

Atari ST
Amiga
CBM 64/128
Spectrum
Amstrad
IBM + more

ISSUE 12 • OCTOBER 1988 • £1.50

ACE

ADVANCED • COMPUTER • ENTERTAINMENT

THE
YEAR'S

100
DAZZLING ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

TOP GAMES

RATINGS • TIPS • TARGETS

THE THE THE THE THE

The first 3 years

Computer industry sources speak of alarm and disbelief today as US Gold - Kempter brothers in home entertainment software - announced plans for a September retail that marks a milestone in the development of the home computer industry. Titled "HISTORY IS IN THE MAKING", it chronicles the early giant successes of this exciting industry and regarded by many experts to be the finest single collection of computer games ever produced..... a real must for computer enthusiasts and a true collector's item to be treasured for years to come.

In just four short years home computer entertainment has grown into a furious and exciting industry not only bringing much pleasure and enjoyment to many youngsters throughout Great Britain and Europe, but creating a whole industry that has made enormous strides forward in technology and the standards of entertainment.

No company has done more to advance the cause than US Gold. Deriving its name from the early activities of importing software from America and adapting it for the home market, US Gold has

constantly led from the front, outstripping competitors in satisfying the demands of an increasingly discerning public. US Gold now stands firmly at the head of a very stable and vital industry leaving behind it many memorable and outstanding achievements.

Now the company has announced plans to create another landmark - it's taking those early masterpieces from its own outstanding success and bringing them together in one collection - 15 true classics in all. A spokesman for US Gold is not surprised at the market's reaction when he

commented to an expert: "US Gold in entertainment software industry in the UK and in Europe.

"In short, the collection will appeal to everyone. It's not just a compilation of games but a true chronicle of the development of this fantastic industry of ours."

It's hardly surprising competitors are unhappy. From the very early days we were the industry leader - we therefore developed some real innovative games - games that we called classics of their infancy to

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NEWS

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MONDAY, 19TH SEPTEMBER, 1988

in the Making

No one has achieved as much and no one is able to command such outstanding talents. Now a mature market in its evidence, we decided that the time was right to make a bold statement about how significant and impressive computer software is, we therefore collected together these classics - collected from only our first three years - and set to publish them in one historic pack. Many of today's enthusiasts may have been too young to have played the originals - it's obviously a real treat for them and many of the older players will treasure the value that such a collection offers. In short, the collection will appeal to everyone - it's not just a compilation of games but a true chronicle of the development of this fantastic industry of ours.

BRACH HEAD... the leader of the pack, US Gold's first quarter of a million seller. **BRUCE BIRD...** the first famous face to join US Gold.

SPYUNTER... Billy Midway's armoured car classic became a home computer cult. **RAID...** impressive yet controversial. **Raid** hit the headlines in the national press. **GOONIES...** Spielberg film translated into the first simultaneous two player interactive arcade game. **SUPERCYCLE...** the lips spectacular on two wheels. Fast and furious - an all-time racing classic. **WORLD GAMES...**

around the world with 8 incredibly, and unusual events by Epyx. **EXPRESS RABBIT...** a rabbit's foot's arcade action - the Easter hit of that year. **INFILTRATOR...** arcade strategy simulation - all ingredients that culminated into a European No. 1. **BEACH HEAD II...** tough action sequel, another monster chartbuster by Access. **GAUNTLET...** the biggest selling computer game 1987, over 300,000 sold

- the last great arcade competition. **ROAD RUNNER...** the summer No. 1 of that year - cartoon, coin-op offers from Atari Games. **IMPOSSIBLE MISSION...** the benchmark test for all subsequent platform games, still regarded by many as one of the greatest computer games of all time. **KUNG FU MASTER...** a Galleg No. 1 - Data East - often limited, never emulated. **LEADERBOARD...** "This is the sports simulation of the year - if not the decade", Zap 84.

Besides its position as a collection piece the package is considered by many to offer inherent value for money and an opportunity not to be missed. Many computer enthusiasts await eagerly the mid-September release and comments such as "I've started saving now...", "I wasn't into computers when the early releases came out, I'm looking forward to playing

them now...". "I've only heard of such games as Beach Head, now's my chance to see what I've missed..." are common amongst the players that we've talked to.

"But the real winners are the buying public - it's fantastic value."

Perhaps one of the most informative comments was made by an industry insider: "US Gold seem to have done it again. What we've all happily continuing, competition from any product we can find and offering them to the public in value-for-money packs, US Gold have put together the finest collection of classic games ever assembled and the support material and giveaways will be just as good and up to their usual amazing standard. Quite simply, I think we're all pleased once again, but the real winners are the buying public - it's fantastic value."

Where will US Gold go from here - well no one knows, all we can really say is that if they keep going on making history like this then they can only keep going on from success to success and all computer owners will be pleased for that to continue.

"HISTORY IN THE MAKING"
The First Three Years

LEADERBOARD
EXPRESS RABBIT
EXPRESS RABBIT
SUPER CYCLE GAUNTLET
BEACH HEAD II INFILTRATOR
KUNG FU MASTER BRUCE BIRD GOONIES
WORLD GAMES ROAD RUNNER BEACH HEAD

The games selected to honour this special collection are each of outstanding merit in their own right...

SPECIALS

38 Games Milestones

Every so often, a game makes history. From the moment you set eyes on it, from the moment you grasp the joystick and the blood starts pounding, you realize that life in front of your computer will never be the same again. Only *Ultima* checks out great moments in games history.

25 Pixel Profits

Get your shades and ACE's definitive guide to the software business, from the computer graphics. Sprites, backgrounds, and cash, cash, cash. Make those pixels pop!



A space is born at the Applegate game festival...

116 Power to the Player

Is 16-bit, great, yesterday's technology? ACE breaks it all the thought of 28-660 megapower.

32 It's Showtime!

ACE presents the one-and-only unofficial guide to the PC Show. Even if you miss the show, you can't miss this!

INTERFACE

7 News



What's been done, and what's been said this month in the world of advanced computer entertainment. It's happened, it's here.

What's next... what's off the top of the editor's head?

18 Previews

These games are set to get you. Get 'em first!

100 TOP GAMES

They're mean, they're tough, they're the 100 top games of 1987/88. These are the tried, tested, and never-bested block-busters of the last year. They've got what it takes, but have you?

106 Letters

The ungrateful, the unapologetic, the unbearable, unrelieved ACE readers discuss the burning issues of today, and tomorrow.

154 The Blister End

Sony, but not just here to have the last word. This is it...

SIGHT...

21 Weather Report

Brian Latham, the great professor, continues his state-of-the-art guide to 3D graphics. This month he conjures up a series of dazzling skyways for those who make feisty weather out of light work.



GAMEPLAY

75 Screen Test



Page 75: Struggle it - Battle it it again.

It's level Sargolde it takes off - and takes most of the ACE Team with it. Fernandez really must die, and probably would if he came up against *Starblaster II PLUS*. *Samurai Overlander*, *Star-Scope*, and a host of other well-timed releases.

29 Arcade Revolution

EMU's 27-based video coin-op system is going to revolutionize the arcade. When was the last time you saw a *Starblaster* in the pub? Andy Smith checks. First.

118 Tricks 'n' Tactics

Intelle *Breakin' Out*: the definitive playing guide to *Central Director*, all the level codes for *Steer-Dead*, *Team Alien* and a host of tips for *Pandora*, *Leatherneck*, and *Counted It*. Load, yank, and fire forever.

23 Graphics Accounts

What? It appears that Europeans are also fooled, after all. Brian rounds up the latest news and puts you in the picture.

AND SOUND

98 The Food of Love

Music is the food of love and boy, did the emotions run high at this year's British Music Fair. Mark Jenkins reports...

100 In Concert

Terry Riley is concert with the *Electric Symphony Orchestra*... Computers and MIDI continue to fuel musical innovation on stage and off.

THE ACE CARD

Win an Amiga!

Turn to page 115 for details of your chance to win the Amiga we're giving away - and check the Random Drawings Page to see if your name is Amiga or any of the shopping (M) software prizes we offered last month.

Ultima's high score, I'm going to play, deliver only.

The game news, K.C. is

Every day, you can own it.

Over the US-2000, you'll

Save a

A whole

A

12

AGOs to get, online

To you, search, coffee, enough

Can M, Clarity, Can you play

People, take a little bit

102 Adventures

Ultima V gets the PC's highest rating ever. The latest Design/Systems role-playing masterpiece delivers. Find out why, and how.



114 Play by Mail

This game is the *Tricks Below*. Hoisting. Plus news of *Bliss*, *Gamma* magazines, *Dark*, *Waters* from K&C, and the takeover of *Game* Bell.

BUY LINES

115 The Ace Card

Every month we deliver hundreds of pounds worth of prizes to ACE cardholders. And you can get your own card absolutely free...

116 Solid US Gold

Are you fed up going on a REAL adventure? ACE and US Gold 800 are going away 1000 worth of great vouchers. Will you ever come back down to Earth?

118 Special Offers

Save up to 50% off a single game. These certainly aren't the really rare special offers.

109 Subscription

Avoid you a Britain's best games magazine, plus a special bonus - US Gold bookstubs at half price.

ACE PINK PAGES

123 Software Buyers' Guide

ACE's monthly guide to the games you're just got to get. Every month brings a collection of specially recommended titles for your machine. Next, we?

132 Upgrade Guide

Do you want a bigger, better computer, with? The search starts here with ACE's comprehensive guide into powers and pitfalls of today's most sought-after machines.

135 Random Access

Can't/Car? The book's response: *Horror*. Dig/Trade? Can you solve the ACE password? Can you break the month's puzzle? Can we stop playing *Delaks*. Nope, we can't...

147 Readers' Pages

People from around the world, the ACE helpers, the Site, and groups... We give you the pages, you fill them...

1 YEAR OLD!

When you have a birthday, people give you presents, right?

Wrong. When we have a birthday, we give you presents. And the best present we could think of was this issue.

It's a celebration of the magazine you've helped us to build over the last twelve months.

It's packed with features, because your response to the magazine has spurred us on to even greater efforts. We want to make sure you get your money's worth...and more.

It's authoritative, because we've found ourselves writing about games for people who aren't spotty eight-year-olds. Now we can really say what we think about the games we play and know that you'll understand what we're on about.

It's getting bigger and better every month, because there are now tens of thousands of you out there to support us. You're stuck by us, and we'll stick by you...

If we ever let you down, set the phasers to stun...and come out looking for us. The photo below should give you some idea of just what sort of aliens you're after...



From left to right: Neil Loxton, Andy Smith, Andy Wilson, Trevor Wilson, Steve Cook, Bob White

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Your quest is interstellar wealth and to hell with glory



The universe stretches before you. A million worlds await your exploitation. Unimaginable wealth is your destiny if you can master the art of interstellar navigation, survive the cut-throat of the planet drive, and evade the deadly space pirates. Forget the medals, forget the honors, forget the glory. As a member of the Federation of Free Traders you live for money and will probably die for it.



FEDERATION OF FREE TRADERS



ATARI ST/AMIGA
£29.99



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Gigawatt Graphics & Software Ltd.,
Alpha House, 10 Curzon Street,
Manchester M2 4PS. Tel: 0161 2363421

AMIGA UPSURGE

If it's cheap, it's powerful, and it's played an important part in changing the fortunes of a troubled company. It's the Amiga, of course, now selling at only £295 and Commodore, once on the brink of bankruptcy, have just reported an astonishing six-fold leap in earnings. "There's simply no real competition for the machine," declared a company spokesman. "The price-cut has positioned the A500 exactly for games players..."

Meanwhile, dealers in London's Tottenham Court Road have confirmed the upsurge in Amiga sales. One chain has recently stopped selling IT's altogether. "We dropped them as soon as the price levelled off. Atari are really wrong," claimed a salesman. Can this be true? Is the turbine really outstripping the fan?

A year ago the ST was striking ahead in the race to become the number one upgrade option for gamers. It was cheap, with lots of software, and relatively reliable. By contrast, the Amiga was expensive, with little software, and prone to operating system problems. Things seem rather different these days...

First, in the USA, the Amiga is reported to be stepping on the ST of many carriers. A spokesman for Atari reported that the company's sales in the States was now "particularly concentrating on the video games market this year, which has shown enormous growth in the States recently."

When asked about the rumored loss of ST sales to the Amiga, our source maintained that the company were "pleased but not excited at the current trends". Hmm...

Second, in all European territories except Britain and France, Amiga sales are said to be topping the ST by a substantial margin.

In reply, Atari are rumored to be launching a new ST in 1988, offering 4096 colours on-screen and stereo sound. The company deny all knowledge of such a product, but there's no doubt that their Computer Technology could be channelled into a "Super ST". A recent suggestion in the national press concerning such a product was endorsed by an Atari spokesman as "being along the right lines."

Meanwhile, all that has to do is drop the price back to £295 for the ST and watch it fly like Christmas. Keep your fingers crossed...

SINCLAIR PROFESSIONAL NO-LAUNCH

September 1987 may be unlikely for some. It could be egg on the face for all of us (including ACE) if events don't turn out as predicted. We're talking, of course, about the new PC-compatible C286 games-computer, now dubbed the Sinclair Professional, and reported on in last month's ACE.

Amstrad are now reported to be launching this body on the aforementioned date. Meanwhile there have been a frantic spin-of-words that the company are up to anything, from any new products, and least of all are planning such a machine. As soon as we announced a new product, you'll be the first to know," an Amstrad spokesman assured us. Of course there's no such machine! Amstrad course will be sticking out Olympia, where the non-existent launch is supposed to be taking place, on the unlikely 13th. Get your eggs ready...

PBM GOES LIVE

Take play-by-mail games as all very well, but would you fancy getting involved in one in real life? In a flash of macho/matrix inspiration, Mark's Kingdom, founders of the PBM 'It's Murder!' have decided to go live and invite partners in a series of blood-curdling scenarios on the Cornish cliffs.

The first 'It's Murder! Holiday Weekend' is September 17th/18th and features professional actors and actresses in a 'Mute O'Murder' investigation. For £149.50 (inc. VAT) you get the full works: meals, cocktails, a drink, and of course the chance to catch some dirty devil slinking a dagger in someone

other's back, or pushing them gently over the cliffs.

or... You're expected to arrive the previous (or) Sunday evening. If you're interested, or want details of future events, phone them on 0240 170925.

By Photo: Julia Brinkley, Stoke



The cliffs at Porthgwartha, Cornwall - a beautiful scenery great for the late King of Britain. How you can tell their distinctive features in real-life, and enjoy a real challenge game.

GREMLIN'S AUTUMN BLOCKBUSTER

Gremlin have revealed details of their big release for the Autumn: called *Federation of Free Traders*. Based on the most realistic space simulation available on home computer to date, it's been in development for over 12 months and will be available on the ST, Amiga and PC at £25.95.

It's similar in concept to *Elite* but with an awful lot of modes, bells, whistles and flashing lights on. Not only have you got space combat in solid 3D and tracking, but it goes into much greater depth than anything previously. There's a computer within the computer that you can actually program to play little sub-games on.

You can hold conversations with other pilots and gain vital information from them.

As well as improving your ship by looking on all sorts of weapons



Simulation of Free Traders, from Gremlin

and devices, there are a whole host of missions to be performed. Ranging out of places to explore will be hard on you because there are 6 million planets to visit. The 16-bit version of *Elite* which are on the way will obviously have some stiff competition from FFT. Unless it's been considerably upgraded *Elite* could find itself being dethroned out of the galaxy.

"The 16-bit market thrives on innovative product with better appeal," says Gremlin's MD Ian Stewart, Federation of Free Traders has been produced to cater to the every whim of about 10-15 game designers."



A powerful monster produced using the STOS sprite editor.

CUSTOMISED GAMES WITH STOS

Madrain Software are releasing a games programming kit that they say will 'transform the Alan 11 into the ultimate games writing machine'. It's called STOS and has been developed by French programming team Jean International.

