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Atari ST
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and...profit?

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AMIGA!

See page 13

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- or see page 14

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The Lords of
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ATARI

SPECIALS

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Want to be a millionaire? We check out gambling theory - plus the software that claims to help you beat the bookies and win the pots.



Football is a game that keeps the pots with frustration.

67 Bonanza of a Clock

...and 7 clock and 6 clock and 5 clock and... In a blinding hail of laser fire, ACE presents the definitive buyers' guide to shoot-em-ups.



Go down with the clock.

87 Progress... Or Points

Are you an alien assassin who craves for nothing but the whimper of expiring life-forms and your position on the hi-score table - or are you a planetary general who aims for the final screen, no matter how many bonuses you relinquish on the way? Andy Wilson discusses game-play styles...

103 Into The Maelstrom

Mike Dingleton, the grammar and game designer extraordinaire, talks exclusively to ACE about the exhilarating programs currently being coded by his company Maelstrom Games Plus, in honor of a job for ACE readers. His biggest program update will cost enough for



ACE

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Don't let the city see the footballer's formation.

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...AND SOUND

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This month's hot-test releases face the ACE challenge. Check out Digital Hypertion's first non-sim-laser title - AFX: Advanced Tactical Fighter, plus stunning photo-realistic graphics on Amiga... and you can actually talk to the aliens in Intergalactic Captain Blast.



Cap'n Blast. Talk with the alien, punt and space out against the stars.

96 Arcade Ace

It's a knockout! Heavyweight Champ faces his opposition...and probably the player as well.

68 Updates

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75 Tricks n' Tactics

Superior's very superior Bonusoucher (and here in a 2-page players' guide) - not to mention the best two levels of Nebulus, tips for Gyro: Fleet Commander, and Quicks, plus the complete 100% proof solution to Army Corps.

Includes two updates.



BUY LINES

91 Adventures

Send's Tale II revised, together with news of Intercept's *Star Trek: Redline* and Electronic Arts' *Return to Atlantis*. Plus a Danish adventure's tale of fall and trouble as he plays an English game...

100 Subscription

Save up to 64% on a single game – and every one's a winner!

99 Special Offers

You reader, we really *Subscribe to ACE*, get the mag delivered direct to your door every month – and the *pages* *literally* as we fall over ourselves to give you a superb *Discounted price* worth £1.95 – *completely free*.



See page 15 for full details on using the card that could win you software and hardware beyond your wildest dreams.

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A completely new look for the best hardware and software listings in the home computer press – kept right up to date as you can check it out before you buy.

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A whole new section for you to guess, ponder and puzzle over. Just make sure you have a pencil ready...

126 Readers' Pages

Post! Write! Buy! Write! Sell! Looking for a pen-pal? Don't sit over the counter and in the pink.

Hey, you!

Yes, you. What have you been doing with your computer this month? Were you busy programming it to win the pools? Or dreaming up a new strategy game? Or trying to find some way of linking it up to your guitar? Or conquering a new galaxy?

...and if not, why not?

The point is that only a few years ago, when computers were regarded as 'hobbyist', we all relied on the man in the street to provide us with software. The back pages of magazines were crammed full of ads for programs to do practically anything, from horoscopes to stock market options. Some of the stuff was pretty ghastly, but the enormous variety made up for the low rotten apples.

Nowadays, however, we rely more and more on a few big companies to answer all our computing needs.

Sure, we're not all programmers and those of us who prefer to play than poke have good reason to be grateful to those who produce the games so efficiently. But isn't there just the tiniest hint of yearning for a bit more variety? Certainly there's more to computer entertainment than just gameplay – check out our article in this issue on gambling, for example. And what about some more graphics software – a DIY electronic comic generator, perhaps, or a state-of-the-art animator to link to the video.

Ideas like these don't come from a vacuum. They come from people like you. You're probably bursting with good ideas, so let's hear them, or – even better – let's see them. And if there are any attic programmers left out there – get coding! Don't forget that most of the big companies around today are runned by people who started where you are now. We need you, we need your originality, and (if your product's worthwhile) we'll reward you handsomely.

• The ACE Team

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CLASH OF THE TITANS



What's winning the 16-bit battle for your hearts, minds and cash? Lining up Commodore and Atari spokespeople you'll almost believe that both companies were, in an attempt to get some more meaningful idea of the ST versus Amiga battle, were caricatured opinion where it counts - in the UK's computer shops.

At street level, Atari's ST seems to be winning the 16-bit sales battle, but certain pockets of strong Amiga resistance are holding out. At the Sound 'n' Vision shop in Leigh, Lancashire, Graham Mills has reason to be happy with his Amiga sales - he's just got a holiday in Singapore from his distributors. "The Amiga's doing better", he says. "It's selling the

ST ten to one."

Down in Southend-on-Sea, however, the story's rather different. Estuary Computer's Nick Jones has just over Christmas the ST was outselling the Amiga by three to one, although the Amiga was picking up again now. The higher price of the Commodore machine, added Nick, was putting a lot of people off buying it in preference to the ST.

At Loughborough's Charnwood Computers, the ST was reported to be outselling the Amiga by a factor of 10 to 1 and the shop's Alan Dropton felt there would be no change in the situation unless Commodore cut the Amiga's price substantially. Alan also thought that if the Amiga was

the same price as the ST then 'Alan wouldn't mind a change'.

HOW MANY ARE THERE?

Estimates of the number of 16-bit users vary. Commodore claim there is an installed user-base of 20-30,000 while Atari claim 150,000 for the ST. Other voices, though, suggest that these figures may be just a little on the optimistic side - while sources suggested more realistic numbers would be around 80-90,000 for the ST and 20-25,000 for the Amiga. Even if they're as low as that, the UK's still doing pretty well in the 16-bit stakes, as the USA there are only 140,000 ST's in homes.

An Atari spokesman expressed satisfaction with ST sales last year, describing the machine as "the fastest-selling home computer in the UK". 1990, he suggested, would be a year of consolidation for the machine, with Atari seeking to "increase the power of the machine rather than lower the price".

VIRGIN TAKE 16-BIT RISK

Virgin are following the success of *Dynasty* with the computer version of *Alien*, to be released under the Leisure Genius label. The program is a faithful conversion of the original board game and is the latest in a long list of products that the label, which Virgin see as anyone of 16-bitged users.

Leisure Genius is where we really shine", said Patricia Skelton for the company, the games are stress-free and very well suited to computer conversion. Watch out then for ST *Scrabble Genius*, *Nemesis* deluxe, and *Quartz Deluxe* during the coming year.

Washington are bringing *Quartz* going to those rooms and new characters. These changes will all be incorporated in the new

Leisure Genius version," continued Patricia, who went on to say that Virgin are looking to release more "advanced" computer entertainment titles looking at games in a more strategic vein.

But Virgin aren't playing by the board alone - they've also got their eyes on other game genres, and mention historical simulations as a possibility. Not only that, but their interactive video division is producing a CD-ROM expansion game about the North Pole, while other Virgin companies are involved in video distribution and program production. The 16-bit market is "hot", declares Patricia, and she's going the way of 1984, for people who are still looking for real "game" games.

SOFTWARE SUPER SAVERS

ACE has received a stack of letters from readers complaining about the service of mail-order software suppliers *Software Super-savers*, who advertised in the first few issues of the magazine. Naturally, we've tried to contact the company about the allegations of orders sent, cheques cashed but games NOT received - in some cases as long ago as October and November of last year.

First problem: *Software Super-savers* are no longer at the address in Greenhead from which they used to advertise. They are now to be found at 73 North Street, Bamber, Bedfordshire. Second problem: by phoning them on 0798-982711 and all you get is a recorded message suggesting you write in with your order - which is what the problem was all about in the first place...

Attempts to contact the shops

cannot, Mr. Clive Palmer, by telephone have that with a bang.

Readers with a complaint are best advised to contact the Trading Standards Office at the local council where *Software Super-savers* operate. He is aware of the company's existence and will endeavour to investigate your problem. You should write or telephone giving all of the following information: name, address, telephone number, title of goods ordered, computer file paths were ordered for, date of the cheque, date when cheque was passed through your account for payment. Write to: Trading Standards Department, Mercury House, Mercury Gardens, Bamber, MK1 5DE, Tel. 0798-766600



The Virgin gang of five, from left, carrying their bags into Richard Branson's

TWO INTO ONE DOES GO...

Most Amiga games are little more than direct conversions of their ST counterparts. Amiga owners often complain, but here's something new: a game whose ST and Amiga versions are literally identical. Take the disk out of the box, put it in an ST and it's an ST game. Put it in an Amiga instead, and it's an Amiga game. It's that simple.

Seems like a practical joke? In a magazine with an April cover date you could be forgiven for thinking so, but prestige ST software house Rainton are deadly serious. The revolutionary new disk loading system involved is ADLS, its creator Argonaut Software.

And to show how serious they are, Argonaut are not using this

straightforward, they offer economies of scale. From the software house's end of things, one duplication run covers for both sets of users. At the retail end of things meanwhile, it's easier to decide how many copies of a game to stock. For Rainton's Paul Hibbard, the latter point is particularly important in the American market. "Out in the States

their own programs for other software houses. They're currently more than half way through a project for American game Electronic Arts, so what does EAs's Mark Lewis think of ADLS? "It's pretty cool - a nice bit of marketing technology with software liberty. Joe [Argonaut boss Joe Baff] has shown it to us, though we haven't discussed using it ourselves at length. We already produce 'Topper' - a 5.25in disk with a CD-ROM version on one side and an Amiga 800 version on the other, as well as packaging 5.25in and 3.5in disks in the same box."

Whatever the commercial advantages of ADLS, public reaction could still be a problem. "The Amiga owners' inclination 'Don't be pining off your ST conversions on us' isn't entirely reasonable - there's no reason why ADLS games should be any poorer at using the ST's facilities than any other - but there have already been lines of indignation along those lines.

Argonaut should make extensive use of the Amiga's custom chips, with both the Amiga and the 1040ST offering access to a whopping 500K of sampled music from the 8 side of the disk. This represents at least as good a deal as 128K Spectrum owners normally get for their extra hardware, but the hefty price difference between STs and Amigas could still cause psychological problems. If ADLS can all of the £24.95/£19.95 price gap between essentially identical Amiga and ST versions of a game, that ought to make it the Amiga owner's friend. We hope it does.

ADLS: THE TECHNICALITIES

The ST and Amiga certainly have a great deal in common. They use the same central processor - the Motorola MC68000 - and have broadly similar technical specifications, so converting programs from one to the other is a relatively simple matter. Of the information contained on a typical ST game disk - the game code itself, data, the screens etc. - around 90% will be identical to its Amiga counterpart. That's not just a consequence of pure commercial work from the one to the other: that's a measure of how similar the two machines are.

Of course, there's a snag here: the ST and Amiga disks might be 90% identical as far as the information stored on them goes, but that doesn't mean the information's stored in the same way. Both machines use standard 3.5in disks.



Paul Hibbard of Rainton. Despite things in shop names?

but stick a normal Amiga disk in your ST - or vice versa - and you won't get very far. Not, that is, unless you know what you're doing.

The first hurdle is a dual-version program is 'topper'. Both the ST and the Amiga will interpret foreign formats as disk errors, and refuse to do anything with the data concerned. The machines can be fooled into accepting strangely formatted disks, but producing something both machines will accept is no easy matter.

HIGH CAPACITY

In designing their disk-loading system, Argonaut set out to cram as much data as possible onto the disk. Their aim in so doing was to overcome the greatest single handicap of the 520ST: its single-sided disk.

Though the Amiga and 1040ST both have high capacity double-sided drives cranking in 800K and 720K respectively, the 520ST has to make do with a standard capacity of only 200K. This falls far enough short of its 32K RAM size to give game programmers some real headaches, or force software house



technique on any old game, but the sequel to their highly successful 3D shoot-em-up *Slapshot* - and that means there's an awful lot of money at stake. So how have Argonaut managed to make the same game run on both machines? Here is the point, why did they bother?

The focus of the project are pretty complex things - see below - but the reasons why dual-version disks look attractive lie quite

they'll sell 5.25in and 3.5in versions of a PC game in the same box; it simplifies things for shop-borders. We suggested the possibility of a similar thing on the ST and Amiga, but on just the one disk, and Argonaut came back with ADLS.

It may be a Rainton game that uses ADLS first, but Argonaut will keep the rights to the system and may well license it out to other developers, as well as using it in

do to release ST games on two disks to the Amiga version's one. By casting aside the normal format, it could have been necessary in any case to get an Amiga-compatible disk. AmigaSoft has managed to cram 500K of program and data onto a disk — the maximum that the ST can read.

Once you abandon standard formats, you start to run up overheads. In particular you must write your own hardware driver routines to load your program in from disk. These drivers themselves take up disk space without adding anything to the program directly, and the point has to be a lot of programmers at the whole idea of dual-format disks.

According to AmigaSoft's Jon Ben However, the hardware driver for ADLS takes up very little disk space. The total loss involved in using the dual-format technique compared to a normal/high-capacity disk format is 'very small', he says — less than 20K. A little larger anti-aliasing gives 48K as the space left for game code and data, and that's enough to fit a 500K or Amiga 4000 right up — assuming the screen memory takes up at least 32K, at a moderately low dot.

This is a crucial point: if you can't fit the machine's memory with code or data from a disk, that's as much as you need to do for most systems. Any disk space left over is only useful for overlays — sections of code or data that load in as required — and nowadays these are increasingly often continued to between-games and file sequences.

Of course, not all that 480K is actually useful to both machines. Graphics and sound handling aren't identical on the two machines — especially if you're aiming to make the most of the Amiga's extra power — so a conscientious programmer will want two entirely different sets of routines here. You'll also need a piece of code that routes out which machine the game's running on and routes/between the two sets of routines accordingly — but none of these need take up that much room if the program's written carefully.

Aside from two-disk ST adventures which access the disk continually — these may be too big for one ADLS disk, in which case the system team is opposed — the only other area where ADLS could run into problems is reliability. Mass-Application of Scapiger is a still some way off, so it's hard to estimate just what sort of a failure rate it's likely to produce. High-capacity disk formats have given other houses trouble on this front in the past, and ADLS pushes the ST driver harder than most systems do, but it's still too early to tell how it will fare.



Scapiger's video driver says

ROBTEK'S BAD HUNCH

While some quarters of the software industry still argue whether the increasing trend of porting games from 15-bit machines down

to 16-bit means it's good or bad thing, some software houses seem to be adopting that practice in reverse.

Take Robtek, for example, who have recently released an Amiga game called *Klaximodo* which retails at £9.95. The game looks very much like an ancient Spectrum game with few enhancements. *Klaximodo* is slow, dull, and suffers from various collector-edition problems. Spectrum games of over four years ago were generally better and had more playability than this, despite the fact that the machine was still relatively new and programming standards were not as high as they are today. When Robtek's sales director Mike Segue was asked what his thought of *Klaximodo* he replied that Robtek were 'not overly impressed with the game'. He went on to tell us that the game will be released for a variety of reasons, 'very cut-throat'. First, to do Robtek justice, makes it sound as if they were obliged to release the game. Mike Segue was swift to point out, however, that there were a lot better games to come from Robtek.

If you followed us all the way before the latest Super Street you could be forgiven for believing that Jon Elway — the Denver Broncos quarterback — could walk or water, or at least put his head and not his tummy at the same time. And if you'd signed him up to endorse an American Football arcade game, you'd probably have been dreaming of at those top prices filling your coffers.

After the match — well, after the match you'd probably have been wishing you'd signed up a certain Doug Williams instead. But *Quarback* — the Mastertron's dudshoot which is longing *Quarback* to those shores — are putting a brave face on it. Mastertron's Rachel Davies 'explained the Broncos' defeat by claiming that Elway 'was too long getting excited about the Mastertron to go!'. Now try. Are you the great one to comeing over for a personal appearance? Or when he comes to term... suggests

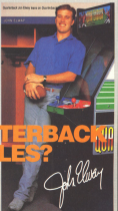
NUMBER 40 THIS YEAR ON SUPERSTREET

JOHN ELWAY

QUARTERBACK FUMBLES?

Quarterback

But the game — what about the game? *Quarback* looks as though it will be one of the better American football simulations, detailed down to the cheerleaders' stupidity at first time and the list of the top thirty names when the game is over. Expected to see it around within a month or two.



John Elway

METAL MOGGIES TAKE OVER

Steve Cooke reports from the Earls Court Toy Fair...

Robotic puppy cats, silicon butlers, and baby computers were all in evidence at the latest International Toy Fair at Earls Court.

Cobbed, but most intriguing, had to be Tomy's range of Peltzer from Fisher Scientific, the man who founded Atari but now sees his future in micro-processor controlled mazes. Peltzer Deluxe is a furry little bundle with a stubby tail and flashing eyes who can be controlled by different hand-clap sequences.

For £299.00 you can watch Peltzer scurry about the floor, zigging to left and finding its way round the furniture. Clap a different rhythm, and your little friend will go on to the spot - wait to be stroked - and tail off for the shelter of the sofa. And the only things it leaves on the carpet are dead batteries...

These of us who aren't fond of cats can share our lonely hours with Peltzer Spider - your furry electronic spider friend who does everything he's asked. Not EVIDENT? Well, surely! The mini-logger, Active, has a picture on a green display of falling leaves, then waking up again with his eyes fluttering and scampering across the floor. Houseproud owners will be interested to hear that it does not actually spit webs.

On a more practical note, however, C299.00 will get you an Onco 2000. This remote controlled toy features manipulating limbs and a learning/programming function that can have him trotting off down the hallway to fetch you a drink from the



Peltzer Spider - My invertebrate of the future or an AtariPeltzer?

kitchen. By the time he gets back, you'll probably need one. If Onco 2000 is a spot too intimidating, you can have almost as much fun with his younger brother, OncoBob. Born



Robot and Peltzer Deluxe - just what you need when it's bedtime.



Atari's Advanced Learning Window provides simple command devices to discover the path required to be using many games for the machine.

all soothe your shattered nerves with rapt music if so required.

MINI MASTERMINDS

In a rather more serious vein, Atari's Leisure were showing the 'brand-new' IC Bulbman. Top of the range is the \$49.95 Animated Learning Window, which is a small pressure-sensitive keyboard with simple LCD display. The unit offers spelling and numeracy games for children over 5 years old. In addition there are add-on cartridges to provide word capacity (£25.00), additional dictionaries, and other features. £12.99 gets you built-in music functions, electronic drawing, animated pictures, or fifteen-different activities.

If all this has you weeping with nostalgia for the good old days of soft cuddly bears and rocking-horses, save heart - traditional toys still occupied 50% of the exhibition. Bored if they didn't think new technology threatened their business, one tall boy rapt grabbed a bear with the immortal phrase, 'look at this bear - it talks'. He then turned it upside down - 'Batteries' went the bear - ... But of course it does have a limited vocabulary.

By admission.



Only when the Onco 2000 is the most sophisticated little Entertainment Center on the market it probably isn't that the best.

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Snippets..

Up and coming titles for your micros.

TIME FIGHTER

CD-ROM

CD-ROMs

The first version of this seven-stage shoot-em-up will be for the CD-ROM, with a possible 16-bit version later. It sees the player travelling through several time periods (always in the back of hours). The game's developers have spent a lot of time studying animation techniques to make the central character's movements as fluid as possible.

TRASH HEAP

PC-DOS

Atari ST £19.95

You'll need a history of at least 1861 before you attempt to play the game, which comes complete with a pair of cardboard frames, tinted lenses and glasses that enable you to view the action in stunning 3D. Your mission is to race across the milky way and deliver some potent drink to your employer. Take care not to spill any though. Trash Heap should be available now.

SLAYGUN

Microsoft

Atari ST £19.95

With the most sophisticated military test ever created under your control, you must try to infiltrate and destroy the Cyberspace Laboratory. With 1000 rooms to explore (not all immediately accessible), be prepared for long sessions in front of your screen. Slaygun should be in the shops as you read this.

CARD SHARK

Acadsoft

CD-ROM £9.95, £14.95



The data view in 'Task Force'.

The deating should start, and soon now in this card playing sim featuring Peter (free version) Free Card Draw, Seven Card Stud and Texas Hold 'Em, Blackjack and Hearts. You play for money against computer controlled opponents who will spend their minds about the game fun fact.

ALIEN SYNDROME

The Edge

Spectrum £9.95

CD-ROM £9.95, £14.95

The saga continues with features such as interlocking and end-level guardians as the Thrigger is out for revenge. 16-bit versions are under development too and should also be with or quite soon now. It's a Gauntlet-style game in which your buddies are looking to you for rescue.

CYBERHOOD

Hexxon

Spectrum £12.95

Amstrad £9.95, £14.95

CD-ROM £9.95, £14.95

Ruffalo's Geon's latest program is a shoot-em-up combined with wacky weaponry including drop bombs,

horizontal beams, climb stairs and laser bouncers. Plenty of play style weapons to collect them. Look out for it any day now.

DESTROYER

Epyx

Amiga £24.95

Ancients are due to get weighed in the near future in this game where you play the captain of a fully armed, nuclear class U.S.Naval destroyer in this administrative game from Epyx. Use your fleet 4000 tonners to subvert the enemy planes to do much mischief.

ROCKET RANGER

Microsoft

Amiga & ST about £24.95

Others undated

You'll find almost everything in here! From zapping guns to zombie women, from life Raqs to mini-controlling machines. There's plenty of strategy, arcade sequences and a non-linear plot to keep you busy. Commodore versions should be here first with ST and PC versions following shortly.

STRIKE FLEET

Geometric Arts

CD-ROM £14.95

The latest Luvellin game offers strategy and arcade action in a modern naval combat simulator. You've got an entire fleet to command and ten dangerous missions to complete (each of which takes place in a different location). You can opt either to play the game one scenario at a time or - if you think you can handle it - you can play the whole campaign at once. Strike Fleet should be dropping anchor at your local software emporium very soon.

TASK III

Dataviz

CD-ROM £9.95, £14.95



Dataviz's first European programme should be in the shops right now. This one of last year's action-packed arcade game features smooth graphics, stunning music and 16 levels. It's a real-time game that has you trying to save the galaxy from impending doom.

INTERCEPTOR

Electronic Arts

Amiga £24.95

An action-packed fight sim where the player is given six missions to complete in and around the San Francisco Bay area. You have a choice of two planes, the F16 Falcon and the F14 Falcon. Both feature digital aim and weapons systems. Look out for it sometime in

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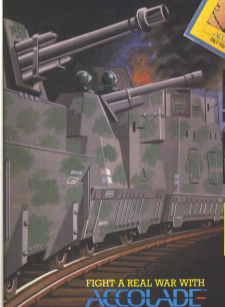


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ning numbers, carefully checked, may be distinctly sending a message addressed to you. ACE Agent always has:
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664, CPC, ST, AMIGA version

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20 B=0 FOR C=1 TO 4: B=B*10
30 D=ASC(C\$) : B=B+D
40 IF D=0 THEN D=32
50 B=B-D-55 NEXT C PRINT "Winning Number is" : PRINT A

SPECTRUM version

10 FOR A=1 TO 20 INPUT "Code" : C\$
20 LET B=0 FOR C=1 TO 4 LET B=B*10
30 LET D=CODE(C\$) : B=B+D
40 IF D=0 THEN LET D=32
50 LET B=B-D-55 NEXT C PRINT "Winning Number is" : PRINT A

TYPING IN THE PROGRAM

SPECTRUM

80 Power on, and type the Spectrum listing in as shown, pressing [ENTER] at the end of each line. To get the next CODE line (i.e. 20) hold down spacebar until symbol appears, together and press the letter key. When you've typed all five lines in correctly, press F4 for FORTH help. Use F4 to show the code on the screen a little, pressing [ENTER] after each line. The program will stop after you've typed in all 20 codes. 1000. Save! (SAVE) made from the start-up menu and type in the Spectrum listing as shown, hitting [ENTER] at the end of each line. Type RUN. You're DONE! We've again set type the code in to the ACE Spectrum code.

664/128

Type listing in as shown. Hit any key to turn it on. The code will be typed into the ACE 664/128. Use the RUN/STOP key to RETURN and then type the code into the ACE 664/128.

AMSTRAD CPC

Type listing in as shown. Hit any key to turn it on. The code will be typed into the ACE AMSTRAD CPC. Use the RUN/STOP key to RETURN and then type the code into the ACE AMSTRAD CPC. Use the RUN/STOP key to RETURN and then type the code into the ACE AMSTRAD CPC.

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Type listing in as shown. Hit any key to turn it on. The code will be typed into the ACE ATARI 80. Use the RUN/STOP key to RETURN and then type the code into the ACE ATARI 80. Use the RUN/STOP key to RETURN and then type the code into the ACE ATARI 80.

AMIGA

Type listing in as shown. Hit any key to turn it on. The code will be typed into the ACE AMIGA. Use the RUN/STOP key to RETURN and then type the code into the ACE AMIGA. Use the RUN/STOP key to RETURN and then type the code into the ACE AMIGA.

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VERMINATOR

Arcade

After the very respectable ACE rating of 8.0 for *Verminator* back large last month, here's another good-looking SF arcade adventure from Telemechat. People expecting *Justice Schwarsenegger* to pop up as a futuristic time-traveling robot have obviously missed the film, because the name of this game is just control. As the time-traveling hero of the film you must work your way up on ancient 20-screen sets (see, exterminating) a wide variety of enemy creatures and collecting heavily items of equipment as you go.

Written by Chris Bailey of *AmigaWorld* a *Wally* game *Verminator* aims to take gallery with a bit of depth to it by bringing in some financial problems. Do you gamble for money, try to bank too, or go to the neighborhood banks and put your money in the bank?

Verminator (2) Runs the game you with this top. (Screenshot by Telemechat)



STEP ON IT!

It's pedal to the metal this month as we start up another set of high-performance games! Will they burn rubber on the competition, or just stall at the traffic lights? Have they got the turbo-power to really eat that tarmac up, or can't they even make it into second gear? Watch out for a full road-test in an ACE near you, soon!

Screenshot

**KICKSTART II**

Arcade

We've already reviewed the Spectra version of this bike-frenzied budget number - see last month's ACE - but it's so good as an appearance on the Amiga any day now and we just had to share these pictures with you. Would they party? Be sure not to be snuffed at either, but we couldn't figure out how to print that. OK?

Screenshot



CHAMPIONSHIP SPRINT

Action

If you loved Super Sprint but thought it didn't have enough courses to really test your speed, this one could be the answer to your prayers. It's not just the set of new courses you might have expected; it's a new course construction set. You want a simple loop or a figure-eight? Simple! You want slow-drones, lots of spikes and plenty of oil on the track? No problem! All this can be yours if you own a C64, Amstrad or Spectrum. Details will be in the definitive ACE review next month, sports fans.

Championship Sprint (20) has been on its make since



STORMTROOPER

Action

They may not be terribly well-known just now, but several 16-bit house Devs can make quite a name for themselves with the use of the screen alone (as anything to go by). The main game background scrolls horizontally – not an easy thing to achieve on the C64 – as you blast your way into an enemy-held mining complex of the future. We're hoping to review this one soon, with Amiga and PC versions to follow.

Stormtrooper



Stormtrooper (2)

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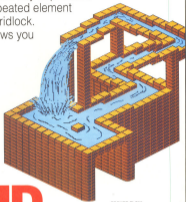
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Just about the fastest way to produce a picture with a repeated element in 3D is by using gridlock. Brian Larkman shows you how.

One of the most dramatic changes in the design of 3D computer games was the arrival of pseudo-3D in games like Knight Lore, Indiana and Alien 3, before Knight Lore met games - certainly most arcade-style games - in a 3D form, and on approach, the unique viewpoint of the Ultima game was the three-quarter view. Simply elevating the upper corner of the room and looking into the center objects and characters moving about on the floor below gave the impression that they were floating in' and out of the scene.

That 3D viewpoint was, of course, all illusion composed by the true 3D views created by games like Elite. Nevertheless, it is a very persistent illusion and is very easy to create with the simplest drawing tools available in almost every drawing package. The result, well, equips you with yet another



ESCHERIAN FLOW PARTS

A maze-like structure (Brian Larkman) with squares in 3D form. It is drawn using a simple cube, three-quarter view trick, panel alignment technique.

RAPID REPEATER

tool to create the basic look of having to do any 'proper' drawing. There are two main advantages of the three-quarter view. It allows perspective to be ignored and it encourages the use of gridlock.

If perspective is to be ignored the real question is - to what degree are the lines of values to be foreshortened? The worst case can be illustrated with a die or cube of sugar. If it is drawn to face with one face toward you and the opposite corners facing up and down, what you see is a square 'twisted' diagonally, bottom. If the top corner is now tilted away from you the square appears to be squashed into one side, becoming a shape and two other faces of the cube come into view. There is no time when the face is a square, and when the other faces can be seen. Nevertheless, if a drawing is made with the upper faces square (drawing corners at 90 degrees), the other sides can be drawn in without the



ESCHERIAN FLOW PARTS

Basic components used for main drawing.

1. Establish basic shape structure to minimize shading effects.
2. Perspective drawing structure to show direction of light using the basic face and other characteristics for the flow paths and flow direction lighting.
3. Perspective cube, tilted so that projected only with gridlock in operation. Starting at the top corner helps the process.
4. Any flow, starting direction or a key flow (corner to flow).
5. Different cube 'rotation' taken for corner, the top of the wall must face down back in a perspective.

drawing looking overall. The style is frequently used in the Apple Macintosh to design icons and other graphical symbols. The great advantage of this method is that the effects of 'clipping' or 'coping' are kept to a minimum. Most lines other than vertical or horizontal when clipping is not a problem, are at 45 degrees giving the maximum 'expensive'.

If the degree of distance is a problem, then a more wide-angle can be chosen. Using gridlock it is possible to produce an angle that gives an even degree of clipping. Once this angle has been determined a three-quarter view cube can be constructed like that shown at (A) in both the parts diagrams. Experimenting should produce the ideal cube for your purpose.

Very gridlock can selected pick up the outline side or a window/brush with background background. The rubber line used to

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NEW CONQUESTADOR

© 1989 - Empires & Castles - DataForce. Empires & Castles uses a 3-D graphics hardware card and an equally priced color graphics

pick-up should be positioned so as to cut across the upper and lower points and the left and right sides of the cube. If the box was positioned correctly it should be possible to push a row of cubes, first to each other, stone-to-stone and touching corners, in perfect alignment, as shown in Temple Parts of (B). Again, a little experimentation should perfect the trick.

