore 64 titles - not an area the company's best known in. New players on the Stock Market this month include

Dynamic and FL - Chase Striker. Back appears to be lunging up to expectations. They find that life's tough at the top...

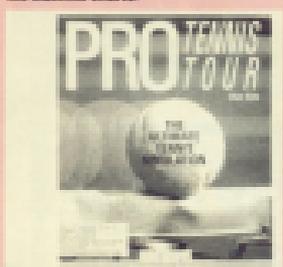
### THIS MONTH'S SOFTWARE INDEX RATING:

71.58

Publisher	This month	+ or -	Rating	Compendium	88.14	-3.74	87.38	12.06	White Wolf	73.82	+0.71	595.81	6.28
Index				Pandora	85.1	0.0	98.7	11.92	US Games	76.70	+0.32	598.17	1.18
Origin	81.4	0.0	115.67	Sierra On-Line	81.8	0.0	98.7	8.82	Newman Dev	76.18	+1.32	116.87	4.8
Dominic	84.4	0.0	107	Empire	81.25	0.0	98.7	8.87	Empire	75	+0.24	595.48	4.42
PFL	84.83	0.0	107	Ocean	81.01	-0.87	85.14	6.48	Psychote	73.08	0.0	597	4.81
Dynalene/Palms	86.0	+4.05	104.00	Imagispace	80.87	0.0	98.7	8.88	Commodore 7	73	0.0	597	2.42
Beas Jolly	88	0.0	84.48	Electronic Arts	80.42	-0.87	85.01	6.84	Ultimat	74.61	+0.28	616.23	2.58
GP Software	88	0.0	107	HR Signal	78.88	+0.73	123.81	1.28	Virgin	74.28	+0.88	88.88	2.88
Black	84.76	+0.88	106.28	Micrograce	78.23	-4.8	86.87	6.76	Amstrad	73.48	-1.48	604.1	2.8

Barador	71.80	-1.70	90.00	1.20	Playpen Premier	41.54	+19.87	147.80	-10.04	Shades O'Steel	na	90	na
Beastie	71.00	-0.01	90	0.04	Papers	41	na	100*	-10.04	System 1	na	82.0	na
Blindage	71.0	-0.01	89.40	0.20	Plus	40.00	na	100*	-11.21	Talisman	na	71.00	na
Boomer	71.44	-0.03	90.00	-0.14	Plus Bytes	na	na	100*	-11.04				
BOYS Band	71.00	+1.3	71.70	-0.23	ARC	38.5	na	100*	-10.00				
Addictive	71.2	na	100*	-0.26	Kiss	38	+1	101.70	-11.00				
Archie	70.67	1.10	67.00	-0.81	Smores	38.0	+0.00	100.27	-14.00				
Ballgame	70	na	100*	-1.00	Starbyte	36.67	na	100*	-11.01				
Assault	69.20	-0.00	89.67	-1.27	CGI	36.5	-1.00*	87.00	-14.00				
Baywatch Gold	69	na	84.00	-1.00	Alternative	36.00	-1.00	100.71	-14.00				
Code Masters	68.00	na	100*	-1.00	Art Screeners	41.75	na	84.00	-15.00				
Masterworks	67.5	na	100.00	-1.00	Arms	na	na	47.00	na				
Intergames	67.28	-0.70	66.5	-0.34	Balladeer	na	na	80	na				
Progress	67	-1.00	81.00	-1.00	Byte Bank	na	na	74.00	na				
Grand Slam	66.78	na	716.44	-0.60	Digital Int'l	na	na	80.5	na				
Roadblock	66.78	na	100*	-0.80	Graphic	na	na	116.00	na				
Worked	66.5	na	100.50	-0.60	Operator	na	na	81.00	na				
Elite	66.00	-4.00	81.00	-0.20	Image Works	na	na	80.00	na				
Dragon	65	na	100*	-0.20	Impressions	na	na	75.70	na				
Lovers' Service	65	na	100*	-0.20	Invasion	na	na	85.20	na				
Shed 11	65	-10	81.20	-0.20	Level 5	na	na	83.00	na				
Network	64.04	-4.00	81.00	-1.04	Multimedia	na	na	87.00	na				
16-Bits	64.00	-0.00	89.00	-1.00	Messages	na	na	80	na				
Edge	64.00	-1.00	84.00	-1.00	PAID	na	na	81.7	na				
Logotron	63.78	-0.00	81.70	-1.00	PAD	na	na	100.00	na				
Speedball	63.50	na	100*	-0.27	Palms	na	na	100.00	na				

Pro-Beans from Whelan has done well in APR this month. How well it affects the charts we'll see next month? Watch out for Micro-gamer's MicroStation, too — it's bound to have a major impact on that category's position on the Company Counter and in the machine charts.