However, you can not only create your own games but customise existing ones. Madrain have already successfully tested it with

several games like Bubble-Boyle, Alan Synchroniser and Fusion-Naut. They've learnt to get software houses producing games using STOS. Madrain's Chris Payne says: 'I think its primary use will be in the budget sector where games have been a little dull. Good software can be produced quickly - the finished game goes away with a 3.5floppy written in just two days using it.'

'We hope software houses will leave options unexplored so that you can modify the games to suit yourself. Wouldn't it be great to call up the Bubble-Boyle sprites and edit them? That way, even if you don't want to create your own games, you can alter existing ones.' STOS comes complete with three pre-programmed games, an icon editor, sprite editor, character set editor, music editor and a room designer, for £29.95 on three disks.



The finished screen that took just two days to programme using STOS.

RARE COINS FROM SUMMIT

New budget label Summit, sister company to Alternative Software, are offering an unusual competition prize. It's a set of odd coinage - pounds, shillings and pence in mint condition. All you have to do is enter to try to work out how much the price of Summit games, £2.95, would be in odd money.

The reason for the novel prize is a 1.50lb coin game called Sum-it, based on the old currency system. Confused? Well the coin game was invented by Frederick C. Huley, father of Summit and Alternative boss Roger Huley. Entries for the competition should be sent on a postcard to Summit Software, C/O Solution PR, 2 Wellington Court, Winton Drive, Brighton BN1 1TS. Closing date: 15th October.

Roger Huley, boss of Summit Software, shows off his odd coinage.



WIDGETS...

WATCH THIS SPACE

Those innovative Japanese have done it again. The folks at Seiko have designed a wrist terminal that looks and acts like an ordinary digital watch - but can hook up directly to your PC!

The watch holds some 80 pages of 24 characters each. Simply plug the watch into the computer and you can type in all sorts of useful things - credit card numbers, addresses etc etc - via the keypad. Then at the press of a button you can roll up the display on your watch whenever you need it. If you're a busy businessman who doesn't want to carry a PDA around, this could be just the thing you're after. The Seiko RC-1000 is only available by mail order in the UK, from Pacific National, Chestnut House, 106 Regency Street, London W1M 0SA, at a price of £28.95, which includes the watch, specifications, data transfer cable, user manuals and software (IBM PC or compatible only).



KONIX U-TURN

Those radical Welsh joystick design and manufacturers Konix created something of a stir a couple of years ago when they launched their hand-held Speed King joystick. The joystick broke all the accepted rules of joystick design and Konix swept the records by managing to sell almost 2 million of the things.

Konix are now set to launch their latest range of joysticks at this year's PC show. The names of the joysticks - Predator and Megalodon (Predator's smaller brother) - give an indication of what we can expect the things to look like. Will they be even stranger looking than the Speed King? Well we have to stop the things in our heads whenever we play our favourite games!

Curiously the answer to those questions is... No. As you can see from the photo, in which company director Sandra Holloway's holding the Predator, the joystick seems to be... an extremely standard joystick. As the joysticks are designed to be placed on table tops but even so, it's not just that feature that we've come to expect from Konix, but it's

EARTH EXCLUSIVE

So sorry, the American joystick manufacturers, whose products are handled over here by Microglobe, have been showing their own trumpets recently by launching their latest joystick - the Analog Plus - as The first 321 century

analog joystick. On Earth, how what does an analogue joystick mean in its games players? Most joysticks are digital controllers, which means they're based on switches that are either on or off. There's no middle ground between centre and left or centre and up - a direction's either selected or it isn't. Analogue joysticks, however, are based on resistors (or potentiometers). They tell the computer not only which way you moved the joystick, but how big the move was as well. Unfortunately, your machine has to have an analogue joystick port to be able to support an analogue joystick, which is no problem if you own a PC or Apple II, but it's no good to ST, Amiga, Spectrum or Amstrad owners.





INCENTIVE ECLIPSED

Incentive have announced the latest game to be produced using their Proimage programming system - Total Eclipse. The game is set in Egypt, but further details are embargoed till next month's issue. don't miss it!

Neating completion are the ST and Amiga versions of the first Proimage game, Drifter. As you can see from the screen shot above it's had a substantial redesign of the instrument panel and looks a lot better for it - review soon.

BIG BOYS GO BUDGET

Some of the biggest games of recent years are about to make a dramatic re-appearance as budget titles.

Chart-topping titles such as Bubble Bobble, JetSet Willy and Flying Shark are all set to scale the heights again at a lower price.

In the case of Bubble Bobble and Flying Shark they are also both re-issuing bonuses, and there hasn't been many of these appear in budget form. Bubble Bobble is due out in mid-November at £1.99 on Spectrum Amstrad and C64 from Silverbird. Flying Shark follows from the same source in early January '88, also at £1.99 on Spectrum, Amstrad and C64.

The two big re-releases from Hassen's budget label Bobble are JetSet Willy and Conquest. Both are horizontal scrolling shoot-em-ups with the emphasis very firmly on non-stop action. JetSet Willy was written by Andrew Bradbrook and set two standards in shoot-em-ups for the C64. Today both it and Conquest (a Thomson game by Steven Prazakaj) have had



Budget Bobble

some of their sparkle but are still great tests of arcade skills.

Silverbird also have big re-releases from three other major software houses - Microsoft, Palace and Digital Integration. The Microsoft games are Riggins (October), Dynamite Dan II (October) & Jet Set Combat (September). The Palace games are Coulter 1 (out now) & 2 (November) and The Sacred Armour of Antiriad (January '88). Finally there's Fighter Pilot (September) and Night Gunner (February '88) from Digital Integration. All the games are available on the three major 16-bit computers, Spectrum, Amstrad and C64, at £1.99.

SNIPPETS...

■ UP AND COMING TITLES FOR YOUR MICRO

BATTLE CHIEFS

Incept/Electronic Arts
Amiga £24.9500
IBM PC £24.9500
Incept Productions, who were responsible for The Bard's Tale series of games, are about to release their first title as an independent software house. Battle Chiefs combines the strategy of chess with combat action and even takes some 3D's at animation and approximately 400k of digitised sound. The Amiga version will be here first with the PC version following shortly after.

JORDAN VS BIRD: ONE ON ONE

Electronic Arts
C64 £13.9500
IBM PC £23.9500
Michael 'The Hammer' Jordan, top scorer of the Chicago Bulls and Larry 'The Shouter' Bird from the Boston Celtics face each other in this basketball sim which is the follow-up to EA's most successful sports sim of all time. Jordan and Larry also do One on One. There are three events to compete in including the Slam Dunk Competition.

GALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE

Ocean
Amstrad £9.9500 £12.9500
C64 £9.9500 £12.9500
Spectrum £9.9500 £12.9500
Amiga £24.9500
Mac II £19.9500

Four years after Ocean first released Galey Thompson's Decathlon - a terrific game even by today's standards - we see the

sequel. The game features 10 events including 100m sprint, hurdles, pole vault and javelin. Before you compete in the events though, you'll first undertake a strenuous work-out with weights in the gym.

EXTENSION

Interceptor
Amiga £9.9500
April '87 £9.9500



Climb aboard your spacecycle and prepare to compete in the Interceptor Tournament on the planet Space. Your spacecycle emits energy balls as it moves and to succeed in the game, you have to force the computer opponents into the energy trails.

THE MARS SAGA

Electronic Arts
C64 £19 £24.9500
This science-fiction role-playing game offers the depth of play similar to The Bard's Tale series of games in a game set on Mars. Having crash-landed on the planet, your only hope of escape is to become a bounty hunter and earn some dough so you can buy your way back. The game includes the on-to-trendy auto-mapping option. Mars Saga's due for release sometime in October.





The Dungeons and Dragons game concept has become almost a household word these days. The system enables a group of players to avoid their fantasies in a complex and detailed environment that is built up by the skilled Dungeon Master according to the rules of the D&D game system.

D&D has spawned dozens of iterations

GO WILD!

...and go free of charge! US Gold/SSI are celebrating the launch of their two games based on the Advanced Dungeons and Dragons products by offering you the chance to create your own real-life adventure.

and a lot for the best known role playing game (RPG) on the market. For a long time now computer gamers who were aware of the possibilities of implementing it on a PC have waited for someone to take the leap. Now US Gold and SSI are out to answer their prayers.

Two games are being released initially. The first, *Pool of Radiance*, is a fantasy role-playing epic in which the player must ally both to save the city of Phlan from an invasion of evil forces. You don't do this all as your own, however, since in the RPG style you first create a group or 'party' of characters - each with his/her own attributes - and then lead the party into action. Much of the interest in the part of game comes from the identification you build up with the characters - and losing a favorite can be a traumatic experience.

The second game, *Secrets of the Lazarus*, is a more cozyly clicking. Although you still control a party of characters with different attributes, the emphasis is on action, as well as adventure as you descend into the cursed temple of that wizard to destroy the dragon Euzard and retrieve the fabled Stone of Malivak.

These games have been long awaited. Both US Gold and SSI are obviously certain that they've given the progress everything they've got. Stand by for the definitive review in ACEL and meanwhile enter the competition and start planning an adventure of your own - for real!

THE PRIZES

First prize is a stunning D&D travel reader that you can spend in any way you choose. Blow it all on a trip for two to the grand old USA, or spend a few weekends in Paris, or wander over to Bombay. 'tis choice, you travel, but you pay for the postcard home!

Second prize is a complete set of *Advanced Dungeons and Dragons* books, worth up to £80. So even if you can't travel in real life, you can still travel into other worlds of fantasy and imagination...if you're not the prize!

PACKED WITH FEATURES!

Just check out these *Pool of Radiance* features...

- Cities, dungeons, and encounters shown in 3D perspective.
- Personalize your heroes with their own weapons, armor, and colour.
- Up to 8 characters including two computer-controlled characters (NPCs) in your party.
- Four classes, six races, nine 'alignments' (moral attributes).
- Full adventurer's Journal supplied complete with history maps, clues, and 'hints'.
- Translation wheel to convert British and Danish into English.

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO

Fill in the entry form on this page (a photocopy will do fine, but only one entry per household, please) and answer the three questions correctly. Then post it off to us at:

SSI Competition, ACEL Magazine, 4 Queen Street, SM7H 8AJ 1BU

Your entry must reach us before 6th October 1988. The first prize will be awarded to the first entry drawn at random from those entries received by the closing date above. Second prize will go to the second correct entry drawn. Get to it!

THE RULES

1. Employees of Future Publishing, US Gold/SSI or of any company involved in the sale and distribution of ACEL magazine are not eligible to enter.
2. Competition closes 31st Oct 1988.
3. The winner of the prizes is first and no correspondence will be entered on.
4. Only one entry per household.
5. No purchase of ACEL magazine is necessary and price--tags of the entry form are acceptable.

ENTRY FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TEL. NO _____



1. In *Pool of Radiance*, which city has been overrun by monsters?

2. Which cursed temple do your party of characters penetrate in *Secrets of the Lazarus*?

3. What does NPC stand for?

What computer do you own? _____

THE BRONX CLUB

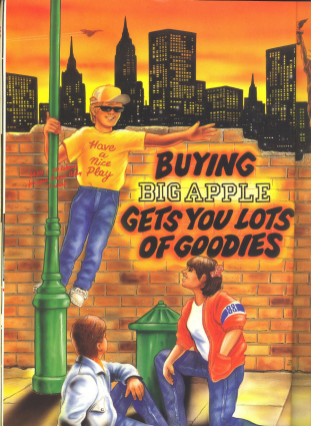
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ON THE STREETS



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No Obligation...

...You're welcome to use the Bronx Club as often as you like. There is no obligation to purchase or redeem tokens for products in order to retain club membership.

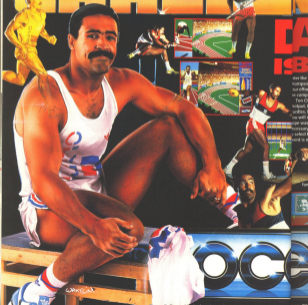
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Signed
BRONX BILLY



p.s.
Have a Nice Play

DALEY THOMAS'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE



DA
IS

For the
hompson
an effort
in camp
Ten O
helped
and his
we will
get into
necessary
perfect
word is

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THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE DALEY IS BACK!

Enter the 1988 Olympic Challenge with Daley Thompson as you "work out" in the gym, where your efforts will directly affect your performance in his competitor itself - another first from Ocean.

Two Olympic events include Long Jump, Shotput, High Jump, 100m Sprint, 400m, 110m Hurdles, 800m, Pole Vault, Javelin and 1500m. You will need all your skills to build on what you hope was an impressive work-out, and, as it is necessary for all top flight athletes, your judgment to select the most effective equipment for each event is now vital - a decision which can win or lose you a place on the podium. This isn't just another sports simulation, this is a Daley Thompson "event" where all his talent and humour found through to make a thrilling and entertaining game play for all the family. Go for the Olympic Challenge!



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87 • Watch those soldiers...they're loose soldiers...

VETERAN

• Software Horizons

This brand new software house has been named to provide the quality software for the IBM machines. One of their first games will be *Veteran*, an exciting simulation in which you take the role of a tank commander. The game features three separate missions, with the first mission being the destruction of the enemy headquarters.

88 • Anything else on you want to look at?



007 - Only One In Japan!



NEUROMANCER
 The game features a digital interface by that name, allowing you to interact with the game. In *Neuromancer*, you always enjoy the part of a computer leader looking out for human development and information. Here you get what it takes to lead: the government and corporate computer systems!

89 • The time to improve your intelligence if you hope to survive.

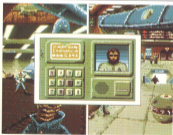
NEUROMANCER

• Electronic Arts

Thrilling reading Japan's the setting for this game based on the William Gibson novel *Neuromancer*. Gibson's worked with creating the intense future subculture of *Cyberpunk* that's influence this like *Blade Runner*, *Blade and Blade Runner*. The game features a digital interface by that name, allowing you to interact with the game. In *Neuromancer*, you always enjoy the part of a computer leader looking out for human development and information. Here you get what it takes to lead: the government and corporate computer systems!

What have those software houses got cookin'? ACE takes its monthly look into the games oven to see how those hot forthcoming titles are doin'. Will they turn out to be finger lickin' good? Or just half-baked?

HEY, GOOD LOOKIN'



87 • Interacting with a well rounded information base.

B.A.T. • Ubi Soft

As a member of the B.A.T. organization (Bureau for Advanced Technology) in the twenty first century, you'll get a very important mission to complete. Fortunately, you'll be able to get help from the computer that's been transported into your forward which (among other things) requires your vital functions. The game's got all that B.A.T. that you've come to expect from the B.A.T. with all the action you expect through successful missions.

88 • Stunning graphics, but then it is a French game.



24 - Night is up to the hills and the forest are dark.

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE ● Firebird

It's night in the forest against the evil magic beings in your task in this latest 3D graphics game. Monsters stalk the streets and there are great fire and storm fire attacks. Playing either Tarzan or Hans in this beautiful game, you're put to test the Golden-Rose Secret in its original place and in other part of these hot topics.



27 - Top view of one of game structures, Luxor and Luxor 2.

THE BLACK ORCHID

● Mundane Software

Mundane Software are a new name in the software world, writing games specifically for the Atari machines. Their first game's called The Black Orchid and it's a before battle for one or two players on the PC.

The game takes place on an island with software and evil. Both sides have your half of the Black Orchid Ball, and wants the other Ball before you get the other player's stuff you'll have to capture their island. The game's initially only available and only on the PC.



28 - Good looking, let's hope it plays as well.

FUSION

● Electronic Arts

Another product that EA have developed in the UK, is this game that combines strategy and strategy elements. In your spaceship you're trying to collect the scattered remnants of an ancient and powerful race. Strategic planning is required as you locate clues, identify enemies and find the right keys to open doors and move between levels.