Temple Part (B) shows that the outline "weather" construction soon becomes a bit of a mess. A far better result can be obtained by filling the three sides of the cube with slightly different tones. Usually, pair on top

and the two darker tones on the sides give a 3D-like block. If more than four colors are available the sides can be textured or colored. By repeating the process of pushing up the filled cube with gridlock selected it should be possible to build up a middle wall or building similar to Temple Part (C) and (D). To achieve a sort of hidden line removal it is better to start at the back of the construction and work forward. The last block (or top-block) to be positioned should always be that of the top.

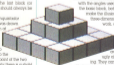
The Temple in New Conquestador (Empires & Castles) was done using the basic block shown in (A) and (B) in a 3-D software package. The basic software (C) was removed by trial and error, starting at the top and working down. Close to the letter (C) the final meeting point at the two sides can be seen. Obviously there is a slight offset (visible in any other language) but I positioned it at a point where the vertical would cover it up. It is a part of the art to learn how to cover up—or even better—use—maneuver in the way.

The pillars were done using one block, starting at the bottom. One of the top (bottom) edge (D) can easily be built up as the final block in the pile is the top stone. Other pillars such as that of (E) are more difficult. They require either that the basic pathway of

blocks is repeated back to a key block to remove inconsistencies, or that the point where the top of the pillar pins on a gridlock up and down in advance and then pushed down again when the pillar is complete. Gridlock makes these operations very easy.

The solid walls were constructed in outline, again with gridlock selected. It is important to maintain consistency

with the angles used for the basic blocks, both to make the faces of three-dimensional work, and to



used with alignment. They can be tiled most easily by making a suitable pattern and using, for instance, the "Featured (F) 1" command in Advanced Art Studio.

The final touches in both cases require some very simple. The things-looking need a small area grayed with a few colors as a base for the vegetation. It is important to leave some space of dirt to give a feeling of depth. Most of the space shown was painted with the repetition then mapped in taking the temple. The ASCII symbols at the present

Gridlock

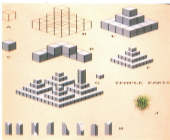
One of the basic used facilities in most painting packages is gridlock. In most circumstances the lock available by drawing can be used to place lines, dots and areas of color absolutely anywhere on the screen. Gridlock is designed to limit the placing of some brushes, lines and blocks to the corners of an invisible grid. With gridlock turned on to rectangles, and with the grid set to half pixels, the smallest box that can be created is half. Similarly the end points of any rubber-banded line that might be drawn are locked to the corners of the grid. This does not prevent the drawing of diagonal however, either, it limits them to specific angles.

construction of the world's mazes was constructed ball mazes using a transparent 'net' placed over the screen. The wanted red line lines in the 4 colour drawing were all drawn free-hand using a one-of-these steel balls.

All these drawings were made using gridlock and a very steep outer block. It should be possible to get these interesting results using more complex blocks and systems, and by varying the size of the grid. As long as the blocks are constructed and not used packed using one size of grid, consistency should be maintained. Good luck with your gridlock. ■

The three-quarter trick

The basic technique or 'trick' of a three-quarter view game is that it gives perspective. By looking down onto the scene at quite a steep angle, the objects further away are (in fact) tiny, tiny smaller than the nearest ones, despite the laws of perspective. If perspective is completely ignored therefore, the impression of depth can be created without the nuisance of reducing the size of objects as they move toward the back of the scene. In the Revolution Escape Flow above this effect is suggested to create quite a peculiar illusion. Now a companion on the other hand, shows that a 3D scene can also be created using such a view.



TEMPLE PARTS
Components used for the Computer.

1. Outer base.
2. Outer steps section. (Other hidden blocks used for structural construction not shown).
3. Filled block.
4. Filled step section showing construction method starting at the top.
5. Complete temple section with a hidden line removed by hand.
6. Temple section scaled down for further construction.
7. Complete temple and related block used to construct the pillars.
8. Outer Pillar.
9. Inner Pillar.
10. Repetition block.

ARTWORKS

We are proud to present the second instalment of our series of readers' artworks. This month's selection covers everything from Spectrum and C64 to ST and Amiga - and there are some very fine pictures for you to feast your eyeballs on.

If you want to join the fun and strut your stuff before the rest of the world, send your work - preferably on disk, with an explanation of how you created it - to **Artworks, ACE, 4 Queen Street, Bath, BA1 1EJ**

A BIRD

July 1988, Turbovision, Essex

Harry's fine serious piece of ST artwork was created using Pierbott's Advanced Art Studio. Harry reckons the best way to use the package is to build up pictures on the grid as opposed to the main screen.



ESCAPE

Orion Impact, Birmingham

Christian writes: 'If you click the right mouse button on the R of ESCAPE, when selected in the command, a new function appears - the animate function. Animate a figure, speed up the animation and then press escape, the word escape is then copied onto the screen. From here I moved the stars from the boxes and added them to give the escaped effect.'

FROG

David Green, Iowa City

David's fine example of C64 wildlife art was produced entirely using the graphics editor in dBase 3.0/egning.



LEVEL 42

3D00Coins, 30x30, 1 Frame

This profile artist creates all his masterpieces on the 3T using Microsoft's Air Director.



FROM BEHIND THE WIRE

By Ivan, 30x30, 1 Frame

Page 3T works all art were created using Integral Solutions' Egoz site package.



19

30x30, 1 Frame

Created into via on an Arma using Deluxe Paint. Drawn/animated.

RED ARROWS

By 3T, 30x30, 1 Frame

All 3T created using Animator 1 to express his artistic flair on the Spectrum. A shout-out from 3T: "Deluxe is 'patience, patience and more patience.'"



PATHWAY

30x30Coins, 30x30, 1 Frame

Another example of Brian's handiwork. Created on the 3T using Microsoft's Air Director.

BRING ME THE HEAD...

30x30, 1 Frame

Produced on an Arma using Deluxe Paint. Single items were created, putted up with brushes, saved and then exported.





DUNGEON MASTER - ATARI ST

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Rock and Ace go against a bunch of the early maze-type Atari titles that resemble *Pac-Man*.



Just wait for Xybots to get on the way to level 1. How often it's so hard to see!

Xybots

Atari -20p per player

Two-player arcade action hits the coin-op in the strange and - initially, at least - misleading genre. The "two personal player" has been invaded by a load of nasty robots, who now enter the multilevel underground centre.

The players - and it must have had an odd team - take the roles of Captain Ace (left) and Major Rock (right). Two real combat stunts who have, of course, got to clear the place up.

Xybots features an interesting split-screen display; at the top centre is the map of the layout. You need to see this because the acti-

K.O.!

It takes two to tango this month. Atari's ***Xybots*** gives you 3D joint exploration, while Sega's ***Heavyweight Champ*** pits you against a series of mean opponents in the modern arena of the boxing ring. It's a game that really takes brawn - and takes it out of you too.

of playing even is a maze of walls, and consider - a lot of the time you must see the map to find your way around and to spot the traps indicating approaching Xybots.

On each level you must wrap around following the numerous robots, collecting energy packs and the opening doors that allow you to hop entire powers between levels.

The game has some neat touches, when



Down on level 1 Rock takes over behind a column. How often it's so hard to see! (See levels of the game on what follows.)

one of the tanks makes it through to the next level he stands, hand on hip, impatiently waiting. If your partner is a little tardy in completing the level, you'll see and hear yourself being cut.

Control against the Xybots is pretty straightforward - you just step left and try not to get stepped on. When they and their one minute you can take behind, and if you keep your eye on the map you can spot them coming into ambush lines.

The game is a lustrous attempt to do something a bit different to the survival genre. The arcade adventure format might look a bit odd but to some computer gamers, but it's well worth a go - especially in two-player mode.

MIDNIGHT LANDING

Talks seem to have gone overboard with this cabinet, since you get inside you what the doors and look out the world. What that means is no over-the-shoulder stuff - but there is a rear-mounted monitor that lets spectators see what's happening. The game itself is a rather tricky flight sim, and not really what we've come to expect in the coin-ops. We hope to send you a detailed look at the gameplay real soon now.



HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMP

Sega - Price 20p

It's one hit, but you can't hide it this extremely realistic box-er-up from Sega. Heavyweight Champ is the first coin-op we've seen so general release that actually requires you to put in atleast an inch effort in the activity its simulating.

You play the game by grabbing hold of three handles you can see protruding into the cabinet. To punch, you shove them in

in the way you can not only deliver those neck-snapping jabs, but a nice wrapping back and a few morey uppercuts. The swinging monitor also helps as you try to block or simply get out of the way of punches.

The game structure is pretty straightforward. You have to knock out four successive opponents before getting in the ring against



Get into some Jim Cooper boxing - your worst opponent.



That's the biggest hit in the round.

and out or up and down. But there's not all the upper half of the cabinet serves as the base, allowing you to dodge your opponent and giving you a wider range of punches than you would get just from the dials.

The missing is largely responsible for the physical exhaustion you feel after a bout, and to be extraordinary postures you'll see players taking up in your local arcade. Some punter really get their legs bent and their backs high as they wrestle with the machine in an attempt to deliver that KO punch that will take them on to the next opponent.

the world champ. If you're still on your legs after that you go on to five defenses, the pugilists have usually silly names - Marco Polo, for instance - and all resemble well-known fighters. Tommy Nears and Marco Heale (left) seem to have been in the minds of the designers.

Made to mistake - if you're not prepared to get your back in to Heavyweight Champ it's just not worth spending your coin. It's not the most subtle or thoughtful game you'll play, but it's certainly the sweetest and one of the most exciting. *



Look at either of those opponents.



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REALTIME SOFTWARE



RAINBIRD





Could your micro tell the future? More importantly, could it tell you the winner of the 3.30 at Aintree? Believe it or not, the experts maintain that it could. Steve Cooke and Pete Connor order the Roller and get down to the track...

Let's not beat about the bush, we're talking pounds, shillings, and pence here. You're got a mass, you've weighed together enough to put an L1011-60, or the jocks, or the bloodstock taken, and you want to get rich. Impossible, isn't it? Or possible, possibly?

Of course, are your computer just might be able to turn the tables in your favour. It's not easy - you're got to accept quite a bit of preparation and hard work - but the real meat could be a system running on your main that will, in some cases, substantially increase your prospects of winning. Forbidden, you never allow yourself to become a slave to the hotel, and promised you always receive returns, were it not buying out more from you can happily afford to lose. The combination of computing and gambling can provide a lot of fun - and the possibility of a good profit at the end of the day.

Computers can help the gambler in two ways - by brute force, or through artificial intelligence. The first approach involves the event's power to manipulate and sort large amounts of data at high speed, spotting relationships that could take a human being months to work out. Doing this obviously involves the use of a lot of it, as well - after all, the data has got to come from somewhere and you're the one with the laptop.

The AI approach is perhaps more interesting, but also difficult for most home micro-memes to implement, because of the lack of available software. This will almost certainly change during the next couple of years, but the results could be very exciting. An AI program called **SHARPE** (Statistical Derivative Algorithm Generating Legged Expressions), if you please, assessed the form of 150 horses during the summer of 1992 and predicted, for definite winners and horses that finished. All four winners actually won,

five more, and of the thirteen other horses that were last past the post. Pretty impressive stuff.

The brute force approach can have some startling results as well, however. The key factor here can be the amount of data you can access and enter into your program (see the Data Baseware book) and the skill with which the programmer can combine the tactics, odds weighting to various aspects of race, and select winners. Donald Stuart, who used to do computer tips for the Sun, once observed an outstanding 80% hit rate over a 500 races using the approach. In fact Donald Stuart himself is quite a phenomenon, as you can read in the *Hot Tipster* book elsewhere in the book.

What we've done, then, is to take a look at some of the software currently available for punters. A successful program will demand a lot from its user, but you can be reasonably sure that the gambler effort you put into it, the greater the potential reward.

You should remember, however, that even looking over a guide to achievement in the gambling world — as in any other pursuit, you usually have to pay for your education.

COURSEWINNER

Tom Dittus

Spectrum	E18.99ea	
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CPC	E18.99ea	E18.99ea
PCW	E18.99ea	
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ATARI ST and AMIGA versions due March/April, E18.99ea.		

Author Peter Chastek describes Coursewinner as "a tool" for weighing the factors involved in predicting the outcome of horse races — whether on the flat or over the sticks. He emphasizes that (it's not a magic system); it uses exactly the same factors as a human with pen and paper would — it just does them much more efficiently.

To use the program you'll need a copy of *The Sporting Life* or *The Racing Post* — or at least a daily paper with detailed info on horses and races etc. Factors such as weight carried, distance, going, speed factor, jockey's record can be taken in to account. In fact, there are 15-or 16 different pieces of data that can be entered for each horse in the race. The more you enter, the more effectively the program will do its job — but Peter Chastek emphasizes that you can use as many or as few of these factors as you wish.



Furthermore, before you run the computer analysis of the data, you can alter the "bias" — that

BBG

David Stewart, computer tipster

A shining example of the fact that there's not just profit but a career in your computer is provided by 20-year-old David Stewart, computer tipster extraordinaire.

As a mere 14-year-old David acquired a ZX81, one which he transferred the manual record he'd previously stored in a shoebox. It seemed a logical step to work out a system for picking winners from the historical data available.

He wrote to his local paper, the *Northern Echo* in Darlington, who printed his computer tips against their own human tip a week. David's tips came out the better; he was taken up by Radio Cleveland, then by other local radio stations, then by the Sun. All of which led to his current job at *The Racing Post* in the information services department, working on a Prime minicomputer.

David's selections consistently outperform those of human tipsters. In one season

he, the straight-giver by the program is the individual tipster. So, if you think that the trainer of the horse is important, you merely turn that one down to zero. In this way you can use whatever expertise you yourself have to add to the computer's analysis.

Used over the course of a season, Peter Chastek reckons Coursewinner will turn in at least a small profit, but bear in mind that entering ALL the data for races can be a long and tenuous task; you need to be pretty dedicated to stick at it.

he had an amazing 60% success rate, he averages around 40% returns, as opposed to the 20% earned by other tipsters.

Do you dare do it? The data he uses is exactly the same as anyone else's, but, he says, "it's the percentages in which you combine the factors that's the important thing." What that trick is he's not revealing, and he's not going to put his work on the market as a commercially available program; he thinks that the average punter just finds it too much trouble to enter the voluminous data.

Neither has he made a fortune out of betting himself. He does think, though, that "I've probably made more than I've lost over the years. But the real pressure for me is in the ratings." And does he think gambling is a "mug's game"? No — not if you treat it as a statistical exercise over a long period of time, and if you know something about what you're doing.



CASINO ROULETTE

CD

Atari 8-bit	E8.99ea	E14.99ea
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Atari ST		E18.99ea

Steering the ball at Monte Carlo is many a gambler's dream. Most of us are unlikely ever to get near Monte, but there's more to the casino and empty its coffers. But now — courtesy of the micro-



computer revolution — we can all track the ball from the comfort of that well-worn armchair in front of the monitor. CDE's Casino Roulette — due to appear around now — simulates the spin of the wheel and the fall of the wager on both Atari ST and Amiga.

Furthermore, it gives details on playing six betting systems — and thus lets you try them out at almost losing your shirt. Five systems are based on Roulette methods, and some of them certainly sound pretty luscious. A very popular — and very simple — one in the past was the Martingale; all you have to do is double your bet every time you lose. Easy. But what happens if you have a losing streak of several spins? Lose your

BEATING THE BANK

- A History of Greed

The idea of trying to come up with a mathematical theory that could make precise predictions about the chance outcome of events is obviously very attractive to a gambler and was, for that matter, already in the 17th century. It all started in Paris, where the Chevalier de Méré made a small fortune by repeatedly betting that he could throw at least one six with every four rolls of a single die.

Unfortunately, he was so successful that very soon he was losing enough to bet. In 1654 he tried to get round the problem by changing his bet and betting that in 24 tosses of a pair of dice he would throw a double six at least once. He had no problem with this bet at all - everyone wanted to take him on, for the simple reason that he kept losing. Although common sense seemed to dictate that the new bet was simply a variation on the old theme, practice proved otherwise and the Chevalier asked the mathematician, Blaise Pascal to find out what was going wrong.

Pascal was able to show that the odds of the first bet were 14 to 13 in favour (i.e. a probability of almost 52%, significantly better than even), but contrary to expectation the probability in the second bet was only just over 49% - hardly a winning proposition.

ALL SYSTEMS ARE GO

Once probability theory had got off the ground, other gamblers began a slightly different approach, coming up with betting systems that could maximise their profits. Again, the French were first and the first was D'Alembert's Method.

D'Alembert was the legitimate son of a French aristocrat and a friend of several famous Parisians, including Voltaire and Diderot. He was very keen on roulette, and developed a system of betting that increased his winnings as follows:

1. He would start with a bet of 5 francs, betting on either red or black. This ensured him a 50% chance of winning because in those days there was no zero on the roulette wheel. Some days roulette is a losing proposition for gamblers

because the croupier gives the casino what is called a "house advantage", whereby they pay reduced winnings when the ball lands in that slot (or in some cases re-rolling it all).

2. After each win, he would increase his stake by one franc, and after each loss he would increase it by the same amount.

3. If ever he found his stake reduced to zero by the method above, he would start again at 5 francs.

There is some surprisingly sophisticated theory behind this method. It really does work, and can increase a gambler's returns significantly whenever he is betting on a system that offers either an even chance or better. Naturally this is hard to do, because, but if you find that your predictor program is giving you better than even chances, D'Alembert's method should raise your profits.

There have been numerous other systems developed, including some to help you win at blackjack (or 21, sing-in!) the most famous probably being that devised by Edward Thorp in 1962. He started the craze for so-called counting systems that involve the player memorising all the cards already played, and then adjusting his bets accordingly. His system is very effective and can beat the odds, which are normally in favour of the casino, by other ways. The problem is that the level of winnings remains very low and - of more practical significance - people who count and bet in the manner prescribed by the system can be recognised by casino staff and gently deposited on the pavement outside.

One of the most exciting aspects of artificial intelligence programs is that, unlike your average gambler, they can generate their own rules and systems and test their effectiveness themselves. With computing power becoming cheaper and cheaper, it can't be long before someone comes up with a more sophisticated package that could show a significant performance on back, bet, and table. Any bets?

TE

11.99-26
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Kind of home computer predictor programs let the user to enter data for them to analyse before they will come up with the goods (assuming they are real). This is particularly important with horse racing, where a model's form can be a strong determining factor in how well it does at the track.

Naturally you can't follow a horse around all the time, being far too expensive, but luckily there are people who collect all the information together for you. Best source of all is The Sporting Life newspaper, which publishes regular summaries of the performance of horses in the field. Not only is this presented on a more-by-race basis, but the

paper also occasionally prints special statistical summaries about particular stables.

This information is an absolute godsend for the gambler. The Sporting Life Form Booklet, for example, gives details on each horse's performance, age, gender, background, winning history, weight carried and so on. Combine

the information with the predictions by the system in the popular Press

and you have some excellent raw material for your efforts to get working on *ROULETTE*. For all program mentioned elsewhere in this feature, we used the Daily Mirror Sportform in conjunction with information drawn from newspapers - and The Sporting Life.

MINI-CIP DATA

The Sporting Life Mini-Cip data format gives you all the pages of statistics presented in several different ways. Now you can see just the winning form for a 6.00 favourite only. The information includes the horses' earnings on each race, its age, weight, and other characteristics. Package it alongside the world's most famous horse racing information.

Data Sources





ly times in a row and you'll be feeling MILLIONS more than you started with. Not that many casinos would let you bet that much at once anyway.

The program plays several other systems, but programmer Frank Ben points out to us that in auto-mode with one computer player using a system and one betting at random, the random player at some point will tip.

POOLSWINNER

Eric Schless

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Winning the pools sounds simple — all you have to do is predict the results of the matches. Even if there are 8 teams and you get them all, you'll win a fortune.

Really, it's not quite as simple as that. 8.5 million people do

THE ACE GRAND NATIONAL TIPS

The most famous horse race in the world takes place at Ascot on April 9th, and the winners and losers have just been declared as we go to press. It's with great pleasure then that we present the following selections from computer tipster David Stead. Over 100 horses are possible contenders at the moment, but by the way itself many will have been withdrawn — we can't guarantee that the horses with leading odds actually start the race, so keep an eye on the racing pages both for lists of withdrawals and for news of the odds on the horse you fancy.

HORSE CURRENT ODDS

1. BY THE WAP

16-1

Ran all but of his races last season, but did not run in the National last year due to injury. Shows good going and is a brave front runner, but the ground is right for him he would start favourite on April 9th.

2. BICKS STAR

16-1

Seems to be carrying a favourable weight and is capable of handling any kind of ground. Usually a very good jumper and is regarded by many as just the kind of horse for a race like the National.

3. WEST TAP

20-1

Ran the National in '88 — and everyone that's a winner. Recent form hasn't been brilliant, but West Tap is a lot of an Antree specialist and could pull out something special this year.

Best outsider

SMITH'S BOON

100-1

Carries a very favourable weight — and it looks like he'll be carrying a lot of tapes from the punters in the ACE effort....

the pools every week, and not that many of them win a fortune. So an interesting alternative is to use a computer analysis of historical data to predict the National winner, assign and score those. Steve's Poolswinner attempts to do just that.

The program requires you to enter results

Understanding the Odds

People are often confused by the way in which odds are expressed in betting forms, and how they relate to actual probability. Start with a package that offers several possible winning opportunities, and the secret of using the program successfully is to bet judiciously, combining your program's recommendations with your own selection of best possible bets. For this reason, it's important to understand what odds, as quoted by bookies, actually represent. Bookies quote two types of odds: odds against and odds in favour (or odds on). What's more, they frequently use number pairings like 2-to-4, when 3-to-2 would seem more logical. The best thing to do is to convert all odds into a standard format which will enable you to compare prices on different horses more effectively.

To do this, you use the formula Q/N , where Q equals the standard format for odds in favour that we're looking for. For example, against odds 4-to-1, and 4 is the quotient odds again. So if the bookmaker's quoting 4 to 4 against, the formula would read $Q=4-N=0$ so Q would be 1.5. Standard odds in favour would therefore be 1.5 to 1. Bookmaker's odds 10 to 10 on would give us a formula of $Q=10-N$ or 0.5 and standard odds in favour are 0.5 to 1.

If you're having trouble with percentage probabilities, you can convert your value for Q with the formula $P=Q/(Q+1)$, and multiply the result by 100. So the probability percentage of a horse quoted at 8 to 4 against before 0-1 is, as above, would be $P=1/(8+1)$ is a probability of 11.11% or 10%.

WINNER

Doing the pools...

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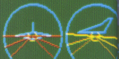


Bob Strain, author of the simulations of 2D, 3D and 4D used here, is chief of a Toronto-based foundation for design.



Steve Glass, author of the flight video, did a research on wings.

03:00.81
22



You want the world's most exclusive shoot-em-up? You want processing power beyond the wildest dreams of Archimedes owners? You're looking at it! This is the deceptively named *INMOS Flight Simulator*. It's from INMOS right enough – their mind-bogglingly powerful Transputers are the driving force here – but it's not really a simulator in the *Flight Sim II* sense. Though the game does feature runways, you don't take off or land – just fly, shoot, and stare in amazement. This is definitely one for the combat freaks!

POWERFUL STUFF!

The game was programmed by INMOS application-engineers Phil Jones and Steve Green, writing in the postscript processing language Coccin. Steve wrote the bulk of the game in his spare-time after working for Lumiflex/Dinsey flight simulators while on holiday in the States. Phil already had a set of 3D-display-card sharing routines which "bored on to the bone" of Steve's mobile to provide a working simulator after only two weeks.

As it stands the game can be played by up to four people at once, each with their own point-of-view of the game world, the winner being the last one still airborne. It runs on a system built out of standard INMOS development boards, the original using eleven custom Transputers per person. By upgrading to top-of-the-range T160 Transputers throughout, Phil and Steve have now got



The INMOS development plant in Newport, where the *Transputer* was made.

the game running at 33 frames per second – a rate approaching the speed of professional flight simulators used for pilot training.

You'll probably see more of Phil's work in the near future, some of his earlier browser demo programs are currently being used to show off the *Acq/Petroleum AS&G* workstation. Watch out for more details and pictures of AS&G in next month's *ACE*. ■



A hand is shown holding a joystick that is mounted on a red, angular base. The joystick has a black grip and a black base with several buttons. The background is dark, making the red base and the hand stand out.

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SCREEN TEST



This month's Screen Test is just bustin' out all over with 16-bit software – looks like the Amiga and ST owners are starting to get the choice and quality they've been asking for. But, just to remind us all that there's life in 8-bits

yet, our highest rated game of the month is on ...the Spectrum! Zooming onto a screen near you is Digital Integration's ATF, one of the classiest



flight and combat simulators we've seen in a long, long time. And those 16-bitners will just have to eat their hearts out; ATF is 8-bit only.

But there's some lovely stuff around for Amiga and ST. Anco's budget

Karting Grand Prix is a worthy – and noisy – rival to Super Sprint. Ere Informatique's Captain Blood combines snazzy French graphics with original – and playable – game design. And



Melbourne House's Xenon probably marks the state-of-the-art end of the line for 16-bit scrolling shoot-em-ups. But it's not all fun out there. Check out Robtek's Kwazimodo for a creature

from the land that time forgot; Spectrum Hunchback four years ago had to be better than this....

And don't forget to consult our Updates pages on the latest versions of the latest games for your machine.



● THE ACE REVIEWING SYSTEM

If you're new to ACE, a word of explanation is in order about our inventory-reviewing system.

First of all the PC, PC stands for **Predicted Interest Curve**. It's an easy-to-use representation of how long we think your interest might be held by a game. (When sales or conversions will start high and then steadily fall off; games demanding some thought and planning will stay higher longer. Half games start low and go nowhere but fast.)

The ACE Rating is a figure calculated to show the area underneath the curve. It's the game's overall score, and is marked out of a 100. Any game which scores over 500 is ACE

Rated, and is pretty damn good – see ATF for an example. (We love)

As well as an ACE Rating each separate version of a game reviewed gets its own version test, giving you details specific to that version and a score for graphics, sound, fun factor and IQ factor.

These last two categories are there to give you an idea of whether the game demands much in the way of thought, is instantly enjoyable, packs an exciting punch, and so. A high IQ Factor does NOT necessarily mean that the Fun Factor will be low. ATF for example, scores a very respectable 6 on IQ and 8 on Fun Factor; it's

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not just great fun, but something that also requires more than a little thought.

Revised scores on each review tell you how much the game exists on the different formats, and when they should be in the shops. Bear in mind that we can only give an idea of the software houses' test as to the date of arrival of a game. "Imminent" means that the version should be in the shops by the time you read the review.

Each game is reviewed by one main reviewer, but is played by at least three of the ACE team: the final ratings and judgement are the considered opinion of us all.

KARTING GRAND PRIX

ANCO get on the grid

RACING games have been coming off us fast and furious of late, but the karting genre from Anco is still worth slowing down to have a look at. Not only does the gameplay compare very favourably with the best of Super Sprint, but the pace should prove very attractive as well.

As with other games of the genre you view the action from above. There's a choice of 8 tracks, starting with a fairly comfortable street oval becoming progressively more tortuous. Control is, customarily, by means of joystick only. Since you have to press for-

ward to accelerate, sideways movement can be a bit of a problem. In the early phase of your racing career you'll inevitably spend more time crashing on the grass than racing around the track. A few laps at practice should see you getting the desired a run in this money.

Assuming, then, that you can actually make it round the various circuits the game should provide lots of fun - especially in two-player mode. Its very well executed and, at the price, should be investigated.

—Neil Green



There you'll see another example close to get you going

Amiga Version

Excellent graphics and even better sound make this very smooth indeed. Steering issues and braking in particular, are absent - but not safe - as good as the handling. While the view from above doesn't give the graphics the same hit as outstanding, they are more than adequate for the job. And then you get a really pretty heavy metal guitar on the backing sequence...

GRAPHICS 7 IQ FACTOR 8
AUDIO 8 RUN FACTOR 8

ACE RATING 844

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No other versions planned

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Maximum value is predicted to occur for you well in the future.

JET BIKE SIMULATOR

Watersports CODEMASTERS style

NOT content with releasing a string of high quality budget games, Codemasters have now introduced their Plus range.

For just a couple of extra pounds, the player gets two versions of the same game. One version is standard, the other is a version for expert players. You can of course forget about the standard version and just play the expert version, if you so desire.

Jet Bike Simulator is one such Plus game and the player has a choice of three settings - Intermediate and Advanced. On the standard version one of two players competes to finish the course (winning is out of the burn) in the correct order within the time limit. For the expert level, you have the same courses but you have to finish the race

in at least three places (there are either two or three irregularly shaped docks, depending on whether you're playing solo or with a friend) to qualify for the next course.

The game plays extremely well and is a very addictive, totally addictive between BMX and Grand Prix Simulator in style. The standard version of the game is a shade on the easy side, but the addition of extra courses and the expert level means you'll be playing this for a long time to come.

—Red Smith



SPYGLASS - watch timing on the expert level. Look for the highscore game over text.

Spectrum Version

Control issues, but it's sometimes hard to distinguish between the individual jet bikes. Gameplay is great through the various seasons in year to night too. You shouldn't spend your fun too much though.

GRAPHICS 7 IQ FACTOR 8
AUDIO 7 RUN FACTOR 8

ACE RATING 819

Amstrad Version

Very similar to the Spectrum version, with a touch more colour. Again the software directory slightly huffed a few spots your enjoyment.

GRAPHICS 7 IQ FACTOR 8
AUDIO 4 RUN FACTOR 8

ACE RATING 825

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The predicted maximum is expected to occur for you.

ROGUE computers are favoured subject matter for scenario writers, and those at Melbourne House are no exception. The computer in RoadWars was responsible for maintaining the busy roadways that take the action of the planet Armageddon. Since the computer went haywire, the roads have become unusable to traffic, so it's down to you to restore order.

The player takes charge of one of two Battlephases (your computer or a friend takes charge of the other) and the game involves travelling down a roadway and blasting away the malfunctioning panels that appear at the side of the road. The offending panels are easy to spot because

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CMTR	disk	MINI



they are of a different colour and usually come in pairs, one on either side of the road, with a huge electric arc between them. Destroying one of the panels will remove the arc but you'll have to drive each roadway if all the disrupted panels before the end appears and you can progress to a different road level.