## THE MACHINE COUNTER

### AMIGA RATINGS

Operation Thunderbolt	Ocean	80.47
CrashMan	Intergames	81.67
Blind Car Racer	More Bytes	80.70
It Came From the Desert	Comcast	80.04
Future Wars	Dynalene/Palms	81.75

Ocean had last month's highest rated game with *Operation Thunderbolt* (its return), while *Operation Thunderbolt* takes over the top slot. *Blind Car Racer* and *It Came From the Desert* continue to attract high scores.

### COMMODORE 64 RATINGS

Shinobi/Ghosts	FTL	87.28
Lumpo/Ghosts	FTL	86.10
Survival	Finland	85.48
Sam-Job	Intergames	84.5
Eye of the Beholder	Logotron	84.25

It was a poor month for C64 games — in terms of quality rather than quantity, with only the best-20 (and then consistently scoring over 80) introducing to us this while the C64 industry had the best version of *Talisman*. It was the pointed formal to Ocean's next developments. *Crash HQ*

### AMSTRAD CPC RATINGS

Crashbusters II	Arvision	86.0
Sagapocalypse	Level 9	86.0
Operation Thunderbolt	Ocean	83.00
Hard Disc	Playpen	81.0
File Machine	Playpen/Palms	81

*Crashbusters II* stays on the top slot, demonstrating that the early reviews caught the essence of the game — on this format, anyway. *Sagapocalypse* is still going strong, and *Operation Thunderbolt* always a strong machine for graphical adventures.

### ATARI ST RATINGS

Crash Strikes Back	FTL	82.80
Tower of Babel	Random	81.5
Future Wars	Operation/Palms	81.0
Blind Car Racer	More Bytes	81.0
Crash O'Clocks	US Gold	80.50

There were high expectations of *Crash Strikes Back* and the *Blind Car Racer* in that category's development. *Blind Car Racer* can usually be rated at 100.000000 quality reviews and while *Blind Car Racer* is not the world's best, *Tower of Babel* has been very highly rated.

### PC-COMPATIBLE RATINGS

Intergames 100	Electronic Arts	91.00
Track Project Hour	US Gold	87
Don't Dare	Arvision	86.0
Micromaniac	Electronic Arts	86
Population	Electronic Arts	83.0

The poor PC turn-out last month may just have been a glitch. PC gamers have something to spend their money on this time. *Electronic Arts* is producing to deliver the chart, especially as it has partly from PC programs to release this spring.

### SPECTRUM RATINGS

Crash HQ	Ocean	85.87
Shinobi/Ghosts	US Gold	85.67
Hard Disc	Comcast	81.25
Super Wonder Boy	Arvision	80.25
Operation Thunderbolt	Ocean	80.00

*Crash HQ* has been the best-reviewed game on the Commodore 64, but by common consent, it's the best Spectrum game around (it scored over 90 points last month as well).

## THE 16-BIT COUNTER

The follow-up to *Survivor* Master goes straight to a number one-of-one format slot, while *Shed 11* (Square's consistently well-received slot) sits at three points.

Crash Strikes Back	FTL	87	80.65
North and South	Intergames	Amiga, ST	80.5
Lumpo/Ghosts	Blade	Amiga, PC, ST	80
Operation Thunderbolt	Ocean	Amiga	80.00
Blind Car Racer	More Bytes	Amiga, ST	80.0
Future Wars	Dynalene/Palms	Amiga, ST	80.0
CrashMan	Intergames	Amiga, ST	81.00
X-Clax	Random Int'l	Amiga	80.7
Shinobi/Ghosts	US Gold	Amiga, ST	80.20
Intergames 100	Electronic Arts	PC	80.17

Building under: *Shed 11*, *The Movie*, *Blind Car Racer*, *It Came From the Desert* and *Ballie Squares*.