LUXOR

● Software Horizons

In this space-faring you have to battle through three planets of various colors to reach a beautiful planet. The game was produced for the new software house by Firebird Software Ltd who have some CD-ROM titles to their credit.



27 - Make these battles as easy.



25 - Just one of the game's many characters you're able to interact with.



26 - Who you should want to know anything is do with this character needs to be used.

FINAL COMMAND

● Ubi Soft

In this game you play the part of a space mariner. There's just been killed by a technological to capture the new lands from a space station that's been attacked by an alien army. In your control have your work out out. That's if you manage to figure out how to fly the space shuttle you're been told and get there in the first place.



29 - Racing around the course, the rider's just ahead.

POWERDROME ● Electronic Arts

This looks likely to be EA's first U.S. release that's been developed entirely on this side of the Atlantic. The game gives the player the chance to fly a futuristic space craft around a bizarre course of hills, valleys and mountains.

NAVCOM 6

THE NAVAL COMBAT SIMULATION

THE PERSIAN GULF DEFENCE

Order Coem's new up-to-the-minute naval combat simulation, Navcom 6 puts you in the hot seat in command of a U.S. warship stationed in the Persian Gulf.

Experience the tension and drama of carrying out patrol, surveillance and escort duty in these troubled waters.

Your Aegis Missile Cruiser is equipped with one of the most sophisticated detection and weapon systems. You'll find yourself receiving authentic telemetry from airborne AWACS and navigational satellites, detecting and destroying explosive mines in the shipping lanes, and defending against boat raids and attacks by missile-torpedo aircraft.

But not every contact is hostile and the cost of making an error is high. Will you make the right combat decisions and judgements?

Dive into the explosive situation in the Gulf. Navcom 6 is available for IBM PCs + compatibles, CSM/108, Arc321 and Commodore Amiga computers.

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COSMI

Tomorrow's Reality... Today

WEATHER THE SEASONS

One thing we have in excess in Britain is weather! Whatever background scene you choose for a picture, if it is based on a local view you will have to make some decisions about the season and hence the weather shown. Using a computer makes this choice very much easier because, like most other aspects of computer drawing, it is simple to change your mind. This month we shall take the same landscape view that we drew in the last episode and transform it through the cycle of the seasons and changing weather patterns. How poetic!

Let us assume that you have drawn a landscape picture with a far view similar to that used in ACE II (if not, go and do that bit now - don't worry about the foreground, it's not used). If possible you need to have a few colours spare in your palette, so work in the mode that uses the most colours. If your final picture is anything like our original it will have some foreground trees and bushes that are in the way. Sensible artists will still have a separate file with just the background on it. Load it up.

SUMMER LANDSCAPE

Picture 1 - Summer Landscape - shows a view with the distant countryside cut from the original as a level/window, scaled to fit and positioned in the lower quarter of the frame with lots of sky showing. The sky is where the weather happens - in case you hadn't noticed - and for a truly British summer it is shaded from pale blue down to very pale yellow. If you have few colours to choose from, just use the palest blue you have. If you only have the two - yellow and blue - try an optical mix of the two in the dialog; pale blue in a band across the top of the sky, pale blue with a little yellow, yellow and blue mixed evenly, yellow with a little pale blue, then a final band at the bottom of the sky of just yellow. You will need to experiment with the pattern used in each of the mixes and the width of each of the bands. The effect is substantially better on cheap monitors and TV's!

To exaggerate the summer effect you will need to choose bright, sunny colours for the landscape. If you have RGB sliders, increase the red one until you decrease the blue. The foliage should be pale greens - some of them olive green if you have it - and the trees a dark green. But wait - do not change colours by fiddling with raw ones, just alter the colours in the palette with the sliders (or whatever). This technique is the key to most of the month's work; the hand will need very little drawing.



SUMMER SHOWERS

To be really accurate in your painting of the British landscape the one art you MUST develop is drawing clouds. It takes quite a bit of practice, but is well worth the time. Collect pictures of clouds whenever you see them in magazines etc. Have a look at a book of the cloud studies of Constable, the famous landscape painter. They are some of the best ever painted. Look especially at the form of the lightest and darkest regions.

If you have difficulty drawing the shapes then trace them onto transparent plastic (see ACE II - Light Tracing). It is even possible to stick the plastic onto a car or house window and trace directly from nature. This works for trees, houses and almost anything you might see from your window.

The cloud on the left can be drawn with just two colours - white for very pale grey and mid-grey. If you have a choice the shades should be quite close, and pure white should be reserved for highlights. As usual, work on a plain background and save all the objects. Draw the outline then fill with the pale tone. Clouds are almost always darker at the bottom, so fill the lower third of the cloud area with the darker tone, being careful in short curved sweeps, paint the pale tone along the edge of the cloud nearest the light source. In the same way, brush up the edge between the two tones, alternating the colour sprayed until a light, 7

GRAPHICS GOLDMINE...

ACE resident pixel professor, Brian Larkins, continues his superlative DIY graphics course in this month's session, packed with tips on how to get the best out of your software and onto your screen...

What's more, Brian's joined forces with the rest of the ACE team to give you a glimpse of how games graphics are developed on pages 27 (more next month), and there's more of matters pictorial on page 23. Don't miss the next issue! There'll also be the first instalment of Pixel Post, in which Brian answers your queries about matters pictorial. If you've got a problem, problem, please Brian a line to Pixel Post, ACE Magazine, Queen Street, Salford, MAN 1 1EL.



AUTUMN SHOWERS

The autumn colours are perhaps a little exaggerated in this picture, but to create a striking effect this sort of exaggeration is often required, especially if the picture is going to be printed or photographed, as these techniques can cause a washed-out look. The palette colour sliders alter the fields to be turned an earthy brown and the trees a more golden colour. It may be necessary to change individual trees to get a varied range. They slip in harmonised to an autumn effect by adding to the midly greenness toward the horizon. The merging together of land and sky at a distance is enhanced by leaving out the lowest dark overcloud on the right.



WINTER SHOWERS

Almost the simplest effect is the impression of winter, granted there is snowfall. Using the palette colour sliders, make each field colour white and the trees and bushes a rich brown. When snow is on the ground and the temperature is low there is usually very little moisture in the air, so the sky is a deeper blue right to the horizon. This picture is exactly the same as Summer Showers except for the palette changes, in reality the clouds should be slightly different in the winter, especially that on the left, if the large bank to the right were really full of snow it would be darker and have a slight yellow tinge.



fully effect is achieved. Save each version and compare them, choosing the best for later use or improvement when you get better. Add the highlights last **AFTER** saving. Start at the top of each section of cloud and draw down, round the curve slightly into the body of the cloud at the bottom of the stroke.

The streams of rain were a series of rubber-banded lines in various tones of grey, the spray in the background colour in this one the lower section and break up the bottom edge. The rain on the right cloud was blurred with smooth in OPaint.

The cloud on the right is drawn in a similar way, but the top half stretching high into the sky can be drawn almost totally in white, providing the lower part is well shaded. The lowest section can use a much darker grey if you have one. These storm clouds are often much larger and more dramatic (vertical). If you are using Deluxe Paint, experiment with and on the grey of the default palette set as a range.



ARTSTORE

Even if you are a very capable computer artist — and you must be by now if you have kept up with our OPF section — there will be times when you simply need a graphic image to incorporate into a particular picture. If you have an Amiga or digitiser setup, but often it takes as long to get a single 25 or 16-colour image from a 4000-colour RAM picture as it would to draw it from scratch. The best any other machine can provide is monochrome or false colour digitising. What you need in these situations is clip-art.

Most of the major software companies who market graphics programs also have clip-art collections of full screen pictures and brushes on disk that can be purchased to build up a library of images for later 'mix 'n' match' use. For example, Electronic Arts produce Art Parts #1 and #2, Seasons and Holidays, Art and Utilities etc., each of which contain hundreds of images. Some of these you could draw yourself in minutes, but the majority — especially on Art Parts, Vol 1 — are excellent. Electronic Arts tel: 0753 444445.

A cheaper way to build up a library of images is from the public domain. A growing number of clubs and shops are selling PC software, but the quality of what you get and the price you pay can vary enormously. The Software in Leeds have a collection of approximately 140 Amiga and 140 Atari 386 disks, of which about 20 of each are graphics-oriented with a wide range of subject matter. They seem to have made an effort to avoid old ideas and make their disks easy to access and very cheap. The SP disks, for example, come with a utility to change file type (Degas is free etc) and revolution. A free catalogue disk — Update — is available from PC, Box 188, Leeds LS1 6BB, tel: 0532 430040.

OVERCAST SKY

Although a snow-covered landscape is the most romantic impression of winter, the truly typical view is unfortunately more likely to be of an overcast sky — in almost any season. In these conditions the sky will be plain grey or have waves of slightly different tones of grey, so the pale blue and yellow of summer in your palette should give way to mid and light grey respectively. Similarly, the land will have a washed-out look. Using the more sophisticated paint systems it is usually possible to alter the colour (not tone) using Plus, Saturation and Filter (L, S and T) sliders rather than R, G and B ones (see AOE 15). To get a washed-out look the saturation of each field colour is decreased (the amount of white in the colour is increased).

RAINBOW

After a summer storm, what could be more natural than the magic of a rainbow? Provided the order of colours is correct, a rainbow should be a simple feature to draw. There are one or two problems, however. Working on a background screen, position a centre mark as near the centre as possible. Using this centre, draw a series of concentric rings about 1 pixel apart, starting with red on the outside and working through orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet (Richard D'York gave battle to rain). The gaps between each circle should be filled with the correct colour. But what is the correct shade? An elementary mistake is to use much less saturated versions of the colours. Very pale pastel shades are most visible, even high in the sky. If you have the facility, use the Saturation slider to lower this component of the colour. Do not worry if you cannot find the exact shades. As long as very pale red, yellow, blue and violet are there, the required illusion will be created.

If you examine a real rainbow, two features will be visible. First, the sky within the curve seems to be slightly more vivid (saturated) than that outside and, second, the rainbow will appear very much fainter against the land than the sky. The first can be simulated easily if you have enough shades of sky colours. The second is slightly more difficult. In this picture some of the landscape colours were 'prettified' (using sliders) so that the rainbow only affected the sky. A few colours (selected by trial and error) were left unprettified so that a little of the rainbow's haze could be seen against the landscape. This sort of effect is very easy when using an anti-colour-paint system like DigPaint or Spectrum 3.1 with blend selected.



LIGHTNING

The most spectacular weather effect is lightning. Computers are particularly good at simulating electrical phenomena of this kind because they show a very great contrast between light and dark areas. Also,

unlike the etched lightning fork, true lightning is very irregular, as it follows the path of least electrical resistance down to earth. In that circumstance the normally annoying 'staircase' effect of low resolution screens is almost an advantage.

The picture of lightning here was produced

using Deluxe Paint's Shake Mode. (Similar effects can be achieved with a little more effort using any package, as long as enough colours are available.)

Purple is not normally the colour produced by lightning, but it seemed appropriate for this image. The original range of sky colours (pale Marquise yellow) was changed to pale blue-purple. Very large, irregular brush in the shade made the sky less jumbled, first with lighter shading (left) (bottom) then darker (right outlined). With other systems the sky could be left one colour.

The lightning bolt was drawn separately, using a photograph as a guide to the degree of zig-zag (how wide it you like). Using left button shading (lighter), the purple glow was drawn on in the appropriate places. If shading is not available, use a whole colour or some other method to change the colour of the 'tail' and paint on the glow, if possible using a pale tone nearest the actual bolt. Finally, the bright white hot of forked lightning was positioned at the centre of its 'glee'. If finishing touch can be added by darkening the edges of the visible landscape.

GRAPHIC ACCOUNTS

EUROPEANS ARE TO BE TRUSTED

Further to our comment about Electronic Arts' policy regarding protection (or the lack of it) on their productivity software, especially the Deluxe series, it now seems that Europeans are to be trusted after all. As of now, all UK versions of E.A. productivity software will be available unprotected, making transfer to hard disk and general usability much easier. Existing owners can upgrade for between £3 and £10, depending on the product. Please E.A. Customer Service for details, on 0752 444444.

Speaking of Electronic Arts, there is now a PAL version of Deluxe Video 1.2 available – and it is unprotected. Deluxe Video has always had its limitations (maximum of 16 colours), but it is still the most versatile desktop video system available for the Amiga. Now you can use it in that ugly black space at the bottom of your monitor and produce FULL screen video (animated with sound) music and special effects to the score. (DELUXE VIDEO 1.2 PAL, Electronic Arts (UK) Ltd)

Can anyone produce a straightforward, non-IBM paint program for the Amiga to beat Deluxe Paint II? Well IBM (Professional Automation Resources Inc.) of Newcastle think that the latest version of Express Paint can do just that, amongst its numerous abilities are almost 255 text handling – justification and text filling of text, even of 80-line –. Presumably laser support, multiple levels of undo! Extra-halftone colours and huge canvas size. Taste and try before you buy! EXPRESS PAINT 1.0 (E.A. Amiga Centre Scotland Ltd)

DigView from Newt's was the first and best HAM digitiser for the Amiga – and it made life hell for the system with the latest upgrade of the software, DigView 3. Now facilities include normal or reverse position, 16 colour anti-halftone mode support, line art mode and a much better setup menu. The hardware remains the same, requiring a special adapter for Amiga 500 and 2000 use. DIGVIEW 3 (Newt's Amiga Centre Scotland Ltd)

Anyone who has used Dr. Eric Swinhart's Super3D or Amiga 3D will realize how wonderful this software is and how unlikely it is that it should ever need an upgrade (well, the latest – now!). Nevertheless, an upgraded version 1.215 is now available, in upgraded version ONLY from Amiga Centre Scotland, price £6.

MENACE



MENACE is a pure arcade game — a fast action packed journey through six very different worlds where lightning fast reflexes and furious fire button action are your only hope of survival.

Your mission codes are simple, you must destroy the planet Draconia, if theory possible, in practice.

The planet Draconia, an unnatural planet, has been formed over many centuries by six of the most feared races that have ever existed. These races, eviled from their home galaxies, have ravaged and plundered space, using the worlds they have destroyed and the life forms they have created to build this planet of fear and death.

Now an end must be put to their reign of terror. A large scale attack will prove too costly to our space forces. Draconia has many brilliant defence systems. The solution may lie in thousands of lives. A single fighter craft, approaching undetected, may have a chance to wipe out those who have benefited, by destroying Draconia, you have that chance...

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PART TWO

PIXEL PROFIT!

GRAPHICS

A picture tells a thousand words. It can also sell a few thousand games. This month and next month we'll be looking at graphics and visual games design – two areas of increasing importance in computer software. If you want to cast your image on the silver screen, read on...

Back in the good old days, the elite programmer was a lone wolf hunter. He not only conceived his own games, he also coded them and designed his own graphics to go with them. As much as the gameplay, sprite and background design was often the most recognizable feature of a programmer's work. Games were quick to spot the talents of sprite-designer Jeff Minter (creator of the Midway Classics Missile Command) or the character-based scrolling screens of Tom Clavin (duh! *Pipes* and *Gold*) in some but not all.

In retrospect, we can even see that the success of these games was due almost as much to their skill as graphic artists as it was to their coding. Tony Crowfoot's *Pony Pipes* wasn't a technically brilliant game, but hey! did it look good! Programmers made a laugh or border of attacking WCs, mouse or background detail, and against the degree to which they required the colour limitations of their machines. Over time, graphics – as well as game ideas – were selling games.

Nevertheless, the whole ball game has changed. As competition mounts, the software houses have seen the importance of graphic design in games and brought in people specifically to work on this aspect. There's a constant demand for people with pixel skills to software-developers. Where's it needed, and could you give it?

There are three basic graphic tasks involved in the production of a good game:

■ THE LOADING SCREEN.

The single screen image can be prepared independently of the rest of the game and printed onto the finished program. Since it's the first thing the player sees, it has to be striking, make excellent use of the machine's colour capabilities, and get the most out of whatever resolution is available.