These arcs are the heart of your troubles, however - you also have to contend with various obstacles found on the roadways. These other obstacles include spikes, steel balls that turn into speedbumps, and satellites that appear at the roadside. All these hazards are destructive to your Battlephases if you should happen to run into them with your headlights down.

To aid you with your task, you have a laser cannon with which to shoot out the panels and some of the hazards. But the

ROADWARS

MELBOURNE HOUSE let the sparks fly



SPIC/ST - fast-paced action game



MSX - they good looking, my best is yet

laser can only be operated with your shields down. Unfortunately the hit not only removes the offending panels, it will remove any panel. Once you've only got a few pan-

els left on either side of the road it becomes very difficult to dodge the hazards and results on the roadway, so caution when taking a roadblock.

Before weapons are available to help you with your task - whoever manages to run over an on-coming car in the road is granted with a clone that orbits the Battlephase. The more clones you manage to run over, the more stores you get, but if you lose one of your three lives you also lose any benefits you might have collected.

There's certainly plenty to keep the player busy in RoadWars but the game seems to be lacking something in the playability department. Control of your sphere is extremely difficult, and even if you master the controls you could find the fun soon disappears.

Andy Bell

Spectrum Version

There are no stores in the Spectrum version, but your score cannot get a higher one of five even though you can now use arena cars. Graphics are good but sound effects are nothing special. Generally the game itself is as better on the Spectrum than it does on the Amiga, which can give a sense that only graphics drive it with the good games.

GRAPHICS	7	IQ FACTOR	1
AUDIO	4	PLAY FACTOR	3

AGE RATING 7-15

Amiga Version

The graphics are very good for the most part, and sound is satisfying. The choice of control method spoils the game in a minor way, making it very tough to get into. As a direct result of this, you could be caught getting hit at all with a score that you might have done.

GRAPHICS	7	IQ FACTOR	1
AUDIO	5	PLAY FACTOR	5

AGE RATING 6-15

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Graphs for Amiga and Spectrum games. The graphs are only comparing the game play to the other on the Spectrum.

MACH 3

3D blasting from Loriclets

WHEN do you get in slowly dying because of an evil spell cast by a nasty wizard, or even how little choice but to keep running in the Mach 3 plane and about the slowly creep.

That's the excuse for the slow-down from France, featuring the usual high speed-



How you go - moving across from intermediate and ending by video.

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ATARI ST	01/94	01/94
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blast of graphics we've come to expect from across the Channel. The action is question is one bit, the get the lovely Genevieve (most of the cast.)

Amstrad Version

Graphics consist of rather murky purple and yellow, and Genevieve doesn't of course that you do - but it's all pretty playable and there aren't before themselves better than on the CD version.

GRAPHICS	5	NO FACTOR	5
AUDIO	7	FUN FACTOR	6
ACE RATING 433			

Atari ST Version

The highlight of the ST Mach 3 is undoubtedly the digitized speech of what Loriclets talk in a tone from the Film Begins. When you get a high score the computerize you with an excited 'Oh, boy!' as its one game in which you might be tempted to try for points rather than progress. Graphics are very neat, but there are some anomalies in the geometry - in particular the other unmovable objects.

GRAPHICS	7	NO FACTOR	5
AUDIO	8	FUN FACTOR	6
ACE RATING 465			

Mach 3 is a multi-stage 3D blast. Your ship - a remodeled pirate - flies into the screen. On the ground are mis-referenced spouting ions and mines - fly into them and you die. Shoot them and you get extra points.

Enemy ships make an appearance, appearing in form the clouds, and sooner or later you'll come up against the flying enemy - very difficult to avoid. These points are earned by flying through barrels consisting of good/possible combinations.

A final levelled game you cross from the first, linearize knowledge, to the second scenario, where it's night and you can have a shot at the floating green head of this level. Get through that and you continue to stages that are basically similar, even if the graphics are slightly re-gaged.

Although it impresses with its graphics, Mach 3 fails to really give us a game. The action is too repetitive and the challenge isn't quite tough enough - it's interesting enough.

• Peter Daint



...TRAZ

CASCADE knock their balls around

TRANSFORMABLE Accessible since it rotates a rather a look like to get Cascade (because) where looking to way onto the screen. Is there anything left in this 14 year-old game to generate excitement? Or use Cascade trans-

formally against another. Vertical (cyclic) movement (there) one ball and horizontal (cyclic) movement moves the other. Its rotating stuff, and as if that wasn't enough, its ball player made the control of the player's ball changes randomly - its a ball rotation and as you line yourself up to defend a ball and to leave the ball suddenly change.

When you've got up to four balls on screen and a multitude of balls whizzing everywhere things can become very confus-

ing. If you're used to boardball games that give you really helpful bonuses to equip your ship with missiles etc, then some of the wacky benefits available in Traz just have to be seen to be believed.

Cascade turns managed to produce a game that is not only addictive but a hell of a wacky fun.

• Andy Smith

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AMIB	01/94, 04/94	01/94
SFC	01/94	04/94
MS-DOS	01/94, 04/94	04/94
IBM PC	01/94	04/94

by logging a level (well?)

What like a war, Traz offers the player the choice to compete simultaneously with a friend in attempting to clear the 64 screens. Secondly, Traz offers the player a multitude of balls with which to defend the ball and destroy the balls. There were in a variety of styles - some screens even provide the player with their balls. One screen vertically against one wall while the other screens ball-



Are you either in boardball games, but need a good ball up construction if you hope to clear the other 63 as well.

C64 Version

The screen design features with an early version to an almost unrecognizable product. The graphics are colorful and well-made and the animation is smooth.

GRAPHICS	7	NO FACTOR	7
AUDIO	7	FUN FACTOR	7
ACE RATING 789			

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



UNHOLSTER your Light Phaser in this dose of interactive shoot-'em-up. There are five stages in the game and three difficulty levels. The player's aim is each stage is to rescue up to eight fellow soldiers who've managed to get left behind in enemy territory. So you try it and pick them up, yes? No. Well, then you learn a trick or two and go changing it. And you? No. In fact you use a level-powered railway car with machine guns and you follow a series of tracks around the various levels picking up your comrades you go.

Of course, the enemy are out to thwart

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No other versions.		

your plans, firing rockets of various shapes and sizes at you, and this is where your Phaser comes in handy. Point the gun at the billy and follow the enemy closely with a push of the trigger. Fortunately, the baddies don't seem at all interested in your shrouded chutz to their ally worry is that you can't control her. Bump-off one of your drums and control ceases, leads to the great scenario is the sky. Rescue a friend and hell score

RESCUE MISSION

SEGA shoot-to-kill

behind a smart bomb. Shoot the cord all the no-access baddies take the dust.

Having your finger on the trigger and the look at your chutz is your hands can be great fun. It's a real shame that the controls are easy to be anything like a total challenge. Even on the hardest stage it wouldn't take too long to master. Terrible fun (with short-lived).

• Any (just)



Long-haired rescue the soldier, with these baddies.

Sega Version

The graphics are very good, but the music is inaudible. The Light Phaser performs well during the game but the overall design of the gun seems to fit the theme.

GRAPHICS	3	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	4	FUN FACTOR	4
ACE RATING 739			

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Really boring shoot 'em up though.

GRUB is at the root of all evil in this very jaunty and smoothly scrolling shoot-and-collect game. Overpopulation of our planet has led to the construction of an immense space station floating thousands of miles from Earth. Problem is, those nasty aliens have taken over. And guess who's got to clean up the mess?

Northstar is a smooth-moving sideways scroller. Equipped with your extending rocket arm, you have to zip along and zap the

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alien. Along the way there are bonuses and extra weapons to be collected by smothering cylinders and collecting their contents as they float up the screen.

Whenever you fail to finish an alien, cut make contact instead, you're thrown off the screen and into the next which runs alongside. This sometimes ends at an unwelcome spot of frustration to the proceedings, as it's not always possible to cross the alien. Fortunately, you're not sent all the way back to the beginning of the game.

The extra weapons you can collect include such useful things as smart bombs, a reflexively-firing laser and invisibility. But be warned—these extra-ops come at a cost to you.

NORTHSTAR

GREMLIN scroll sideways

Northstar is by no means an original game, it's got elements of Space Invaders and



Sticky projectile-firing posture of your extending rocket arm.

Green Beret in there. But it's very well put together and provides a demanding shoot-'em-up challenge.

• Free Center

Amstrad Version

Excellent, colorful graphics mean that Northstar is very pleasing to look at. Sound doesn't quite match the visual flare, but there's a party enough there too. Your character is very nicely animated and the way he slides around when stopping is particularly cute.

GRAPHICS	3	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	4	FUN FACTOR	7
ACE RATING 680			

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Quite delightful for a while - but not a brilliant game.

THINGS seem to be sitting at what was once Argus Press Software and is now, somewhat grandiosely named Grand Slam Entertainment.

Basically, kids, they seem to be bringing out some decent stuff. Following the possibly great last October, we now have the possibly better arcade adventure *Terramex*.

The very word "arcade adventure" may bring you out in goosebumps as you remember all those wacky post-apocalyptic games of yore, but to be fair, *Terramex* isn't exactly the most original game you'll see this decade. But it is pretty enough for 16-bit versions, at least funny enough and

lull about laugh enough to hold anyone's fancy.

The plot involves you in the search for the brilliant but scorned Professor Spectator, since delivering his warning of the arrival of a (likely, earth-shattering) asteroid isn't quite *ARCAD*. Not surprising since virtually *EVERY* kid has already done, at least that related to his way and only (Synthetic) core the world.

All the beginning of the game, you are given the choice of playing one of two characters, each of them the kind of natural stereotype writer comes to know and love: Fortage-dumb, the jargon-filled Englishman; Wu Ping, the dispassionate Chinese.



ARCAD - Fortage-dumb on his long home, finding some of the early characters.

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TERRAMEX

GRAND SLAM'S pretty arcade adventure

Atari ST Version

Very neat and smooth, with extremely pretty graphics. The sound is just enough, if not outstanding.

GRAPHICS **F** IQ FACTOR **T**
AUDIO **T** FUN FACTOR **T**

ACE RATING: 80%

Amiga Version

Porter of hope we'd be, the action graphics on the machine are well below, and the pretty music provides a stability in party atmosphere.

GRAPHICS **F** IQ FACTOR **T**
AUDIO **B** FUN FACTOR **T**

ACE RATING: 85%

Amstrad Version

Simple, an effort enough, but are you a little on the heavy side and, hence, a little resistant. The search is great, others after - but these days, 500K isn't always a fun, or enjoyable and playable game.

GRAPHICS **B** IQ FACTOR **T**
AUDIO **B** FUN FACTOR **T**

ACE RATING: 70%

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Predicted interest curve following the ACE system, which will compare to what you do it.



ARCAD - Search for underground caverns. No long home, along with many, but, it's going to be fun for the very reason!

need to go to include a Perelman and a German.

The different nationalities have a purpose in making the game more varied, since certain objects can only be used by certain characters. What possible use, for instance, would Wu Ping have for a rocket ball? And what character might not be able to do something with it?

Once your character is selected, off you go into the strange landscape of the game. First of all you will light as a massive element, assuming you aren't one of the many non-interacting items that proliferate. The screen takes you flying up to another screen composed of clouds and pillars, where there are large, more objects to accumulate. Flying to freely allows you to come back to earth and even slip underneath - but unless you've found a certain object along the way, you won't get past the heavy

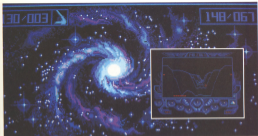
weights.

In order to carry all these objects you have a pretty large container or tote, but even these stereotypes. To select an object for use you scroll along the bottom and then pick the thing you want. This is a fairly smooth interface, but can cause a few times if you need to swap objects when you're under pressure.

The fun of *Terramex* comes from its combination of exploration and deduction. While you may find certain areas easily enough, you won't be able to get through them without the right object, and working out exactly what one you need is not always a simple task.

While it's a little old hat in terms of inspiration, the game is accomplished graphically and, especially, it's fun to play since, if you're not getting very far,

■ Pete Corner



In play, do you or enemies and to be triggered later, then pass through a key board to start a new environmental interaction.

CAPTAIN BLOOD

INFOGRAVES graphic stunner

CLONES are what you're after in this space-adventure quest game that, across the channel, lives closer to be precise, the only one still left to be collected out of the original 30 that resulted from an explosion in space some 500 years ago.

The player takes the part of Captain Blood and has to search a whole galaxy of planets in his Ark for his elusive relatives. The game involves constant interacting with various alien characters that can be found on various planets. The interaction is effected by dragging icons that represent words and phrases into questions or answers, and then deciphering the correct replies.

While this is the backbone of the game, several other sub-games can be found within it. Once you have the co-ordinates of a planet where you think you may get help, you search there by hyperspace and then dash to the planet's surface where you suddenly enter an arcade-style sequence as you try to guide your ship over mountains and through valleys (with the aid of a steering indicator on the screen) to locate the alien. You then 'interact' and hope that by doing it you provide you with more information to aid you on your journey.

There's certainly enough of a quest here to keep a fan of this game genre going for a long time. Thankfully, the game can be saved in slots which means you don't have to worry about completing it all in one go. If you like games that require real concentration and you think you could put up with



And how you're found answers to riddles etc.

some of the more repetitive aspects of the game, then Captain Blood could be just the sort of thing you're looking for. The game is surprisingly playable and extremely involving.

Andy Gribb

Parlez-vous French?

We should point out that we played the French version of the game. We are assured, though, that its gameplay is to be shared during the translation of some 20 to English. Infogrames say that the only differences in the English version would relate to extra features - notably more music, which can do nothing but add to the already high quality of the game.

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	CD-ROM	OUT NOW
AMIGA	Pro-protected	WANTED
No other version planned		

Atari ST Version

The graphics are among the best yet seen for the ST. Animation is superb, and the various alien characters all equally great. It's a real treat to use a programme that seems to use the 70-bit processing power of the ST to its full advantage.

GRAPHICS	9	IQ FACTOR	7
AUDIO	8	REACTOR	8

ACE RATING 887

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Expect to see a steady decline in interest over time.

THE ART OF CHESS

SPA make their move

UNTIL recently Amiga chess players had only EA's Chessmaster, good though it was. But now we have another contender of the board, in the shape of The Art of Chess. How does it stack up? Can it dethrone Chessmaster?

Probably not. The problems with programs horse-racing in it is with its ability to chess, but rather with its graphics. The Art of Chess just doesn't look good enough, whether in two or three dimensions. Its 3D visibility is very poor, with a back-row piece, pawn and knight visible in extremely hard

whose design just doesn't give the original its due.

In other respects, though, the program has everything you could want. It talks - if you want it to - so you can rotate the board, take moves, play through a library of classic games, change rules. You can also change the default colors in other settings - thus producing a much more visually pleasing display than the one you start out with.

We haven't been able to play off the program against Chessmaster, so we can't recommend definitively its true relative playing



The Art of Chess 2D mode has the 'The Tower' layout, showing you 10 different views, including one in three views.

strengths. But The Art of Chess will definitely give you a very good run for your money. And as well as its three extensive settings you can also customize the level of play by setting response time and aggression meters.

The Art of Chess has some very attractive features which make it well worth a look, but really it is let down by a lack of attention to the details of display.

• **Free Game**

RELEASE BOX

AMIGA	CD-ROM	OUT NOW
To the rescue, go!		

to look out for individual pieces.

While 3D displays are nice to look at, none of them are perfect, and most players will probably prefer to use the 2D option. Thanks to this, The Art of Chess disappears here as well. While the pieces are nice clear enough, this design is unattractive, with top-heavy looks and heights that a long

Amiga Version

These display problems are the edge of what could have been a very interesting effort, but it seems to have thought about quite simply should have made of the difference.

GRAPHICS 5 IQ FACTOR 10
AUDIO 7 FUN FACTOR 7

ACE RATING 702

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Because this display features a very high price per unit of graphics display power.

NIGEL MANSELL'S GRAND PRIX

Turbo boost the MARTECH WAY

FOLLOWING poor at Nigel's very last race last year in the World Championship, inevitably will be rooting loudly for him again this year. Interest especially so, because a successful season for Nigel would take back to Mansell's last reference.

So does the game get into top gear? And does it have the fuel to keep at the race? Quite simply, yes. With its classic modelled

on the real tracks and with everything between 41 and 83 laps per race, a season's going to take a long while to complete. Good news for some game options. If the screen display looks unexciting to you, then such a wealth of information that is nowadays available to the driver through computer and radio link is displayed on the panel. So now when message bank informs you that every car except yours has pulled into the pit for a tyre change, you can reevaluate your strategy.

Spectrum Version

Graphics are impressive (though the colors do change for each course and are well drawn). Sound is surprisingly good considering the limitations. The save game option means you will never play for a long time in vain.

GRAPHICS 7 IQ FACTOR 6
AUDIO 8 FUN FACTOR 7

ACE RATING 796

RELEASE BOX

SPEC	CD-ROM	OUT NOW
ARC	CD-ROM	IMMORT
CD-ROM	CD-ROM	IMMORT

gameplay is surprisingly tough, and correct use of gears can have you reeling into the pits, so it's as well to practice with the car for a while before you start an actual session competing.

Design-wise, rather dubious collision detection (usually in your advantage for a change) during the race, the game will certainly provide you with a challenge, but not one that is impossible to meet. A game for racing fans who look for a long-term overall challenge.

• **Only 50%**



Starting a full-on race around the famous circuit of Brands, you have the eye for it.

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



There's nothing a racing game has a particularly good one.

AFTER BURNER

The right stuff from SEGA?

SKY high, mindless blasting has always been a successful video-game formula, and it's no wonder that *After Burner* has had such a good run in the arcade. The action is hectic and constant, the graphics superb. Add in that it huge air is constant that exits and sets off over the ship and you've got one mean (and expensive) arcade coin-er. Take every the cabinet and make a stand-up version and the game has something. It will get all the action, sound and graphics but it's not so hot any more.

RELEASE BOX

SEGA on the OUTSIDE
also version for ACTIVITY games

Convert the game to a home console and does the game lose anything at all? Superficially no, it really, yes. The whole game is still present and the plot hasn't changed. By your I-4 format through stage after stage of enemy territory and by

to wipe out as many of the enemy fighters that appear here in level and beyond as possible. You're still armed with a level firing machine gun (armed with the aid of a small on-screen square that moves with your plane) and missiles stored when you split lock-on to an enemy plane or missile. Now that's all sound good, so what's the problem?

The lack of playability is the game's biggest problem - the arcade version was definitely tough until you got used to the controls or where the safe points on the screen went out that is not the case with the



It's difficult to fly when both are outside setting.

console version. The actions still those and consistent but the game's reaction time is tough and it takes most of its activities very quickly. *After Burner* on the console is one of those games you may come back to time and time again, but only for short spells.

• Andy Bell

Sega Version

As some like the idea with most Sega games, the graphics are very good but the main's dull. Please fully problems are an otherwise competent arcade conversion, and don't expect your gap meter to be too severely beat.

GRAPHICS 8 HD FACTOR 9
AUDIO 8 FUN FACTOR 8
ACE RATING 702

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Do you get the best out of your console version just for short spells only.

THE KRYPTON FACTOR

Accept the challenge from TV GAMES

DEFINITELY isn't a game for one player - it's only the program is a better but competing attempt to deliver the entertainment theory of the popular TV series.

Up to four players choose a game character from a list of eight, represented on-screen by a digitized portrait and a brief biography. You can enter your own occupation, age, and home town if you want, but these details don't respond in the game.

Then, here, follow the challenges, each one a separate level that make sure you have to have created using your powers of observation, short-term memory, physical control, and general knowledge. At the end of each round the scores and running total

are shown and at the end of the game there's a brief victory display that's a little tired, with a trophy to the winner.

The physical control vectors are nice - tapping different keys at different rates simultaneously, either to propel an "objectivity" across the screen, or to handle the "control counter". All the vectors are dominated by strict time limits, except the "Observation Round" in which you spot differences in pictures and short stories. The problem here is not too little time, but too much of it - there's not playing at the time how cutting back.

The game also is a collection of fun to a family of four who want to gather round the monitor. You could play with less parties points but it wouldn't be as enjoyable. For the action it's a waste of time.

• Steve Cooke

Spectrum Version

Digitized pictures display poorly on the monitor and the graphics are generally slightly inferior. The 2 screens looking a right number may have some minor loading errors, but otherwise there's a little difference between the and the Amstrad version.

GRAPHICS 4 HD FACTOR 7
AUDIO 1 FUN FACTOR 7
ACE RATING 618

RELEASE BOX

SPEC C7000 C61000 C61000
AMS C7000 C61000 C61000
DMSR C7000 C61000 MSX801

Amstrad Version

It's very exciting gradually and looks good during play. Some actions would benefit from a greater option. The old's built-up age counter makes the most out of a little more benefits, but the combination of loading delays and waiting for others to take their turn demeritizing to enhance graphics.

GRAPHICS 8 HD FACTOR 7
AUDIO 3 FUN FACTOR 8
ACE RATING 641

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Do you get the best out of your console version just for short spells only.



on the way - playing by telephone makes tapping different level at different rates - a lot of coordination for the sounds without in being for the programming only in practice.



FAR AWAY IN A LAND WHERE TIME STOOD STILL...

... A SUDDEN ROCK-FALL THREATENS TO KILL OUR HERO!



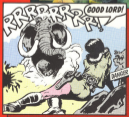
ARGH!!!



WHERE TIME STOOD STILL



EPIC™ IS
CALL 27 94 888
BRANDS
+ SPECIAL
OFFER
JUST 7
99p



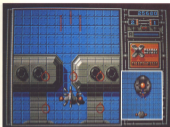
GOOD LORD!

DANGER LOOMS EVERYWHERE!



OH NO!!
CANNIBALS





1. Xenon - flying over to another planet, and the point of view provides also happens. It's the design that makes it so fun to play - and the graphics look like real life.

XENON

MELBOURNE HOUSE have the last word?

COMPETENT 16-bit programmers are in short supply at the moment (at least based on charge sheet) so it's only fair to use a product coded by not nearly competent, but good, programmers like the Xenon Brothers. These chaps at least have some riding on to how to use all that extra memory etc to its full advantage. Whether they should have demonstrated their talent with yet another vertically scrolling shoot-em-up is another matter.

Considering it's a shoot-em-up, the standard-issue controls seem to be simple - fly your craft through five stages of alien



2. Xenon - the end of the line - alien ships appear as yet another variety of alien.

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	£19.95	OUT NOW
AMIGA	£19.95	OUT NOW
No other versions planned		

territory and try to destroy as much as possible. The first sector has the player in charge of a space craft that can also between a ground vehicle (the destroying ground-based alien and terrestrial) and an alien fighter craft (the flying alien). Changing between craft is simply a matter of giving your joystick a quick 'toggle' (if that poses problems you can just fill the space bar). The overall idea is to simply survive to the end of the sector and destroy the end-of-level guardian, lots of retro weapons are there for the taking (xxxxxx-multiples, laser cannons, extra shields etc - simply destroy certain

installations or the odd wave of alien and collect the resulting credits).

If the first sector gives you the choice of ground or alien craft, the second gives you fighter craft... or fighter craft. The idea again is to survive the onslaught from the various installations and alien occupying that looks like a fairly tough thing to do.

The third sector is similar to the last, again with a choice of craft, and the fourth is a real race against the clock as you try to reach the end of the sector. Despite the dull sections, where Xenon really shines is in its playability. The end-of-level guardians can

be a problem until you learn their movement patterns, and the majority of the bonuses appear at the same place each game, so it's not too difficult to plan your route. The Xenon Bros have managed to deliver their five features between installation and activation, and have produced a wonderful game. It's just a shame all this sort of thing has been seen and done before.

Andy Smith

Amiga Version

The sound is superb, the graphics are wonderful and the gameplay is terrific. Xenon must be one of the best shoot-em-ups to appear on the Amiga, the scoring combined the actual Amiga version is 'total control' Amiga boards. A very complete alien invasion game.

GRAPHICS	5	IS FACTOR	2
AUDIO	5	RUN FACTOR	5
ACE RATING 86%			

Atari ST Version

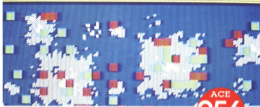
The graphics are superb, the installation and operation are wonderfully done. Sound consists of some atmospheric tones and great explosion effects. Control of your craft is good, though you can feel yourself changing craft at a crucial moment simply because you were wiggling the joystick.

GRAPHICS	5	IS FACTOR	2
AUDIO	5	RUN FACTOR	5
ACE RATING 86%			

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



WAR REPORT - INTELLIGENCE



The state of the war, an instant read, such as people often have on your side in the enemy's end.

ACE
956
RATED

A T F

DIGITAL INTEGRATION fly out



Getting up with Mission briefing screen.



Ready to take-off

LOCKHEED You must be having a bit of a bad time of it just at the moment, surely have Microsoft get this F-19 game *Attack Stealth Fighter* release when *Digital Integration* what this one out of the tempo. Based on the Advanced Tactical Fighter, the F-19's exciting success, the game's something of a departure for D.I. Rather than producing another analysis in the mould of *Thunderbolt* or *Fighter Pilot*, this time D.I. have gone for what may sound like a boring one... associated with the strategic depth you'd expect normally associate with them.

The more away from straight simulation, take you out of the cockpit so that you view your plane from above and behind. The viewpoint is fixed so that the horizon stays

level no matter how you climb, dive or bank, and is far enough back that you can see enemy interception on your tail. Aside from the joystick, you only control controls on the keys for throttle, undercarriage up or down, and two very handy auto-pilot modes. The rest of time, terrain-following, radar and scope tagging is done while the second track your plane automatically for you.

Once you've got the hang of flying - steep, shallow, dipping for one don't fly too fast or low level - you're ready for the game's real guts combat. The wrap-around game 'world' of sea, snow, beaches and scrubland is the setting for a full-scale war, your task being quite simply to swing the odds in your own side's favour. You won't be given mission objectives, you'll have to work out your-

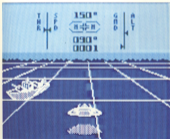
RELEASE BOX			
SPIC	£19.99	£12.99	OUT NOW
AGE	£19.99	£12.99	IMMEX
ONTR	£19.99	£12.99	IMMEX

own intelligence reports and your own sightings, aim up appropriately and get stuck in.

Once you've backed up with various shells for on-to-on combat, *AGRAMM* and *Movement*, enable the surface targets and fuel to get you there, you can, better in on a suitable for taking your bearings from your selected computer. Enemy interception will



There's every side (like you) - about a wing - for the wings in your air.



Order to us, fly together every way. You're an outside?

before you doing the way, pointing as you turn behind or leaving alone as you turn ahead, guess being. Common skills will finish them off easily, but being of little strategic value. Interceptors are often best simply avoided. Four real targets are the enemy's ground and sea bases, air bases, communications centers and - most important of all - the factories. It depends on its release on bases.

Once you're within 1000s or so of one of these you can let fly with a Maverick; they have in it three eyes, and can usually do the job without your ever actually seeing the target. If you're loaded up with A-10s, it's instead you'll have to close in until you can see the target, and then guide the missile in manually. This means a

greater need to fuel and to start with an awful lot of bases, but once they're well to sea, A-10s can be an effective choice for short range heavy-duty missions.

As you gain in experience you'll soon find that, even on the lowest of the game's eight levels of difficulty, you can't defeat the enemy simply by destroying the targets intelligence reports tell you about. The only way to make real progress in the game is to fly into known enemy hotspots - you can pinpoint these on the map below each sortie - and find the targets yourself. The onboard computer will inform you of enemy installations or bases as you approach them, and you can then proceed as before.

Interceptor alerts will decrease your engine power and damage other systems



It's not the best performance.

Spectrum Review

The landscape makes you very impressively intense. The ground targets are well done and the CPU doesn't give up. A great of houses than any I got time to do.

GRAPHICS: 4.5
SOUND: 4.5
ACE RATING: 706



Not a low, it's a rating too.



Don't you? I want the interest system you'll a fairly standard.

until you're bored to land for repairs or brought down altogether, but they aren't the only choice. SAMs (Surface-to-Air Missiles) will track you until you start to fall, but the player has to aim, and since being there places into the game regardless of the way the general war's going it's vital that you stay alert.

Though the size of the task is limited - the game world is always the same size whichever level you play on - the initial disadvantage you start of being up from nothing is likely to doze on the AI's hair-splitting, giving plenty of being interest. It's got the same initial advantage and strategic depth of Dan's old and Control Zone needed in state of the art graphics, very playable stuff.

Andy Wilson

CHAIN REACTION

DURELL clean up the mess

WOLFEAR presents always a good excuse for a game. In this case the Anti-MacDonald party have done all sorts of nasty things to the world, and you must root out the mess, collecting and then disposing of the radioactive waste. It's got a clever, almost-3D view and interesting in-pkcs.

RELEASE BOX

Cost	£14.95	£7.95
SPS	1984/1984	£7.95
AGE	1984/1984	£7.95

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



population mode. Graphics are neat but not special. An enjoyable game that looks just a little old-fashioned.

• Peter Connor



ZYBEX

Action-packed blast from ZEPPELIN

RELEASE BOX

Cost	£5.95	£2.95
SPS	1984/1984	£2.95
AGE	1984/1984	£2.95

ROBTEK smartly produced and very exciting budget shoot-'em-up. There are ungleam levels of floating and ungleam different weapons to collect and use. Graphics and scrolling are top-class, and the sound effects suitably atmospheric. With an

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



INTEREST

CHECKMATE

Cheap chess from PRISM



PRISM chess at this price has got to be worth considering. While Checkmate doesn't have the 3D sophistication of some programs, it has a clear enough 3D view.

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



play - and if you're keen, you can't wrong the pieces. It's by no means as strong as some full price 3D chess programs, but it's certainly cheap and cheerful.

• Peter Connor

RELEASE BOX

Cost	£19.95	£9.95
SPS	1984/1984	£9.95
AGE	1984/1984	£9.95

KWASIMODO

ROBTEK'S humpty dumptily?



THE arcade action game puts the player in charge of Kwasimodo as he struggles through 20 levels in the attempt to rescue Kwasimodo. The graphics and animation are extremely good. Sound too is very good and the game itself is

no fun to play. Definitely one to be missed.