## THE 8-BIT COUNTER

There are some great value budget games around at the moment, with four titles here at 100.000000 or over 80%. Ocean's *Operation Thunderbolt* is proving a huge success on all formats.

Crash Escape	US Gold	C64, Sp	85.00
Dilly Dally Fantasy World	Code Masters	CPC, Sp	84.25
Operation Thunderbolt	Ocean	CPC, Sp	83.25
Paragade	US Gold	CPC, C64, Sp	84
Unsubmittable	Ocean	CPC, C64	80
Hard Drive	Domark	CPC, Sp	80.70
Ballin'	Mastertronic	CPC, C64, Sp	81.87
Ping Pong	US Gold	CPC, C64, Sp	78.44
Shinobi/Ghosts	US Gold	CPC, C64, Sp	77
Talisman	US Gold	CPC, C64, Sp	77.3

Building under: *Talisman*, *Don't Dare*, *It Came From the Desert* and *Ballie Squares*.



# RAPID SERVICE SOFTWARE

SUPPLIERS OF QUALITY SOFTWARE



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## LOOK! LOOK! LOOK!

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# HOW TO WIN the ACE Stockmarket.

**S**o you want to get your hands on some of those stockmarket prizes, and to possibly earn the \$150 jackpot here are a few tips.

First, the prize themselves. There are seven prizes available each month. Three go to the seven readers who get 10,000 or more star lines to get them exactly right in predicting the top three games in the correct order in each of the six machine categories (SFP, Amiga, ST, SAA, PC, Spectrum) and the top three software houses listed in the correct order on the Company Counter.

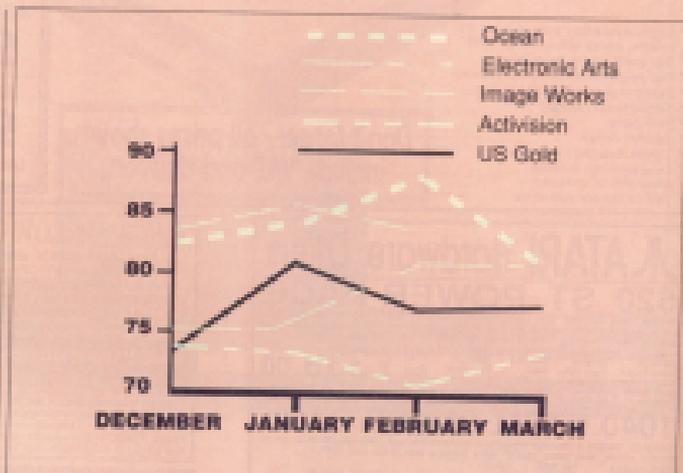
Remember — you don't have to get them exactly right to win a prize, you just have to be the closest. If, however, you get all three right and in the correct order of 10,000 you stand to win the jackpot prize of \$150 worth of software. Any stars are divided by adding the top entries and a hal.

Of course, predicting next month's positions isn't easy. However, if you're good at games, you'll stand good chance. For example, last month it was a reasonable bet that TFC's Chess Series Book would be released this month and get high ratings. Straightaway you've got one potential entry for the top five. Looking ahead to next month (and we figure you a top rated read magazine) will be covering Mike Singleton's *Midwinter*, which again is bound to get high marks. All they're high enough to push it into the top three? Over all well.

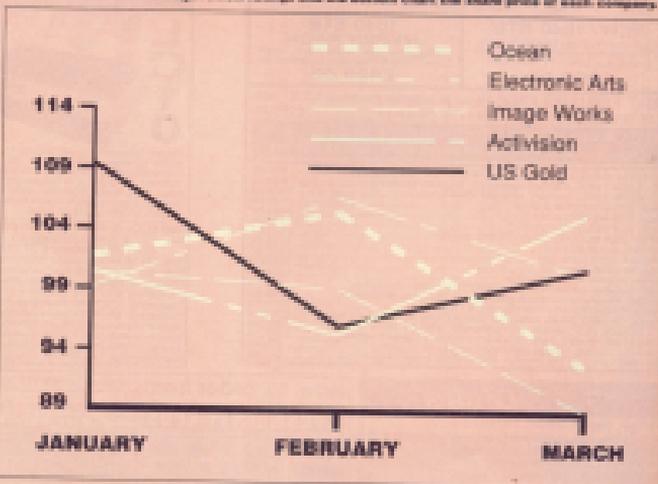
Of course, if you're really keen, you can try analyzing the performance of companies by looking back over past issues of the Stockmarket and trying to predict outcomes. However, when read this carefully (see the tables on this page) and I don't think stands out clearly, it's that there are no easy to perceive patterns. The best way to win a prize is not to get involved in any of complicated calculation, but simply to find out which games you think are likely to be released and reviewed in the following month and then show us your predictions accordingly.