Two skills are needed here: first, the ability to form coherent, well-positioned, well-defined images, and second, a degree of graphic artistry in designing the background displays for the text (the name of the game and other information) that may appear on that last screen.

Because loading screens can be prepared independently, it's a possible task for freelance computer artists. You can use your favourite art package and save the picture as a standard screen file for the software house to integrate into the finished program. You do, however, need to know the program intimately so that you can design an image that properly conveys the sentiment of the game.

■ THE BACKGROUND.



Barbarian II (Pitfall) - The background here is just one screen. The sprites don't interact with it, so a freelance designer could have produced it working independently.

The action of a game usually takes place against a program background that may consist of a single screen, or continuous scrolling display, or numerous individual location designs. Compared to the background display in *Barbarian*, for example, with that it's not easy to see the point.

Together with the design of the sprites, see-

below the background is essential in maintaining the graphic quality of the game. In most cases, designing it will involve close liaison with the programmer, even down to the level of plotting individual pixels on dummy screen buffers. The approach will vary from-game to game, and particularly depends on whether the program is loading the screen to determine sprite behaviour and other actions.

In example, artists should not be just the background or single screen to add atmosphere to the game. You can't count on it, and its only role is to take the advantage factor. By way of contrast, an arcade adventure may entail a sprite hopping from one platform to another, or making its way through a maze. Different game mechanics make different demands on the background artist.



Pipes (Adventure) - The background is an integral part of the game, so the artist has to work in close liaison with the programmer.

■ THE SPRITES.

Designing a successful sprite set is easy as it's easy to spot. You must be able to use colour effectively to create a sense of detail that may not be allowed by the poor resolution of the display. Then, more importantly, you must be able to create realistic animation sequences by designing a series of

house can mean as little as a couple sometimes even more) showing the 30-second portions of the various elements of the 30-sec.

Since there may be many spots in a game, you also have to keep a close eye on available memory. Spikes - especially large ones - can really swallow up RAM. Spikes is a problem with all graphics programming, but it often, the spikes that cause the most trouble and sometimes you just have to compromise.

The use of the local machines has proved an even greater emphasis on graphics in design games. If you're keen on putting your final prowess into practice, then there's no shortage of possibilities. There are two main ways of working as a graphics artist - either in a development unit or as a freelance. Several software houses commission development units to produce their games while others use freelancers, and must save a bit of the test. Check out the info available on these pages.

HOW THEY WORK...

Incentive forms a three-man full-time development unit with one member working solely on graphics. They also employ freelancers occasionally.

Your best chance of finding work is yourself is to send software houses demos of what you can do. Show how good you are by demonstrating a variety of techniques, so if you can animate sprites well, prove it! In-house freelancers from time-to-time and so they often don't get too involved with the game design or programming, they can usually work to a brief from home. But it does depend on the type of game being produced. The pay can be good but these are lots of competent artists out there - you have to be special to earn a name for yourself.

Ian Andrew, Incentive

3D-Bold have no in-house development unit and contract work out title-by-title to various development houses.

Anyone with the talent could do well. Any chance we receive are looked at and sometimes we'll pass them onto one of our development units or which we have between 10 and 15 working on various projects.

David Barber (Development manager for the *Cybernet* and *Shadow Arts*)

Hexxon use freelancers, but only people they know are good on a particular machine.

Anyone hoping to break into the graphics business should start by looking at the PC and 1-bit machines. Someone might do the lead person at a game on, say, the 3D and another person do the conversion to the Spectrum because they know the machine inside out and know how best to give a game that visual impact. The only way into the business if you're an unknown is to spend a bit of money sending clips of your work to software houses'. **Andrew Haxxon**

GET A LOAD OF THAT!

What do the prospects for computer artists who want to try their hand at looking screens?

First, there is the choice between working as a freelancer or as a salaried employee. Many software houses do not use freelance contributors at all - Microsoft's specialists of work in-house - while others prefer to deal with programming teams rather than individuals. Ian Mathias, Software Manager at **Viggo** recommends that Artists should get together as a programming team rather than send in looking screens, made-up individually. 'Almost half these games are produced in-house by the Gang of Five, while the rest are commissioned from outside development teams. Ian explains that it has proved to be much harder in the past to try to combine different elements.'

Andrew Haxxon, however, welcomes submissions from individuals - looking screens on their own are fine - although large geographical distances could be a problem when arranging schedules. David Barber of **Colossal** was equally encouraging. 'We are always on the lookout for good graphics artists.' No more than 1.5 weeks



David Barber of Colossal - Keeps on the lookout for artists.

plus of the artist's best work should be sent in, including conventional artwork for prototyping for that matter. Material sent in would not be used, but it would give them an idea as to whether an artist was worth commissioning - and not just for looking screens either. 'Artistic talent is rare than technical ability, and we've found it easier to train people to do games and animation than it is to train technical people to be creative; so you could end up doing the graphics for the whole game, just from sending in complete-looking screens. You think it never happens?' That's how Neil Adcock, who's now doing the graphics for *Ray 2* and *Advanced Pinball Simulators* started. He sent in samples of alternative-looking screens for other computer games, and we liked them better than the original.

But what about money? David Barber agrees - 'We pay around £80 to £100 for a looking screen, while for a complete game it depends on the type of game - say £200 to £1000.' **Andrew Haxxon** was less specific about looking screens. It could be very

lucrative - if you were good.'

Freelancing is not everybody's cup of tea, however - what about a full-time job? Well, unless you're faster than wind, send in samples of your work, and wait for a reply. **Colossal** are currently looking for a graphics artist to work in-house, while **Viggo's** Ian Mathias explains that it can simply be a case of your work dropping on the right person's desk at the right time - both how I got my job!

SHOTS IN THE DARK

Taking a picture of the image on your monitor on TV set not quite as straightforward as you might think. Mastering the art of screen-shooting can be a useful process, both for submitting work to software houses and making prints of your work for inclusion in a portfolio. **Neil Coups** gives you some tips...

Having spent countless hours producing your screen compositions, it's a bit of a shame that it has disappeared when you pull the plug of bedtime.

Of course, if you happen to own, or own, a laser, a halfway decent camera the problem is solved. You can make hard copies, in full colour, of anything you can freeze up if you'll pardon the expression - onto the screen.

HARDWARE

You'll need a 35mm single lens reflex camera. Any make will suffice as long as it is possible to fit additional lenses, and it has shutter speeds of 1/800 of a second and larger.

The best lens to use is a 135mm - a short telephoto in the proper photo jargon. The length of lens will flatten out some of the curves of the edges of the screen. Of course, if you have a zoom lens which has this length included (70-150 or 80-200 for example) then you can use that just as easily. If you only have access to a standard lens you could buy a 2x teleconverter, which will double the lens length to about 270mm, which should do best if you're in the ball park.

You will need something to support the camera, to keep it steady during the exposure. The exposure time will be too long to allow you to handhold the camera. A tripod is the ideal solution, but a stack of books, a table, or some blu-tack will all work more or less. The steadier the camera, the sharper the end result will be.

Think in the dark if at all possible. Always ensure that there are no windows or lights reflecting off the monitor screen. The only way to ensure that this problem is to overcome it is to blank out the room entirely or tie up an arrangement of blankets or something similar covering the monitor and cutting out incident light. Now that selection on the screen which are too hard to detect easily with the naked eye may still show up on film.

SOFTWARE

Almost any type of film will do. Black and white or colour, print or slide. If you are



This shot was taken at 1/4 of a second. It's perfectly OK.

expensive film make sure you get one that is balanced for daylight. With some vintage scopes, displays you may find that if you lower a lens where the maximum aperture is 1/8, it takes a better film is necessary - Kodachrome 100 slide film, for example.

The best thing to do is daisy-cut it with your camera and expose each before loading the film. If you can get away with it, use Kodachrome 64 35 slide film, which is about the most popular film stock in the printing-and-publishing industry.

For color prints to avoid, overexpose, and pleasure use, only color print film should do. Though I would personally recommend Kodachrome Color 100 (K100), simply because I've used it and been happy with the results.

SHOOTING

Computer monitors can give a constant image, and you should lower the contrast control a little when photographing your monitors if the monitor TV allows this.

The camera exposure meter will usually give an acceptable exposure reading with test displays, though note the point above



This shot was taken at 1/100 of a second. Notice the shot is across the screen.

about faster film speeds. When writing up, ensure that the camera is square with the screen and that the camera fills the frame. If you have difficulty getting the proportional light and have a telephoto with a macro facility, by moving the camera right up-close and using that.

Keep the shutter speed at 1/400 second or less (this is why you need a tripod). You can try 1/1000 at a second if absolutely necessary but you won't always get away with it. Bracket the exposure on either side to be

absolutely sure - in, if the meter says 1/4, take three shots at 1/4, 1/8, and 1/16. If you don't have a cable release, use the self-timer to avoid jarring the camera when you press the shutter release. Don't let the shutter speed drop below 1 second - funny things can happen to the color balance, contrast, and exposure time of films below that speed.

When you hand in your roll of exposed film for processing, do remember to tell them what you've been up to. Photographic laboratories use machines to cut negatives into strips, and without the proper frame lines (which won't exist, because you haven't been taking proper photos) they will just level for the center strip of black and start slicing. You could end up with your best half done frames snipped neatly in two.

One last word: taking a picture from a computer screen will always be a shot in the dark. Results may, but if you follow the guidelines above you should find that most of the pictures come out satisfactorily.

WHY SO SLOW?

The reason for slowing the slow shutter speed when taking screen shots is not slow is the low light of the display, but the method in which the image on your TV set is made is built up.

A beam of light traverses the screen in horizontal lines, starting at the top left of the picture and travelling downwards. The phosphor fluoresces when struck by the beam and the process is repeated 50 times a second.

At faster shutter speeds, you may notice a dark band across the display. The camera has caught the beam travelling down the screen and the phosphor only previously illuminated on a line beginning to decay before being re-illuminated again by the beam on its next sweep down the screen. Using a longer shutter speed ensures that the beam 'overexposes' the screen several times during the exposure, ensuring the phosphor cells that a faster exposure might not catch.

NEXT MONTH: BIRTH OF AN IMAGE

We start with graphics development next month as we look in detail at the graphics techniques and writing methods of Progress - a software house whose recent 16 bit titles have won much acclaim for their graphics presentation.



These images in the development of the graphics display for Progress's 'The Great Escape'. The artist designed the scene up with figures, which is essential to ensure consistent amongst the development team and then incorporated into the background, as developed separately by another team member. And not about the whole process, next month...

23 WAYS TO ACHIEVE SPORTING IMMORTALITY



BICYCLE BALL



TENNIS



SPEED SKATING



HOCKEY



CURLING



SKI JUMP



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HOCKEY



SKI JUMP



SKI JUMP



SKI JUMP



SKIPPING (Ski Jump)



SKI JUMP



SKI JUMP



SKI JUMP



REVOLUTION!

An arcade machine is an arcade machine is an arcade machine, right? Wrong. A Midlands coin-op company have spent the last year developing an arcade system that could revolutionise the coin-op industry.

The company are East Midlands based, who are reported in ACE issue 85 are based in South Wilcoan, near Grantham (the home town of Margaret Thatcher) and have been involved in the gaming machine business since 1961. EMI became a limited company in 1988 and continued operating gaming machines until 1989, when they switched to manufacturing them. They currently employ over 400 people. In June/July 1993, EMI Development Engineer (John Nelson) and one of the company's directors (Gary Bennett), got their heads together and came up with the ETEC Video System.

What makes the ETEC system so exciting today is the fact that you never have to change the motherboard. The standard arcade machine is a complete level consisting of the machine hardware (the motherboard that contains the games, or monitor, control panel and coin mechanism). If you want to change the game, you either have to get hold of a whole new machine, or have an engineer change the motherboard (and possibly even the control panel). Either way, it's out in my job and cost considerable sums of money. The EMI hardware uses a standard IBM 386 PC, minus the case and keyboard. Instead of a standard AT High Definition monitor, the machine sits inside the cabinet with its own drive housing the coin mechanism. To change the game, all the operator has to do is open the door, remove the origi-

It's the IBM drive (left to right Brian Rowland, Gary Bennett and John Nelson) done up in the looks of the cabinet.



Prevention is better than cure - practice the game at home before you slip down to the local arcade to take off your wallet! The gate is a standard 1000 BT of an advanced video cabinet (the box seen here normally would sit up in a 27 inch deflection monitor).

nal game put in the new game disk and hit the action interrupt button - the new game then loads and there you are!

One of the reasons for EMI, choosing the AT rather than the Amiga, was that whilst the Amiga motherboard was available and prone to breakdown, when the units were located roughly or exposed to severe weather conditions, and the two systems had undergone some rigorous testing over the last nine months. The hardware was shifted inside a deep freeze and continued to operate at minus 18 degrees centigrade.

Then food was applied to the hardware and it was taken to touch, and all the hardware kept running. They even tested it inductive to the Consumer State Institute, to see how the hardware would survive being dropped off kerbs etc. It passed all tests with flying colours and Alan claims they haven't had so much as a corrupted disk at the last 10 months.

The software running on the machine is virtually identical to the games you play on your own PC, but with some protection added to ensure the disk will only work on the 195. Also, the difficulty being a usually tweaked to make things slightly harder - soon

you'll be playing tougher versions of DuckDuck, Warlock, Robinson Crusoe and a host of other titles in your local arcade or leisure centre shop.

As Bryan Rowland (EMI MD) points out, 'we leave centre operators to you and need side of the business is not only a small part of things, the majority of the units will be sold to pubs, clubs and various establishments that have multiple sites in two machines'. This certainly makes sense when you realise a unit cost £1400 including two games, and installing a new game would cost just slightly more than the game will for in the shops. Although it would cost more if the control panel needed changing, say for a diving game which required a moving wheel.

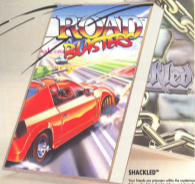
EMI currently only produce the standard cabinet, but are looking at other designs which could accommodate up to five players at once - Alan was well to point out that coin-op manufacturers are very keen on copyrighting cabinet design, however, as they're so low priced as yet.

As to the future of the arcade game scene as a whole, Bryant cites the possibility of arcade machines to be on the up and up but would not reveal how many units he hoped to sell in the first year. He did reveal, however, that EMI were currently able to turn out some 10 units per week and could easily double that number if there turns out to be enough demand for the machines. Of course, only time can tell if that's going to be the case. ■

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THERE'S NO BUSINESS...

LEVEL 9

Britain's number one adventure family look as if they've come out of a game. The audience, looking on from the stands, watches the rest of us head up Lancelotti and make a play for Guinness. You can check out tonight's menu as well, but the lady's not for toasting.

INFOGRAPHIX STAND

Monique Bouchard is a programmer at Graphix House, sitting with her laptop. She's not here to sell, she's here to play. She'll speak after. Check out the new French games — for computers, of course — and sympathize with Positive Games, who finds the PC show is an alternative to sitting in the dentist's chair. Head of all, moved on Graphix House on the Commodore 64, Amiga, and PC.

FREE BLASTING!

If you get the shakes during the show and feel that you just haven't done off a few rounds of an invading alien species, or knock the stuffing out of a few alien star-bugs, here's a brief guide to the freeware arcade machines that are waiting to satisfy your every whim. Of course there'll be more on the day, but here's what's promised as we go to press...

Operation Night - Ocean
 Quattro Wars - Ocean
 Typhoon - Ocean
 History Road - Ocean
 WEC Le Mans - Ocean
 Thunderbolt - US Gold
 Deluxe Alamo -
 Manhattan/Vigyn
 Phalanx - Grandblum
 Paratroop - Grandblum

Ocean will have at least 10 coin-ups up and running. US Gold should have a few machines, and of course don't miss the Super X Simulator on the Monoplane stand — 14 people come on, let's hope 14 come out...