• Andy Smith

RELEASE BOX

Cost	£9.95	£7.95
SPS	1984/1984	£7.95
AGE	1984/1984	£7.95

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



SPACE RANGER

Environmentally sound Defender-clone from MASTERTRONIC

DEFENDER is still one hell of a gem, so we shouldn't draw defensive out of hand. *Space Ranger* gives the familiar concept of Defender a twist by turning the conflict you meet enemies into out-of-safety-isolated enemies.

The entire take place on the planets of

RELEASE BOX

ARCAD	11/84	OUT NOW
No other versions listed		

Amiga Version

Very pretty indeed, will tolerate better than our standard sound effects. If you have a joystick will be independent before you'll do OK. Number only using joystick controller.

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	2
AUDIO	4	FUN FACTOR	7

ACE RATING: 7.45

the Beta Circle system, where the evil Mungloons are trying to stunlock, ensnare and destroy the indigenous lifeforms - all in all at the same region they follow. You, as one of the Space Environmental Protection Rangers, have to save the cities.

You fly around in your space suit, armed with a laser pistol and carrying an endless supply of ammo with which to save the wee babies. The capturing is easier said than done, while some Beta Circles are sluggish



Even on the Omega 2, the Mungloons transport the jet a pace 100 miles in 10 days - that is, the time taken will fall on the same point as will Mungloons in your test.

and occasionally others will meet on flying around in circles or hovering all over the place. Given your inertia and the fact that you'll have to use the spaceship to drop out, the capturing can be a frustrating business.

And, of course, you haven't got things at your own will. You make display of the last lot of the screen shows not only the enemies you meet again, but also the items that are carrying them to the Mungloons transporter. You'll have to blast down while trying to avoid hitting the others (they're carrying). As levels progress, the stars get more and more become more of a problem.

There's a good variety of creatures and landscapes in *Space Ranger*, all of them very pretty indeed. While the number of levels is pretty limited - is eight, in fact - the action gets hot and exciting enough to make the very derivative game worth a look.

• Fun Factor

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Enthusiasm for this game will be low.

MULLS 1988. Thompson rule - *Battle* all time in Microsoft's latest and best-remembered addition to their Commanditaire range.

Dis your perspective and spots and swapper down to the second speed-way as the programme takes you back to the good old, hot old, days of American gangster life in the early thirties. Chicago has just had the down on top of the steady city and as a young ambitious hoodlum in the employ of the Mathews law, it's up to you to take control of the city going east completely the city.

King of Chicago is one of those interactive movie type games that follows a casual plot and allows the player to make crucial decisions at various points during the adventure that either change the type of game that has played to be very limited (Globe Associates Game etc) but *King of Chicago* has been very well done. You can't look on the characters reactions as any

KING OF CHICAGO

MIRRORSOFT make you an offer you can't refuse

given situation and its doubtful whether any two games you play will ever be exactly the same. You always have to pass your strategies for the game quite actively peeping out at it in the hope that the game will follow the same course as an earlier attempt. Choosing your course of action involves whether one of Peter Callaghan's charm you, into thought buttons. He has made considerably. Entertaining that this does not to capture the flavour of the era as well as providing a challenge.

• Fun Factor

RELEASE BOX

ARCAD	02/84	OUT NOW
MSIC	10/84	MSIC
STAR 57	04/84	5758
DA 02	14/84	2554

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Enthusiasm for this game will be low.

Amiga Version

As Microsoft point out on the cover of the packaging, the game is recommended to the bundle along with who only own a full 16-bit drive. You really do need either 2 disks or at least a 1 MB drive to enjoy the game's graphics and music without annoying loads of disk swapping - which can be tedious in the point of using the game.

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	8
AUDIO	8	FUN FACTOR	7

ACE RATING: 7.00



The complete set for the whole thing - based is required for most of the set.



PLATOON is a beautiful action. Look for a sequel to elaborate the war ep.

PLATOON

OCEAN'S rumble in the jungle

VIETNAM'S warlike gap on modern American cinema is finally narrowing, thanks to a healthy resurgence, but the software spin-offs are either lagging or floundering. Ocean's earlier foray into South Viet Nam celluloid—the immensely popular *Damocles*—was no better than the original film deserved, but *Platoon* is a different kettle of fish. Few can anyone cast a movie that comes from the struggle of good versus evil within the US Army into an arcade game?

RELEASE BOX

DATE	3/8/84	D4166	03710W
SPIC	3/8/84	D4166	03710W
MS	3/8/84	D4166	MMHNT

As you might have guessed, Ocean brewed really hard to what they've turned out instead is a multistage single-and-four-player slugfest set a million miles away from Dayton, with the Viet Cong obligingly standing in for those nasty aliens. As you work your way through the differing perspectives and control methods of the game's six stages, you're treated with sound and display hints (based on versions of the film plot).

In the jungle maze of the first stage you have to find a box of explosives and dynamite a bridge, while avoiding or W3 and dodging their bossy traps. By dodging jumping and using you can avoid enemy bullets while talking to some with your rifle—if you're still alive, anyway, and good thing that is. Jumping can also get you over lip-walls and spike-hole snipers, but a front



Oh... Searching for a trench and a flag, you set out to really slug!

grenade will get the job done here if you can spare one.

Once you're found and used the explosives, it's on to a very hot stage hell where, still in that hellish perspective, you have to search a VC-occupied village for vital equipment, namely a map of the tunnel complex under the village and a torch to explore it by. VC attacks are interspersed with innocent villagers, the former thoughtfully leaving bottles so as to stand out nicely. Shooting villagers causes all penalties so there's something of a *Rescue Alley* side to the action here, but really it's a matter of learning where the equipment is and getting to it. Once you've found the map, torch and the trap door into the tunnel system, stages three and four load in.

As you explore the flooded tunnels searching for VC weapons caches, situations spring from the water-walking scenes. Survival depends on reflexes alone, quick

accuracy shooting is essential if you want to come through alive. The side-eye view here heightens the tension but, as in the *Damocles* defense sequence at stage four, the action is often more than target shooting and mental use of senses.

Stages five and six see the best to best, offering another jungle sequence followed by grenade throwing. The scenario here has you blasting your own, very nasty weapon out of a hole so you can blast them, but it's elsewhere in the game the most problems the situation can't get any better than the instructions: it's all just action since you're playing.

It's funny how hard to be a really miserable boss, but despite some gummy grunts *Platoon* does hang together pretty well when it makes the point somewhat. The line structure is interesting — for much of the game you switch between first-person team work with his own health level to maintain. This helps add depth to some tactics accessible gameplay, while there is a real sense of the plot advancing. But the game does involve a serious subject, and you may find some aspects of it stick in the throat: the Viet Cong weren't Martians or robots to be shot out of holes, and its clashing that they should be treated as such. Who's next? The Contras? The French resistance?

—Andy Miller

Spectrum Version

Though control responses and scoring rate the game playable, while the quality hints helps make it a surprisingly well to look at. On 1280 machines the game loads in one go. On 1280 machines the game loads in one go. On 1280 machines the game loads in one go.

GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	4
AUDIO	3	PER FACTOR	3

ACE RATING 530

C44 Version

Though graphically impressive and very playable, the scenario framed by a few really little bits and some stage jankiness. Even your previous hints you can't shoot and when you're on the edge of a cliff, and changing position in stage five can be funny. All stages, however, death rate in the instruction box, see what the best person!

GRAPHICS	8	IQ FACTOR	8
AUDIO	7	PER FACTOR	7

ACE RATING 601

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Graphs show general interest, but its capability for real response is critical.

THE TRAIN: ESCAPE TO NORMANDY

ACCOLADE do the locomotion

WVE La France. Au Front. Resistance. Ignite Paris. La Feu, your mission is to replace a train boiler with provisions and resources that Army intends to send to Berlin for the new inevitable surrender negotiations. You must then drive it to the town of Etienne to meet the Allies.

The game breaks down into three main sections - locating stations, securing bridges and controlling the train.

RELEASE BOX

DATE 25 Nov. 1988 **CAT** 1001
No other games planned

Taking stations and bridges puts the player into an arcade sequence as he has to shoot either guards that appear at windows, or tanks that roll past the train, depending on where he happens to be. Driving the train involves regulating speed, steam pressure,

fuel-air temperature and water levels, and during these sequences the player has a choice of four views: the engine cab, a map screen, and front and rear gunner views. The last two are for steering down obstacles, shooting enemy turrets. The map screen can be raised up at the press of a key and allows the player to plan his route, taking note of which bridges and stations are controlled by which side, and where the sets of points are.



Player's engine speed up to station speed.

C64 Version

Graphics are not drawn and printed. Gameplay is easy to get used to and the only worry is watching steam pressure rise, while studying one of the other views for shooting that plane. The time element adds excitement and makes the game great fun - a shame that it's not easy to play with five different features providing a lasting challenge.

GRAPHICS 5 **IQ FACTOR** 5
AUDIO 5 **FUN FACTOR** 7

ACE RATING 641

You start the game at midnight and have to reach Etienne before dawn. The train manager has to maintain a small amount of strategy and planning with a few old bits of arcade action. It's fun while it lasts, but it won't take long to complete the mission - all that's left then is to try for a higher score.

• Andy Bell

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



It's an exciting game if you're without enough challenge in time playing anything else.

TOURNAMENT OF DEATH

INFOGRAMES go rifling through dungeons

LEE Instead of another sword? You get to look to the end once again in this, the second of the Time StruggleMaster series. After his debut in the PlayStation-type comic game *Age*, Lee is up against the evil Yellow Shadow yet again, but this time is an arcade adventure set in the 15th Century.

That Yellow Devil has noticed the busy Stroud and is preparing to betray it, so it's up to Lee to rescue it. The bones of the T.S. are gaudier than the Stroud in the middle of the Grand Strategy, and it's in the center that the action takes place. To overcome the guards (which include bears) Lee has to shoot to slay them, and two vertical mazes at the side

Lee's strength and endurance the top - of course all lights are detrimental to Lee's health and once the health meter reaches zero it's game over. Magical shields and suits of armor can be found at various chests and cupboards around the castle to help protect Lee during fights, though, as it's well-advised during them.

Being just a small window to display the action is a little odd but works well, and the game can become quite addictive after a short while. On the whole it's an interesting arcade adventure that should keep you putting for some while.

• Andy Bell



Lee battles it out with a threatening bear. Behind the bear and you'll have the chance to search for food.

RELEASE BOX

Start ST 218.000 **Cat** 1001
DATE 21 Nov. 1988 **MARKET** 1001
OH PC 218.000 **MARKET** 1001
MS 218.000 **MARKET** 1001

of the window through which you view the action represent Lee's health and strength. During a fight with a bear, the player has to wiggle the joystick rhythmically to ease

Atari ST Version

Though the window's small, the games it it can support - well drawn and very atmospheric. It's that first step of the way though even needs a camera, though, while the absence of actual sound-effects does nothing to enhance the game. Gameplay takes a little getting used to, but poses no real problems. An unusual sword adventure that's fun to play.

GRAPHICS 5 **IQ FACTOR** 5
AUDIO 5 **FUN FACTOR** 7

ACE RATING 776

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



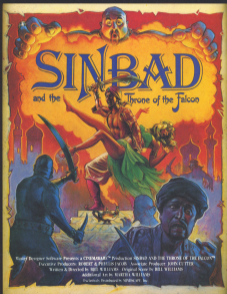
An unusual and enjoyable game. It's not what the playing is a game is.

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COMPACT
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MIRROR
Soft

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MIRROR
Soft

VAMPIRE'S EMPIRE



Atari ST

SPECTRUM £8.99 Tape
SPECTRUM +2 £12.99 Disk
COMBAT32 £8.99 Tape £12.99 Disk

GREYHOUND



MAGIC BYTES



Amiga ST

AMIGA £18.99 Disk
ATARI ST £18.99 Disk
AMSTRAD £8.99 Tape £14.99 Disk

BALL RAIDER

ROBTEK go in to bat

MEANING closes all suits on low and again, and leaves one at the Amiga ready. You've got 25 levels to complete, each with superb background graphics. There are some tricky screens to clear and your skills will really pay under the hammer to use a

control to control your bat. A good looker that unfortunately has no gameplay.

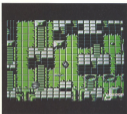
• Andy Bell

RELEASE BOX		
AMIGA	1984	03/86
Not in stores yet		



STRATTON

CRL look into the future



EXPLORATION steers you up as you guide your robot through several levels of the futuristic stratum in an attempt to destroy the circuit breakers scattered throughout the levels. Good

graphics and music help make this an enjoyable game.

• Andy Bell

RELEASE BOX		
AMIGA	1984	11/85
Not in stores yet		



XR35

ANCO's good-looking number

OVERDRIVE controls speed like a thousand looking hysterically waiting shoot-em-up. You're flying a space ship through a tunnel and under constant bombardment from narrow flying discs. You've got to dodge these discs, and this is where the problem starts. Cracking into any of the fused walls takes every one of your lives and the controls are

so sensitive you'll feel yourself hitting the walls almost every time you move the joystick. This makes the game a lot less playable than it might have been.

• Andy Bell



RELEASE BOX		
AMIGA	1984	07/86
Not in stores yet		



GRID START

ANCO hit top gear

RACING games aren't exactly hot at present these days - at least under a fence that one is pretty cheap to the Amiga - but they're certainly back on the ground. The one offering you right at the world's great Grand Prix events is fast paced, giving you a new look behind your car as you desperately struggle to stay on the track and dodge other drivers. It's complex and quite pretty to look at, but the look really isn't wide enough for sale combining and that ends the gameplay. All part of the

fun, you might agree, but there's really too much choice involved in what should be a routine manoeuvre.

• Andy Bell



RELEASE BOX		
AMIGA	1984	07/86
Not in stores yet		



New versions of old favourites? We've got 'em! ST Test Drive's out on the forecourt, Amstrad Flying Shark's ready for take-off and somehow we've crammed in three helpings of Tetris. Enjoy!

UPDATE SPECIAL

DARK CASTLE

Microsoft \$24.99

Oh dear, oh dear. This one could have been a full-on video game, or much better, it could have been the final game.

Dark Castle is very similar in some ways to Black Lamp on the ST (though not nearly so pretty). It's essentially a sword and sorcery game with a jumping, rock-fighting hero who breaks his way through diabolical castles to conquer the Black Knight at the end of the game.

Each screen is an ungrated layout of platforms, ledges, stairways, ropes, and trap doors over which you climb, jump, and run. Enemies take the form of rats, bats, goblins, and other familiar opponents, all of whom you dispatch by throwing rocks at them. There are a few bonus weapons to collect, but they are a bit limited in their benefits.

To be, as I believe I believe, the real test here is in the puzzles. You must send your figure spinning, diving, and crawl the Black Knight's chamber by pressing inward combinations of the buffer and stick. The program will attempt these commands in absent ways according to whether it finds you're standing by a staircase or not. At the end, you'll leap to your death unless you were planning to flip lightly down the stairs.

Once you've let your hero, more often through lack of proper control than lack of skill, you have to wait one to two minutes to get back into the game while the program boots some new data. You might be able to develop enough skill in the very long time to overcome some of the control problems, but that seems doubtful.

Data playing with the keyboard and mouse in combination is much better but things are still confused. You can forgive the old game concept, but most of the old games were a damn sight more playable than this.

• Steve Cook

Amiga Version

Graphically an absolute belter, taking it with here about some nice sound effects too. Though they get a bit repetitive after a while, but in the final minutes when the game is really the under-the-belt stuff, not the old game stuff, but the quality, fantastic graphics.

GRAPHICS 7 F. FACTOR 8
AUDIO 8 FUN FACTOR 8
ACE RATING 8/93

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Not your effects and reactions predictions your target, but the resulting program takes a short program in it.



See Dark Castle for more game details, you can find the game and more info on your Amiga.com website.

AMIGA

GOLDEN PATH

Hyper \$20.00/19.95

For too many Amiga games use pre-drawn screens loaded in from disk as a substitute for steering gameplay, and here's a case in point. An arcade adventure consisting around an oriental motif's style quest, the game really involves parking objects up, dropping them down and hitting people or animals. Not exactly parking that, especially when your movement very restricted and your machine-compatible one made here.



• ACE RATING 5/11

SPECTRUM

TETRIS

Microsoft \$1 Plus £2.00/1.95

Old re-introduced back - ACE Rating 10

Competition can define, but this version of the Russian abstract geometry classic does let a little way short of its GBA cousin. You can get rid of the silly patterned backgrounds, switch on the 'real shape' view and put up with the rather less impressive music, but the rest of a game (which includes a few a good game is being nearly a good one when things start going wrong at high speed you really need to pause and make the shut-up, without this, the game's being played takes a lot of a beating.



• ACE RATING 8/14

PC & COMPATIBLES

TETRIS

Microsoft £1/1.95

If the Spectrum version wasn't all it might have been, this one's just about everything you could wish for. It's got the lot: a standard-experts/GGA version, a full colour GGA version, a completely colourless Hercules version, and a totally wonderful set of memory-resized versions. Call it up in the middle

of your afternoons and you'll waste the rest of the day creating little coloured shapes into tight spaces. There's still no pause, cue, but the best tools to take advantage of the slow motion business of words will not be the game to give you a brother, good stuff.

• ACE RATING 9/15

AMSTRAD

FLYING SHARK

Model 4M Plus 128Kbit

Spectrum review/retail level 1—ACE Rating 80

Os version review/retail level 1—ACE Rating 80

Softer slower than the Spectrum version could not a great deal more colorful, the ship still interesting but as velocity-oriented shoot-though-go. The bullets could have been made a little easier to see, but you must have everything.



● ACE RATING 75M

TETRIS

Model 4M Plus 128Kbit

The word every for instead of the game's all-screening version, the look of a prize mode here is absolutely crucial. The game speeds up far too early and the controls are decidedly unresponsive, as games tend to be short and exceedingly frustrating. A great concept badly executed.

● ACE RATING 710

ATARI ST

TEST DRIVE

Model 4M 128Kbit

Spectrum review/retail level 1—ACE Rating 85

Os version review/retail level 1—ACE Rating 85

There isn't quite the same polish to the graphics on the driver's-eye-view road race that the Amiga version manages - the 'F' sound in particular falls a little short of the mark - but both only to be expected. The level of real excitement and tension is still there, the graphics move well and the



presentation impressive.

● ACE RATING 810

WARLOCK

Model 4M 128Kbit

Some very good programming makes this isometric 3D arcade adventure a real disappointment. The graphics aren't too bad but animation is very poor. Room following is pitifully slow and the lack of a joystick or mouse option - its keyboard or setting - cripples the gameplay. Even at the level that over-charge price, it would be very hard to recommend this one.

● ACE RATING 475

UPDATE SPECIAL

TIME BANDIT

Model 4M 128Kbit

Take enough elements from enough good games, put them together in an intelligent way, and you might get come-up with something that's playable in its own right - as Microcad here with the increasingly high-speed test to watch job.

The basic idea is to explore the different

classical run or a higher complex. There's even the Shortwood - a very silly Pro-Man clone. Wherever you go the monster you encounter are white clouded cars of you but and faster as you progress through a score level.

● Free Color

Amiga Version

The new level editor you control is quite nice and makes great sounds, but overall the graphics are not really amazing. However, the game is played by its own and otherwise, so don't be misled you.

GRAPHICS	4	10 FAC/100	4
AUDIO	5	100 FAC/100	5

ACE RATING 764

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



time does cost, ultimately, solve the mystery that surrounds the land. Each of the 16 cases has five levels of difficulty - and each of these five levels has four further levels. That makes a lot of screens - all of which you must solve to win the game.

In play, Time Bandit has similarities to both Detective and Gnomed. You control a man whose who moves about during the morning constantly being presented with the Portal. You reach the city - or city - which will allow you to enter the level.

Each level has a different theme; you might find yourself in a medieval world or



BRISVILLE (1C)

TIME BANDIT
PROGRAMMED BY
Bill Dunbar
DESIGNED BY
Henry Johnson
ARTIST
Tom Parsons

CURTAIN 6130
EE
FEARLESS (40)
7

PRESS SPACEBAR...

This level has a definite level 12 and 13 is really taking up the level. It's a really good level to play. The level is that level's best to play to get up to the level. The level is that level's best to play to get up to the level. The level is that level's best to play to get up to the level.

WIZARD WARZ

WIZARD WARZ is a combination of fast moving action, depth of game play and strategic challenge that takes fantasy role playing one step further and it's....

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Screen shot from Commodore 64.

Screen shot from Amstrad CPC.

COM 64-128 \$14.99 disk \$9.99 rate

AMSTRAD \$14.99 disk \$9.99 rate

ATARI ST \$14.99 disk \$9.99 rate

AMIGA \$14.99 disk \$9.99 rate

There are times when you need a rest from all that puzzling and brainwork that a lot of games provide; when what you really want is a good strong dose of furious, frenetic, noisy, reaction-testing, nerve-racking ACTION. In short, what you need is a good shoot-em-up. In these pages you'll find listed the games we think are fit to be included in any self-respecting space pilot's collection.

SHOOT-EM-UPS

ACADEMY

System	1995cs	1995cs
Derby	1995cs	1995cs
Amiga	1995cs	1995cs
Mac ST	1995cs	1995cs
Amiga	1995cs	1995cs

As much as any of life as a game, Robot craft and metalloform have run out on a series of planets, and it's your job as a novice alien pilot to wipe them out. Diagrams are basic but effective while sound effects are minimal, but this doesn't really detract from the game. Twenty missions are grouped into five sets of five, with each set being progressively more difficult, and may succeed by successfully completing the stage before. Not an easy game, but totally addictive since you get into it. The sales take place over a CD package which you can swap if you want to. Success is more a

matter of practicing patience and control rather than lightning reflexes - like at more than your cat can chew and you're done for, however good you are. A game you'd think to be on tour at a time, and one that'll keep you going for a long, long time.



COOPER - Edge you out on tactics out

BACKLASH

Manager

Amiga ST	1995cs
Amiga	1995cs

After the strategic explorations of the hugely successful Micro-



copy. *Horizon* returned to the arena with lockstep — a point-to-point race at sea state, instant acceleration, and frantic maneuvers. The scenario is simply a rehash of *Starwinger* — how often lockstep swimming with hostile alien who bust you down routinely, shooting occasional torpedos at you as you dodge about the place trying to get



Drop zone on the beach.

them in your sights. Very hot, spectacular explosions in state-of-the-art, 3-dimensional glory, and very, very tough. Your mission is to fire the last shot-in-up location — stay alive as long as possible and take as many of the fighters with you as you can. You'll run out of bullets long before you run out of lives.

DESTRUCTO

Atari

Spectrum £1.99 vs
Amstrad £1.99 vs



Destructo's — the picture, the scene, the pace.

A super budget game for one or two players in which each player controls a plane and tries to shoot down all of its destruction over one of his ships, buildings or stacks. Shoot down enough planes and the installation is destroyed and you can proceed to the next level. With 21 different levels and huge outsize graphics, *Destructo* is an

incredibly enjoyable game that shouldn't be passed up regularly when you consider the price.

DROPZONE

US Gold/Amiga

Commodore £2.99 vs

How a budget package, this *Dropzone* clone is still one of the

choices. There's no up, no down, and absolutely no quarter. Kill the enemy, run to home or die in the process. Tough, cyclical shut-throttles lower the points of your tanks in a reset. Graphics here come on a bit since the standard late stages of the 344 versions — the PC title is a solid 3D — but for deep-space ship-fighting the genre will get top marks.



Encounter's alien-robot.

ENCOUNTER

Atari

Commodore £1.99 vs £1.99 vs
Amstrad £1.99 vs £1.99 vs

Not of Atari's games that launched them in instant fame. Stunning 3D graphics attracted interest, but what really got the gamers was the pace of the action — fast, furious, and unrelenting. By today's standards the landscape is pretty tame, but what made this game (and still does) is the speed at which you play. Mile-wide polygons huffe across a green landscape letting fly at you — and they're very good shots. Use the pillars to avoid them, to take control, to spin antibodies, and stay alive as long as possible. Once you're wiped out or level you have to leave and pass through a gateway — then you find yourself back at the ocean on the next of eight levels. Right has taken, and the alien die counter ticks over...

LIGHTFORCE

Segale

Spectrum £1.99 vs
Commodore £1.99 vs £1.99 vs
Amstrad £1.99 vs £1.99 vs



Lightforce's — the picture, the scene, the pace.

best available. It isn't any look good, but it also plays well and manages to keep the pace of the action right at the top of the league without sacrificing smoothness or playability. The mission is pretty well identical to the arcade original — called the *hustlecock* and deliver their ally to your *Dropzone* before they get turned into *hustlecock* by the alien. As for the alien — well, you should know what to do with them by now. One of the best budget shoot-em-up bargains.

ELITE

Frost

Spectrum £1.99 vs
Commodore £1.99 vs £1.99 vs
Amstrad £1.99 vs £1.99 vs
PC £1.99 vs

If this 3D space epic is a shoot-em-up, then *Michangelo* was an instant disaster, but for all that looking and mining you can do there still is a shooting blast in here. You can stunts between side systems carrying legal charges if you want, but the only way you'll get that credit already or still wanting is to go out there and working other ships. This isn't why the contest is 3D tortuously as well as graphically, so manufacturing profits can attack from any

A hot vertical shooter this one. And on the Spectrum — miraculously — not a colour clash to be seen. Destroy the descending alien and the various installations. The varied alien war-torn make this a demanding game that can easily become a habit. Not to be missed if you're an Spectrum owner.

MAQ MAX

Imagine

Commodore £1.99 vs £1.99 vs
Spectrum £1.99 vs
Amstrad £1.99 vs £1.99 vs

Here's a horizontally scrolling shoot-em-up that has the player controlling a robot scanning the surface of a planet looking for paths of interest. The robot was designed to spot the bodies of asteroids and every part of the planet that the player collects increases the fire rate power. The rock-level graphics and progressively harder stages make for one highly addictive and extremely enjoyable game that will certainly test your reflexes. The Spectrum version is, arguably, the best of the bunch.

MOONSTRIKE

Atari

Spectrum £1.99 vs

Moonstrike is today's best for gun games, but New Zealand also offers *Dropzone* users



Moonstrike.

split on with the visual gags in the vertical world. As you blast and bomb your way through swarms of light bulbs, coins, gas and 6553 central processes you'll also be struck by the one and attention they've put into the gameplay. You'll need nerves of steel to pass your way through the hail of slow-moving enemy bullets, and split-second timing to destroy the volcanic and oil-fired torpedoes. Scarily by machine destruction this is not, you'll need your brain in gear right from the word go. As for the distinctive black and white graphics, these might not appear in *Light Force* here but they're effective and witty.



PARAHROID: Home, see how you do it.

PARAHROID

Hudson-Consultants

Com128 C1.99ea C2.99ea

A very simple game, to quote ACE in earlier News Columns, but it offers the satisfaction of combining the excitement of warlike destruction with a good deal of strategic challenge. The master of a space ship is the boss for a unique-galaxy style in which you use your ballistics device to enter and control ANY of the levels involved by first rapping them and then taking control of them. All of this is practically a game in itself. Besides an efficient deck enable you to renege steps and the board both library, all of which will help you to maximize your points by winning, losing, and controlling other decks as you attempt to clear the ship of its numerous crew.

PLUTOS

Tyrenoff

Atari ST C14.99ea
Amiga C14.99ea

There's no shortage of vertically scrolling games on the 16-bit machines, but if you get tired of Pluto you could well save yourself the trouble of buying more than one 16-bit that this is a game with anything except to offer - but more action and blocking all the way up the pretty scores. A great bonus is the inclusion of a neat two-player option, which to some of us is the only way to make real progress on some tricky points in a pretty levelled game. Naturally, Plutos will going to bewilder your mind or make you a more real better person - but it will give you a

very satisfying zap whenever you feel in need of one.

SPORE

Bulfinch

Com C1.99ea

A tremendous tactical slayer, with a whopping 90 screens of genetically altered spaces out to distract you steps strategy. Open up the screen sections one at a time, clear out the spores, and generators within, and pick up the all-important items of pesticide. You'll spend half your time running away from the spores to



SPORE: get on the ground.

get them strung out in pursuit and the other half blasting away at them before they can reach you. Pesticide still but by its means evolves. The game has 30 relationship screens to edit once you've burst out the built-in set. Tactic value

STARGLIDER

Pandrol

Spectrum C14.99ea C18.99 ea
Com C14.99ea C17.99 ea
Amstrad C14.99ea C18.99 ea
Atari ST C24.99 ea
Amiga C24.99 ea
IBM PC C18.99 ea

Starglider is still one of the best examples of vector graphics, and one of the best shoot-em-ups you can buy. There's a fair bit of slow strategic planning involved as you fly your AGW around the barren wastes of Norvegia in the attempt to

destroy the Space Shipstop (the Shogger), as you have to keep your eye on your craft's energy levels etc. A wonderful moment from the cockpit game that has us tap it back as you could hope to find it a shoot-em-up.

3D STARSTRIKE

Pandrol Silver

Spectrum C7.99ea
Amstrad C7.99ea C14.99ea

A stunning top-end of the Atari copy-up Star Wars, this three-year old veteran can still show the newer attack (especially because it comes just at hand). Blast the fighters in deep space, blast the towers on the battlestation's surface and dodge the folk in the trenches as you head for that elusive without duct. Tactic to its time, and great value nowadays if you can track it down.



MAGMA: more action, please.



TANK BUSTERS: Slapper 88.

TANK BUSTERS

Design Design/Pandrol Silver

Com C1.99ea
Spectrum C1.99ea

This was one of a family of very successful games by Design Design, who were originally to the good old, but old days called Crystal and produced some memorable Spectrum games, including the infamous Hills of the Range. Tank Busters appeared on their disk compilation along with the excellent Deer Star and others - it's now a budget release from Pandrol. It remains one of the best representations of the arcade game Busters on its first stage. Just in case you were born yesterday, that means you pilot a tank around a vector graphics

leviages, blasting other tanks and guided missiles. Use the obstacle rocks and pyramids to hide behind and make sure you can take 'em! What else? Of the more intelligent (and) smarter look-alike you - the highest score, however, is the man who knows when to turn and fire...