And a word about deadlines. The ACE Stockmarket figures are compiled during the first week following the first Thursday of each month and appear in the issue that comes out on the first Thursday of the following month. So this month's figures were put together between 4th and the 10th of January.

So get to it, the fans on page 112.



These charts show the overall performance of five major software houses during the last few months. The top chart shows average review ratings and the bottom chart the share price of each company.



# ACE DEALERS

WE KNOW HOW IT IS - YOU'VE SPENT MOST OF YOUR HARD EARNED DOSH OVER CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR, AND NOW ALL THERE IS LEFT TO DO IS HIDDLE ROUND A CANDLE LOOKING MISERABLE. OF COURSE THE OCCASIONAL ALCHUNK OF DRIED BREAD AND CUP OF DIRTY RAINWATER ARE NO CONSOLATION - YOU'D MUCH RATHER HAVE THE LATEST SOFTWARE SENSATION INSTEAD. SO HOW DO YOU FIND THAT UNMISSABLE BARGAIN OR SPECIAL OFFER? LOOK NO FURTHER THAN THE ACE DEALERS PAGE OF COURSE...

## ACE - GREAT DEALS

Many retailers are trying to have a headstart this month, following the Christmas rush and the January sales. There are fewer games being released, and the real big bulk of promotions and competitions will probably take place round about Easter time.

## VRGIN SALE

Despite the fact, the Virgin Games Centre sale continues until the middle of the month, with a whole host of special offers, so just in case what they have in offer. Once the sale stock has been cleared away, Virgin hopes to have a special promotion set up with Microbyte.

Items available to ACE want to press, I'm afraid, but it should be worth investigation.

## FREE FERRARI!

Academi's model Ferrari promotion. Look in Text Drive 2 - The Day continues, with the North-western Computer Shop chain offering a Matchbox model car with every copy of the game. All names go into the prize draw for a Ferrari model of a 1987 Ferrari F40 mounted on a wooden chassis, complete with moving parts.

## SOMEWHERE OVER THE RAINBOW

Computer Shops are also working on some forthcoming special offers with the long-awaited

of Rainbow Islands now being released by Ocean and Pandora's Monopoly. Check with your local Computer Shop to see if locations listed for details.

## T-SHIRTS AND DRINKS

Buyers in Birmingham and Newcastle should drop into their local branch of Microbyte on Saturday, February 27. Spend over £15 on any Ocean item in Birmingham or that day, and you'll get a T-shirt and drink to go with the game. For your name to go into a draw with mystery prizes and a chance to win.

## BUDGET DAY

in Microbyte Newcastle. February 17 is a special budget buyers' day, and

any full price purchase you can also buy any 8-bit budget game for just £1. A limited quantity of model cars is also up for grabs in a 1-day competition.

## ACE DISCOUNT

Microbyte is also offering readers of this page a 10% discount on goods bought at any of its stores, provided you present the reader's paper when you make your purchase. Happy buying hunting!

## WHERE IT'S AT...

You can find Computer Shop outlets in the Virgin Game Centre, Manchester; Newcastle; Leeds; Preston; Sunderland; Stockton and Hartley; Salford. You can't find the Computer Shop chain

and the two Games Store outlets in Carlisle and Middlesbrough, which stock role-playing games as well as computer software.

There are Microbyte stores in the Arcade Centre, Manchester; the Broadmarsh Centre, Nottingham; Kingsley, Wakefield; the Metro Centre, Sunderland; the Greenmarket, Newcastle upon Tyne; the Kingsley Centre, Bradford; the Bell Ring Centre, Birmingham; and the County Arcade, Leeds.

Virgin has its Games Centre outlets in Sainsbury's Oxford Street in Marks Isack, within the Magnums, and also in Magnums, and also in Magnums in Birmingham, Brighton, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow or Dover St and Regent St.