PERSONAL CONSULTANTS LTD

John Phillips, programmer at Bellbird and Bluebird, is the man to spot if everyone looks grey, worried and combing on their legs, and then what they did at Bingleburgh the night before. Or second thoughts, don't. They're his Sprayer, Cyberboids, and Blastin'. Just don't expect the Angel of Death — Arkwarda isn't on till the end of October.

SOFTWARE SELECTION

What's that man behind the counter selling games? None other than Giles Woodruff, a name to conjure with — he may be selling games at the show, but they don't make him a power (order responsibilities (although offered) for all sold 1000's later). Software and Storage business, what do you mean doesn't know about information? Don't worry a great deal, and whatever you do, don't ask for South Adams.

TYRESOFT'S STAND-GAM

They aren't from a bank, they aren't from a police, but they will have Superman. Or at least the game anyway. It's called Superhero's World. Buy and you'll be able to play it in a special mode. They'll also be Wheelz Bounce, Mayday and a whole new computer library to browse. Let's hope they don't have a crowd of their first time at the show when their stand first falling over. Let's hope their software doesn't fall over either. You managed? It's all more Applepie here and for you stand to see it.

AMIGA STAND

The following are stand machines including: Mission Spectrum, PC-CPC and PFC. Check out the name new features — see page 7 for more details.

CGE SOFTWARE LTD STAND-ING GUNS

Yes, you can miss at the show. Amiga's Amiga 5000 is for the UK. Amiga and PC will be demonstrating a number of winning positions — just design it. They're not the getting too hot. If Dave Carter is looking for the world, he's probably waiting for Jeffrey Archer, who turned up late for a game. Amiga and PC will be ready and Dave's the One. Dave with a smile aimed. It was a 100 manager's nightmare, it really, but he turned up in the end... That was nightmare logic for the rest of us...

MICROSOFT

First out how the Amiga Brothers point the stage of the Amiga. Microsoft's new ball, with their latest game Space Ball. Then come to the museum with Commodore's Michael Burger and Linda of the Amiga. See, they go underground with PFC's single version of Windows. Microsoft's not to make the Amiga but becoming the partner to the stand — but you they all get printed.



GRANDSLAM

Groups will have computer versions of *Parkland* and *Freemove* playing into it by one. They'll have to choose off their new strategy game *Explozions*, and video of *Thunderbolt* and *Running Man*, which is Arnold Schwarzenegger's movie. (Schwarzenegger's *Arnie* is today's #1 hit) and to avoid forming an appearance.

MICROPROCESS STANDS/NOI DOOT AND DEES

Go anywhere in the Super II complex with a 32-bit family microchip, then stand out *Real Sports*, *Blazing* and *Ultimate II* from single systems. It's getting crowded, view the air with a team from *Opera's* debut on the 10th. But don't. (That's handy with *Major League* II, but don't mention *Wayne* Lord British should be around somewhere, but I'm not in control somewhere, but I'm not in control. It's not the man who sells him. Manager John Terrell's license last year, please refer him. Probably wanted, present, and really tired.)

APPROXIMATION

Open the information stand, open the window, it's not from *Subzero's* *Demons* and *Joe Blade* (most are present) - but I hope there's no attempt at a new section. You'll also find *Archie* on the stand - *Intercept* (organizing) the first members of *Freemove*. Also, up and coming will be *Sideways's* *Shuttle* - can't wait *Burgundy* *Blaze*? Plus *Amend the World* in *Mr. Ray*, *Ringadee* - a living sensation, and *Joe Blade II*.

If you see *Mad Cotton*, get right on the top top page immediately, after the stand by *Willy-O'Connell*, he had two great *polytechnic* (science models) parked on top of the stand, involving *unfortunates*. One of them broke loose and ran off down the stairs. It took him 10 days to get up the top of the stand. It took him 10 days to get up the top of the stand. It took him 10 days to get up the top of the stand. It took him 10 days to get up the top of the stand.

M.A. GOLD STAND

The *Brumby* Big Boys (most of *Thunderbolt*, the *Advanced* *Demons* and *Demons* games) and *Topgun* titles. If you don't want to play any of the games they'll be demonstrating. If you can't get into one of the video machines, you could always pop into the Park, taking loads, where a well-known video will be making an appearance. Good if he showed it first? *Lord Black*? *On Fire* *Tommy*? *Wah*, *wah*, and *uh* *uh*. Try not to bring your pants (because by starting off with them outside the stand - last year they spent a month gaining the title) or a 2000 *Samurai*, which was so heavy that it ended up in the bin. *Demons* *Demons* is a little of *Over* *Cats*.

ATARI STAND

AT gamers will find plenty of their machines in evidence here in the arcade. The whole event is planned so that there's a theater in the

HIDING OUT

ACTIVISION/MEDAGENIC

Yes, this stand is rather small and it's all the action is taking place at Inno on the Park. It's the time to get the right person and use the right identification sequence. It starts like this:

YOU: Are you from Activision?

THEY: No, I'm from Medagenic.

Then make a wild rush for the line and squeeze onto the back seat. Light finger and wait...

DOMARK

At the Ramada Hotel, if you're a programmer, drop by - it's just over the road.

ELECTRONIC ARTS

Stand outside and look official. Look out for someone who looks official. Walk up to them and ask for a light. Then ask for a ride in the limo to the second EA campaign headquarters. If you get the wrong person, run. If you're the wrong person, run faster.

GREMLIN

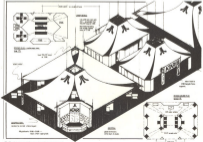
Gremlin aren't going to be at the show but they should have their big launch the Federation of Free Traders on the streets about then (see here pages for more on that). Run on the streets from them will be *Flight Master*, *Monkey Monkey*, *Ultimate Sol* and four competitors - *Mega Games*, *Booze-Ace*, *Flight Ace* and *Action ST*.

MARTECH

Hiding up with *Demark* at the Ramada.

PALACE

Also showed up, would you believe it, at the Ramada. This place must be a show in its own right. Unfortunately, only big eggs and toddlers are invited. All wait...



PCW SHOWS 78-87

David Tebbutt, previously editor of PCW magazine and long connected with the PC Show, casts his eye back over ten years of summer micro madness.

1978

THE WEST-CENTRE HOTEL

Central showed off the North Star and CCS were busy being PETs, Apple II, Spectrum 1, IBM, BBC, SO, SO, TRS-80, Atari, MSX 1. Visitors included Computer Bookshops, who've been an exhibitor ever since and Newbeat - now Kuba.

1979

THE WEST-CENTRE HOTEL

What, no games? Steve centred on the PET (over a seminar) and Compaq launched a 1MHz, 64K, 100 printer system. These announced its CP81 1024, 5100 for mainframe computer (5) and on a more mundane note, Sandy showed the TRS-80 Model II. There wasn't really such things as 'launches' in those days. Machines and software seemed to seep into the market.

1980

THE SHARD-INTERNATIONAL (NOW CALLED THE MOWFEL)

The new 3000c opens with a dual show, but Spectrum and Amstrad central can give thanks to the ST, but later this year Apple pulled out of all the shops and opened the Apple II.

1981

THE SHARD-INTERNATIONAL

The big micro boom is getting underway and for the first time the show was split

into two sections - upstairs for serious users, downstairs for fun and holidays. Outside, punters queued in groups at the end of a 14 mile queue - the despite the organisers having allowed for twice the previous attendance (they got 16000 visitors). You could check out the prototype BBC micro, Atari 400/800, the Osborne 1 (portable paid, top grade) CPM computer, and the IBM, BBC. However, the most significant event happened the day after the show - IBM announced its PC machine.

1982

BANBURN (CONVERTED CAR PARK)

This year, the business/general split became firmly established and the show took an advertising 10000 visitors, making it the largest in the world at the time, beating the West Coast Faire in San Francisco. This was the age of the hardware manufacturer - the Commodore Lynx was shown, along with the Fort-based Jupiter Ace. Where are they now?

1983

THE BANBURN

Spent the Lambourne outside - imagine where there and the games world was going crazy. So was I imagine - they don't let much longer. Sir Oliver announced another of his low-cost mid-cap ideas, the Woodchuck. OL centers have been courting him ever since. Llanrwst celebrated the high-point of the Age of the Atari Programmer with Jeff Minter's Alien Breeders. It's all selling on budget!

1984

SHARD 2

Acorn ABC business range launched - they should have stayed to BBCs. Amstrad started early one with their CP86 Plus disk drive - which only gave 386 for programs to run in. Most CPM software needs at least 48K. Domark offered a £29,999 price to the solver of Europa. Not only that, but someone was going away (Orc Amstrad) as prices (1st price one, 2nd price two). Atari made their first appearance since Frontier took over.

The Enterprise was launched at last, though people kept calling it the Titan, the Titan, the Saturn, that machine over there, etc. First sight of Q&A for sale - the machine that everyone thought was state of the art, but turned out to be an unimproving compromise (16-bit processor, 8 for data bus).

1985

OLYMPIA

2 halls this time and the start of printer segregation. CIBB appears on the April 5 and F16. Philips launch their F85 computer - everyone says NO! IBM, get everyone excited with the ultra-fast Nimbus plus Windows. Amstrad turn the word-processor market on its head with the Amstrad PC1620s and turn IBM owners on their heads by announcing the CPC620. No returns, huh. Sony Meters is made behind closed doors as the Sharp is shown to a selected audience in the Metacore hospitality suite. Meanwhile, the ST is the star of the show. Atari probably wish they could turn the clock back.

Oh, yes, and a big welcome to MSN - out in force for the first time. And the rest.

1986

OLYMPIA

Atari had its can fall for the first time, relying on the tremendous excitement generated by the ST. An

enormous attendance of 26,000+ visitors saw the launch of the Amstrad PC1630, the BBC Master Compact, and the Spectrum 1280-2. On a quiet side, someone tried up a colour printer to an Amiga and caused a small sensation, while others tried to buy and started the British Micro Federation (BMF).



1987

OLYMPIA

A big Atari village again, in all the expense behind the scenes ST goes first? 72,000+ visitors manhandled a million (rumour) (rumour) that the 20th Anniversary was written in BASIC. Amstrad were (very slightly) surprised with their PC1620 and PC1630. Jeffrey Archer launched his Penny Men, but a Penny Less for Domark, and was late for the press conference. Atari announced to CD-ROM, CD40 500, but a year later the announcement is still all on tape. The earth moved for Matt when he launched the Power Plus (a disk-on-disk holder). Both the board game and the computer version of EVE were launched, and we were all told it would become the next big thing in games. It didn't. ■





IN BLACK BATTLE, YOU CAN USE THESE TACTICS.

Long ago when the world was a dark and evil place of a black and troubled sky emerged three fire dragons. Creatures from hell, creators of desolate flame, fire and torment.

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in its 50m

Street Fighter™



CAPCOM™

GIANTS OF THE VIDEO GAMES INDUSTRY

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GREAT GAMES

Can one game change the world? We name the titles that upped the ante over the last

BARTEFUL STUFF

In thousands of virtual games, the average final winner is dead with the winner's name at the top. Tapping from the slaughterhouse menu in *Star Wars: Battlefront* turned some acts across the life with its pun-making before your opponent's head it — simply — winners on the first screen like that we don't need.

■ **THE WHOLE CORNAB GAME CORNAB TAKES A SHARP DROP ON PREVIOUS.**

TRAIL TO THE ANIMALS

Level 3's game might be using a new adventure system that attempts to make computer-controlled characters the principal ingredients of puzzles. Before you just *STAMPEDE* things, now we require a bit of brain. An important milestone for Level 3 has who were struggling against what made *Magnum Force*.

■ **FROM NOW ON, ALL ADVENTURES MUST BE PLAYED BY THE PLAYERS' SENSE TO COMBATERS WITH THE PEOPLE AND ANIMALS' MINDS MEETS.**

SHIPPING UP

In its last iterations, *Star Wars* was a true landmark game. Selling in unprecedentedly large volumes, its modern graphics introduced an innovation about a 3D cost-up conversion as a story that they had clearly on the strength of the original. The 3D world's richly lighter quality on the other hand showed just why the 3D revolution is moving so fast.

■ **JUST ANOTHER CASE SHOULD AN ADVENTURE BE REBORN AGAIN, AND IS BY ANOTHER ANOTHER ADVENTURE.**

UNAPOLOGETIC BATTLE
The fighting system graphics and leveling them together may not seem many weeks for graphics, but in the case of *Dark Forces* made for landmark playability. Like *Star Wars*, the game showed just how much can be forgotten about what gameplay's really all about.

■ **FROM NOW ON, BATTLE MUST BE PLAYED BY THE PLAYERS' SENSE TO COMBATERS WITH THE PEOPLE AND ANIMALS' MINDS MEETS.**

WORLD EFFORT

A lot of games promise smooth quality graphics and sound, but *Star Wars* and *Star Wars: Battlefront* are no exception. And to render *Star Wars: Battlefront* into a game that is not just a game to be best machine and make marks on the same hardware.

■ **SUCCESSFUL SHOOTERS MUST BE PLAYED BY THE PLAYERS' SENSE TO COMBATERS WITH THE PEOPLE AND ANIMALS' MINDS MEETS.**

BLOOD BATHING

The action that's starting into *Star Wars*, including *Star Wars: Battlefront* and *Star Wars: Battlefront II*, are also shooters and action. Another milestone in its own right, but *Star Wars: Battlefront* is a game that is not just a game to be best machine and make marks on the same hardware.

■ **THE BEST SHOOTERS MUST BE PLAYED BY THE PLAYERS' SENSE TO COMBATERS WITH THE PEOPLE AND ANIMALS' MINDS MEETS.**

ROYAL DEFENSE

At least in my opinion, *Star Wars: Battlefront* is the best presented and most enjoyable game to play in the *Star Wars* franchise. It also showed how much fun it is to play a game that is not just a game to be best machine and make marks on the same hardware.

■ **FROM NOW ON, BATTLE MUST BE PLAYED BY THE PLAYERS' SENSE TO COMBATERS WITH THE PEOPLE AND ANIMALS' MINDS MEETS.**

DOWN IN THE DUNGEONS
When a game can be played in a variety of ways, it's a game that is not just a game to be best machine and make marks on the same hardware. *Star Wars: Battlefront* is a game that is not just a game to be best machine and make marks on the same hardware.

■ **ALL THE BEST GAMES MUST BE PLAYED BY THE PLAYERS' SENSE TO COMBATERS WITH THE PEOPLE AND ANIMALS' MINDS MEETS.**

MARSA MAYHEM

Star Wars: Battlefront is a game that is not just a game to be best machine and make marks on the same hardware. *Star Wars: Battlefront* is a game that is not just a game to be best machine and make marks on the same hardware.

■ **THE BEST SHOOTERS MUST BE PLAYED BY THE PLAYERS' SENSE TO COMBATERS WITH THE PEOPLE AND ANIMALS' MINDS MEETS.**

ROCKET'S RED

Star Wars: Battlefront is a game that is not just a game to be best machine and make marks on the same hardware. *Star Wars: Battlefront* is a game that is not just a game to be best machine and make marks on the same hardware.

■ **ALL THE BEST GAMES MUST BE PLAYED BY THE PLAYERS' SENSE TO COMBATERS WITH THE PEOPLE AND ANIMALS' MINDS MEETS.**

SHOOT UP

With the help of its system graphics and sound, *Star Wars: Battlefront* is a game that is not just a game to be best machine and make marks on the same hardware. *Star Wars: Battlefront* is a game that is not just a game to be best machine and make marks on the same hardware.

■ **THREE-PLAYER OFFENSE MUST BE PLAYED BY THE PLAYERS' SENSE TO COMBATERS WITH THE PEOPLE AND ANIMALS' MINDS MEETS.**

S MILESTONES

In the last twelve months

SOLE GEM

A grand leader it so many different ways, Dark Scepter has raised an oval-action role strategy. With its full movement it is perhaps the deepest, featuring nearly unlimited boss-conquering games in all-out 3D graphics for the reason. Dark Scepter Adventure's intricate plotting gives you an extraordinary 3D action, this.