URIDIUM

Atari
Spectrum £18.95
CMT/CM £18.95 £11.95

Andrew Braybrooks' game took about five minutes to become a classic - games were created by the super-smart writing and finished out by the master and increasing graphics.

Basically, you have to fly around blasting the mighty Dunderbriegs - massive structures floating in space. Your ship has plenty of tanks, which some people find annoying in play, but maybe they just find it too tricky...

XENON

Melbourne House
Atari ST £19.95
Amiga £19.95

Xenon made its last appear-

ance on Melbourne House's arcade label, the last version of the game are almost ideal translations from the coin-op, and are consequently very good looking.

There are lots of extra weapons to pick up, including multiple and invisibility pods that render you indestructible to a few seconds. There are only two stages to the game but each one is extremely difficult and it will take you a long time to make each level.

ZARCH

Superior
Atari/Amiga £19.95
ST & Amiga versions under development

No trace of ACE is complete without a reference to this one, and quite right too: it's a time eater. The levitating octahedron



ZARCH: An intriguing game to test.



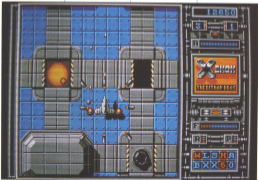
Zynaps being a ZYAP!

blasting of Dunderbrieg needs the best physical control style of Atari's or Thrust, all a gripping and 3D that goes well beyond the state of the art. Your mission is to wipe out a whole lot of alien robots before they give you grief, with a whole series of tougher levels to face once you've scattered the lot of 'em. You'll have missiles to dig out with, bombs to land 'em, missiles to prevent, guided ones to destroy - the game's got everything. Its pace is a bit poetry, with 16-bit versions in the pipeline.

ZYNAPS

Newton
Spectrum £7.95
Amiga £19.95 £14.95
CMT/CM £19.95 £11.95

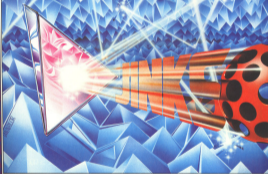
Side-way-scoring blasts, where objects collected give you extra weapons. Capsules discarded by the robot alien give you other extra packs or the additional weapons you'll need to make progress - because Zynaps is pretty tough going. It's one of those games where it certainly does pay to both, your score doubled. ■



ZYNAPS - Zynaps is tough, but when it pays...



"The graphics are well designed and the scrolling is flawless."
HARRY COMPTON
Germany



PREPARE FOR A TOTALLY NEW PINBALL STYLE GAME.
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IBM 486/125 29.99, £11.99, Amiga 29.99,
 AMSTRAD 29.99, £14.99

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Corporation programming by David Brown. Spectrum and Amstrad programming by Simon Trueman. Graphics by Peter...



WIN 3 Z88
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IMPOSSIBLE
MISSION 2



EPYX ECSTASY!

Yes, codebusters, Professor Elvin Alombender is back – with a vengeance. To celebrate, Epyx and ACE are going to award to three winners of this competition, not just copies of the brilliant *Impossible Mission 2*, but superb Z88 portable computers from Cambridge Computers. And 25 runners-up will each receive a copy of the game.

The Z88

If one you didn't already know, the Z88 is the latest descendant of Sir Olive Simon. This may explain the rubber keyboard – but don't be too concerned by that; you get used to it very quickly, and it's a real boon if you want to type somewhere that demands quiet, such as a library.

The Z88 is not just an electronic notebook, but a full-featured and totally portable computer. It comes with a built-in spreadsheet, BASIC, clock and a calendar which will give you dates and days as far back as 1700 (useful, isn't it?). In short, it's the perfect laptop computer, the essential accessory for 1988, what everyone's seeking in the hazy, distant future... Get competing for one now!

HOW TO WIN

In *Impossible Mission* you play the role of the secret agent who must stop the nefarious Mindbender's megalomaniacal plans. So we're going to see if you've done your homework on secret agenting. Below are 8 questions about fictional spies from film and TV. All you have to do is select the right answers from the alternatives, write them on the coupon provided and then send it to *Impossible Mission 2 Comp*, ACE, 4 Guesen Street, Bath B1 1EJ – by the 15th April.

1. Who played agent Napoleon Solo in the TV series *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.*?

- (a) David McCallum
- (b) Robert Vaughn
- (c) Patrick Vaughn

2. Who played James Bond in the film *Dr. No* (Ray's Agent's Secret Service)?

- (a) Sean Connery
- (b) George Lazenby
- (c) Roger Moore

3. Who was the secret agent Harry Palmer in the film *The Ipcress File* and *Passport to Berlin*?

- (a) Trevor Howard
- (b) Oliver Tobias
- (c) Michael Caine

4. Who played Steve in *The Avengers*?

- (a) David McEne
- (b) Max Miller
- (c) Patrick McEne

5. Who was Bentley in the TV series *'Tinker, Sailor, Spy'*?

- (a) Frank Frost
- (b) Alec Guinness
- (c) Jon Mackenzie

6. Who was *The Saint* in the original TV series?

- (a) Ian Ogilvy
- (b) Roger Moore
- (c) Edward Galt



The six correct answers are (write letter in box):

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
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| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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A bumper bagful of tips and pokes this month, including pokes for *Quedax*, *Jack The Nipper II* and *Flying Shark*. We also bring you the solution to the last two towers in *Nebulus* and a magnificent players' guide to that Superior mind-bender *Bonecruncher*.

TRICKS 'N' TACTICS

BUBBLE BOBBLE

A handy little tip for ST owners.

Press F1 to address one screen.
Press F2 to address all screens.
Press F3 to address eleven screens.

CHAG DICKSON, Nottingham.



NEBULUS

Following Bob Wade's wonderful tips up to level six in issue 5, we can now bring you the solutions to the other levels.

■ **Tower 7** Go right, onto the lift, go up, go right, hit, jump right, then hit door out for the spinner, go up, shoot glowing block, go left, onto the push up. When you stop push up again. Go right and you will hit onto first lift. Push up, shoot one glowing block on your left, then go right staying just behind the spinner and shoot the glowing block. Go up, quickly getting on each lift as soon as you get to them. When you reach the top lift go underneath the spinner that's going up and down and wait on the block to the right of it. Another spinner will be going round (as before) and you must be behind it as you go around. And the sea levels as they all disappear. Go up the lift, do the same as before but this time use the tower blocks

to wait on, as the spinner goes twice as fast as you. Go up the lift, under the spinner, take lift back, go up, shoot balls, go right, drop, go left, drop, take lift back, go left, hit, take lift, go up and through the door.

■ **Tower 8** Go right, go up, shoot balls, go left, shoot glowing block, go right, through door, go left. When you reach the first block jump, you will hit onto a lift. Go up, through door, go right, jump under spinner that are going up and down. Take the lift up, go left, jump over all the spinners, shoot glowing block, go up the first lift, through the door, jump left, through the door, shoot right glowing block, go through the door, jump right, go through door, jump left, go up, go left, go up again, go up again, go left, shoot block, go right, hit, take lift, go up, go right, left again, shoot block, go up, go left, go through door, shoot right, go left, jump left - black disappears. Repeat process (to go back to this point) jump onto lower block, jump left, shoot block, go up and take door number 3, and (finger) give yourself a pat on the back.

JOHN BUCK, Westbury, Wilt.

GRYZOR

A neat cheat for Spectrum owners.

Load in the 4th side of the tape. Choose your method of control. Then load Level One and complete it (shouldn't be too hard). Load in Level Two and lose all your lives. Now you will get the chance to Continue or Restart. Select the Restart option and you'll be asked to reload Level One. Pressed to the beginning of Level One, and when this level has loaded you will have a whole heap of lives which should enable you to complete the game in one go.

LEROY BAGWELL, Revision Peggiborough.



BONECRUNCHER PLAYERS GUIDE

This challenging puzzle game grabbed a massive 943 ACE rating in our March issue. Check out our timely tips, passwords, and tactical hints...



Bonecruncher has 20 levels, completing each of which will give you a password that enables you to access the next level from the main menu. You can check out a list of passwords in the first six levels elsewhere on this page.

The diagrams on these pages go together to provide a complete map of level 4 (Password: *Guatemalan*) and the accompanying text provides a good introduction to basic Bonecruncher tactics. Success in the game depends on tracking the different obstacles in the right order — and that usually means knowing which route to follow when, and when to change the arena direction.

In addition there are a number of basic skills, some of which are similar to *Blockade*! You can see these listed in the Skills Box. Good luck, and may the map be with you...

PHASE 1

1 — Enter the arena, open the gate, and activate the square to the right of the gate. It will send you back to the start. Then follow the route to point B, to the yellow starting point. It will send you into a maze of squares, with the obstacle *ATC* with a trigger by the starting point.

This square is a walling — pushing you back when you hit it. It will also kill when the explosion with you goes towards and to the right of it on your right in the solution.

2 — Head the square to the left and the gate will fall and kill the monster. Follow the route to C. The monster will have moved to the square you reach the square, allowing the gate to fall in the bottom of the arena, though you won't be able to enter this. Move right into the square and the monster will be up after you launch along the route above — after you pass under the gate to point D, the gate will fall behind the obstacle. Follow up to the top square and you will have seen the full knowledge of the arena. The arena is open! — It will go down, point right, and will open, come up to the passage to point E, leaving the monster and being circumvented.

3 — Pick up the new obstacle, then go down to the below defined corner and collect the fire obstacle there. Proceed to the obstacle at point F and make your first passage to point G, collecting the new obstacle (one of which is the experimental monster you finished with a gate at the beginning of the game). Head downwards and you will see the gate to the right and it will fall down. Move your gate to the right of point G before this happens, otherwise the monster will rise up to the top and you won't be able to move the gate without backtracking to a 1 password again. After this, you activate the obstacle at H, that you had to the obstacle and follow your help. Once you're done this, activate the gate to point I to fall, and collect the key at L, you're finished for phase.

PHASE 2

1 — Open the gate, and follow the route to point A, collecting the key for the obstacle, and making your way in the program.

2 — Go to point B, and the wall to the right, then quickly descend one square allowing the gate to collect in the top square above you. Now when I go into square, allowing I to fall into the square at point B. Then move your gate to point C, and then from there follow the route through the gate to point D, following another obstacle and a key on each. Then follow the route from the second line, passing the wall to the right of the gate.

3 — Walk by the obstacle until the arena direction changes, then go down and collect four obstacles from the monster in the bottom right of the map.





PHASE 3

1 - Release your traps (point 1) and have them take the route to G, collecting a skeleton on the way. Head through from the square above you, allowing the glock to slide to the right, trapping the monster. Now move right until the monster is completely trapped and that skeleton's skeleton.

2 - Follow the route to point 2, open the gate, and then watch the glock to collect the monster. The monster's here and you'll get a single glock - but note you can't get another yet. Return to point 1, check that the red from the glock's compass marker and then go southward and use the wall behind the gate to slide it down. This takes the route to 7 and takes care of your trapped monster's dead in a glock.

3 - The glock will now take out of the container, allowing you to collect the skeleton at the bottom.

FINISHING OFF

1 - You've moved only two skeletons to complete the game. Proceed to point 8, avoiding the spider. Skeleton always move to the left. Remember open the gate and collect the two skeletons. You can expect to be fully pushing the glock.

2 - For the last skeleton - put the trap to get it. Enter the gate to collect and dig it into a skeleton - to force into a skeleton and then get on good with it to the monster - or you can proceed to point 1, trapping the monster in 1, and then deliver your glock, always remembering to make it on the right, stopping the monster's skeleton. And for the glock to fall and trap the monster, collect it, make every glock, and then a good one.

M MONSTER	W WALL	G GATE
S STAIRWAY	E EARTH	D SKELETONS
K KEY	Y GLOOKS	C CAULDRON

BONECRUNCHER SKILLS

1. The Steel

This stone block is often a source of earth on the job, without actually moving into a square you do this by holding down the direction and pushing the glock in the opposite direction. Its most frequent use is to release monsters from their pens without being killed and to free glock without being caught. To prevent it from the player's dead skeleton's path - pushing the button and moving the glock towards these items will simply force you into the relevant square, so don't do it if the square under that item is monster.

2. Push, Shove and Hold

There is a similar steel - a steel - embedded in a wall. On the other side, you can stand in one side or in push through to the other square without moving yourself, again by holding down the direction and pushing the glock.

Note that you can slide these things up - or down - back to both sides if the monster's direction has just changed and a collection of glocks. For example, using it to a skeleton after you can hold back to the side of the side and push them over so they can do this. It's a similar technique if a large number of moving glocks are heading in the same direction.

Back on the job, glock about provides that path is usually created by other skeletons pushing other glocks. The can see how

glocks by standing underneath them. For example, if the glock's direction is downwards and a pile of glocks is supported in each square. Here you can move onto that square and support the glock's front. The technique of Push and then return to the Square screen. See the full

screen to details. The second screen - you can't escape from a moving glock by moving in the same direction. For example, if the arrow direction is downwards and you slide a square of earth down, releasing a glock, you can't escape downwards but must move from side to side. Same here, on the other hand, can't slide you up in a straight line.

3. Trap, Lure, and Drop

Trapping a monster on a single square results in a new skeleton. The most common method of doing this involves introducing a glock of that monster's color, usually into a monster's pen. Lure the monster to one end of the enclosure and then change the glock's direction, whereupon the glock moves along the enclosure and traps the monster straight in a better.

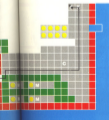
Alternatively, you can release a monster which will follow you, and then push to one side of a glock. Pushing the glock's direction a glock, the glock will then fall to the side, blocking the monster's path and allowing you to escape. There is usually a point in the game where the glock leads the monster in a dead-end, and you can get glocks to trap the monster and turn it into a skeleton. There is a good example of this in the Skeleton - see the map and watch a Phase 1.

Alternatively, you can release a monster and lure it up to a trap screen, whereupon it will fall in and disappear. This is a good way to remove a monster. The best example of when to use the final screen where you can support of ready-made skeletons of a line go to getting that to the end of the straight line.

Get Going!

Here are some passwords to get you going through the first six screens. Don't worry - there are only 10 to go after that!

- Screen 1: ColossalWalk
- Screen 2: MyGlock
- Screen 3: ColossalKill
- Screen 4: Search
- Screen 5: Trap of Death

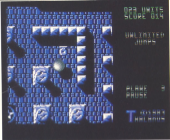


QUEDEX

If this quest for ultimate dexterity is proving a little tough for you on the C64, this infinite lives poke should come in handy. Type in the listing, and reload the game from the start.

W FOR 8458 TO 557
 55 READ P POKE A,PO-C+P*EXT
 56 IF C=2550 THEN POKE 157,128:SYS 500
 57 PRINT "DATA ERROR"
 58 DATA 188,26,147,40,3,148,2,149,4,1,3
 59 DATA 32,46,244,148,6,147,258,1,36,1,2
 79 DATA 77,60,148,147,147,66,46,74,238,2

DODGER, Washington
 Type and Wear.



ANDY CAPP

Here's the solution and some general tips for Microsoft's cartoon killer.

- 1 Go to the shop and buy the Baby Mirror and the Posing Shoes.
- 2 Go to the Jobcentre - ask for a job and your Car.
- 3 Go to Fred's thing Hut - say "The castle for the job." - say "I can operate a computer" - say "BIM" - say "No, I haven't." - use the Translocan command and left give you a CAR suit.
- 4 Go to the Clothing Shop - examine the Posing Shoes - use the Translocan command and left on Truck One (20). Help then give you your last book.
- 5 Go to the Town Hall and play the 220 test.
- 6 Go to the Police Station. The Desk Sergeant will

- give you Chalkie's keys. With these keys go into Chalkie's back garden, break into the middle of the garden and you will automatically pick up a rope.
- 7 Find Mr. Blue for a kiss. Stand next to her. Use the mirror. She'll give you your benefits card.
 - 8 On Wednesday go to the Jobcentre. Use the Translocan command and right on the table.
 - 9 On Thursday find your girlfriend. Ask where the Car is. She'll say she gave it to Jack the Barber. Go to the local pub and ask Jack where the Car is. He'll then give you the Car.
 - 10 Find Mr. and Mrs. for the Car. That's it!

WESLEY SMITH, Tunbridge Wells.



DEFLEKTOR

If last month's players' guide didn't help you conquer this game then hopefully this poke will.

Use for the C64 and you should type in the listing and run it before loading the game. You will now be greeted with infinite energy, and immunity to overloading.

188 DATA 32,96,245,188,78,147,284,3
 198 DATA 188,1,147,255,2,88,188,188
 208 DATA 148,140,54,147,248,54,78,5
 218 DATA 8,148,173,238,32,238,258
 228 DATA 32,238,76,238,258,1,3,5,32
 238 DATA 8,18,32,3,78,1,78
 88 FOR L=320 TO 344:PR#A
 178:POKE L:A:NEXT SYS 328

THE HACKER, London.



Copy shot

FLYING SHARK

For those C64ers with a keel facility, this poke will give you infinite lives. Load the game, keel the computer and enter:

POKE 768,132:SYS 2047

THE HACKER, London.

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---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	-----



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★ THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER

The lives of ST users have been made a whole lot easier thanks to this little tip.

Once you have been killed, you will receive information on how you died. When this is displayed, go up and save the game (use the Red October disk) then load the saved game and go to "continue game" and press fire. This can be used every time you die and should help you complete the game.

NOTE: Saving the game on the original disk will NOT copy over "The Hunt for Red October".

DARREN PARDOE, Beasingstoke.

JACK THE NIPPER II

C&D pulls for infinite Jacks. Simply type in the listing, **RUN** it and load the game from the disk.

10 FOR 1034 1039E 1034D 4 POKE
LA NEXT
80 575 258
80 DATA
20 44 207 262 108 249 108 76 141 134 8
40 DATA
1 08 1 147 105 8 76 10 8 108 82 14 1 14
80 DATA
6 108 1 147 105 8 76 10 8 108 208 14 1 70 100
80 DATA 76 76 70 0 0

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GARFIELD

This C&D cheat should grace your feline chum with infinite food and he'll lose his need to take naps, simply type in the listing, run it and load the game from the disk.

8 FROM GARFIELD CHEAT
1 FOR 8 330 10 80 80 80 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
0 0 0 0 0
3 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
3 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
4 0 0 0 0
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
32 77 0
0 0 0 0 0
100 1 14 20 3 0 0 100 0 75 141 48 77 14 1 88 77
76 0 0 0

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Penny-Mark, Cleved

720*

Weather too bad to skate and practice your *Bonnie to Death's*?

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80 DATA 32 104 225 108 10 141 108 108
1 0 0 DATA 141 57 8 76 10 8 108 208 141 8 21
1 0 0 DATA 108 8 14 1 48 1 76 1 1 108 42 141
1 0 0 DATA 204 4 108 8 14 1 205 4 76 14 1 80
1 0 0 DATA 173 141 208 208 141 108 31 141 240
1 0 0 DATA 20 141 10 24 141 276 21 141 170
1 0 0 DATA 32 76 0 0 0
1 0 0 FOR 14 108 10 100 80 80 8
1 0 0 FOR 14 108 10 100 80 80 80 80
1 0 0 575 1038

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Could his love for his micro survive his passion for music? Read on!

Larry Least had always loved his computer, but another desire now threatened his little heart...



Yeah, if you already have a micro computer, you have the basis of a music system which will allow you to produce professional-sounding results at home. Using the computer as a MIDI controller, you can create music with inexpensive, powerful MIDI synthesizers — allowing you to play more than one instrument simultaneously; make digital recordings of your playing in real time; edit your tunes; sound like Howard Jones; destroy your wife's feelings with your neighbors; play a keyboard when you thought you could only play a guitar; plus a host of other tricks that make most computer games seem even less intriguing than old hats.

Larry went to his local music shop. His heart pounded with excitement as he tip-toed inside...



Sales don't necessarily mean bargains, but if you want to find out more about computer music systems, your local music store should be your first stop. They'll be able to show you a range of instruments starting from around £100, and can advise you on MIDI software and interfaces. Getting the MIDI is a real-life getting into computing for the first time — you do need to dig around, but the results really justify the effort. Nowadays, even some arcade games have a MIDI output to generate a really stunning sound accompaniment while you beat away.

But in a shop, things were just a little confusing...



MIDI equipment comes in all shapes and sizes, from 200 keyboardless modules to £500 synthesizers. Some of these can make very nice noises indeed. As with most love affairs, however, sweet music is simply a matter of knowing which buttons to press. First, however, you have to decide what you can afford — get some advice from a range of shops, and choose the equipment which offers the best sounds and facilities. It's worth trying specialist shops as well — a good one is Synchro Music (Tel. 01 461 8106) who will give you some serious advice, if you're serious about making it.

When Larry saw the Yamaha CG100, it was love at first sight!



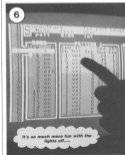
Larry's a one-machine man, it seems, but if you don't agree with his ethos, you could try one of several small, portable, powerful-sounding MIDI synths starting at around £149: the Roland BR-10, Casio CZ-101, Casio CZ-2000, Yamaha CG-100 or Casio MT-100 are all worthy contenders.

But wait! Something was keeping Larry and his love apart!



Here run out of cables, to start with. Here's also realized that unless you have an Atari ST, which has built-in MIDI ports, you'll need a MIDI interface to connect your synth to your micro. IBM, Jamstems, Robert, Passport I/O, Creative, DMP (an IBM) all manufacture interfaces for a range of micros including the Spectrum, BBC, Commodore-64, Amibase CPOPCOMP and MSX. You'll also need several MIDI leads which your music shop can supply. Further details on MIDI and MIDI interfaces can be found in issues 7 and 20 of ACE, or see the MIDI Info Box on the last page of this section.

The kind assistant had also sold Larry a software package.



The first package you'll want is a MIDI sequencer. This will 'record' notes played on the synth keyboard, and allow you to correct, edit, loop, chain, and arrange them into songs. Some MIDI interfaces come with appropriate sequencer software free; other packages, like CLM's Creator or Sterling Pro-24 on the Atari ST, can cost around £200 (a need for parts, however, since there are packages to suit all budgets).

... and another software package...



No kidding - some of the sounds you can set off are really hot. Sound-on-chip (forster) packages allow you to transfer sound data from the synth to the computer, edit and rearrange it, then store it for future use. In this way you can create and save your own synth sounds, more easily than you can with the cut-down panel controls of most modern inexpensive synths.

... and another software package.



Remember packages allow you to transfer music from MIDI data into optional manuscript form. They're invaluable for serious music students, but even if you're top priority if you can't read or write music!

The third essential tool also sold Larry lots of other little items...



There are lots of different products which can be controlled by your MIDI. MIDI drum machines will play in time with a sequencer, MIDI effects units will change function in response to signals from your music, and MIDI sync boxes allow you to synchronize your sequencer to tape for multi-track work. Even MIDI guitars, pianos, wind instruments, and master instruments are available - and getting cheaper all the time.

Larry loved his system dearly...



With a simple 1/4 tape recorder, or a 4-track Portastudio cassette recorder/mixer, you can create impressive music, at home without the need to spend a fortune on equipment or studios. As you become more familiar with the equipment, you'll be able to add little systems to produce better and better results. It needn't be an expensive business, but watch out for the temptation to buy just one more little effects unit, or another second-hand keyboard, or an eight-track tape recorder, or a \$49,999 Fairlight Series II computer music instrument, or Abbey Road studios.

...And nine months later, look what happened!



Larry Leart became a pop mega-star, and now lives in two penthouses in Los Angeles with his fans, his cat, and chimpanzee Ramoth. Despite his passionate affair with his synthesizer, he still loves his computer, and has bought it a mansion in Rio de Janeiro, a yacht, and a Mercedes.

MIDI - the facts.

Future issues of ACE will be covering a host of MIDI topics, and will also be looking at computers and music in general for the benefit of those who are not involved with the MIDI revolution. We can't stress too much, however, how many benefits there are to be gained from MIDI. Like Control, its one of those areas of computing which will appear to a minority only, but which offers tremendous rewards to anyone willing to investigate a little further.

Current MIDI applications include using the interface as a high-speed data transfer device, as in the multi-player game MIDI Maze, in which 16 players can play simultaneously, choosing each other with gay abandon. There are also patch-to-MIDI converters, which enable you to convert musical pitch (your notes, your mother's voice, your enemy's voice) into MIDI data, enabling you to control a whole musical accompaniment without actually playing a single note.

Here's where to find the information you need about MIDI in ACE:

- Issue 1: MIDI Made Simple Part 1 - a review of Casio's MIDI guitars.
- Issue 2: MIDI Made Simple Part 2 - a look at MIDI interfaces for different machines.
- Issue 3: A look at samplers - a review of Roland's stunning MTG.
- Issue 4: Tenity keyboards reviewed - MIDI Made Simple Part 2 part 2.
- Issue 5: Drum machines.
- Issue 6: Music WITHOUT MIDI - seven packages reviewed for all-format users.

Next month:

Look, we're not kidding. EVERYONE can use MIDI and with very little skill (and no musical ability whatsoever) can produce some stunning sound. In the next issue of ACE we go one further and spell out exactly how you can use MIDI to radically upgrade local noise levels. And for those of you with (and without) the know-how, the MIDI Panel of Experts answers a whole string of queries from would-be MIDIers.

POINTS OR PROGRESS?

Way back in the distant video game past the question was with us, and it divided games players even then. In those days it took the form 'Do you shoot saucers?', but deep down it was all about whether to go for points or progress.

The game was Space Invaders, and the question at question was little eight-shaped blobs of light that periodically whizzed across the top of the screen. Shooting saucers could earn you big points if you knew what you were doing, but didn't get you very near to clearing the screen. Indeed, it usually involved exposing yourself to considerable danger from the surrounding alien pack. Was it worth it? Were you better off concentrating on the pack and getting further into the game?

The dilemma cropped up again and again in the great rush of concepts that followed. Were the power pills in Pac-Man really there to help you score big because munching ghosts, or was it better to use them for protection while clearing on the important task of clearing the screen? Was it worth using slow-down in Star Wars really increasing your scoring rate, or did smaller play areas (shooting aliens in the skies at full speed) really give you more bang?

Opposing camps took things to bizarre lengths in the quest to further their respective goals. Many players would first sets-aside-on Asteroid screens and hang there blasting incoming craft, deliberately leaving the last fragment of debris intact so that they didn't move on to a fresh set of invaders. Progress players meanwhile would sacrifice half the alien in Asteroid Command without a quibble, the better to defeat the other half, even though this drastically reduced the end-of-level bonuses they got.

It isn't just alien-averse titles that divide the opposing lobbers. How about the sweet bonus in Flying Shark? If you use them you'll undoubtedly get further, but saving them up boosts your bonuses impressively. Or then there's Super Sprint: do you use the spoonies to take you out up and be sure of winning the next coin, or do you take the risk of leaving it as it is and go for extra points instead?

On more games, dilemmas of points versus progress are set to please the player

gies through. At first you'll always want to play for progress so that you can satisfy your curiosity about the game, e.g. what happens on level two? Equally, you'll eventually get to for as you're going to end end up just playing for points, you will train the mice, but later such extra time will you have left over? Games that reward extra lives every 10,000 points or so are but the boundaries between nudging level-up progress players into collecting those bonus points-also.

At least the games that really bring out the progress or points player in all of us are arcade games. Pac-Man, Asteroid and Star Wars pretty much what you make them, they adapt to what possibility without losing individual style. Making screens and developing levels are vital ingredients of greatness, but so many titles have done offer you one - and only one - way to play, tackle the problem like that, they say, or you won't get anywhere. From that, can design the long-term reward a game can offer, both hope things being back the other way.

BAT AND BALL STYLE

It's some main reason. Baseball dilemmas really do bring out the dilemmas in games players. If the hitters that do it of course the tempting capsule in Asteroid, the glowing hotshoes in Impact that give you hot extra powers, divide the ball into three or whatever. Even more so than mice, they're the key to the subtle beauty in ball-and-ball games that otherwise have easy the numerous progress made by Impact and Revolution.

The lesson's the thing - that crucial dilemma of playing the ball or grabbing the capsule first. Can you get the bat back in time to keep the ball bouncing? Do you want the capsule badly enough to risk being a ball? Do you want it at all? Both games, like their less particular partners,

ARKANOID

There are few basic strategies here: either go for the capsules (they help you clear the screen most potently) or progress or to absolutely only capsule you can reach (points). The two aren't always easily distinguishable: grabbing a type of capsule you don't need took the game to give you something else.



ARKANOID: off to the bats (the game speaks in a play the ball)

So it can make sense for the progress player, and even, the real winner (points merchant)

will concede that on some screens at least or give a just too important to let go of.

The two capsules that really sort the sheep from the goats are wild ones and level pieces. Progress pieces won't normally grab extra lives unless they can get back to the ball - if they're only low it again immediately, why bother? - while points pieces grab them come what may. So what if they lose it again? They've still got the bonus points.

Level pieces are slightly trickier for high-score seekers: they may get you on to another screen and give you a whopping 10,000 point bonus, but they do stop you getting the points for something broken on the screen, if the balls stopped at the top of the layout (also doing useful work, it can be worth hopping around it while Progress pieces don't waste a second with such trivia) it could: they only ever want to get onto the next



■ IMPACT (3): A ball's in the frame - see how you can beat it!

screen, so they dash for that point without hesitation.

IMPACT

The leading structure for gaining extra points here will have the new progress piece coming up later, in something really handy and then wrapping them off the initial screen. Occasionally this can mean deliberately letting tokens go - if you've got just

enough to do a double hit, but don't want to trigger it yet - but broadly speaking both types of player agree that existing tokens always makes sense. They want the tokens to completely different reasons however. Thinking the last thing on a points player's mind, less often the coin, alternative - cost, level, high-score making points - and then get a whopping 10000 of them if he can beat the screen with a full level of them. Or maybe if you're really good you can trade in an extra bonus - a wide bet, for example - and still have a good chance of filling up with tokens later on, but a risk most points players would take though, that one.

Some players think that all Impact pieces are capsules and should be spaced regardless of points. These people get clearly lost when

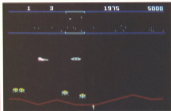
LIMIT SETTERS

Game is perfectly reasonable of course, and any healthy points player will have a goal-setter helping it, but look, strange restrictions for going after points: lots in the depths. Perfectionists is it strong one of course, and the king-of-the-castle syndrome has given many a games player sleepless nights trying to reach the top of the high-score table. But limit setting is something else again.