Leeds, and Birmingham. One of these must be near you.

Offers and promotions are subject to availability of stock. Although we do our best to ensure our dealer promotes information accurately at the time of going to press, ACE cannot take any responsibility for changes or cancellations to dealer plans.

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# PINK PUZZLERS

### PUZZLE RESULTS

First off some results and solutions. The winner of *Puzzle 16* was **Clie Chingy**, 51, Ipswich, Essex. 213 will surely be saying to you to join Clie. *Puzzle 17* never had a previous winner, but **St B.**

**A. Salsgall** of Ormskirk, Lancashire, also receives £30 for winning *Puzzle 16* on 11. Next month will bring you the solutions and prizes for the Jan '90 Pink Puzzles, and the Feb/90 *Puzzle Crossword*.

And finally, here was **Mr P.** faced on a computer screen by **Anna Macdonald** of Huddersfield, West Yorkshire: "Why don't you make your terms so small that they can fit on a postcard? It would look the best! I try now!"

And **Anna**, be don't worry it that we really don't mind if you put your computer answers and postcard rather than the standard form. As long as you give us all the information that is requested on the form, and is being as fit clear, there is no

problem for us. Obviously if the form contains a design like a Christmas card then you'll have to return the whole form.

Letters of our we want to copy to our magazine on your postcard form please - please send!

### SOLUTION TO PUZZLE 10

The multipliers are:  
 4911  
 1111  
 2111  
 2111  
 1111  
 1111  
 1111  
 1111  
 1111

The problem involved finding two four digit numbers which produced a long multiplication which had the digits 1 to 9 running diagonally downwards from the top right hand corner. In addition, each of the four substrategies lines 0 to 7 of the multiplication comprised five digits.

Because the digits '2' and '1' in the top function are 'fixed' it is only necessary to consider the remaining three digits in each of these lines. In the program this is done in lines 100 and 110, the known digits being inserted into the correct positions by means of the two string variables A1 and B1.

The four substrategies are generated from these two values and are stored in the strings C1 to D7 in form. As each is completed it is tested to ensure that there is a length of five characters, the final character is not a dash agreeing with the known digits on these lines of the print.

Finally, the full products calculated line 200 and is listed for the presence of the digit '0' in several places.

100 FOR B=1 TO 99:FOR A=1000 TO 9999  
 110 B1=B\*1  
 120 FOR C=1 TO 99:FOR D=1000 TO 9999  
 130 B1=11\*1000+D:G1="1"  
 140 C1=1000000+A\*1000+B1\*100+C\*10+D  
 150 IF LEN(C1) < 5 THEN 180  
 160 IF VAL(C1,1) < 10000 THEN 180  
 170 B1=1000000+A\*1000+B1\*100+C\*10+D  
 180 IF LEN(B1) < 5 THEN 180  
 190 IF VAL(B1,1) < 10000 THEN 180  
 200 D1=10000000+A\*10000+B1\*1000+C\*100+D  
 210 IF LEN(D1) < 5 THEN 180  
 220 IF VAL(D1,1) < 10000 THEN 180  
 230 D1=100000000+A\*100000+B1\*10000+C\*1000+D  
 240 IF LEN(D1) < 5 THEN 180  
 250 IF VAL(D1,1) < 100000 THEN 180  
 260 D1=1000000000+A\*1000000+B1\*100000+C\*10000+D  
 270 IF LEN(D1) < 5 THEN 180  
 280 IF VAL(D1,1) < 1000000 THEN 180  
 290 PRINT B1;" \* "A  
 300 GOTO 100  
 310 NEXT D  
 320 NEXT C  
 330 NEXT A

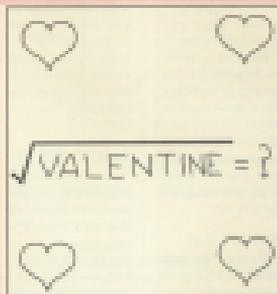
The winner is **Dennis Lynn**, Ashford, Fife

### MARCH '90 PRIZE PUZZLE

Set by **British Birds**

The cover date of this issue is March but if you are quite enough to be managed you should have managed to obtain your copy in time for Valentine's Day. So here's a puzzle in the spirit of things.