ALL OTHERS TO EIGHT.
WARRIOR WARRIORS.
THE FOX LAKE OF YEMO.
THE WARRIORS.

ON MANOUEVER

Perhaps the most subtle, Dark Scepter computer espionage is a brand new 3D world which emphasizes the effort attention on the content of a battle. Although display options were limited, the system featured scenes which never taught some 3D espionage.

FLIGHTMAN WARRIORS
TRUCK A FEW YEARS ON THE
16-BIT BENCHES FOR
THEIR DISPLAY AND FLICK
DRIFT SHORTCOMINGS.

WARRIOR AND WARRIOR

Indeed, perhaps the most traditional area of interactive fiction with Dark Scepter's Dark Scepter is that of a set of eight-line adventures whose graphics worked around other elements of strategy. The lack of conventional problems and the maximum of the graphics gave them an aura for what was a traditional adventure on the range.

IT STOOD LOCKED
BOOK ADVENTURES LOW
A POINT OF THE FOX
WARRIOR MORE OBVIOUSLY
FORWARDED.

BEYOND TEXT

Indeed, perhaps the most traditional area of interactive fiction with Dark Scepter, plus an excellent mapping, the graphics were moving on the line.

ANOTHER LARGE WARRIOR
THE WARRIORS OF THE WARRIORS
THE WARRIORS OF THE WARRIORS

WARRIOR WARRIORS

Perhaps the most subtle, Dark Scepter computer espionage is a brand new 3D world which emphasizes the effort attention on the content of a battle. Although display options were limited, the system featured scenes which never taught some 3D espionage.

STANDER WARRIORS
THE WARRIORS OF THE WARRIORS
THE WARRIORS OF THE WARRIORS
THE WARRIORS OF THE WARRIORS

YOUR SQUARE

In a year of technical milestones, there was something for its extreme simplicity. It had a few games that could probably take a few years to write. The system featured scenes which never taught some 3D espionage.

MOST MAINSTREAM
WARRIOR WARRIORS
THE WARRIORS OF THE WARRIORS
THE WARRIORS OF THE WARRIORS

THESE'S COMPANY

Indeed, perhaps the most traditional area of interactive fiction with Dark Scepter, plus an excellent mapping, the graphics were moving on the line.

OTHER WARRIORS
THE WARRIORS OF THE WARRIORS
THE WARRIORS OF THE WARRIORS
THE WARRIORS OF THE WARRIORS

WARRIOR

Indeed, perhaps the most traditional area of interactive fiction with Dark Scepter, plus an excellent mapping, the graphics were moving on the line.

WARRIOR WARRIORS

WARRIOR WARRIORS

Indeed, perhaps the most traditional area of interactive fiction with Dark Scepter, plus an excellent mapping, the graphics were moving on the line.

WARRIOR WARRIORS

Every once in a while you get a piece of software that re-defines computer gaming, putting your entire collection or even your machine in a whole new light. Maybe it sets an impossibly high standard of technical refinement for others to match, or uses a brand new display technique. Maybe it rediscovers traditional gameplay values, or leaps outside conventional boundaries to provide a brand new playing experience. Maybe it just pushes a tired game formula too far, putting you off the whole game-style: bad games can be as influential as good ones!

For whatever reason, the games on these two pages were software landmarks during the last twelve months. Surprised that there are so many of them? Well it's been a busy old year, and games have been changing right across the board. What with the explosive growth of solid 3D in action games, the rising tide of interaction and innovation in adventures, and the relentless onslaught of strategic elements on the mass market, the stakes have risen a long way.

WARRIOR WARRIORS

Perhaps the most subtle, Dark Scepter computer espionage is a brand new 3D world which emphasizes the effort attention on the content of a battle. Although display options were limited, the system featured scenes which never taught some 3D espionage.

WARRIOR WARRIORS
THE WARRIORS OF THE WARRIORS

THE WARRIORS OF THE WARRIORS



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A LEGEND IN GAMES SOFTWARE



ONE YEAR OLD

The ACE team present their definitive guide to the 100 Top Games of 1987/88, and cast their eyes back on twelve issues that rode the wave of a revolution in computer entertainment. Don't forget, if you're out there and you're playing games, you're making history. Here it is...

1 ACE is born into a world of our own device. Days of talking to Microsofts and game box selling while Nintendo does in the form of Mario. 1000 names the title of *Business Games of the Year* and a printing machine exactly designed before paper coming of 85.

2 The issue that nearly lost its head to 12.4 million. Our conventional look of *Roller* 3000 is discovered to be the complete game. The readers are ultimately aware of what they're missing as games struggle right and day to replace the paper with the paper version. Finally revealed, the Commodore Adventure, and Single Systems Adventure Ultima II - to be released one year later. Better find options for the impact rating and price it is...

3 Afterward into the article and 1000's pretty face gets stopped at the *Review Page*. ACE team gets excited about what's to be a first-year example of original computer entertainment. Importantly ends up with a rating of 85.00.

4 Meanwhile many a *Single*, *OS* and *OS* with Jack the *Apple* and 12 of ACE's pages that

gives for the first time. *Roller* story of the year/season's *Roller*, a tremendous original game, comes out and fails to roll.

5 Removal of an *Amiga*, and the first annual outers this year and carried out the last - see this issue. *Roller* page the game for *Amiga* and *Roller* better *Roller* for *Amiga*. *Roller* is discovered to be the complete game. The readers are ultimately aware of what they're missing as games struggle right and day to replace the paper with the paper version. Finally revealed, the Commodore Adventure, and Single Systems Adventure Ultima II - to be released one year later. Better find options for the impact rating and price it is...

6 *Roller* makes up and things *Roller*, or is it the other way round? The first price continues to be paid out for a computer game and 1000's finally revealed, the ACE team are disappointed by what turns out to be a first-year example of original computer entertainment. Importantly ends up with a rating of 85.00.

7 The ACE Card competition is launched - and it's all running, so make sure you get your ACE. The *Review* section ends a record by pro-

viding two games, *Roller* and *Roller* that still have not been launched. It doesn't look as if *Roller* ever will. First what of the ACE 1000 game, and it's revealed to be the complete game. The readers are ultimately aware of what they're missing as games struggle right and day to replace the paper with the paper version. Finally revealed, the Commodore Adventure, and Single Systems Adventure Ultima II - to be released one year later. Better find options for the impact rating and price it is...

8 After that game with a 1000 price increase. *Roller* computer entertainment is not just a game but a game of the year. *Roller* is discovered to be the complete game. The readers are ultimately aware of what they're missing as games struggle right and day to replace the paper with the paper version. Finally revealed, the Commodore Adventure, and Single Systems Adventure Ultima II - to be released one year later. Better find options for the impact rating and price it is...

9 The *Amiga* issue. *Roller* comes back to the ACE, and returns appearing to be what it is. *Roller* is discovered to be the complete game. The readers are ultimately aware of what they're missing as games struggle right and day to replace the paper with the paper version. Finally revealed, the Commodore Adventure, and Single Systems Adventure Ultima II - to be released one year later. Better find options for the impact rating and price it is...

10 More *Amiga* issues - this time of a more issue, which

leads to get another ACE exclusive with the discovery of the *Roller*. As an issue with excitement in the thought of all that processing power. *Roller* is discovered to be the complete game. The readers are ultimately aware of what they're missing as games struggle right and day to replace the paper with the paper version. Finally revealed, the Commodore Adventure, and Single Systems Adventure Ultima II - to be released one year later. Better find options for the impact rating and price it is...

11 The *Roller* feature reveals just how much excitement is to be had. *Roller* is discovered to be the complete game. The readers are ultimately aware of what they're missing as games struggle right and day to replace the paper with the paper version. Finally revealed, the Commodore Adventure, and Single Systems Adventure Ultima II - to be released one year later. Better find options for the impact rating and price it is...

12 Another *Roller* issue again. This time, however, it appears almost official - a 1000-compatibility game machine for ACE. The *Roller* came out on September 10th. *Roller* is discovered to be the complete game. The readers are ultimately aware of what they're missing as games struggle right and day to replace the paper with the paper version. Finally revealed, the Commodore Adventure, and Single Systems Adventure Ultima II - to be released one year later. Better find options for the impact rating and price it is...



NOW...turn the page and check out the 100 Top Games of the year, rated and re-appraised - PLUS playing tips and targets...

100 TOP GAMES

Here they are...the top games from one of the most exciting years ever in the history of computer entertainment. Check out the ratings, the playing tips, and the lasting value of the titles that set the standard by which all other games should be judged. If you think you're tough, buy them, play them, and see if you can beat them...

ADDOCTABALL

Amiga

Amiga BT **114,856k**
 Reviewed Issue 2 - Original ACE
 Rating 95k

A scrolling Breakout game didn't seem like the brightest of ideas, but it added a novel twist to a flagging game type. There are too many elements like go-thrusters on the ball, an unstable back wall and teleports, that make it different from any of the other games in the field. However, it's more frustrating because if you die there are instant points you have to go back to.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 850

It's suffered from the masses of other clones.

◆ TIPS

Use items sparingly to get you out of tight situations. Don't just let the ball bounce off the back wall - you can do more damage and speed the ball up by trying to hit it all the time. Protect the back wall as all time from fireballs and multi-steps. Respect them and you won't last long at all.

◆ TARGET

Complete a level without using a teleport.

ANARCHY

Amiga

Spectrum **12,995k**
 C64 **12,995k**
 Amstrad **12,995k**
 Reviewed Issue 2 - Original ACE
 Rating 95k

One of the year's best real budget crackers, this intriguing title ranks as a top flick to light under a pound. The game format looks like



Get liberty - the ball itself will be taking control by a leading shot, or will release you when.

simply itself - drive your tank round a series of mazes, destroying the weapons-carriers stored there and dodging enemy drods - but restrictions on firing often force you to tackle screens in one particular order. It's a subtly enjoyable game, veering on the abstract, which manages to be both satisfying and largely non-violent.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 79k

Still looks like the great budget fare.

ATF

Digital Integration

Spectrum **12,855k** **112,566k**
 C64 **12,855k** **112,566k**
 Amstrad **12,855k** **112,566k**
 Reviewed Issue 7 - Original
 ACE Rating 95k

This stealth fighter-bomber game was a bold move for DI, a firm better known for shoot-'em-ups. They traded realism for gameplay and produced some of the best tactical action we saw all year, embedded in a very playable arcade-style game. Make up your own mission from intelligence briefings, load your Advanced Tactical Fighter with the items of your choice and fly out over your frame landscapes to help your forces win the war.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 84k

When it got software it's impressive, it's not.

◆ TIPS

Slow with intention for ground targets. Slow down to terrain-following speed as you get within 100k, fire up, fire, and launch another missile as well as hit to destroy even the odd tough enemy bases before you reach them.

On higher levels, your real task is to keep your ground and sea forces in contention - use those map areas where your jets are heavily outnumbered, blowmaking any larger you've already got on your computer and searching out the rest. They'll lag in automatically as you approach, and a few more blowbacks should turn the tide in your favor.

If you've been shot up and are only just fast enough to stay airborne, don't put your undercarriage down until the last moment. Lowered wheels only reduce your speed by a tiny amount, but this can be enough to seal you.

◆ TARGET

Win an any level without using Mavericks.



◆ TIPS

The key to unlocking a large structure of containers isn't the structure's shape, but rather the motion of firing pipes round the edge. Often you only need one pipe to unlock a large chunk of the screen.

The guardians or even little level follow your course exactly, so try and move in-locks rather than retracing your steps. That way you stand a far better chance of requesting past them and escaping.

BALANCE OF

POWER

Microlog

Amiga **128,566k**
 Amiga BT **128,566k**
 Reviewed Issue 2 - Original ACE
 Rating 95k

A classic struggle between East and West for world supremacy. You can control either the USA or USSR as they try to win over countries by fair means or foul. It might start out as some economic aid to a poor third world country, escalate into military intervention and end up as a global nuclear conflict. It's a tremendously complex simulation that tests your powers of organization, diplomacy and leadership to the full. The passage of time has done nothing to diminish its appeal or challenge, even in the age of Civilization.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 90k

As good today as it's always been.



• TIPS

Initially you'll have to play everything by ear so to what to fight first with. Usually you'll learn what issues the opposition will or won't back down over. There's no punishing a nice guy and just defending your own sphere of influence. You've got to get out there and compete, otherwise defeat is guaranteed. Never go all the way to nuclear war, please. Sometimes it's worth pushing the other side to the frustration to get a big advantage. Never challenge on anything except issues; you've got a good chance of winning - it will cost you points otherwise.

• TARGET

Go to *SeaCon 4* three times in one game - and double.

BIONIC COMMANDOS

ACT

024/128	02/95cc	£14.95pb
Spectrum	02/95cc	
Amstrad	02/95cc	£14.95pb
Atari ST		£19.95pb

Revised Issue 18 - Original ACE Rating 4.5



Bionic Commandos - Using your sense of all vibrations you get your just bloody well.

Another coin-up adventure that works well is *Islands* where instructions. The levels may in question has vibrations, popping little guys that allow him to swing and climb around at manner of flying patterns. It's not pursued by ropes at over the place and faces other devilish defenses. As you there aren't any clues but you can't be someone will be working on one.

• VINTAGE VALUE 5.0

So much have appeared to freedom it.

• TIPS

Throwing the book can scroll the screen to reveal platforms or obstacles. This is frequently handy at making progress.

• TARGET

Complete Level 1 without shooting anyone.

BMX SIMULATOR

Customisation

Atari ST	£14.95pb
Amiga	£14.95pb

Revised Issue 9 - Original ACE Rating 4.0

Viewed from above, this BMX set-up gives you and a friend the chance to pedal your way round seven courses in an attempt to complete the specified number of laps within the time limit. The bumps and berms of affect your bike realistically, so use them to your advantage.

• VINTAGE VALUE 7.0

We expect a bit more from a game nowadays.

• TIPS

Some levels have undocumented shortcuts!

• TARGET

Complete it without falling off.

BOBSLEIGH

Digital Imagination

024/128	02/95cc	£14.95pb
Spectrum	02/95cc	
Amstrad	02/95cc	£14.95pb

Revised Issue 4 - Original ACE Rating 4.0

This winter sport simulation is well unloved for its realistic representation of hurtling down walls of ice in a metal tube. The 024 version was really not up to the standard of the others, lacking the control and feel. The long term aims were quite difficult but we still a tough prospect today.

• VINTAGE VALUE 4.0

Be determined while in gameplay here.

• TIPS

Always keep the team at maximum fitness by training every other race. Good steering is crucial at the top of the run. Lose time here and you'll get a very poor time. Keep on the bottom of the track around the corners - going high usually prints! Well. Watch out for short-cuts - they'll throw you out of what's very easy.

• TARGET

Break the track record on every course.

BONECRUNCHER

Superior Software

024/128	02/95cc	£14.95pb
Amiga		£14.95pb
BBC	02/95cc	£14.95pb

Revised Issue 9 - Original ACE Rating 4.0

It first gains a doubletastic rep, but soon reveals highly original gameplay as you attempt to collect bits of soap on screens full of hazards. Punting quality similar to *ACPI* - addictive, at times exceptionally difficult, and always entertaining.

• VINTAGE VALUE 6.0

As addictive as ever, proving that a powerful game design can outlast the test of time and subsequent releases. Some recent releases however, *Dungeon Master* for example, have introduced the brainpower element into more exotic scenarios.

• TIPS

Password entry is different screens varies on different versions, but by these: *Colossal*, *Colosmarch*, *Worship*, *Scorch*, *Web-of-Death*, *Underground*, *Horrid*. Always make soap whenever possible.