There's a little of the limit writer in all of us. How many playing a collectible weapons shoot-em-up without collecting any of the weapons? How used to be on a tough-opponent in a lifeless when you could easily spare a missile? That's limit setting for you.

Of course not limit writers are a limited group. They're the sort of people who refuse to let their cars use extra bombs in Defender. They aren't actually playing the same game that most of us do at all: they're making up new rules for themselves as they go along, trying to make things harder so that they can sponsor that last drop-of-reinforcement out of a game.

The typical limit writer avoided breaking up the credits in the pavement when very young, and is still trying to break the hold



■ NIGHTBEING (2): The CPC should've had its own night limit!

over, right-handed limit: when play old games left-handed to the challenge of it, and will eventually graduate to playing with the controls of because looking where you're going to be easier.

loser that appeals - the promise these games make that every day, in every way, you can get better and better. It's not what you can do with the extra features, but rather it's not getting them. Main ingredient: More speed!



■ BODY BUILDERS (2): What the most expensive and profitable!

BODY BUILDERS

Progress is normally a matter of clearing the current screen, fighting your way past the next major obstacle or reaching the end-point before your time runs out. There are other kinds of progress that games can offer you, however, the fashionable one of the moment being body building - self-improvement by collecting weapons or other bonus abilities.

Even since the dual-hit nature of Starlog players have wanted bigger and better cuts to control. Whether it's Berserker in Green Road, controller tricks in Penetration or clones and clones in almost every scrolling shoot-em-up since Nemesis, additional weapons and features are otherwise normal players with a very special kind of greed.

In the idea of developing yourself from a single-episode wedding into a real tough cut-

NIGHTBEING

The true progress player, a compulsive explorer, a mountain-top type who absolutely must reach the next level simply because it's there. But the challenge isn't the only thing to go for: there's the view from the summit as well. For many players that's the real interest in making progress - not seeing what comes next.

Of course, it's really decide games what some level was very much the same as the null level been playing already, but programmers soon learn the value of extra features or a change of graphics as it reward to progress. These days the bulk of programming effort seems all too often to go into these features and graphics of the expense of playability. As a result, on credit, as it games like their interest once you've seen all the progress changes there-in.

Though many games, just get into touch for you to reach the point of exhaustion, these are always cheat modes, maps or pointers to show you the bits you couldn't reach, that doesn't spoil the game for you, but in practice the computer often isn't good enough to stand in its own once the element of curiosity is gone.

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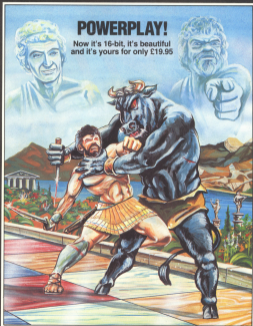
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This month the Pilgrim continues his exploration of role-playing games with the excellent Bard's Tale II – just released and undoubtedly a major achievement for adventurers to revel in. Plus a host of other goodies covering every aspect of adventuring with your micro.

BARD'S TALE II

ACE
920
RATED

Excellent role-playing epic from ELECTRONIC ARTS

THE Bard's Tale was one of the best RPGs role-playing games released in recent years. It offers the opportunity to create a party of up to six adventurers with complex attributes and then take them off on a highly adventures through a well-illustrated game world.



Bard's Tale II is everything you would want from a sequel. It takes all the best bits about the original and improves on them so you get the same character system used over the same characters if you want to transfer them from the earlier games but a much larger map and a more complex objective.

Your party's objective is to locate the seven broken fragments of the Destiny

Word, which has been stolen and destroyed by the mages of the evil Legath. Each fragment is concealed within a "House of Death" – a location full of deadly puzzles that must be tackled by the party in real time. Once you've solved each fragment, you can reforge the Word and defeat the opposition.

What makes this game so playable is the sheer weight of gameplay involved in locating your objective. It should take you hours to complete, with several non-adventures on route. There are no cities to visit, wilderness and forest in between, as well as a number of Caves. And that's not to mention the dungeons beneath the cities – dark, perilous places which harbour sudden death as well as fame and fortune.



The graphics window shows your location – and the rest is all handled on

the screen, your progress is accompanied by a small graphics window that shows the view in any of four directions from your current location. Narrow streets, strange buildings, and (outside the town) forest and wilderness scroll rapidly by as you move about. Every so often you will encounter hostile creatures, from ogres to acids, telepathic bats like the wizard, with associated effects as listed above.

Gameplay is enhanced by the complexity of the scenario. First, there's the large map. Then there are numerous different character classifications and levels, based on seven different stone class, half-etc. to-six, six character classes including Fighters, Wizards, and Rogues, four Magic Item categories, and six personal attributes to each player's true defensive list of ten performance in battle. You can, of course, create your own named char-

Keep your distance

Bard's Tale II is very similar to its sequel in gameplay features, but adds two important improvements: a larger map and the idea of "distance" in combat. In BT1, when you're in conflict with an opponent you're in the thick of the fray, but in BT2 there's the added complication of distance between combatants. Over a longer distance (60 feet, for example) spells are less effective and hand-to-hand weapons are ineffective. At a range of 10 feet, however, the "melee" really begins with each hand-to-hand fighting taking the lion's share of the action.

RELEASE BOX

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Transferring Characters

One of the best things about PPG's is the strong bond a player can build up with some of his or her more long-lived characters. An excellent feature of BT2 is the ability to transfer characters from a character disk created under BT1 – and, very interestingly, from BT1 to BT2 and vice versa, two other popular PPGs.

PILGRIM

aces, with their original attributes fixed by the roll of dice (which the computer does for you).

In addition there are an astonishing 79 spells and seven magical wands (which only Berck, of course, can use). Consider all those features with the variety of locations and puzzles and you have a very satisfying scenario indeed. Highly recommended for

all those who fancy a spot of bottle and beverage in foreign lands - the emphasis, it

must be admitted, is more on action than IQ, but who could resist it?

SYSTEM	87	ENCOUNTERS	90
CHALLENGE	94	LANDSCAPE	89
ACE RATING 920			

Bole on Issue Eight!

The monthly RPG, Bert's Tale, tries to give the adventurer the best of every possible world. You get complex character creation, a large map, and reasonable graphics for the different locations. And even if a lot of the buildings do look identical from the outside, they can still spring some really surprising events on you once you've kicked down the door!

Next month in issue Eight of ACE we'll be looking at the famous Ultima games from Origin Systems. These games take a different approach to graphics from The Berke Tale, with a map built up from small character-sized tiles - so you see more of the map on-screen at once. In other respects, however, they are closely related to RTT and also to another older game, Ring of Darkness from Microsoft, which will be mentioned by the name of nostalgia.

LOADS OF MIDNIGHT

Epic setting from CRL?

EXCELLENT idea this - to be in Ireland at Mike Singleton's epic release. CRL's distinguished program features the adventures of Lucc, Mithrad, Cordius, and Barthen as they attempt to destroy the Crown at the Tower of Boons and win the favor of the Fervent against the nefarious Gormgook.

RELEASE BOX

SPIC	75%	PG/MS2
to the release period		

So, great idea! But not much of a game, unfortunately. Leading up the game takes the player to begin with, especially when you see some subtle female graphics and realize that - in the early stages at least - the program is designed to be quite clever at imitating a serious programmer. The map lay-

out is also a disturbing resemblance of the look of Midnight and Olympe fantasia with the woman characters and places at that domain should have a few laughs.

Notably one of the best features of the original Loads of Midnight was the variety of content. It would have been nice to see some attempt to introduce a tele- or tele-in looks at twilight, but it doesn't appear.

And that's about all, really. The humor seems to wane as you store further into the game and very serious take-off of Mike Singleton's game becomes a race and race scenario possibly as you discover a quest station and find that a disturbing number of simple commands are not accepted by the program. Spelling mistakes that are initially amusing ("chariotbody", for example) soon become nothing but a symptom of poor programming and badly handled.

Software companies that publish quality and GAOed games need to remember that



Looks like Loads of Midnight, as it should be.

many of these games are written by people with little experience. A good company will give the programmer help, advice, and back-up that ensures the absence of simple grammatical errors and shoddy programming. This you can end up with some good products. Without it, you get something like this, which very few people will want to add to their collection.

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ACE RATING 890			

NO PROBLEM!

The Pegasus due column returns this month. Don't forget that if you've got some handy tips for RPG adventures, then pay them as a postcard and send them to us:

No Problem! The Pegasus Queen Street, Bath BA1 1EU

By doing this you get your name on the page after adventures out of trouble, and the closer to immediately you are likely to reach this side of Midnightworld! This month's tip are sent courtesy of Nighty, the Danish Wizard, which should put at you English half-way to shame. Come on, tell us how from you!

Mithradobaw

To get past the angry crowd around the shrine stop you need to be instant! Use the cleaver to cut the anchor chain, then walk the plank! Examine your drink in Black Cafe and follow man to get a vital lead in the search for your real identity.

Seafarer Cells

Short patch with the lock to make the bell move in the right direction before climbing a Box a ladder with your gun to get an egg from the chicken. Throw garbage at the camera. Eventually make a sentence, and pray decent!

Bole of Overwood

Capture the thief to escape from Nottingham plus, Kill Belenus with the cross, and take Martin to the location just south of the Garage. There's a man hiding in their bushes! If you only need one more location and don't know where to find it, why don't you drop the silver stone in the stone mine.

Dravala

Sign register, and ring/bell before using, and take care when crossing from the menu. Examine the eyes of the old woman in the coach, and walk up

when you've had enough LA and in Strada's coach, and use the cross as a key to get into the storage. Walk cross after attacked by the female vampire.

Yagrim IT

Try 'get gales' when outside the hut. Move the students in the dark alley, but be sure to take equipment and key of lock with you before you enter the sewers.

Temple of Honor

Kick sand at serpent to enter the city. You could also walk right past him (or doorway), but clearly this is a bug (one-of-many)

Rayvith

Open bar to get past the Black Ray. To escape from Yagrim's quarters you need to ride the frog.

Frankenstein

Ask the girl why she is weeping. Fry in the church and say hello to the young priest. Hit and throw them ask for a job.

◆ The Travellers' Times

Edited by: The Pilgrim ◆ Honorary Editor: The White Wizard ◆ Published by: For-Future Publishing
Price: free with every issue of ACE Magazine.

INFOCOM GO HOLMES

Infocom's latest release takes us back to Victorian London and sets Dr Watson and Sherlock Holmes in pursuit of the stolen Crown Jewels. The player takes the part of Watson, who has sole responsibility for solving the crime, although you can also confer with your distinguished colleague during the game.

This release is part of Infocom's expansion into other gameplay areas. To start with, there are the now-familiar on-screen hints as well as the usual Infocom paraphernalia (which in this case includes a tourist map, newspaper, and key list). In addition, ST and Amiga versions feature sound-effects—a first for an Infocom product.

But is it an Infocom product? The company are now adopting programs from other sources rather than developing them exclusively in-house. Infocom's past few months' Travellers' Times were the first example of this, and now we have this game, produced for Infocom by Challenge Inc. Recent titles have not been as strong as some of the older, in-house programs, so keep your fingers crossed and read the review in next month's Pilgrim column.

Gulf Crisis for Activation

Activation are about to release their first game from new programming house Rotrock Concepts, run by Anne Peppers and (in the background) Pogue Mitchell. Rotrock has some excellent graphics, a strong story-line, and a number of very attractive programming features.



Southampton to last—about 1900,000 tons left.



Young Mitchell and Peppers from Rotrock—contemplating.

Physically young Peppers finds himself in a post-nuclear Southampton where a secret regime is making life rather nasty for the locals, who—with relative wisdom and nuclear devastation—have

got enough on their plates already. Peppers joins in making the long journey in a (typical) round to go to London Southampton to prevent the Third World War from taking place.

The game is produced using Level III's new programming system, specially produced for them by (among others) Tim Gilbert of Great. The professional background in the programming really shows, with system features like SCRIPT and SAVE being controlled from an on-screen menu screen. There are twelve interactive characters to interact with using the national BNF TO name 'MESSAGE' format together with READ, SAVE and HARBORING. There's also an unusual feature whereby the main character will start to 'sloppify' if you don't enter a command for three minutes—if you have to keep on your toes, although it seems you can pause the action if needed.

Meanwhile Peppers is hard at work on projects for his Delta 4 label, and we should have some news of Smoking Horne in the very near future.

A THOUSAND KISSES

Soren Beng Hansen, Danish adventure supremo, points out just how difficult it is for adventurers abroad. If you thought The Pawn was tricky, wait till you tackle a game where a typical location description might read: *Der er i en mørk og slyngelig gang uden vinduer. Måske the Goblin's Dungeon seem like an open door...*

Most Scandinavian adventures probably know me from the Bazaar '82 issue magazine, where I ran a regular adventure column (the biggest in any non-English computer magazine) featuring a slow help-line, letters, reviews, and even complete solutions and save games. I understood that the letter is a matter of much debate in England, but there is a great demand for this service throughout Scandinavia, and I certainly don't know any 'local jobsites' because of this. As you will see, there is a particular need for this. Read on, and find out why playing abroad is often considerably more difficult than most English-speaking people realize.

LINGUISTIC DIFFICULTIES

It is a well-known fact that the vast majority

of professional adventures are written in English, and if this happens to be your native language then of course everything is just fine. But those of us who live in a minor language area do not see privileged. How do you go about playing adventures in foreign languages?

Outside Britain, USA, Australia etc. succeeding in an adventure game is not only a matter of solving logical puzzles. Often the most difficult task is fitting upon the particular word or phrase required by the program in order to perform certain tasks. In the game that preceded 'Sjette' I've continued in Danish. In 'Circus' is one such example. Also most crucial to me now (but it is essential to be clearly aware of what the text descriptions actually say, in other, there are

at least 1000
for du kender og

erke loft skal du
lyt bender fæst

'head du finder i
af Tovermønstret
Bænderkuglerne
i din baglomme, og
der opløst
med guld nu

der gælder når
... En

... En

... En



Wetters, Avon Strand
Gaggenen Ltd.
Sine

what tasks are included in the text. This means that you have to understand every single bit of it, which goes to make an English dictionary an obsolete necessity.

Well, if you have some rudimentary knowledge of the English language, this isn't too intimidating. It is usually possible to work through. The only exception I've found came across during my long life on an adventure reviewer, is *Ultimate Role and Rev!* I recently reviewed this game in *IC MAG* and it was the first ever *Ultimate* game that I could not recommend to my Scandinavian readers. Not because I have some experience in translation work (but couldn't make head or tail of the game) (You'd see the only one, *Ultimate Wizard*.)

THE GAMES WE PLAY

Needless to say, the linguistic barrier also has great influence on what games we play. It now makes a great difference whether you're playing a rudimentary paper-and-graphic adventure, or—especially the atmospheric environment as the latest indication from *Ultimate* shows, the most popular adventures on this side of the Channel tend to be those with nice graphics and a minimum of text. To give you an impression of the games we change public view, I have compiled a chart based on the number of mentions a game gets in my regular mail, the list shown here is by no means received during 1987.

1. *Ultimate-Monsters*
2. *Baroness Time (Ultimate)*
3. *Valley of the Great-John quest*
4. *Avatar of Death (Ultimate)*

Danish Dynomite

Ever played a Danish adventure? Thought not, but just imagine what you would do if you were confronted with a text description like this:

On or in an overtop of abjectly gang odde window. Run the of pe hair-furled outer!

The location description is from the latest and best Danish adventure I've seen for a long time. It's called *Tuesday's* (Danish for 'The Tuesday Krew') and is a graphic adventure for the Amiga written in compiled BASIC by one Loren Lutter.

The game is a funny little story in which your quest is to prepare yourself and your team for a nighty raid by your girlfriend. Before you'll go green with envy for not being able to actually play this adventure, there's a couple of facts to note. The overall standard of Danish adventures is generally far below that of English and American games. But despite that, it is always a refreshing experience to play a game, tentatively as it may be, in your native language!

A State-of-the-Art (Adventure) List

As you see, there isn't a single *Ultimate* game among these five old-time classics. However, *Ultimate* do have their own brand of loyal and dedicated followers—in Denmark, like everywhere else. And the one of them fits just that theme, an awful lot of text to dig.

Another common problem facing a Scandinavian reader is that of getting hold of

copies. The adventure market is a relatively small niche (especially in small countries), and many software retailers simply don't stock anything which doesn't contain some element of politics-eggging. Consequently I know of many adventures who were first advertised within clearly non-English.

Probably the most important point to note in this connection however, is that if an adventure for any other genre of entertainment software for that matter, is to really succeed in Scandinavia, then it MUST be for a Commodore computer. For the last 3-4 years the Commodore 64 has been THE home computer over here, and there can be little doubt that the Amiga is the next step forward. Also it's a word which just doesn't appear in our dictionary!

THE GOOD POINTS

Clearly, as playing in English can be frustrating sometimes, but there is at least one important point which I haven't mentioned that of education. I speak from experience when saying that text is actually helping in English. I can think of no better way of learning the language. The only thing the computer can't teach you is how to pronounce the words correctly (although if you play *Power* on the Amiga, do learn the speech option off). It could possibly damage your English pronunciation. Anyway, I sincerely believe in the use of adventures to educational purposes, and I think the relevant authorities should consider the potential of this new media in language instruction, both here in Scandinavia and elsewhere.

PAT'S PATCH

Quill and PAW have a built-in weatherproof routine but GAC does not. Pat plays wardrobe mistress in this month's column especially for those who like to create their own adventures...

GAC's lack of a built-in wardrobe routine was pointed out to me by Robert Lane of Minneapolis in a recent letter. Robert sent a routine for wearing things in GAC which dealt with specific objects, being like I've extended the idea to allow automatically wearable objects to be handled.

First define all wearable items as having object numbers above 100 and ensure that their nouns have identical numbers. Also define the verbs 'wear' and 'remove' and allocate a few rooms (I'll use 200) as the player's 'room store'. Then enter messages as in the conditions in Figure 1.

Condition 1 checks that the object is wearable and carried, stops it you don't do this or the weight carried will become distorted; then sends it to the room store.

Conditions 2 and 3 and appropriate messages if the object is already worn or not available (in that order otherwise) not wear would trip objects worn since they're not available.

Condition 4 covers objects which are not wearable.

Condition 5 brings the object from the 'room store' when you try to get it in case the player is already carrying the maximum amount.

Condition 6 deals with objects not currently worn since it's checked only if condition 5 fails.

Condition 7 (which explains the standard inventory condition) tells the player about both carried and worn items.

(PS: The 'is in' condition is ignored in the GAC manual and should be used as '(is in) IN object' ... NOT '(object IN room)'.)

If your adventure had only one wearable object it would be simpler to define two objects for the wearable items and simply swap them around using the conditions in Figure 2. There's no need for a special inventory condition.

Listing 1 - MULTIPLE OBJECT ROUTINE (See Personality)

```
1) IF ( NCI > 100 AND VERB 'wear' AND CARRI NCI ) STOP NCI NCI T3 000 ORAT END
```

```
2) IF ( NCI > 100 AND VERB 'wear' AND 200 IN NCI ) MESSAGE 'already worn' NCI END
```

```
3) IF ( NCI > 100 AND VERB 'wear' AND NOT
```

```
AVM NCI ) MESSAGE 'is not wear' NCI END
```

```
4) IF ( VERB 'wear' AND NCI AND MESSAGE 'you can't wear that' NCI END
```

```
5) IF ( VERB 'remove' AND 200 IN NCI ) MESSAGE 'you remove' ORAT NCI MESSAGE 'no stop it' NCI END
```

```
6) IF ( VERB 'remove' ) MESSAGE 'you're not wearing that' NCI END
```

```
7) IF ( VERB 'wear' ) MESSAGE 'You are carrying' LIST WITH MESSAGE 'you are wearing' LIST 200 NCI END
```

Listing 2 - SINGLE OBJECT ROUTINE (See Personality)

```
1) IF ( VERB 'wear' AND NOUN 'glove' AND CARRI 'glove' ) 'glove' ERAP 'glove worn' OKAY END
```

```
2) IF ( VERB 'wear' AND NOUN 'glove' AND CARRI 'glove worn' ) MESSAGE 'already wearing them' NCI END
```

```
3) IF ( VERB 'remove' AND NOUN 'glove' AND CARRI 'glove worn' ) 'glove' ERAP 'glove worn' OKAY END
```

```
4) IF ( VERB 'remove' AND NOUN 'glove' AND CARRI 'glove' ) MESSAGE 'not wearing them' NCI END
```

Yes, folks! That of 'Leaderboard' controversy just keeps rollin' along. Is it or is it not possible to get a hole in one? There are those who say they've done it - and there are those who say it cannot be done. And, at long last, the women are having their say on the sexism debate.

ACE Prizes go this month to Grant Punched - that man is so plucky in defence of his Spexcy; to Anonymous of Great Budworth for his tale of Yuletide woe; and the Letter of the Month is from Michael Ormond of Glasgow for his trenchant criticism of the GEM operating system.

Make sure your views are heard - and give yourself the chance of picking up a software prize - by writing to ACE Letters, 4 Queen Street, Bath, BA1 1EJ. Don't forget to say what software you would like if you get lucky.

☛ Fairy godmothers

Once upon a time there lived two furies when they were proud owners of an ST. Off the top of the ST colours on the palette and 4 colours on their greatest canvas - a

highly exp. from their Doctor.

But one fateful day, I walked with evil a spell on them, making them greedy for more colours on their canvas. They heard of such things as Quantum Painter and

Spectrum 312 offering their full-stroke of colours on the screen. They found with Quantum Painter that their canvas had to be split up into different sections, one the size of Spectrum! Alas they did not

☛ Tarnished GEM

They certainly don't make computers like they used to. First was my first thought on switching on my new Apple II/051. And here I sit I was. What's this lovely GEM user interface? Okay, it's far enough on the IBM PCs alongside Microsoft Windows, and in fact I found it very useful, but that was probably because I could switch it off.

I remember when I first got my 2001 and I could quite happily sit for hours on end conversing with its user interface but with GEM it's rather a one-way conversation. I have owned a lot of computers since my faithful Sinclair and have used a great deal more but the ST is the first I've come across that would let you do anything unless you've got some software to load.

Please the situation, I'm sitting studying for my statistics final-year degree exam. I need to calculate a relatively simple equation. To get my calculator would require excessive manual effort so I turn to my ST to do the sum for me. Speed is of the essence. What do I have to do? I have to load the Basic language first, that's what the only version of GEM I've seen that doesn't have a calculator built in, and then do the math.

Is that an ST owner's manual I see below me? Come let me check this. I have this not and yet I see the ST. And this not a very thin manual for an owner's manual? I mean, I've heard of something but not including a thorough guide to ST BASIC is a

bit ridiculous.

The machine itself though has a number of interesting features. The keyboard, though not quite IBM standard, is pretty well quite and the audio feedback is very useful. The mouse is better quality than I had expected and must make life a lot easier for the less computer literate among us. It has a parallel printer port, which is not mentioned in your pink paper. The disk drive is fast and quiet. And the screen display on my TV is excellent, far better than any I have seen before. I still can't quite believe that I get all this for £250.

No doubt I shall be ever more impressed when I get some games software and I can't wait to try my hands on an assembler and a version of PASCAL, (can you recommend any particular software for either purpose?)

The Apple II/051 was good reason to really excited. It's so much easier to control the type styles and formatting than with other WPs I've used.

As I said at the start, they don't make computers like they used to. Most of the advances that have been made are almost unalterable. I was playing on an Archimedes the other day - why don't I let you loop the loop in Zorro? I think though that Alan, in trying to make the ST more user friendly have only succeeded in adding an extra degree of abstraction between the user and the machine. It is like when once you could program in assembler you

LETTER
OF THE
MONTH

are now being forced to program in PASCAL, with all the complex limitations and information being the top involves.

Michael E Ormond
Glasgow

Should an operating system code between you and your computer? The idea behind GEM - and its predecessor on the Apple II/051 and Lisa - is that users are able intuitively to operate the machine. Somehow or other you're supposed to grasp the meaning of all those woe words and symbols. As you can gather, I don't believe it's an simple as this. A WIMP system needs to be learned, just as a command-line system such as MS-DOS. After waiting on the Mac for quite some time, I believe that a decent WIMP system does make things easier - for management in your life. But I still can't help being annoyed by the silly little phrases and arbitrary 'hotcut' of a lot

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lines. They later offer a HAM mode on another computer which did not cut out on the same; they listed Spectrum 512 worked like this and that their fancy graphics ACE would let them; what a sad story. Let's hope that another comes true and they will be answered!

**Max Kenney
Wales**

Forbes of Arabia

I am a British subject working in Saudi Arabia and am writing to ask your advice on a matter of compatibility of the C88 1081 monitor. As the printer I own an 4800 and the 1081 monitor and I wish to buy an Atari 520 ST F88. Can the Atari be used with the 1081 monitor? (with a suitable level of course). Also I wish to congratulate you on producing a magazine that is a benefit of the early announcements over Machine vs Machines that are encountered in many "newsweek" publications! Every month I receive ACE sent from the UK, after a very thorough read and re-read, I pass it on to my colleagues (most of whom are Americans), showing they dig out what you get to read it first. For their information, can you offer subscriptions in countries outside? Apparently, they were talking the ACE in the USA. If I am lucky enough to be "Letter of the Month" can you give the reward to some deserving charity. As I ask is that you can carry on the good work in producing such an excellent magazine. For me, it truly is something to look forward to every month.

**Henry Perkins
Dorset, South Africa**

You can certainly subscribe to ACE

Leaderboard

Finally, in reply to S.P. Lee's letter last month, I have achieved a hole in one at World Class leaderboard - but only once!

Seriously, why don't you introduce a PIM (Play-It-Mild) section. I'm sure it would be very popular. Friendly goodbye.

**Carl Kollerweiser
Cumbria**

Concerning a letter from SP Lee of Wrenwick in ACE Issue 5, it is impossible to get a hole in one at Leaderboard because the flag hits the hole and doesn't move until the ball has stopped in the goal.

**Mark Pridgen
Bristolian**

I reply to S.P. Lee of Wrenwick question about getting a hole in one on Leaderboard. I have not got a hole in one on Leaderboard, but I've got

none the better or even from Cecil - but if you're going to read a lot more from the UK, Atariul outside Europe costs £27.95, payable in Sterling. As for the C88 monitor-ST link up, we've read it here but can't see any simple way of doing it. I'd like to try to say that it can't be done; more news on that as soon as we've got some.

Stocks & shares & videos

I am excited and interested in buying a computer for personal use rather than business purposes. My main requirements are that it is able to print:
1) A portfolio for stocks and shares.
2) To sit options or Videos.
I understand that any of the Amstrats can do (1) but not (2), and that the Amiga can do (2) but not (1).
Can you advise me what computer I should be looking for?

**Arthur Kallis
Neysham**

You're never too late right, you can get portfolio management software for the Amstrats, but nothing that will produce video files. The Amiga will do the bits, but there doesn't seem to be anything to manage your stocks and shares. The thing to bear in mind is that it's unlikely that there will ever be video output software for the Amstrat, but it's very likely indeed that someone will bring out a portfolio management program for the Amiga.

Programming courses

I was wondering if you could help me. I am a 13 year old finished 4th grade and I'd really like to join

your. I've always wanted to learn how to make programs; my own games, but I haven't had much luck. I've read all the books I could get hold of about Turbo, War Gaming etc. but as they are explained in such a complicated way, it's impossible to understand them.

I was wondering if you knew of any programmer's courses that would teach me how to make games on my Amstrat 484 for money. I would appreciate it very much if you could find this out for me.

Home & address without to again embarrassment

We know of no course specifically aimed at games programming. Most people who write games professionally are either self-taught or have studied computing at an university. There are evening classes run by local authorities, but these won't necessarily be what you're looking for. I suggest you try teaching yourself machine code - Amstrat Adren's course First Steps is as good a place as any to start. If you don't start to feel that progress you should try a CBI games program such as Speed Six Up Constructor II.

Easy Cars?

I was wondering how many people had Easy-Cars on the Amiga and if it's quite a good game, but I wasn't a lot simpler, as just after 4 games I was driving the Ferrari no results. In fact I wasn't pleased to say I completed it and I got the straight line in the back of the track (Mercedes) and then I completed it again on the same game and I could have gone on at a score of 5000000000000000000 but I was just getting bored even taking the same old cars with the same old lines. I just gave up and stopped. Yours faithfully,

**Roger Flynn
Reading**

Irish users

I have been an ST user for over six months now and it is totally fantastic that a very little support for ST here in Ireland. Instead of sitting around and waiting for someone to start up a user group, I have now decided that I will start one myself. I am at the moment compiling a newsletter with the help of a few friends. We also have a list of P.O. addresses based on us and we also have made a few of our own software titles.

As the name suggests we are looking for both ST owners interested in getting our group, but we would like to hear from anybody anywhere. Signed without typing we would love any of our readers to send Don O'Shea and P.O. software to us. All data will be returned and we will add a few names of our own.

If you are interested send a SAE... of for UK or Europe an inter-

national Reply Coupon. You can type 50p to a piece of cardstock in UK or US. If you send us details we can return postal orders return you get a list of our Donors and list subscribers. I would like to thank you for giving us the chance to publish our fine group.

ST Ireland

**Mark D. Greally
Johnston, Lee Road
Adrian, Co Wicklow Ireland**

Write happy to print your letter to help you get going. If you want to advertise your assistance once your established, start past the Reader Pages in the Post Pages.

Amari 50K?

After reading your letters page I feel pretty relieved because I bought my ST the day the H Smith dropped the price to £395, so it makes me lucky enough to have an "old" machine which isn't everything it's cracked to make a better one. Unlike ST because the software houses will always write for the latest model ST upgrades - they certainly won't produce special ST versions for the few thousand people who will upgrade and might just buy the program.

Once a machine has been successfully launched it's best not to produce the bugs or programmes can write around them. The wasted very well for years on the Spectrum 48K, which went through several hardware versions at having mostly the same ROM and the same bugs. Consequently every 48K Spectrum ran every 48K program with no problems.

Unfortunately Sinclair then stole their best trick in a when they produced the C88 machine, which is already around here been famous identical to an 88K machine when in 88K mode. When they added the compatibility routine calculator to the 88K machine, they put the code for it in an unused area of the HD ROM used in 88K mode. Many programmers working in C88 mode have had been using that area (a lot of low PPI) as a jump vector table, and their programs would not work on the 128. Also lots of copy protection schemes uncontrolled the code as a means of the tape partly by XOR'ing it against the ROM, and would not work with the shared PPI.