Last year, on February 14th, I received the following unusual Valentine card:



Enclosed within the card were the following instructions: "Can you find the square root of Valentine?" To do so, simply substitute each of the letters in the word "VALENTINE" for a digit - a different digit for each different letter; the same digit where any letter is repeated. If you have done this correctly the square root of the value will be a whole number. There is only one possible solution apart from that you replace the 'T' with a 4.

Unfortunately, in the intervening twelve months for forgotten just which of the digits was represented by 'T'. But, dear you, you should still be able to solve the puzzle.

### SOLUTION TO PUZZLE 20

Money bought:

3 cassette players at £27.99 each	£81.99
2 floppy drives at £8.99 each	£17.98
1 game at £7.73	£7.73
1 Christmas hamper at £27.99	£27.99
and 1 shirt £6.00 set at £11.99	£11.99
Total	£147.68

In the listing each of the presents is assigned its price (13 to 70). A series of seven 100/50/100 lists then calculates every possible combination of gifts possible. Each row (except for the last) and starts with a value of zero and extends to the maximum number of gifts of that price that can be bought for one hundred pounds. The final loop, which represents the number of shirts bought commences at 1 because we know there is at least one shirt in the list.

Line 170 calculated the total price for each combination of gifts, any which-one is exactly one hundred pounds are printed out.

```

10 PLAYERS=100
20 CASH=100
30 DRIVES=100
40 GAME=100
50 HAMPER=21.73
60 SHIRT=11.99
70 SHIRTS=100
100 FOR P1=0 TO 10000/PLAYERS
110 FOR P2=0 TO 10000/DRIVES
120 FOR P3=0 TO 10000/GAME
130 FOR P4=0 TO 10000/HAMPER
140 FOR P5=0 TO 10000/SHIRTS
150 FOR S=1 TO 10000/SHIRT
160 T= P1*100 + P2*100 + P3*100 + P4*21.73 + S*11.99
170 IF T=100 THEN PRINT P1;" P2"; P3;" P4"; S
180 NEXT S
190 NEXT P5
200 END
```

The winner is **David Wood**, Chesham, Bucks

### MARCH '90 PRIZE PUZZLE ENTRY FORM

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWER: \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: March '90 Prize Puzzle, ACE Magazine, Ffolroy Court, 90-92 Farringdon Lane, London EC2R 9DU  
 Entries should be postmarked no later than 28th February 1990.





# ACE READERS' PAGES

## FOR SALE

VHSO Camera, Panasonic HZ219 camera and lens. A1 view. Ideal for night view VCR ext. £30. Tel: 081 788 0886/086.

MSD 1 meg 128kb extra for 4000 software and 600 more, all fit to go only £250 with light, contact laptop on 0442 73178.

ORIGINAL ARCADE GAMES for sale. Action, FDT, Forgotten Worlds, Fantastic Wars, Total Science, Operation West, Dragon King, Power Shifters 128K/2.

COMPOSITE 64, 128, joystick over 4500 original games 4100 only. Tel: 0248 734166 evenings and weekends only

MSA, THUNDER, CEH 16 screen, gun, 18 games allowed, 900, worth 2000, only 1250, all new items. Tel: 0248 69287.

ADVANCED CPC 464 great screen, full TV monitor, 16 games, games + maps £220 new. Tel: 0451 73 73-0774.

SPECTRUM 48K + com pack for sale a bargain at £80 with three joystick and 420 games. Ring Darry on 0782 822644.

MSA 91 0/1280 joystick over 2000 of games good condition all lowest price £230. Tel: 070 9965 after 5pm.

MSA 1 MEG, multiple, 8k, sound sampler, mouse, joystick, games, external drive, manuals, excellent condition. Binest. Tel: 01 204 9050. Sell for £289.

COMB 9090/12K, good condition with 21 carts 250000, 250000 5K/1 software £38000. Tel: 019 3282 778280, what a bargain!

MSA 9092/16 for sale, £240, mouse and 50 games, automatic joystick. Tel: 0704 97981 and ask for Alan.

MSA 986 4 months old TV monitor, built in 188 029500. Tel: Tony after 5pm 0248 41 2203 1200-0490 open to call etc.

128K SPECTRUM 4800 games joystick external over 1000 top cam 240000 maps and bags 16/8K system for sale Tel: Eileen 691156.

## PENPALS

AMIGA CONTACTS want 64, worldwide. Write to Agent Steve, Advertiser, Unit 42, 38213A, Breech, Holwell, Kent. Reply, don't let stop!