BUBBLE BOBBLE

Puzzle

Spectrum	£7.95cc
Com	02.95cc
Amstrad	02.95cc
Atari ST	£19.95pb
Amiga	£19.95pb

Revised in Issue 1 - Original ACE Rating 5.0

Probably the only coin-op ever to star bubble-blowing, banana-eating crosscut. *Bubble Bobble* proved us this time last year in its COM incarnation. Since then it's surfaced on a host of other formats, but the timeless silly gameplay shines through on all of them. Blow bubbles to trap those marauding critters, keep up to burst the bulky bubbles and then eat the fruit that the bubble turn into. It sounds stupid - but, it is stupid! It's about when a game is this addictive, who cares?

**• VINTAGE VALUE 4.5**

Still plays well, but looks a little old now.

• TIPS

The randomly-distributed extras are the key. Progress fans should watch out for the level skip abilities, while high-score addicts will need those golden bottles that fill the screen with bonuses.

• TARGET

The game's simultaneous two-player mode is a must for continued progress. Real addicts should be able to finish the game single-handed, mind you.

BUBBLE GHOST

21st International Programmes

Atari ST	£19.95pb
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Revised Issue 4 - Original ACE Rating 5.0

Bloats - obstacles threaten to burst your bubble in this engaging little piece of French cartoonism. Move your cartoon ghost head behind it and puff your cheeks out to blow that little bit of past space, through perfectly blowing gaps and across dangerous air currents. Wacky stuff, with bags of Golic charm!

▶ VINTAGE VALUE 014

Still wins full marks for wordiness—and playability!

▶ TIPS

Many serious obstacles can be moved or switched off by blowing in the appropriate place. Vary your distance from the bubble to control how much effect your blowing has: from blowing up your car-wash to a far greater force.



▶ **Captain Blood** — Her work is that subtle, and the only way to get food that fast is to blow the trigger.

BUGGY BOY

Clay

044	\$3.995	\$14.995
Spectrum	\$7.995	\$14.995
Amstrad	\$3.995	\$14.995
Atari ST	\$3.995	\$14.995
Amiga	\$3.995	\$14.995
Revised Issue 4 — Original ACE		
Rating: 800		

The spoils of car driving games began before this one hit the streets and is continuing ever today. Like rock-the-car-off-road and avoid obstacles to avoid and

time bonuses to collect, making it a thoroughly enjoyable drive on up. When Buggy Boy first appeared it offered something new and exciting — this is not the case nowadays.

However, it's still a good game for its not great yet, not.

▶ VINTAGE VALUE 060

It's loaded well, but has been superseded.

▶ TIPS

Time-based games are the key to completing the game. Use fire whenever possible.

▶ TARGET

Complete all five courses.

CAPTAIN BLOOD

Intergame

Amstrad	\$3.995	\$14.995
054	\$3.995	\$14.995
Spect	\$3.995	\$14.995
Atari ST	\$3.995	\$14.995
Amiga	\$3.995	\$14.995
086 PC	\$3.995	\$14.995
Revised Issue 7 — Original ACE		
Rating: 887		

Captain Blood's a superb looking space quest/adventure that has you searching a vast cluster of stars for some of your clones. You've got to talk with a whole bunch of different alien types — some of whom are not friendly — in order to get any information that may or may not be of use to you.

▶ VINTAGE VALUE 060

A superbly well implemented.

▶ TIPS

Face down the various planetary coordinates, don't rely on just remembering them.

▶ TARGET

Find all the clones.



▶ **Carrier Command** — Start and expand and expand with the allies.

CARRIER COMMAND

Parade

Atari ST	\$34.995	\$34.995
Amiga	\$34.995	\$34.995
Amstrad	\$14.995	\$13.995
Spectrum	\$14.995	\$13.995
Revised Issue 9 — Original ACE		
Rating: 827		

This mix of arcade and strategy game looks more like the Star 30 graphics and great gameplay. The player plays the commander of one of a pair of aircraft carriers that were on duty in the Southern seas when a series of volcanic islands recently emerged. The two carrier's game happens and a set to destroy the islands unless you can defeat it. This is achieved by capturing the islands and using them to manufacture goods for you. You've got to keep all your islands within a



▶ **Game Command 87** — Some 1's on balls, several ready for launch.

network for supplies to be moved around, and this is where your strategic abilities are tested.

▶ VINTAGE VALUE 060

Nothing else combines the two games so well.

▶ TIPS

When loading up a Mahjong, just install the Mahjong laser cannon in the front compartment. Check out Defense stands with a Manta to find which side the command centre is on. Approach with the carrier from the side so that you can take the centre out with the deck laser. Take out the centre before dealing with enemy fleets. They will then cut out of ammo and fall over if you can't manage to shoot them down.

▶ TARGET

Take out an enemy defense island using only 1000000.

COLOSSUS MAH JONG

Clay

054	\$3.995	\$14.995
Amstrad	\$3.995	\$14.995
Revised Issue 8 — Original ACE		
Rating: 827		

Mah Jong is a pretty like game played with a special set of tiles. With the computer version you form punts, kongs and chows onscreen against three computer opponents. They may not be the greatest dice, but they'll certainly give you a run for your money.

▶ VINTAGE VALUE 827

Still a terrific piece of arcade software.

▶ TIPS

The only real skill in the game is choosing which tile to discard. If you don't want to use a tile — especially if it's a dragon or wind — stick it early; that way you can probably force it patterns out of your opponents' hands. Fanning a close may seem like desperation, but if it gets you Mah Jong you should go for one like a shot. If you're that close to Mah Jong then at least one other player probably will be too, so speed is of the essence.

CHUCK YEAGER'S ADVANCED FLIGHT TRAINER

Electronic Arts

054	\$3.995	\$13.995
086 PC	\$3.995	\$13.995
Revised Issue 2 — Original ACE		
Rating: 812		

Chuck Yeager's flight trainer is, broadly speaking, a thoroughly enjoyable flight simulator — but that's by no means the whole story. The training options included make this not only fun, but instructive fun. It doesn't take long if you follow Chuck's advice before you're achieving such complex manoeuvres as barrel rolls and loops. The game's controlled by a series of pull-down menus which are incredibly easy, and all the options make for plenty of testing enjoyment.

▶ VINTAGE VALUE 812

Get one of the best flight sims around.

▶ TIPS

Listen to Chuck!



CONQUEROR

Darien

Archimedes C14.950
 Reviewed Issue 3 - Original ACE Rating 8/11

The Zero-landscape routines saw action for the second time in this solid 3D turn-em-up for IBM Archies only. Choose either German, German or American forces to fight for and then invade off to battle in a realistic 3D lighting scheme. Remarkable chiefly for the way the tanks were actually recognizable, it's an impressive game but lacks the popular appeal of Zero. Good stuff, but probably best left to tank fans.

■ **VINTAGE VALUE 100**

Doesn't look a little limited compared to the later *Center-Command*.

■ **TIPS**

On the lower, less tactical levels of the game, don't assume that having a tougher tank automatically makes things easier. The opposition gets tougher to match!



COMBAT SCHOOL

Darien

CD4 C8.950 C11.950
 Spectrum C7.950
 Amstrad C8.950 C11.950
 Reviewed Issue 3 - Original ACE Rating 8/8

This multi-event wargler's based on the popular coin-up and has a distinct military flavor. You and a friend can compete simultaneously through split-screen gaming events including fire range practice and unit training.

■ **VINTAGE VALUE 800**

Not one of the better coin-up conversions around, even if the game style is rather old.

■ **TIPS**

Learn where the targets pop-up from or the life-ranges. Wiggles like mad!

■ **TARGET**

Get through the game without losing too-oh the coin-ups.

COSMIC CAUSEWAY

Darien

CD4/128 C9.950 C14.950
 Reviewed Issue 3 - Original ACE Rating 9/10

The sequel to *Freelancer* that took bouncing balls and scolding roadways about as far as they can go. It's fast when there's very demanding on the players reflexes and memory of the course. For 64 owners it's still a game that will test to the limit.

■ **VINTAGE VALUE 800**

Tough stuff, but aging fast.

■ **TIPS**

The only way to crack this is to learn the route. If you can remember where you're going then you've just got the aliens to deal with.

■ **TARGET**

Kill a dragon without getting hit.



Oh *Dan Dare* Causeway - That bit we loved will bring you back to a updating ball when you're back on it.

DAN DARE II

Virgin

CD4 C8.950 C11.950
 Spectrum C7.950 C11.950
 Amstrad C8.950 C11.950
 Reviewed Issue 3 - Original ACE Rating 8/8

Virgin's second team ten-up's viewed side-on and contains four levels. The idea is for the player to take control of Dan and thwart the alien's plans to invade Earth by destroying the life support capsules of the Supermoons. Good arcade adventure stuff that's great to look at.

■ **VINTAGE VALUE 800**

Dan Dare is still a worthy game, but there are better games of this sort about nowadays.

■ **TIPS**

Time's your main enemy so make sure you map every level and learn the short cuts.

■ **TARGET**

Win on the Moon.

DARK SIDE

Incofit

Amstrad C8.950 C14.950
 Spectrum C8.950 C14.950
 CD4/128 C8.950 C14.950
 Reviewed Issue 10 - Original ACE Rating 9/11

The second game to use the Freescape programming system, it's much more of an arcade challenge than *Chien*, as you try to eliminate-point targets against a time limit. The graphics are again excellent, as you'd expect, and the more exciting gameplay gives it a much wider appeal.

■ **VINTAGE VALUE 810**

Only big developments will tarnish this great value.

■ **TIPS**

The crucial factor is getting

anywhere to eliminate a number of targets early on. This will save the clock down and allow you to spend time working out how to get the broken towers. The target crystals are in some pretty odd spots. Look carefully at the planet and some other seemingly useless scenery.

■ **TARGET**

Complete it.

DEFENDER OF THE CROWN

Microfit

Amstrad C7 C8.950
 Amiga C8.950
 CD4/128 C14.950
 Reviewed Issue 4 - Original ACE Rating 10/8

When the game first came out on the Amiga and CD4 it was a case of brilliant graphics, shame about the gameplay. The ST version changed that considerably and really peaked up the strategy elements. The battle between six modes to gain control of England is superbly presented and continues to be one of the most graphically impressive 1-6-60 games. *Commander* have produced similar quality products like the 3 *Stranger* and *King of Chicago*, but *DOTC* still has an aura of class about it, even if the gameplay is weak.

■ **VINTAGE VALUE 800**

Lacks depth but surprisingly is still enjoyable.

■ **TIPS**

Starting from the east coast to Wales, head straight



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them to the castle in Cornwall and back. You should be able to cut off the army from the castle and capture it. Don't forget to call on Robin at the early stage. The only risk is that your home castle will get attacked in the meantime. If you capture the castle bearing the rest should prove easy.

Don't bother with disease or fire when attacking castles. Just make sure you knock them as much off the wall as possible. If a castle's health happens then go for a jewel. It's risky but certainly has a chance to salvage the game by gaining some land.

★ TARGET

Complete the game and keep the other key-Secrets alive.

DEFLEKTOR

Comix

Comix CD £19.99s £14.99s
Spectrum £7.99s
Amstrad £9.99s £14.99s
Atari ST £14.99s
Revised Issue 4 - Original ACE
Rating 9/10

Never mind the shoot-from-the-top genre of 1982, here we have a laboratory environment full of mines, fire-sprites and light-walkers. The aim is to stroll the laser at little blobs to destroy them. It acts for a short time to work out the routes and quick solutions to stop the laser overheating, setting off bombs or running out of energy. You could almost call it a puzzle game, and as such hasn't nothing else like it. It's a bit on the easy side but still great fun.

★ VINTAGE VALUE 8/10

Unique but too easy.

★ TIPS

On screens packed with mines don't arrange them all, just spin around until the beam ends up near a blob and then switch to the mirror round. If a blob seems impossible to hit, spin each mirror slowly through all possible positions so as to test out all the possible angles and reflections.

★ TARGET

Complete the game without losing a life.



Oh! Deflektor - Level 5, and as yet there are no problems to show up your skills.

DIPLOMACY

Labour Games

IBM PC £14.99s
Revised Issue 1 - Original ACE
Rating 9/10

As computerised boardgames go, this is one of the best. Take on the role of a major

European power at the turn of the century as the struggle for continental power ensues. Deploy your fleet and armies so as to gain territory from Roman or computer opponents, and use your military forces with the increased production this gives you. Concede, help and conquer out of seven players only one can win, so alliances clearly aren't going to last forever!

★ VINTAGE VALUE 9/10

Not indispensable for another war game.

★ TIPS

Against six computer opponents you should be able to win every time, even from a weak country like Germany or Austria-Hungary. The key is to watch the computer's orders for the last go. If you haven't changed your position, the chance are fair odds usually the same move this go.

Against humans it's a tougher business altogether, but the general rules still apply. Don't assume the worst - if everyone gangs up on you you'll die anyway - and make some allowances for other people's mistakes. You can often win well defended positions just by a clever game about what your opponents' orders will be.

★ TARGET

If you really fancy yourself as a well-pooled war strategist, try this one with the game from Turkey against six computer players, without meeting Russia or Austria-Hungary.

DRILLER

Imperial

Comix CD £14.99s £11.99s
Spectrum £14.99s £11.99s
Amstrad £14.99s £11.99s
IBM PC £19.99s
Revised Issue 4 - Original ACE
Rating 9/10

The first game to be programmed using the Prologisp system that creates real 3D environments that you can go into and out of. The task was to explore a mine and place drilling rigs on it to release gas under the surface. The rigs have to be accurately positioned in each location. Finding the locations is where the puzzle element comes in and there are some very tricky things to work out. It matches up to all the more recent software and ST and Amiga versions are eagerly awaited.

★ VINTAGE VALUE 9/10

No-one has bettered it yet.

★ TIPS

To win intelligently go in Topaz. Use

it by firing at opposite walls. Find hidden tunnels and go to complex R3. Destroy the 4 blocks to make Integros appear. In R5, sever the power lines to the tunnel. Set all the symbols to squares and the doorway to liquidating is revealed. Here you'll find the jet in one of the hangars. In Obdolon you have to shoot or knock over the walls to cross the 1000ft.

★ TARGET

Complete R3 without using the jet.



Before Angerons get hold of you (R3) in Driller.

DUNGEON MASTER

AtariSoft

Atari ST £24.99s
Revised Issue 4 - Original ACE
Rating 9/10

Take charge of a band of four adventurers and wander through the dungeons of the Lord Chaos searching for the treasure. The action viewed through a large window that's surrounded by each character's stats. These icons indicate what the character's holding and their health and stamina levels. There are plenty of spells to learn and cast at the monsters that roam the 14 levels of the dungeon, but you could always resort to beating them with an axe if you have to. Trick puzzles, device mechanisms and ingenious atmospheric graphics will sound make this one of the best role playing adventures to have appeared in any machine.

★ VINTAGE VALUE 9/10

A milestone in Advanced Computer Entertainment.

★ TIPS

Try using particularly vicious monsters into dungeons and then close the doors on them. Or stand one side of a pit (steep) and when the monsters are on the pit, open it

★ TARGET

Complete it using only three characters.

EAGLE'S NEST

Plasmod

Spot £18.99s
CD £18.99s £10.99s
Ami £18.99s £10.99s
Amiga £18.99s £10.99s
Atari ST £18.99s
Revised Issue 5 - Original ACE
Rating 9/10

The Gauntlers aren't just as playful on the larger machines as it was on the 8-bit micro. You view the hero from above as he stomps around a German castle dealing leader-dead to hundreds of Jerry soldiers.

★ VINTAGE VALUE 9/10

Better games of this type have since appeared.

► **TIPS**

Don't collect too much ammo at all once, you can only carry a maximum of 50 shots at any one time.

► **TARGET**

Don't use more than 150 shots on each level.

ENDURO RACER

Amiga

OS/1	£29.95	£14.95pb
Spect	£7.95	
Am2	£29.95	£14.95pb
Am3	£1	£14.95pb
Reviewed Issue 8 - Original ACE Rating 1.5		



► Enduro Racer - Super! You should have called it 'wheelie action you fill that area. One year is for a very long time...