It also really need to produce a better machine, and they should be complete with the currently superior Amiga they should also throw in a 60000 word chip, perhaps 812 software on the "Main 812" or something. Meanwhile they should leave the ST completely unchanged instead of unrolling the software base for it. If Terminal produces an SX II they are to keep my ST compatibility...

**Stephen Gathright
Walsord**

a hole in one on World Class Leaderboard for the Amstrat CPC. The graphics are disappointing compared to the Commodore 64 version. What is even more annoying is the graphics are in the lowest resolution screen mode that the Amstrat can produce.

**M Gordon
Spartan**

Yes, my dad and I have had help from an leaderboard on the ST - in fact, everyone on our table at school (3 Years, 2 54s 1 ST) has Leaderboard.

**Matthew Pedersen
Buckingham**

These letters don't seem to bring us any closer to discovering whether or not you can get ball above hole-in-one. Can anyone come up with a definitive answer?

While you're at it, why not suggest to Jack that you take over the company and let it go the right way?

☉ Girls talk

I am writing to add my say to the debate of women in computer games.

Everyone seems to be leaning to the defense of our young, exploited girls. Well, I don't feel at all inspired to just excuse Mike Whisker as a starting point in his own say. The idea that all women are being degraded by this is the equivalent of saying that all English people are stupid because one of them is correct.

Finally, I thought I might like to say that Neil Wilson (letters issue 2) is the most big-headed and opinionated prat I ever heard of. Less on the 8-bit machines issue!

Ms J'Wanne Writings

I did not see D. Panagi's letter in issue no. 3, since issue no. 5 is the first issue of your very excellent magazine that we have bought. I can very well imagine how it went through, since we have heard it all before, about the exploitation of women and the abuse of all computer-related female. Some well-intended people choose to uncover more than some people think they should.

I, as a woman, am not in the least offended at the sight of another woman's scantily clad or naked body. Girls such as Mike Whisker know exactly what they are doing, and they have the brain to prove it.

If the truth be told, it's not they who are being exploited, but the men who constantly clamour for more.

Ms B Banned Hobby

Well, it's well nice to get - at long last - some letters from women on the subject. But I wonder just how representative these opinions are? Would any more modest care to join the debate?

☉ Piracy made 'simple'

I have come up with the following 'simple' solution concerning software piracy:

Simply increase higher pricing of software, higher pricing of software makes further piracy. Further piracy causes irreparable damage to small software houses, irreparable damage to small software houses causes the narrowing of software availability. Narrowing of software availability causes less software, which ultimately results in more piracy.

To conclude, it can simply be said that with piracy causing higher prices, higher prices causing more

☉ Punchard is back!

Thank you for publishing my letter in *Defence of the Spectrum* (Feb 1988) and for your generally fair response. You did perhaps, slightly miss my point though, but the Spectrum has an exact right to be considered as a games and leisure machine as any of the 8-bit machines. Indeed, when one considers such excellent software as *The Writer* or *The Wizard* (both which eliminate the 20 column limit) I think the Spectrum is probably better supported than any other 8-bit machine in terms of serious software. As you quite rightly observed, I am 'marketing' with the Spectrum for business applications, but we do owners of OHRs and OPRs who have complete control. Amiga, PC-Compart, and the like I don't want to labour the point, as will you at least concede that the Spectrum, through a lot of ingenuity in the field, is a versatile machine which offers unparalleled value for money, and will not let you down.

All this bit of leaping, leaping, I move on to my final point, being one that provides some interest. Being a dedicated Spectrum fan, the logical upgrade for the small appear to be a 486. I have, however, heard disturbing rumours about serious compatibility problems, with existing DOS software either not running or running with corrupted sound. Also,

alleged reduced RAM disk capacity, slower basic and memory to access existing peripherals (such as my old 20mb disk) have all these are rather worrying. There must be a lot of Spectrum owners who want to know if these rumours are true and so I would be very grateful if you could provide some definite answers.

Next, if there are any non-Spectrum owners still reading, I would like to express my views on the more general subject of sex and violence in computer games. I feel it would be extremely difficult to draw up guidelines as to what is or is not acceptable, as we all surely have our own moral values of right and wrong. It is obvious to most of us that DR's 18 certificate for *Jack the Ripper* was a typical publicity stunt applied to those who enjoy X-rated films. My opinion is that the responsibility lies with magazines such as ACE to present as objective a review of software as possible, whilst highlighting any areas of interest, such as killing violence, excessive gore and so on, and to let each reader decide whether or not to purchase on the basis. The sales figures will soon reveal what is and is not acceptable in the public. To quote an example, I once played a game called *Red Cross* (developed by a friend Alan White) the game play was quite good, I would certainly



rather say this product, as the realisation that it was not just some abstract talk or prize. It was something, but meant to be realistic, was to me at least rather disturbing.

Grant Punchard Admitted

Well, I will concede your point and call it an honourable draw - if only to keep you in your province (do I dare) as more evidence on the topic of the Spectrum's worthiness.

All to Spectrum 43 problems, my friend! Read anything about their 'shades' or the 'limbo' about upgrading - also I lay off - is something just a little more powerful? Read *Chris Moore* certainly was a disturbing game, but did you know that public pressure forced GB Gold to release it simply as 'Real'? If people think that enough, things can get worse.

piracy, more piracy causing damage to small software houses, damage to small software houses causing less available software, and less available software causing more piracy. The software industry is really being destroyed.

Price is illegal, piracy is damaging, piracy is wrong. I do not believe any price can justify these actions.

Hope this has clarified the problem!

Bill Power Replies

If anyone can follow your intricate chains of reasoning, that they may not agree with you.

☉ Archie software

Do you know of any new releases for the Acorn Archimedes? If you could you please send me some information on them, I think they're OK - keep it up.

Richard Thomas Bishop's Cleeve

The new bit of news for the Archie - or the games test - is likely to be *Compass* by Jonathan Goff. This is from Spectrum Software, but not any more new Acorn form that we don't think of much coming Archie's way.

☉ Crash corner

I feel I may be of some assistance to Damon Moore, and any other people having problems with uncooperative computer 'crashes'. After reading B. Schofield's letter in the March issue I feel I must make a few comments. Although changing a 3 wire fuse to a 5 amp may stop the fuses blowing, has anyone thought to themselves, why are they blowing? If you follow the procedure of simply replacing the fuse with a bigger one each time it goes, you are asking for trouble! Anyway, I cannot possibly say any benefit by replacing the fuse, unless maybe allowing more than 5amps to enter the computer.

Now I don't go over the top here explaining about power surges and 'dirty' mains, but will make a few points.

Firstly, using 'leaky' adaptors is not a good idea as they do not permit a clean flow of power to the computer (same is true of it, getting dirty) and can cause problems with replacement it is much more sensible to use a 'leaky' water (see below) instead, as each unit then has a separate plug and of course a fuse.

Secondly, I cannot see how moving the computer to another room will help a game load, as you are using the same power supply.

The amount of power a computer consumes is very small, my own Sharp only takes 17 watts (that's roughly 1 amp of a 100V line supply). Britain uses approx 80 watts and 700 around 70W.

The fuse rating therefore reflects the 'load' you put a 3 amp fuse in for a 3 amp electric fire (200W). Now, neither will it burn if you don't recommend anyone to put a higher rated fuse into any appliance other than that stated, if you still get unexplained 'crashes', as a last resort, try a mains filter. These are simple boxes that sit between the socket in the wall and your equipment, and eliminate most of the power surges and spikes that otherwise cause you to hear hot hair but I hope this will be of some use to someone out there.

Brian McClelland Co Down, NI

☉ That of rubber devil

Help! I'm in a bit of a pickle and you can't read certainly help me.

I am one of the elite few that will own a rubber-typed Spectrum. I have been considering getting a more up-to-date and different computer. This happens to be in the shape of an ST with mono-monitor. I was wondering if the ST is as good

was wondering if the ST is as good as it is cracked up to be and would it give the best for money? And is it worth having in my Speccy or is it worth saving?

My 'Week Sports'

Well, the ST is a serious machine, and you're unlikely to be disappointed with it, but as a choice mainly to reply what you asked if you want to play games or get it in graphics, I can't imagine you should slump up the extra cash for a colour monitor, at just one year 'TV set, I don't know if any dealers will take your Speccy on part-exchange but if they do, I doubt that you'd get what it's worth, if you're going long on it and it's possibly better to sell it, especially if you can also offer your software collection.

Deluxe Paint for ST?

I was wondering if you could tell me whether any of the Deluxe Paint range for the Amiga will be available for the Amiga ST. Even though there are a few paint programs out for the ST, none of them really match the capability of the Deluxe range.

Matthew Owen London

Excellent. Arie lets us that there are no plans at present to produce versions of the Deluxe range for the ST, if it were to happen, it would be quite some way in the future.

Back issues

I am interested in obtaining back copies of your magazine ACE. The issues reported are listed here to us. Please let me know the cost of these magazines and I shall send on the money.

If possible, I should also like to obtain current and future copies of ACE, thanking you in anticipation.

Neil McCreery Co-DoK

For back issues of ACE you should contact our Stratford office - the address and phone number are on the Contents pages. The price is £1.50 per issue - there aren't many copies of the early issues left. If you want to get ACE regularly through the post the best thing to do is take out a subscription, see the offer and form on page 93.

Arkwood - that head

Please could you give me an explanation on why after six months of talking about 32 screens of Arkwood on my Speccy -2 and getting absolutely nowhere on THAT HEAD? (The last screen on

Christmas tragedy

"Dear, where is my thing? I only just writing to tell you about the most disastrous Christmas Day on record. It was Christmas Day and I had just spent a good quarter of an hour tidying up my fire things. At last it was ready, and after spending the morning reading the standard I switched it on. In went the Park bench and I swapped its functions, before taking a couple with me, I took out the Wandersich and read the newspaper. Then I read to read the game. Test One which contains Christmas presents, and one month's pocket money. "Deluxe" I screamed, for something to fix the mess. The disk didn't slide into place. I tried again for an hour or two but couldn't get the computer away so we took the disk back to the shop as soon as possible. I then spent the rest of the day thoroughly miffed, at least of the TV.

Come Boxing Day and we tried to phone the company but bought it from there was no reply. Sunday came and there was still no reply. I was getting worried now and I just couldn't stop thinking the dealer had left the country after taking off faulty computers before Christmas.

I decided to just buy once more, on top of tape I fed the computer



out of the box and did in a disk. 'You' said the computer 'Thank you' I shouted, then proceeded to play on it for the rest of the day. For me Christmas had just begun...

Please tell me why the disk wouldn't be accepted and how it could possibly work again just like that.

Anonymous Great Baddow

A sad tale with a happy ending - there wasn't a sky eye in the office when I read it out. And you make sure you stay happy - we're giving you a nice prize. Why are we so good nice people?

The original tape, why should it be so easy to get through THAT HEAD on Arkwood on the new release (Magnificent Jewels). In the original tape a lot of items come at you from THAT HEAD's mouth as soon as you get through it. But as soon as you get through to THAT HEAD on Magnificent Jewels, no Arie! Good you give me a reason why this is so. So therefore to conclude, a tip for your Tricks in Tactics page would be to get Arkwood on Magnificent Jewels TO BEAT THAT HEAD.

Mr P Pinks Corkville

We haven't really played the Mag 7 version of Arkwood as we can't offer any advice. But there must be readers out there who can offer advice.

Outrageous Our Run

Well, we've just received our copy of Our Run for the Speccy and ah, and coded it up. What a disappointment that wasn't how we felt!

Okay perhaps there isn't much to be done about the music, given the speccy limitations, but we can do with that - just stick the sound track on the CD player!

This is where a potentially excellent conversion falls miserably. The same fault occurred with Under Floor. The backgrounds were fine and in Our Run the top half of the screen is okay. But when you get down to the mountains,

watching and the glowing red Peter Testross, you encounter these murky BLACK things and somewhere amongst that chaos is you, the car and the jet.

I haven't been able to fix this. The use of blue for the road graphics would have improved appearance tremendously and where is the RED car?

Super King Of was able to bring on the 'right track' - it was the blue that some color and fix. There is our opinion, the positions of track could have made a world of difference. This game should be tested and corrected. Then it would give the pleasure that it comes so close to doing.

Frank & Lee Frank Leyland Macclesfield

We've yet to find anyone who's been satisfied with Our Run. We certainly weren't.

Happy destruction

Continuing the discussion on violence in computer games I would like to express my personal views. A few nights ago I was watching a documentary about the hungover feelings and reawakening myself how terrible it was while drinking into The Eagle Bar and happily destroying hundreds of other people.

I believe that people like me do not enjoy playing a shooter as like the because they are causing death and may get into the Hall of

Fame. It would make no difference to the average game player whether they were shooting humans or mutant rubber ducks.

Although I do not condone the marketing of such violent games, I really cannot see how they can cause such apparent damage to the player's mind.

P J B London

Another idealist!

I would really like to say that I think ACE is very good value at £1.50, considering what it offers. However, there are a few things that could be done to improve the magazine.

Firstly, considering that you are catering for all computers, don't you think that four or five pages is a bit mean? Secondly, could you make the IBM column in monthly rather than an occasional feature. Thirdly, why don't you do a series of features on public domain software? And finally considering that the magazine is Advanced Computer Techniques, do you not think that the Contents should be more in line with regular stuff? In a you could review the software, hardware and manuals available for the different computers, as well as the services such as Prater, Microsoft and the scores of bulletin boards.

I hope that by making these comments I have not demurred your magazine, or that you will not just throw the letter aside, thinking 'Oh well, another reader'.

Julian Grier East Sheen, London

Julian - systems dealer. To take just one of your suggestions, we plan to do something on the world of public domain soon.

Christmas cracker

For Christmas I had a Speccy 128 and I thought that Gauntlet looked like a good game so I bought it. I played it over and over again, and thoroughly enjoyed it. One day I was playing it and something strange happened. I was on screen 43 when my health went up to 15,000 and lots of just appeared from nowhere - lots of them, not just one. Then I was transported to screen 76. I thought there were only 64 screens so I was surprised to see this.

I kept on playing and the keep on happening. Before I knew what was happening I was on screen 113. It was because of a bug or a glitch that many created? How you can't find this code? Please tell me you can't do what I could do, as I know you can't.

Hallam Skinner Oxford

We invite reader comments on this strange phenomenon.

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Mike Singleton, programmer extraordinaire, talks to Steve Cooke about Maelstrom Games and chartbusters to come.

INTO THE MAELSTROM

I think I'm going to write a textbook on vector graphics after this," murmured Mike as I gazed in awe at the 3-dimensional display he'd just set up on his PC. I kept quiet, as everyone would, because I was tentatively trying to work out just how anyone could get a machine to do what I was watching at such painstaking speed.

"Actually it's very easy when you know how," said Mike as the spinning polygon shimmered off into deep space. "But that's usually what I'm not going to tell you this one, about the mathematics, though, since the game - *Whizpop* - should be interesting even to us IT wannabes here you. Mike took us to court again but's going to double the game world by having an existing format - in this case, the 3D shooter-up - and completely reworking it by adding his own personal brand of magic.

Then done it below, at least. Lots of Microsoft-dominated small games perceptions of strategy and adventure brought by introducing "bambinesque" and the ability to avoid lots of different characters within a game. In *Demolition*'s *Survivors* he deepened his own formula, bringing out a game of mounting complexity, beauty, with *Dark Scepter*. He gave the spectrum top-down games and solved the character attribute problems of the same time with the simple but ingenious method of giving each sprite a basic outline.

One of Mike's latest revelations could be his greatest, though - and it's not even a game. It's his own company, Maelstrom Games Ltd, and together with partner

Melwyn Nelson and Hugh Lansbury, he's preparing for some even bigger bits in the months to come.

FORWARD TO BITS

"Games are becoming more and more intricate," said Mike after we'd finished gapping at *Whizpop*. "It's no longer the man and his computer doing all the work, you need to bring them - which is why I wanted to set up Maelstrom." So now gathered in a small house in Wokingham just Liverpool are three programmers who together like some of leading graphics, and music. You get some idea of the expertise when Mike, who's a no-nonsense programmer himself, says that his real job is in design. "I feel both where I'm

best employed, because there are already a lot of good programmers about."

Certainly both the games under development, *Whizpop* and *Demolition* show the benefits of the approach. Mike and Melwyn had ideas about the engine about 10 or weeks ago and then with one week on the project sharpening the design and at the same time advising the programmers. Many other software development houses work to game designs produced by non-programmers, which often leads to confusion at the coding stage, but these do not such partners at Maelstrom.

"The total involves a working Mike has strong views about 'First', he says, you've got to do a lot more on the machine.

Getting the ideas together



Two important people Mike Nelson, pulling together ideas for his...

Nelson: I come up with an idea, and Michael comes up with an idea...

Mike: ...and then we argue about it for weeks. We found an awful lot of stuff around here.

Nelson: You're trying to get some of the special something that all good games have. All of the really successful games have got a special property, which falls down to imagination.

Mike: Looking at things from a completely new angle.

Nelson: Yes, I'm thinking particularly of *Alien Attack* and *Demolition* - they were both really strange games.

While this devoted discussion was going on, the two machines were staring at a version of *Libra* on the ST. I could sit and watch this for hours," said Mike, who's programmed numerous versions of the old classic, using colour planes and new rules to generate machine displays. Mike, as THIS is why Star Trek was so late!



Be like a chess board with the king dead? Paul felt and how he will not ever forget. He of Maelstrom's up and coming game. One's looking at it, another's thinking about it. A single ST/PC program on the STC board and the

You want that more compression, it takes getting out quality stuff to fit it into the Amiga at 60-90. But to make up for that there's all the excitement of the new available. There's no "fiddle-diddle" of trying to fit it. No-one knows how far you can push the things.

What about the AT versus the Amiga? The Amiga's pig is programs - the operating system keeps trying to take care of what you're doing. The AT on the other hand is a bit like a 16-bit Spectrum - it's not a least-machine with no fancy bits, but with the Amiga you're got to set up the chip, set up that chip... Luckily today's programmers aren't quite so stupid. By the Amiga - Nick

And is particularly really every programmer on the Amiga, or on Commodore would be used that their machine is getting a single deal.

As it is, 8-bit Macintosh games are still going to require "three-gut" a lot of contacts for the 8-bit market," says Mike, so Spectrum and Commodore owners aren't going to be left out in the cold, even though there are going to have to be a few compromises in some of the 8-bit systems. In Commodore, for example, much of the attraction has had to be left out of the 64, or well as some of the variety in the tapes. Shouldn't affect the playability too much, though, so keep your fingers crossed. ■



High Definition - high levels available but it makes you sit the figure out as it is better to experiment with game design.

So you want to be a programmer?

We reckon that Amiga systems are on the top of the pile when it comes to talent and initiative, so Mike suggested that we let you all know that Macintosh games are looking for someone to join their programming team. You need to be able to handle a database of database and have some programming experience. Write in with a CV to **22a Dundee Road, Walsley, Birmingham, B44 2DA.**

For those of you who like the outside the box, Mike has some sound advice if you're planning a career in games programming. "Just get yourself a machine - whichever one you can afford - and start playing about with it," he says, and Macintosh points but that "...if you can master BASIC then you can master a low-level language, assembler, or machine code. So there's no need to worry overmuch about which language you work in, provided you can get reasonably proficient at it. So grab that manual and get coding - your money needs you!"



David Oliver and David Harvey learning away in Glen Head - you and your computer have a long time to learn.

ON THE BOIL...

Oriniblood

First out of the battery banks could be Oriniblood scheduled for release later this year by Melbourne House. William's Great, 7th Earl of Oriniblood, is having a spot of bother in the ancestral home. One of the inmates is knocking off the other guests and your job is to lock down the assassin and put the finger on him, before he does the same to you.

Once again, it looks as if Mike's team is going to be able to put a whole new slant on an old gambit. There are elements of *Clash* and *Land of Mights* as you move among the different locations in company with 24 other characters. Defined faces gleam at you from the screen, each with many different expressions that change according to mood. Stylized rainbow-hued figures glide across the display as you ask questions and converse with other characters. Finally, you can make your own character - but if you get it wrong you meet a little higher up the assassin's list.

With so many digital graphics and digitised speech in hand, Oriniblood has been pretty funny on memory, which threatens a compromise on some of the 8-bit versions. Even here, however, the programmers have turned a disadvantage into a new game feature - We've

got a compression system that squeezes the picture by up to 10 times, but the best thing is that we can decompress it whatever size we like in real-time. In practice, there are about 15,000 different scale sizes possible. You can well believe it as you see the figures walking out of the screen towards you, growing in perspective as they move.

Whirligig

From medieval murder mystery to 3D frantic shoot-em-up, Macintosh really shows their pace here. Whirligig's main asset is its speed and smoothness on screen. The programming techniques allow very complex shapes to be generated on-screen in time 3D with the result that you get a geometric scope you not only a screen look better, but very much faster.

Although, although currently running on an ST, shows that the 8-bit market still has a good on Singularity's programming rules. It first looked out the graphics routines in the Spectrum - in fact it was originally conceived as an 8-bit game, but it would obviously be too much better on a 16-bit machine.

Speed isn't the game's only strong point. Although the gameplay is still being worked on, the graphics alone are enough to make you stop

and stare. Mike has managed to introduce a new element into 3D graphics that adds believability to the realism of the display. But... it's not allowed to tell you what it's doing! "The first instant it's not, you'll get time to dump up that first after all, and tell you all about it next month..."

Delivery dates

Both Oriniblood and Whirligig look like pretty strong chart contenders - but when will we see them? If there's one thing Mike's renowned for, it's missing deadlines. Fans of Star Trek will know that prompt delivery isn't exactly Mike's style, but he's very quick to defend himself. "Yes, he certainly got something to say about that - most of the games where poor old Mike Singularity has been singled out for missing deadlines have not been games where poor old Mike Singularity has been doing the programming. That was the trouble with Star Trek, for example - half the programming team got teamed off in the middle of the project. We had had to start off again with a fresh team." The same thing happened, apparently, with *Star Trek: Voyager*. Oh Mike, we'll let you off the hook... let the crew.

ACE PINK PAGES

This month sees the introduction of a whole new regular section to the Pink Pages - Random Access - designed to baffle, perplex and entertain you. We've also updated and re-designed the hardware and software buyers' guides to make it even easier for you to find the vital information you'll need before making that expensive hardware or software purchase.

ACE RECOMMENDED SOFTWARE

ARCADE ADVENTURES

These games usually give the player a joystick controlled character with which to explore the huge game area.

AIRBALL

Wordstar ■ Amstrad 27-10a (26k)

Full-coloured three-dimensional arcade adventure that casts something in the classic eye-balls genre against no mercy of people, dead and premeditated. Now in the virtual question, your objective (control) and means fall of various obstacles - of spouting expert death, for our development of a popular genre.

EAGLE'S NEST

Wordstar ■ Amstrad 27-10a (26k) ■ Star 27-24 (24k)

This is one of the better Quander clones, especially on the 16-bit machines. The money factor of the arcade adventure with atmosphere and if you like the particular style of game, you will find it appealing with Expert level.

HEAD OVER HEELS

Orion ■ Spectrum 17.000 ■ C64

17.000 ■ C12 (26k) ■ Amstrad 17-000 (17.000) ■ ZX ■ ZX (26k) ■ IBM PC 17.000

3D exploration reaches its peak with the huge AIRBALL masterpiece. You play as characters - Head and Heels - as you search for the objects that will lead the galaxy. The puzzles are not very difficult indeed, and you'll often have to split Head and Heels up to use their different capabilities. The game's 3D graphics are really great, and the animation is marvellous throughout. Amstrad (26k).

MAGIC KNIGHT TRILOGY

Wordstar ■ Amstrad 27-10a (26k) ■ Spectrum 17.000 or Amstrad 27-10a (26k) ■ Spectrum 17.000 or IBM 17.000 or ■ Amstrad 17-000 (17.000) or Amstrad 17-10a (26k)

This trilogy is a series of many-themed arcade adventures which, as well as all the expected running and jumping, have

a complex system of interaction between characters. In Spectrum you must rescue Gandra the Wizard from the bewitched Castle of Karm in Knight Trilogy; how to find a way back in time after being transported into the 23rd century, with in Stonehenge, the final part, as

find that the magic knight has been kept in his, and you'll need the other two. You can't kill yourself, so the only solution is to merge the two halves. But how? Lots of action, plenty of thought and good graphics make of these games.

STRATEGY GAMES

The games for rogues and kings. The games listed in this section will really test your maths on the battlefield.

BALANCE OF POWER

Microquadrant ■ Amstrad 27-10a (26k) ■ Amstrad 27-24 (24k) ■ IBM PC 26.000 ■ Star 27-24 (24k)

Definitive strategy game for 16-biters. The player takes the role of one of the superpowers, while either the computer or a friend takes the other. There's a huge 80 flying 6-bit friend and numerous simple and a great scale. This can be achieved in a number of ways, including supplying units to transport and to build

factories in the hope of triggering a government which is not receptive to the great American or Russian stream (depending on which side you're playing). It's complex, involving and it's difficult to play in less than 30 minutes, demanding that you give an insight into the various world of processes.

DIPLOMACY

Lotus ■ Amstrad 17.000 ■ C64 17.000 ■ IBM 17.000 ■ PC 17.000

The grand old man of state negotiation

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Bestgames finally made it into home computers and here! The game can handle up to seven players and is an engaging and truly addictive game that's a must for most requirements.

UMS

Requires: Apple II+ IIx IIe ■ IBM PC 234 256 ■ Macintosh 234 256 ■ Amiga 234 256

Stanley's Universal Military Simulator is designed to simulate a conflict between two forces on a user-definable terrain that can be created in three dimensions from any view of eight directions. The program features a new way in 14-bit Computer

warping. The ST version is available only with the other versions following shortly.

YULGAN

OS/2 Spectrum 23 256 ■ Amstrad 25 256

An elegant, simple and rigorous roguelike, Yulgan takes the Tolkien campaign of 1962-63. A huge playing area and 16 000 phrases make the game an improvement over the genre's other notable works. Yulgan and Quest After Yulgan is fast, efficient and simple to play, and its unobtrusive designer should be without.

PUZZLES

If you're after a game that will provide you with a real challenge, without necessarily requiring large doses of strategy, looking for one of a puzzle game you want.

BOMB CRUNCHER

Spectrum 25 256 ■ OS/2 25 256

At first sight this score-keeping may appear to be nothing more than a Blast! Blast! Blast! However there are a number of highly innovative gameplay features which give Bombcruncher a feel of it is not quite right recommended for those who prefer to solve problems rather than shoot them.

BOULDERDASH

Spectrum 23 256 ■ OS/2 25 256 ■ Amstrad 23 256

A game that has everything - score addition, long-term challenges, levels, excitement as the clock ticks down and extremely tricky puzzles. You must not let your boulder in swamps, digging holes, cliffs and boulders to get at them. Boulders can drop and/or you become damaged while the boulder you enter has been by scoring progressively more. Complex but great fun. Bombcruncher is a classic you don't often see in our best recommendations.



DEFLECTOR

OS/2 25 256 ■ Spectrum 27 256 ■ OS/2 25 256 ■ Amstrad 27 256

Deflecto sets the order of the day here for the sport (especially) as the player tries to combine laser beam to a sphere and at the same time destroy a number of cells that are obstructing the path. You need to make full use of the mirrors, reflecting circles and pulsating and vibrating spheres to push or attract and aim. Great for the brain and good for fun. 500 000 is a goal. Fascinating and thoroughly addictive.

NEBULUS

Spectrum 23 256 ■ OS/2 25 256 ■ Amstrad 23 256

Such a game is the top of sight seeing using the force of platforms, ice and bridges that form the route. It's a highly

original game game that takes a few lessons between frustration and either fun, added to which is the main goal, thus making it a good looking, playable winner of awards.

SENTINEL

Spectrum 23 256 ■ OS/2 23 256 ■ Amstrad 23 256 ■ IBM PC 234 256 ■ Amstrad 23 256

Score and competing strategy game played over the (imagined) surface of a planet dominated by the Sentinel. Fundamentally you have to attack enemy while trying to make the Sentinel from attacking you. A-OK! You can and can't get things and both necessary in the very original and long - 10000 possible landscapes - game.

SKULLDIGGERY

OS/2 25 256 ■ Amstrad 25 256

Skulldiggery shows that complexity does not mean the original in this particular machine. Again, you Skulldiggery, a classic style of digging for diamonds in a classic but 100 different scenes - with a price list for each scene. Skulldiggery scores or possibly create scenes as they go with a choice of starting point and by introducing five player options.

SPORE

Spectrum 25 256 ■ Amstrad 25 256 ■ Spectrum 25 256

The winning combination of strategy, tactical thinking and great graphics make Spore a worthy roguelike contender that is highly fun to be able to play it when it's on.

TETRIS

OS/2 25 256 ■ Spectrum 23 256 ■ OS/2 23 256 ■ OS/2 23 256 ■ Amstrad 23 256 ■ OS/2 23 256 ■ Amstrad 23 256 ■ Amiga 23 256 ■ OS/2 23 256

A fascinating intellectual ability, the Russian puzzle that the obscure mathematics lesson of packing into a grid game. One of a time when fall diamonds into a rectangular playing area, left to their own devices they'll pile up until they reach the top of the screen (which is a good thing) and each time in sight to that doesn't happen. Different patterns have proved to be rather variable in their areas, especially, however, they're simple and brilliant ideas that they're well worth a look without your machine.

THINK!

OS/2 25 256 ■ Spectrum 27 256 ■ OS/2 27 256 ■ Amstrad 27 256

Cognitively oriented by Amstrad or fun price, but now available for a fraction of that price. Instead, it's a highly addictive game played on a full grid - where you

SIMULATIONS

Games that put you at the controls. Whether you're flying helicopters in simulators or driving battleships, simulation games can become very involving.

BOBBLEIGH

Digital Integration ■ Spectrum 23 256 ■ Amstrad 23 256 ■ OS/2 23 256

Average is a rolling game with enough things to make it add another dimension to a highly competent and addictive game. Here you get the chance to win play the one of the top 100 positions to the end of the season. Simulation, graphics don't look like contemporary. Though Bobbleigh is available for the IBM, it's a poor game compared to the Amstrad and Spectrum versions and therefore not recommended.