Amiga contacts wanted, 200K, reply, fast and reliable, 440/933 925000, 18 Church View, Burton Latimer, Northants, NN2 5UG.

Amiga contacts wanted, latest stuff only, 1200 reply Jason, 1 member-son Street, Bridge of Aik, Strath, Scotland. 909 4000 or telephone 0788 432841.

PC CONTACTS WANTED from the Twilight Zone. Write to Geoff Parker, 31 Southside Ave, W6 where, Blackburn BB9 9AF LANC., England.

AMIGA CONTACTS WANTED 128K reply, fast and reliable to Roy 413 Clonsilla Park, Watlington Hill, Oxford. UK 913 Exp. term.

AMIGA CONTACTS want to swap latest stuff send bits to: Harriet, 32 Burghley Rd, Wimbledon, London SW20 9SL, 2024 reply.

AMIGA CONTACTS WANTED all over the world, 120k reply. Write to Dave, 5 Highway Drive, Singapore, PO Box, 14905 1212 9 81.

AMIGA PENPALS WANTED 120K reply Write to Jeff, 45 Westbury St, Luton, Beds, Bedford. 004 896.

## HELPLINE

PLEASE HELP WITH Prince Quest 3. Are related questions. P. Davis, 18 Woodland Road, Scarborough, Perth, WA 6116.

EXPERIENCED AMIGA USER NEEDED to help new owners with occasional problems, write to C. Bernard - SJ Guildford Way, Northor, Park, Shaftesbury, 01 2988.

HELP WANTED for 87 version of Raffles. Details or orders for extra files as I am closing up the stall. HELP!

88K expert after help on Raffle Task, Books Talk, Kings Quest 1, 3, 4, 5, Police Quest 5, Space Quest 1, 2, Leisure with Larry 1, 11, Basic communications, Tappan, Ghosts IV Cousins, King, Minitaur/1 Revenge and any other.

problems associated with 88K computers and compatibles. This contact is wanted to help learn, type games etc... Send disks and list to: Paul Owen, 28 Overway Crescent, Mansfield, Perth, Western Australia, 6002.

90 900900 (0888 121) where is the star key on Level one? Dependable phone help. Telephone WA 0234 734123 9089.

CAN ANYONE OUT THERE HELP ME with the new game for the 528K BASTER SYSTEM called "Topoliner"? I cannot find the figure but I can find every other weapon. I also need to know the exact location of the figure and the ability you fight in the Pyramid. I also need to know how to find all the defense weapons.

Could you send your reply to GLEN McLEACH, 126 Seaside Rd, Puffin, Clydebank, G80 2BB. I can also give help for a lot of other things games.

TIPS-44 assistance, programming, games, supplies, contacts, free help, SAM Stephen Shaw, 18 Arroyo Rd, Stockport, Cheshire, CH4.

## WANTED

Chess PC/computer game wanted for Spectrum 48K computer (with) Tel: 06900000000

Repeat space quest one with an enhanced book compatible with 88K PC, 4/8/8/2/2/4

Any 68K or 68000 computer software for sale. SAC, 60 124 Church Street on Sun South St 0782 74174. Bournemouth, 1

**NOTICE!! DO YOU HAVE ANY THING TO SELL? NEED HELP ON ANY GAMES? YES? THEN JUST GO TO PAGE 121, FILL IN THE ENTRY FORM AND SEND IT TO US- NO PROBLEM!**

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# The BLITTER END

## THE SECRET'S OUT!



**O**r is it? Last month's Blitter carried a piece about Steve Franklin of Commodore, who tentatively declared the existence of a secret weapon which would keep the Japanese console invasion at bay. Since then, there has been no elaboration from Commodore as to what this secret weapon might be (so, it's not Super Action - that choice in the picture is for clarity, not for spelling the Japanese). Blitter, however, has an inkling of what could be in the wind.

Features of this year's CES show (see report in this issue on page 126) were tinged by reports of cartridge software for the OAD. This doesn't sound particularly interesting, except that it would make Commodore's products at very little cost a small plastic box with a cartridge slot, two joystick ports, a video outlet, and a power socket.

This box would not games like Boulderdash, Impossible Mission, Dile, and Monocrow, but it would fit the programmers of some of these titles could be persuaded to produce joystick-only versions.