CHUCK YEAGER'S ADVANCED FLIGHT TRAINER

OS/2 25 256 ■ OS/2 25 256 ■ Amstrad 25 256

Chuck Yeager's flight trainer takes the flight simulator game a step further by including a training option. Chuck will guide the novice through such difficult manoeuvres as extreme loops and rolls. With so much in one package it will take many hours of instruction for to master all the various options.

FLIGHT SIMULATOR 2

OS/2 25 256 ■ Amstrad 27 234 256 ■ Amiga 23 256 ■ OS/2 23 256

The venerable grandfather of flight simulations, Flight Sim II is the standard by which all others are judged. Although it sports a rather weak on top of the US charts, it's still one of the best in the UK. If you have the money, this is an essential purchase.

GUNSHIP

OS/2 25 256 ■ Amstrad 25 256

Excellent graphics, involving simulation and a variety of weapons make this one of the better PC games. Finding your target around in order to use various guns may not be terribly fun, but you can send the pilot you shoot down a great lot.

LEADERBOARD

Amstrad 25 256 ■ Spectrum 23 256 ■ OS/2 23 256 ■ Amstrad 23 256 ■ OS/2 23 256

If you only has one good simulation for pilot collection, make sure it's Leaderboard. Its lead and shoulder above everything else on the usability and realism points, may be get into with delightful graphics and some subtle controls. Once you've mastered the nuances on the original version, make the most of the excellent sound and the latest Flight Leaderboard based on real sources including fly-by-wire, and also something the standard Computer 256, a score record by Accur to be so set (not so possible).

TOMAHAWK

Digital Integration ■ Spectrum 23 256 ■ Amstrad 23 256 ■ OS/2 23 256

One of the all-time great flight simulations, Tomhawk also has a striking similar edge to it. Flying it all day. Specific highlights is a complex features, and the game's realistic controls make up for some of the better ones. Chances are at the time some of the most and you can fly it out to attack ground targets, while enjoying a weather eye open for enemy aircraft. Landscape, buildings and various use of them in only under graphics.

ARCADe-STYLe

Including comic conversions. Games with a high fun factor and plenty of add-to-them features.



ARKANOID

Imaging Spectrum £7.95 ■ C64 £12.95 £13.95 ■ Amstrad £12.95 £14.95 ■ Atari £12.95 £14.95 ■ IBM £12.95 ■ MSX £12.95 ■ PC £14.95

Conversion from Atari's star-ship, it is fun from the first second of the classic Bouncer. Simple to manage, the player controls a ball at the base of the screen, shooting a ball and light. The object is to keep a third ball in play, bouncing it off the ball to destroy formations of bricks in the top half of the screen. Elements at the bottom and above go to the rest of 30 screens. Over 2000 features—continuity

in the add-to-them. As a follow-up to Bouncer, Arkanoid comes out top, but for a different kind of the same theme and some very music by ADL's output, when you bubble up the difficulty levels more gradually.

BOUNCER

Imaging Spectrum £7.95 ■ C64 £12.95 £13.95 ■ Amstrad £12.95 £14.95 ■ Atari £12.95 £14.95

A great arcade board-come-up, and very addictive too. This game is set in a bouncer top-down position to another, high above the vertically scrolling stage. Level on marked squares and you can stop shift bouncer to mark a mystery bonus. It is a joy to be in the top of the game's many levels. Bouncer and you'll see a life. Bouncer's bouncing action at the end of each level help you the game, and those tough gaps really have you coming back for more. Bright with graphics, great music—and it's so addictive.

BUBBLE BOBBLE

Imaging Spectrum £7.95 ■ C64 £12.95 £13.95 ■ Amstrad £12.95

£14.95 ■ Age 7 £13.95

Playability in the essence of this two-player arcade conversion. You and a friend play bubble-blower, blowing through 100 movement platform screens, lighting off the "bubbles" by accumulating them in your bubble. It's more than the joy that more features and various bonuses await as you reach the more difficult level screens. Don't miss the great fun of a little on the table-top. C64 will be played as one player against the computer.

BUGGY BOY

Imaging Spectrum £7.95 ■ C64 £12.95 £13.95 ■ Amstrad £12.95 £14.95

A fun-time action driving game that will keep even the most ardent Cui-Flu-ten busy for a long while. Cycled the time between in the attempt to complete the first driving course. Relatively playful and highly addictive. Buggy the should be in any living hell's shopping list.

COSMIC CAUSEWAY

Imaging Spectrum £7.95

The follow-up to the very popular Buggy Boy game. This game is the first of the exciting landscape race games you'll find in this series. You try to guide your ball through the maze of obstacles. Less technically demanding than Bouncer, but much more fun and entertaining play.

ECHOH

Imaging Spectrum £7.95 ■ C64 £12.95 £13.95 ■ Amstrad £12.95 £14.95

Graphics speak for themselves, creating a new way in which you can play. Each game you may enjoy a player's surface, leaving only of their information. It's fun and a much more fun to play to beat the first. But if things are not too tough then you can play an introduction for extra practice and play.

HIGHWAY ENCOUNTER

Imaging Spectrum £7.95 ■ C64 £12.95 £13.95 ■ Amstrad £12.95

Each game in this compilation is an excellent example of what a 2D action and racing game can do. Highway Encounter stands out in both these areas, as you play your race along each highway fighting off threats from a variety of different types of flying.

FITSTOP 3

Imaging Spectrum £7.95 ■ C64 £12.95 £13.95 ■ Amstrad £12.95 £14.95 ■ Atari £12.95 £14.95 ■ IBM £12.95 ■ MSX £12.95 ■ PC £14.95

Nothing gets you more when the screen is split into two halves and you see the car split in a front. Lots of different kinds of tracks, too. Bouncer and Bouncer.

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Amiga 42000	£8299.00
Amiga 43000	£8499.00
Amiga 44000	£8699.00
Amiga 45000	£8899.00
Amiga 46000	£9099.00
Amiga 47000	£9299.00
Amiga 48000	£9499.00
Amiga 49000	£9699.00
Amiga 50000	£9899.00
Amiga 51000	£10099.00
Amiga 52000	£10299.00
Amiga 53000	£10499.00
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Amiga 55000	£10899.00
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Amiga 57000	£11299.00
Amiga 58000	£11499.00
Amiga 59000	£11699.00
Amiga 60000	£11899.00



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SPECIALS

Original series that are simply unclassifiable feature in the section

ATF

Digital Integration • C64 £2.99
£1.99 • Spectrum £2.99 £1.99
• Amstrad £2.99 £1.99
Education counterpart for the above in the same price range.

DRILLER

Comics • C64 £1.99 £1.99
Spectrum £1.99 £1.99 • Amstrad £1.99 £1.99

The first 3-dimensional masterpiece of exploration and adventure took a year to develop. But the real test was a 4 whole world was confined into 1-bit memory to give the player such a feeling of being there. It's exciting, it's bold, it's really original and very playable. A masterpiece of computer entertainment.

ELITE

Flight • Spectrum £14.95 • C64 £14.95 £17.95 • Amstrad £14.95 £14.95 • BBC £14.95 £14.95 (available from Superior Software)

Set the best space racing game. This set is intended for other competitors to follow. One of the first space games to use vector graphics, it's a pleasing and exciting game that scores several galaxies with plenty of variety in the gameplay. You can trade legal points in relatively safe systems, or risk the quarter of points in the galactical danger zones with your total bit of computerised fun. Why then's a free fix in our £2 debugging and test disc to help you find any errors.

HATCH DAY 2

Cover • Spectrum £19.95 £14.95 • C64 £19.95 £12.95 • Amstrad £19.95 £14.95

Defeat the football game on record, magnificent animation, great graphics, various and varied computer opponents. Various responses over the course make this a fluid for all computer football fans.

QUEDEX

Thematics £14 £8.95 £14.95
In this increasingly challenging game you find there is nothing but through an

different sort of match, however and obstacles, all within a set time limit. The single game concept has a host of other features to make it particularly pleasing. You can carry over unused time to the next round, for example, and take in the different systems or players if you prefer you wait. Excellent graphics and play every evening play.

SPINDIZZY

Electric Dreams • Spectrum £3.95 • C64 £3.95 £14.95 • Amstrad £3.95 £14.95

Terminator stuff over your opening to cover tough obstacles and collect gems, against a flexible time limit, the game is intended to be a real system of odds, odds, odds, odds, and bonuses surrounded by total chaos - and 60 extra bits. 1000 bonuses activate life and energy gain, but flipping them in the right order can be harder than it looks. A free test game and a lot of free touches. Get the explanation in the book.

TAU CITY ACADEMY

C64 • Spectrum £2.95 • C64 £2.95 £14.95 • Amstrad £2.95 £14.95 • BBC £2.95 £14.95 • Amiga £1.95

Eight minutes of fun and it's equal which you can modify, smooth and edit together. The editor is built in, it's impossible as you and all other learning means in a game code. It's Academy plus get it design your own space shooter right now.

WIZBALL

Cover • Spectrum £7.95 • Amstrad £8.95 £12.95 • C64 £8.95 £14.95

A compelling and original ball game in which you become the ball and must set out to conquer the "ball" creature which are often an obstacle to the spectrum and rendering the landscape grey and blue. Controlling the wicket a goal for and makes the one of the most playable game to have appeared for a long time.

JEWELS OF DARKNESS

Paradise Level 1 • C64 £14.95 • Spectrum £24.95 • Amstrad £14.95 £19.95 • BBC £12.95 • Amiga £14.95 • BBC £14.95 • Amiga £14.95 • Amstrad £14.95

Level 1, Britain's oldest adventure programming family, have put together their own classic releases, Colonial Adventure, Outrage Adventure, and Adventure Quest on one disk. The games have been updated with graphics and better resolutions and are in close to the original spirit of adventure that yours truly feel.

Launch the fabulous Colonel of Quartz it is a game that combines the art and ingenuity of one of the world's most original software companies with that of an amazing and popular. Free copy, but with an on screen mapping facility.

GUILD OF THIEVES

Realtime/Roguelike Levels • C64 £14.95 • Spectrum £14.95 • Amstrad £14.95 £19.95 • Amiga £14.95 • BBC £14.95 • Amiga £14.95 • Amstrad £14.95

Simon's recent software software house produces a classic roguelike game that will have a lot of graphics and a lot of very hard. Powerful game help make it a challenging game.

HARDWARE BUYERS' GUIDE

	IN BRIEF	GRAPHICS & SOUND	
ACORN ARCHIMIDES			
<p>Model: Archimedes 500, 100 and 1500</p> <p>Package: Archimedes, monitor, mouse and disk (up to 1000), mouse driver, diskette monitor (diskette or mouse), 1000 or 1500 software installation kit, mouse</p> <p>Memory: 512 Kbytes, 1 Mbytes, 1.5 Mbytes</p> <p>Processor: ARM260, ARM260</p> <p>Recommended Retail Price: Starting from \$299.95 for 1000 series is a credit for 1000 with software bundle</p>	<p>At the cutting edge of many technologies - but not cheap. Not cheap because software base of larger desktop machines. They certainly do have a lot of software investments for sale.</p>	<p>Resolution: 640 x 350 x 350 x 350 or 640 x 480 or 640 x 480</p> <p>Monitor: 640</p> <p>Display: 640 x 350 or 640 x 480 or 640 x 480 x 480</p> <p>TV In: 1</p> <p>Monitor Output: 640 x 350 or 640 x 480 or 640 x 480</p> <p>Monitor Supported: Yes</p> <p>Monitor Options: None with internal 640 x 350 or external 640 x 350 or 640 x 480 or 640 x 480</p> <p>System Name: Archimedes</p> <p>Speed: 10 MHz</p> <p>System Quality: Excellent</p> <p>MSA: No</p> <p>Monitor Output: Yes, adjustable</p>	<p>Monitor: 640 x 350 or 640 x 480 or 640 x 480</p> <p>System Name: Archimedes</p> <p>Speed: 10 MHz</p> <p>System Quality: Excellent</p> <p>MSA: No</p> <p>Monitor Output: Yes, adjustable</p>
AMSTRAD CPC			
<p>Model: CPC464, CPC640, CPC664</p> <p>Package: Archimedes, monitor, mouse or mouse (up to 1000), mouse driver, diskette monitor (diskette or mouse), 1000 or 1500 software installation kit, mouse</p> <p>Memory: 64 Kbytes, 128 Kbytes, 256 Kbytes</p> <p>Processor: Z80180</p> <p>Recommended Retail Price: Starting from \$299.95 for 1000 series is a credit for 1000 with software bundle</p>	<p>The Amstrad CPC's range is a value for money and versatile line-up. You get something out there and the whole situation really isn't too bad. They're not necessarily as popular as other, but they are also a lot better than most of those generic brands.</p>	<p>Resolution: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>Monitor: 640</p> <p>Display: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>TV In: 1</p> <p>Monitor Output: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>Monitor Supported: Yes</p> <p>Monitor Options: None with internal 640 x 350 or external 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>System Name: Archimedes</p> <p>Speed: 10 MHz</p> <p>System Quality: Excellent</p> <p>MSA: No</p> <p>Monitor Output: Yes, adjustable</p>	<p>Resolution: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>Monitor: 640</p> <p>Display: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>TV In: 1</p> <p>Monitor Output: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>Monitor Supported: Yes</p> <p>Monitor Options: None with internal 640 x 350 or external 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>System Name: Archimedes</p> <p>Speed: 10 MHz</p> <p>System Quality: Excellent</p> <p>MSA: No</p> <p>Monitor Output: Yes, adjustable</p>
AMSTRAD PCW			
<p>Model: PCW800, PCW833, PCW850</p> <p>Package: Archimedes, monitor, mouse or mouse (up to 1000), mouse driver, diskette monitor (diskette or mouse), 1000 or 1500 software installation kit, mouse</p> <p>Memory: 64 Kbytes, 128 Kbytes, 256 Kbytes</p> <p>Processor: Z80180</p> <p>Recommended Retail Price: Starting from \$299.95 for 1000 series is a credit for 1000 with software bundle</p>	<p>The PCW range is designed for serious word processing and other applications. It's a good computer for word processing, spreadsheets, graphics and other applications. It's a good computer for word processing, spreadsheets, graphics and other applications.</p>	<p>Resolution: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>Monitor: 640</p> <p>Display: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>TV In: 1</p> <p>Monitor Output: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>Monitor Supported: Yes</p> <p>Monitor Options: None with internal 640 x 350 or external 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>System Name: Archimedes</p> <p>Speed: 10 MHz</p> <p>System Quality: Excellent</p> <p>MSA: No</p> <p>Monitor Output: Yes, adjustable</p>	<p>Resolution: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>Monitor: 640</p> <p>Display: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>TV In: 1</p> <p>Monitor Output: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>Monitor Supported: Yes</p> <p>Monitor Options: None with internal 640 x 350 or external 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>System Name: Archimedes</p> <p>Speed: 10 MHz</p> <p>System Quality: Excellent</p> <p>MSA: No</p> <p>Monitor Output: Yes, adjustable</p>
APPLE MACINTOSH			
<p>Model: Macintosh SE, Macintosh Plus</p> <p>Package: Archimedes, monitor, mouse or mouse (up to 1000), mouse driver, diskette monitor (diskette or mouse), 1000 or 1500 software installation kit, mouse</p> <p>Memory: 128 Kbytes, 256 Kbytes, 512 Kbytes</p> <p>Processor: 68000, 68010, 68012</p> <p>Recommended Retail Price: Starting from \$299.95 for 1000 series is a credit for 1000 with software bundle</p>	<p>It only requires a few minutes to get the Macintosh SE or Plus set up and running. It's a good computer for word processing, spreadsheets, graphics and other applications. It's a good computer for word processing, spreadsheets, graphics and other applications.</p>	<p>Resolution: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>Monitor: 640</p> <p>Display: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>TV In: 1</p> <p>Monitor Output: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>Monitor Supported: Yes</p> <p>Monitor Options: None with internal 640 x 350 or external 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>System Name: Archimedes</p> <p>Speed: 10 MHz</p> <p>System Quality: Excellent</p> <p>MSA: No</p> <p>Monitor Output: Yes, adjustable</p>	<p>Resolution: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>Monitor: 640</p> <p>Display: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>TV In: 1</p> <p>Monitor Output: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>Monitor Supported: Yes</p> <p>Monitor Options: None with internal 640 x 350 or external 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>System Name: Archimedes</p> <p>Speed: 10 MHz</p> <p>System Quality: Excellent</p> <p>MSA: No</p> <p>Monitor Output: Yes, adjustable</p>
ATARI ST			
<p>Model: Atari 1040ST, Atari 1050ST, Atari 1060ST, Atari 1070ST, Atari 1080ST, Atari 1090ST</p> <p>Package: Archimedes, monitor, mouse or mouse (up to 1000), mouse driver, diskette monitor (diskette or mouse), 1000 or 1500 software installation kit, mouse</p> <p>Memory: 128 Kbytes, 256 Kbytes, 512 Kbytes</p> <p>Processor: 68000, 68010, 68012</p> <p>Recommended Retail Price: Starting from \$299.95 for 1000 series is a credit for 1000 with software bundle</p>	<p>A traditional upgrade path from machine to machine, with a good range of software. It's a good computer for word processing, spreadsheets, graphics and other applications. It's a good computer for word processing, spreadsheets, graphics and other applications.</p>	<p>Resolution: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>Monitor: 640</p> <p>Display: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>TV In: 1</p> <p>Monitor Output: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>Monitor Supported: Yes</p> <p>Monitor Options: None with internal 640 x 350 or external 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>System Name: Archimedes</p> <p>Speed: 10 MHz</p> <p>System Quality: Excellent</p> <p>MSA: No</p> <p>Monitor Output: Yes, adjustable</p>	<p>Resolution: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>Monitor: 640</p> <p>Display: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>TV In: 1</p> <p>Monitor Output: 640 x 350 or 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>Monitor Supported: Yes</p> <p>Monitor Options: None with internal 640 x 350 or external 640 x 350 or 640 x 350</p> <p>System Name: Archimedes</p> <p>Speed: 10 MHz</p> <p>System Quality: Excellent</p> <p>MSA: No</p> <p>Monitor Output: Yes, adjustable</p>

HARDWARE & SOFTWARE		BURLINES
<p>Two new drives are presently available - the 200 and the new model 200T. Both feature 10MB, 1041 RPM format. 200 has removable 5.25 inch disk. The 200T is 3.5 inch.</p> <p>IBM Performance Enhancer III offers a completely new and totally 100% new advanced capabilities.</p> <p>HighPoint - latest point-to-point with built-in feedback performance line. Lower the communications overhead.</p> <p>Adaptive Mouse - Freedom for the disabled.</p>	<p>32-bit - Move the speed. Commodore 286 (80386) model available. 640 MB per 1041 RPM format.</p> <p>Point - 1 gigabyte upgrade, complete system available. 640 MB per 1041 RPM format. 100% new.</p> <p>IBM</p> <p>Resolving Software Base - Executive City, including the Executive.</p> <p>Business Software - 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new.</p>	<p>New Big Play - October 28th, during last weekend. The message is being passed on to around 100,000. Commodore, including the message, is being distributed. The message is being distributed. The message is being distributed. The message is being distributed. The message is being distributed.</p>
<p>Two Point - 1 on 100% format. 100% new.</p> <p>Two Point - 1 on 100% format. 100% new.</p> <p>IBM Performance Enhancer III offers a completely new and totally 100% new advanced capabilities.</p> <p>HighPoint - latest point-to-point with built-in feedback performance line. Lower the communications overhead.</p> <p>Adaptive Mouse - Freedom for the disabled.</p>	<p>IBM - 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new.</p> <p>IBM - 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new.</p> <p>IBM - 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new.</p>	<p>New Big Play - 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new.</p>
<p>IBM Performance Enhancer III offers a completely new and totally 100% new advanced capabilities.</p> <p>HighPoint - latest point-to-point with built-in feedback performance line. Lower the communications overhead.</p> <p>Adaptive Mouse - Freedom for the disabled.</p>	<p>IBM - 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new.</p> <p>IBM - 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new.</p> <p>IBM - 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new.</p>	<p>New Big Play - 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new.</p>
<p>IBM Performance Enhancer III offers a completely new and totally 100% new advanced capabilities.</p> <p>HighPoint - latest point-to-point with built-in feedback performance line. Lower the communications overhead.</p> <p>Adaptive Mouse - Freedom for the disabled.</p>	<p>IBM - 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new.</p> <p>IBM - 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new.</p> <p>IBM - 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new.</p>	<p>New Big Play - 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new. 100% new.</p>



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1040STF 100, monitor, 1st word drive	£399.00
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	IN BRIEF	GRAPHICS & SOUND	
SINCLAIR SPECTRUM			
<p>Model: Sinclair 100 and 1000 Plus (or Plus 2)</p> <p>Package: Keyboard and software included, also printer, optional peripherals.</p> <p>Storage: Plus - 48K or 128K Plus 2 - 128K Plus 3 - 128K</p> <p>Processor: Z80 (2M)</p> <p>Recommended retail price: Plus - 199.95, plus sound; Plus 2 128K Plus 3 199.95</p>	<p>The Spectrum is a superbly designed machine and deserves recognition for such. It is most often the business user with the heaviest requirements who will buy a 50 (plus) machine cheaply. The production is top quality and from a top class manufacturer. It is not really recommended enough for non-business users but for those who will want to upgrade later the 100.</p>	<p>Resolution: 256 x 192</p> <p>Printer: 4</p> <p>Options: 4. Only two colours can be used with only a 128K system. Limited graphics potential.</p> <p>TV: No</p> <p>Monitor/Output: 1000</p> <p>Monitor: Supplied (no)</p> <p>Monitor options: No. Selected features for use on monitor. Binary/RGB outputs.</p> <p>Speaker: None</p> <p>Speed: Average in fact for cost</p> <p>RAM: 4</p> <p>Expansion/Upgrade: Plus - optional Plus 2 and 3, 4, 5, 6</p> <p>RAM: Plus 48K or 128K 200K (optional)</p> <p>Harddisk/option: 512K or 1M</p> <p>Serial: 1000000, No</p>	<p>Performance: 1 channel. Poor performance - sound too slow for the Spectrum's average price, and low expansion potential means that 200K 128K was</p>
NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM			
<p>Package: Standard version - console plus game cartridges, plus 1 game (Super Mario Bros.) and 1 game (Super Mario Bros.) and 1 game (Super Mario Bros.) and 1 game (Super Mario Bros.)</p> <p>Storage: None</p> <p>Processor: 6502</p> <p>Recommended retail price: 149.95</p>	<p>Japanese software does not appear to be available but the console is available. The console is of standard home computer quality and performance is of average to good.</p>	<p>Resolution: 256 x 240</p> <p>Printer: 0</p> <p>Options: 0</p> <p>TV: Yes</p> <p>Monitor options: No or optional</p> <p>RAM: 8</p> <p>Performance: 1 channel. Includes speed system.</p>	
SEGA MASTER SYSTEM			
<p>Package: Complete kit with console, 10 game cartridges, plus 1 game (Sonic the Hedgehog) and 1 game (Sonic the Hedgehog) and 1 game (Sonic the Hedgehog) and 1 game (Sonic the Hedgehog)</p> <p>Storage: None</p> <p>Processor: 6502</p> <p>Recommended retail price: 149.95</p>	<p>A hardware buy for a console which you can't upgrade. It is, however, one of the best value systems available. The console is of standard home computer quality and performance is of average to good.</p>	<p>Resolution: 256 x 224</p> <p>Printer: 0</p> <p>Options: 0</p> <p>TV: Yes</p> <p>Monitor options: No</p> <p>RAM: 8</p> <p>Performance: 1 channel. Good sound which is not great.</p>	

WIGHT Computing Home Micro's

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Spectrum 128 plus 3	179.00
DMIP 31 60 (PC compatible printer)	199.00
Used Spectrum 48K, plus 3 month warranty	68.00
Citizen 120 printer	199.00
Joysticks	from 8.95
501 1 meg expansion kit (Amiga)	130.00
Also + Philips 8833 monitor	459.00

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Phone for items not listed

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Acorn Electron non ULA Faults	25.00
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RANDOM ACCESS

Let's face it - reading through all the action-packed colorful features and regulars in ACE is a pretty satisfying experience. But when you go out for a good meal you need that little something extra to round off a wonderful evening - an after-dinner mint, a fine Havana cigar, another helping of jam roly-poly and custard.

That's why we've introduced the brand-spanking new Random Access section, so that once you've read through the magazine you can sit down and DO something. We've got mini-listings, fiendish puzzles, cartoons and a cryptic crossword to keep you busy, entertained and - if you strike lucky - rewarded. Because there's hundreds of pounds' worth of software to be won on these pages. So dip in and do something about it. NOW!



THE ACE PUZZLE

ENIGMA VARIATIONS

Set by Archie Meades

Puzzles can intrigue, infuriate or even delight - if you crack them. The pleasure of solving the first of ACE's new puzzle series will be enhanced by the knowledge that you stand a chance of winning £25.00 of software if you're first out of the hat.

Some of the earliest mathematical puzzles are 'approximate', in which letters are substituted for digits and

the solver has to discover the original values.
For example: $46226 \times 4 =$

ECOMA would have as the solution the sum $21978 \times 4 = 87912$. In 1955 J.A.H. Hunter produced the first problems of this type which formed logic sentences. Even the apparently innocent $FOUR \times FIVE = EIGHT$ will produce an alphametic if the digits 0007 + 5201 = 10248 are substituted.

Here's an alphametic especially designed to intrigue ACE readers.

ENIGMA - ACE

If you can solve the ENIGMA, its square root will result in ACE. It

puzzle that isn't likely to present to many problems to readers of ACE. REMEMBER: each letter always stands for the same digit; different letters indicate different digits.

LISSAJ

We would we'd never ever put listings in ACE, but since the really wonderful ACE card format's given us a system needed a listing, well, what the heck - here's another one. It doesn't do anything half as useful as tell you you've just won an Amiga, but it does nicely illustrate the absurd difference between versions of Basic and consequently what a bad idea listings are in a magazine like ACE.

You thought Microsoft had standardized things years ago? Alan don't! The total lack of a suitable substitute for BASIC

ENIGMA ENTRY FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

COMPUTER OWNED _____

I think the answer is: _____

Please box the appropriate form. Do you find the puzzle

Too easy? _____

Just about? _____

Difficult? _____

Send your answers to:

**ENIGMA PUZZLE,
ACE,
c/o Queen Street,
Bath, BA1 1BJ**

Closing date: April 15th 1988

ACE PRIZE CROSSWORD 1

Set by Mips

The first correct entry shows from the posting will win software to the value of £25.00. Closing date for entries is 15th April. Solution and winner in July ACE.

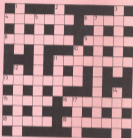
The ACE crossword is cryptic. The answers might be an anagram, or formed from the end of one word and the beginning of another, or simply another word hinted at by the clue. Most – but not quite all – of the answers are computer-related.

Down

- Down may leading moon has with pictures (5)
- Someone with cartoon as their form of a device (4)
- Pop! took it outside – it's only a piece of software (7)
- Appearing ages older when one is captured by one of Gorbis killer (6,7)
- Why a girl painter became programmer of Benarum (3,4)
- Some split in game from Con-Systems (4)
- Come face to face with me, an extra-terrestrial (4)
- Rad's got her nameless – game from Mongoose (7)
- Rebelle about single made with pointing device (5)
- Capable memory featured in the last Commodore (4)

Across

- Word that needs information for hardware (7)
- In Chris dreams do something original about the operating system (3,3)
- First Orange designed Melis for the software house (7)
- Owner from Postal Lyka found interesting (3)
- Attractive type of sea (5)
- The Danish game's on target (3,3)



- DA is out to break the code (3)
- A game's not an item, right? (7)
- Partly same role for a PC (5)
- An joining the journal to make a mark (7)

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SAJOU FIGURES

means that ST Basic can't handle the simple picture-drawing task. The Amiga meanwhile has no PLOT command or its equivalent, so you'll need to draw a line of zero length to get the desired effect. The OS4's got either more of an excuse for its shortcomings – it's too old, the old don't getting on a bit – but without proper graphics commands it's need a very different-looking program to get the job done.

The listing turns out L-shaped figures – the shapes made by objects performing simple harmonic motion (pendu-

lum) for example) in two dimensions. It chooses such shapes at random, drawing a line one each time you hit a key. It's based on a GPC listing from Dave Amazing AmigaWorld Developer by Martin Parkin (Interface Publications, £7.95), but all you can imagine is what had to shuffle things around a bit to make it run on the Amiga and Spectrum. Even so, only lines 10 to 80 are common to all three versions; lines 100 to 400 are different on each machine, to allow for variations in text and display characteristics.

MAIN LISTING

```
10  graph:100
20  if ready:17 then go 30
30  let s:=int(rnd*19)+10+4
40  s:=s-int(rnd)*s:if s<=0 then go 100
50  if ready:17 then go 30:30
60  let s:=1:graph:100
70  if ready:17 then go 100:100
80  if s>=0 then let s:=s-int(rnd*s)
90  goto 30
```

AMORAS (SIB)

```
100 randomize line:=1+y*4 mode
1 return
200 graph:400:pic:0:0:0 return
300 graph:400:line:0:0:0 return
400 let s:=100:100:100:0:0
500 s:=200+int(rnd*10) return
```

SPECTRUM LIST

```
100 randomize s:=1+y*4 mode
1 return
200 graph:400:pic:0:0:0:0:0 return
300 let s:=int(rnd*400)+100
400 s:=s-int(rnd*s):if s<=0 then
500 s:=int(rnd*10)+10 return
```

AMIGA LIST

```
100 randomize line:=1+y*4 mode
1 return
200 graph:400:line:0:0:0:0:0 return
300 graph:400:line:0:0:0:0:0 return
400 let s:=100:100:100:0:0
500 s:=200+int(rnd*10) return
```


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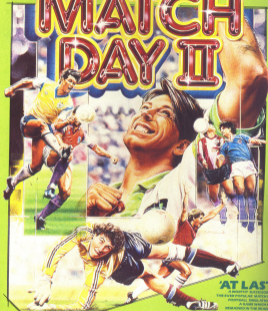
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