Looks like these are called consoles, and Commodore - if the rumours are to be believed - may well think they've got a Nintendo beater on their hands.

There are, unfortunately, two flaws in this philosophy. The first is that for many porters, the word console does not mean cheap plastic box with great games systems. It means retro cheap-plastic box with state-of-the-art graphics and sound technology and a smaller number of technically impressive titles.

The second flaw has already been pointed out by Blitter in previous issues. If Nintendo decide to enter the European market (and Blitter doesn't believe they will - but more of that another month), they will do so in force. The company are now in a position to GNE Atari's first NES console to everyone who can jump the queue at

Games, provided, of course, that the carrier pays out £20 for his first game cartridge. From then, Nintendo will reap yet more profits from the sale of further titles.

Faced with the technological incoherence of today's console buyer and the sheer weight of the world's largest cash mountain, it's difficult to imagine anyone - including Commodore - winning the battle. Stayed by for more on this next month.

QED recently showed a TV program which pur-ported to examine the computer game phenomenon. What we got instead was yet another diatribe against gamblers, who, it appears, are tuning their brains to custom by using stunts at the TV all day.

This is a lot of a joke, isn't it? A TV program telling us that watching too much TV is not a good thing? At least with games you interact with, get involved with, and have a degree of control over the medium. With TV, however, you just have to sit and watch it.

Question: if you had to choose a Prime Minister from either the ranks of those who watch neighbours and Coronation Street all the time or from the ranks of those who can demonstrate a high score in Dungeon Master, which group would you favour? No contest. Q.E.D.

On the other hand, perhaps QED have a point. At CES, representatives of the UK software industry put up a good show for themselves. Led by someone who shall remain nameless, they drank Nintendo into the ground, sang Blits on the spot, and then disappeared into the Palermo to optimistic women. Just shows you just a bit of games software can do to the soul.

Bill-Bill

## YANKEE DOODLE!

Boy, have we got a special issue lined up for you!

Next month, we're sending intrepid ACE reporters to the US of A to bring you red hot coverage of some of the most exciting games developments on the West Coast.

We're planning the itinerary now as we go to press, but we expect to be providing you with an exclusive glimpse of George Lucas' ranch and the CD-I development projects underway at Lucasfilm, Electronic Arts, Cinemaware, and AIMS - American Interactive Media.

Best of all for some readers, however, will be a sneak peek at the development work now being carried on by Robyn and Rand Miller of Cyan - the team who brought you Cosmic Demo.

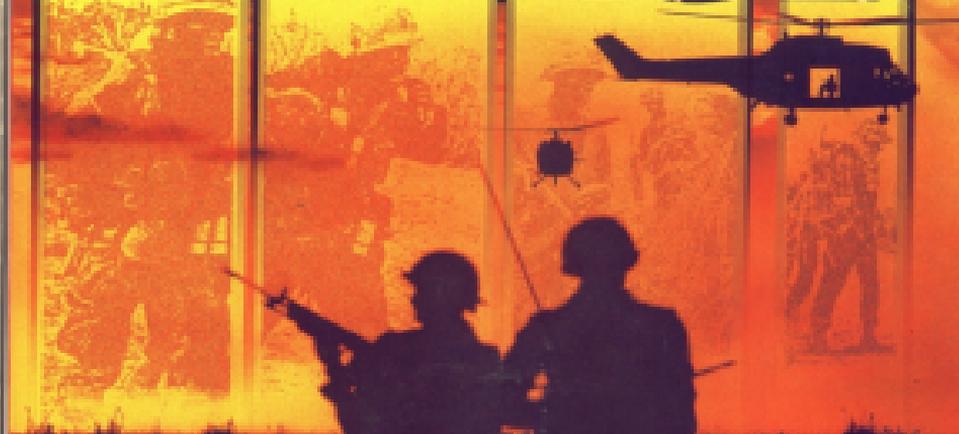
Don't miss next month's ACE - taking you to the far frontiers of computer entertainment.

### Goops!

Blitter would never be complete without an Goops or two. Last month the Arcade Pages succumbed to the printer's curse: they were printed the wrong way round! Whoopsy daisy...

WE'RE FIT, WE'RE ALIVE, BUT...

# LOST PATROL



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# WE'RE NOT BACK HOME



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