The on-ramp conversion gives you a 2D side-on effect to race through the winding stages of bumps and landing tracks. Watch out for the rock piles, other riders and traps that can allow other fliers into a tangled heap of twisted metal. Get through a stage with seconds to spare and the extra time's added to the clock for the next stage, which is handy because the stages get harder.

► **VINTAGE VALUE TWO**

A good conversion of the arcade game, but we expect our games to have more of a testing challenge nowadays.

► **TIPS**

To flying in the worst CHRAF after the conditions, then press the letter T if you want an extra 10 seconds, or the B to advance you one level, or the P to turbo-speed (200km).

► **TARGET**

Complete 1 without crashing!

FALCON

Spectrum Hitodisc/Amiga

IBM PC	£24.95	£14.95pb
Reviewed Issue 8 - Original ACE Rating 2.5		

The definitive American flight simulator is complex with a capital C. Fly a very realistic F-16 on a wide range of missions, step up the

difficulty settings as your flying skills improve, and marvel at the attention to detail. The side 3D graphics should be even better when IBM PC, Am2 ST and Amiga versions come through.

► **VINTAGE VALUE TWO**

Old very realistic, but Inspector does show up its playability shortcomings rather.

► **TIPS**

Read the manual! Its much, much more than window-dressing. You won't get very far at all if you just take to the air and by bugging out.

► **TARGET**

Land successfully with the HUD switched off in a Colonel mode.

FERRARI FORMULA ONE

Electronic Arts

Amiga	£24.95	£14.95pb
Reviewed Issue 8 - Original ACE Rating 2.0		

As the title suggests, Formula One racing like some of the game here, with the player flying in the driving seat. Although through the main part of the game there are other things to attend to. What angle should the car's wings be? Can you afford to sacrifice a bit of aerodynamic for extra speed at

this track?

Just how rich should the fuel mixture be? Once you're behind the wheel though and waiting for the light to turn green, it's not later to realize you should be in slots in this pouring rain.

► **VINTAGE VALUE TWO**

The best racing game available for the Amiga.

► **TIPS**

At the start of a race, count to 2 after the green lights come on, then press the accelerator and keep it pressed. Keep the car in a straight line and if you're on maximum turbo boost you'll find yourself moving up through the pack rapidly - don't be too keen though because a sharp corner is never far away.

► **TARGET**

Win a ten-lap race with manual gearchanging.



► Ferrari Formula One - Right at the start of the race, then the computer-controlled race can start.

FLIGHT SIMULATOR III

Autodesk

IBM PC Import only - prices vary		
Reviewed Issue 11 - Original ACE Rating 2.0		

The grand old man of flight sims leads to several revised, one with wonderful IBM PC graphics and some extra control options. Fly a prop-driven Cessna or executive jet/transport around North America, learning to fly or just sightseeing. Either way it's instructive and impressively realistic. Autodrive will find it completely unconvincingly mindless, but that comes with the territory.

► **VINTAGE VALUE TWO**

Hardly out of the wrapper!

► **TIPS**

The slow frame and control rates can make you overconfident, so a little restraint is in order. As with all really authentic flight sims, there's a bookwork to be done first. Stick this and you won't stay airborne long planes aren't as simple to fly as you might imagine, and will present problems on both planes - but little on the Cessna, too much on the transport - the car makes you up very easily indeed.

► **TARGET**

Make a night landing with your instrument lights off.

FLYING SHARK

Amiga

OS/1	£29.95	£12.95pb
Spectrum	£7.95	
Am2	£29.95	£14.95pb
Reviewed Issue 8 - Original ACE Rating 3.0		

A vertically scrolling shoot-em-up this time. You're flying a frigate if aren't's plane through five levels of increasingly difficult attack from enemy planes and gun emplacements. There are plenty of extra weapons to pick up, and monster-submarines and planes to be destroyed.

► **VINTAGE VALUE TWO**

Good graphics, good gameplay, what more do you need in a shoot-er-upper?

► **TIPS**

Learn where the planes and tanks are coming from. Coded at the entries and scrolling around at the bottom of the screen.

► **TARGET**

Complete level 1 without extra weapons.

CITYZONE

Com

OS/1/2	£9.95	£14.95pb
Am2/3	£9.95	£14.95pb
Spectrum	£7.95	£12.95pb
Reviewed Issue 5 - Original ACE Rating 3.5		

One of the best on-ramp conversions to make its way into the home micro. The clarity stems from the variety of the gameplay, which involves not only horizontally scrolling action but some pseudo-3D landing as well. Arcade games tend to get continually better, but this one still looks good and plays well in comparison to the opposition.



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VINTAGE VALUE 740

Holds up better than most coin-ops.

TIPS

On the first stage you want to get hold of the rocket gun because it's handy for taking out encroachments at an angle. In the control section you should keep moving continuously from side to side to avoid the enemy fire.

TARGET

Complete it without extra weapons.

From the same team that brought you *Impact* comes another wacky activities game. It doesn't look like much but it conceals some wicked puzzles out of a five straight lines, some monsters and a learning ball. It relies on the control for most of its appeal and subtlety isn't. It's got elements of *Battle Broom* and it will be interesting to see if any other similar games come out.

VINTAGE VALUE 800

What could happen in a month?

TIPS

Don't panic and don't give up. Even with just a few seconds left you can achieve quite startling screen completions.

Learn how to stamp the bonus because it can save thousands amounts of time.

TARGET

Score 1,000,000 on the pre-programmed screens.

HUNTER'S MOON

Toshiba

MSX 25900 (12,000)
Reviewed Issue 6 - Original ACE
Rating 800

The crucial eight-way scanner sets you the task of blasting into organically alien structures and collecting vital star-cells from within them. The chief problem here is that, being organically, the structures rebuild themselves in a cyclic pattern. Blast your way in at the wrong time and place and you're dead! Some rather odd sub-games and a host of cut levels add depth to a quirky but enjoyable test of arcade skills.

VINTAGE VALUE 810

Seems a little repetitive in retrospect.

TIPS

Use of shuffling is vital to getting those star-cells successfully. Items, shields are all very well while you're learning the time to take through each structure, but in the long term you'll have to rely on the 'shuffling' of the temporary protection you get from each star-cell.

TARGET

What is its own time setting? Then clear the first three test systems without using any shuffling - that is, waiting between star-cells for the short term shield to wear off.



MSX Hunter's Moon - Blasting your way through it takes a search of star-cells.

IMPACT

Autogenic

Atari ST	£14,990
Amiga	£14,990
Amstrad	£8,990
MSX	£8,990
Spectrum	£8,990
Reviewed Issue 1 - Original ACE	
Rating 800	

Breakout clones are still pouring onto the shelves over now, but this one still has that something extra. Not only is there the fast action, sharp graphics and musical sound effects, but a screen-designer which gives the game much more variety and interest. The sheer weight of clones has devalued breakout games, not that they had much originality in depth going for them anyway. They're still handy activities, though, and you'll find yourself coming back to this one time and time again.

VINTAGE VALUE 800

Got the best alternative scene.

TIPS

There are few aims you can go for - points in progress. Points players will collect the spinning tapes and take the bonus points at the end of a screen. Progress players will use the staples to get additional powers that make climbing the level easier. Here are the combinations for accessing different screens: gold, fish, eat, plus, heat, ink, and take for the user-defined screens.

TARGET

Complete 10 levels without using any extra powers.

JET BIKE SIMULATOR

Comcasters

Spectrum	£4,990
Amstrad	£4,990
Reviewed Issue 7 - Original ACE	
Rating 800	

Having almost conquered the market in high class budget software, Comcasters decided to up their prices for their Plus range of games. These offer games players the chance to play both standard and expert versions of the same game. In *JetBike Sim* you and a bunch of mates (or computer clones) get to

GUNSHIP

Microprose

Atari ST	£20,000
IBM PC	£20,000
MSX	£14,000
Amiga	£12,000
Amstrad	£14,000
Atari	£20,000

A good old pump 'n' helicopter fight shoot'em-up game with an impressive manual. You get to fly missions in several areas starting with flight training in the USA and culminating in combat in Western Europe.

VINTAGE VALUE 800

Fades slightly in the face of strong recent competition.

TIPS

Be warned! - flying a helicopter isn't easy. They respond slowly - but just as inevitably - to the controls. And the keyboard overlay is essential.

HELTER SKELTER

Autogenic

Atari ST	£14,000
Amiga	£14,000
Reviewed Issue 12 - Original ACE	
Rating 850	

INTERCEPTOR

Electronic Arts

Amiga	£24,000
Reviewed Issue 10 - Original ACE	
Rating 800	

The best combination of flight simulation and combat yet. Amiga handles the advancing graphics and realistic sound effects. The combat simulator sets you a series of difficult missions. You start off simply by identifying an aircraft, but it soon escalates into dogfights with flaps, chasing after cruise missiles, taking the opponent's plane and even attacking an aircraft carrier. Unlikely to be believed for some time.

VINTAGE VALUE 800

Nothing even comes close to it yet.

TIPS

The mission descriptions shouldn't be taken as gospel. On several of them you'll have to change your plans. Remember it's a combat simulator, it doesn't do co-operate - let 'em have it. One good way of dealing quickly with flaps is to fly very close to the ground under them and then looping behind them, where you give them a quick missile as soon as it's in range.

TARGET

Shoo-down the cruise missile with cannon fire only.



ize around several water courses competing not only against each other but also against a tight time limit.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 87%

Still a good multi-player game.

◆ TIPS

Try playing the expert level first — that ought to standardize level and you shouldn't have too hard your own.

◆ TARGET

Finish first at the Expert level on all the courses.

KARTING GRAND PRIX

Atari
1992

Amiga \$9.95/96

Atari ST \$9.95/96

Reviewed Issue 7 — Original ACE Rating 84%

This is a shaved-from-behind race on-up, that has both tracks and some hard-to-land computer clones. Not only does the gameplay compare favorably with such staples as Super Sprint, but the price is quite attractive too.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 84%

The game's not very little appeal.

◆ TIPS

Stick to the same track until you get well acquainted with how the kart handles.

◆ TARGET

Lap the computer clones.



Image: Karting Grand Prix — That's you in the blue on just about to crash.

LEATHERNECK

Mitsubishi

Atari ST \$19.95/96

Amiga \$19.95/96

Reviewed Issue 10 — Original ACE Rating 87%

The first game to have four-player action, via an interface that allows four joysticks to be used at once. It's basically just a Commando derivative, but it's packed full of great graphics, nicely sound effects

and violent action. It's bloodier than after that the one delivers. Granted that followed it down the four-player path (but it hasn't) diminished its enjoyment level.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 86%

There aren't many four-player games around.

◆ TIPS

Stick in teams of two. Each team takes a side of the screen and tries on the other team for scoring/ies. Don't shoot your buddies in the back — especially any-path. Edge forward slowly-up the screen. Aiming to approach will flood the screen with the enemy and/or you best fast.

◆ TARGET

Score 100,000.



Image: ST Leatherneck — Play it get the close to that explosion and you get the shot.

MAGNETRON

Pirella

Spectrum \$7.95/96

Atari \$8.95/96

Reviewed Issue 8 — Original ACE Rating 84%

Take a standard generic 2D arcade adventure, add Steve Turner's game-jacking skills, stir in some magnetic physics and what do you get? A little cracker of a game, that's what. Steer your steel-around-eight multi-screen weapon satellites, shuffle their reactor tabs around to shut the power off, and kill or cannibalize any robot that gets in your way. (Pretty standard stuff.)

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 86%

Looks rather dated now, but it's okay.

◆ TIPS

Weight and inertia power can be important, but also keep an eye on your level of charge. (Floor magnets can become very dangerous indeed once you're carrying a stable load, nothing finishes you off better than being sent sailing off a ledge.)

◆ TARGET

Complete one satellite completely (R/P).

MATCHDAY II

Orion

Spectrum \$7.95/96

Atari \$8.95/96

Atari \$8.95/96

Atari \$8.95/96

Reviewed Issue 8 — Original ACE Rating 86%

The definitive football game for 8-bit machines. The player's in-charge of half a dozen player/fooballers, and has to score goals against the other team controlled by either the computer or a friend. Kick strength is determined by the player and is represented by the "kickometer" that appears above the character that's either in possession, or is in the best position to reach the ball.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 86%

There's still nothing to beat it on the 8-bit machines.

◆ TIPS

Get up on the computer!

◆ TARGET

Beat the computer by 4 goals in the F.A. Cup Final.

MERCENARY

Manager (now available as turn-overable compilation edition including Escaper from Targ and The Second City)

Spectrum \$9.95/96

Atari \$10.95/96

Atari \$10.95/96

Atari \$10.95/96

Atari \$10.95/96

Atari \$10.95/96

Reviewed Issue 8 — Original ACE Rating 84%

This 2D vector-graphic game set the pace for "real" environments. You have to get off the planet Targ by first getting to an orbiting space station and then finding a spaceworthy capsule of interplanetary travel. (Two game)

even goes underground and has dogfighting action. (It was dated because of the introduction of improved game environments like those created by the Frogscaper system in Jiffy. Filled w/graphics and shading help create more atmospheric surroundings. The lack remains a good challenge though.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 84%

Factors like the realism rate to Modin (S).

◆ TIPS

Underground hangers are located at 03.05, 03.15, 01.26, 11.13, 04.05 and 04.06. That's jump of obscure facts big enough to get into. Don't mess with alien spacecraft, there's little to be gained and a lot to lose.

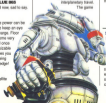
MOONSTRIKE

Mitsubishi

Spectrum \$7.95/96

Reviewed Issue 2 — Original ACE Rating 88%

Written in New Zealand and set on the Moon, this vertically scrolling shoot-em-up has strong shades of Xenos. If anything it's even slower though, relying on the sheer weight of enemy fire — consisting of light bulbs, coins and





AMIGA
£24.95



FUEL FOR EN



Your plane has ditched on a mountainous plateau somewhere in Nepal. Tibet. You and your companions get alive. A large shape moves toward you. It's not your type of dinosaur, is it? Where are you... and where? Stunning, state-of-the-art 3D graphics and 4 way scrolling, give that '90's cinema mood as you team not only to survive, but also that your companions get out. All they need is your



One please name up the screen and appeal of Ark - "It's just pure awfully good." Ark is a challenge of the capabilities of the. Must know the cartoon is almost perfect replica with all the excitement of the original. Take on a great hit. This is Arkwood - The



Exceptional graphics, on game, Ark, and before all add up to make the atmosphere generated. Ark is a challenge of the capabilities of the. Must know the cartoon is almost perfect replica with all the excitement of the original. Take on a great hit. This is Arkwood - The

AMIGA

ocean

FROM



AMIGA

ocean

16 BIT STATE

ATARI
ST
£19.95

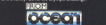
ENTERTAINMENT



DALEY THOMPSON'S CHALLENGE Enter the 1988 Olympic Challenge with Daley Thompson as you work out in the game, where your efforts will directly affect your performance in the competition itself - another first from Ocean.

Ten Olympic events include Long Jump, Shotput, High Jump, 100m Sprint, 400m, 110m Hurdles, Discus, Pole Vault, Javelin and 1500m. You will need all your skills to build on what you have seen, an impressive workout, and, if it is necessary for all top flight athletes, your judgement to select the most effective equipment for each event is now vital - a decision which can win or lose you a place on the podium.

This one is just another sports simulation, this is a Daley Thompson event where all his talent and know-how burn through to make a thrilling and enterprising game play for all the family. Go for the Olympic Challenge!



PEOPLE OF THE ART

any other ridiculous hero a hero they can come up with — to put the pressure on you. Backdrops and ground details include plazas, 1500 ships and the Mona Lisa. Oh, and more: it may be, but what a load of wonderful visual nonsense!

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 710

It wasn't a real game style even then: now it really looks old.

◆ TIPS

Stay well up the screen so as to fit ground defenses early. When you fire and pull back to release a bomb, view off to one side initially to avoid defending fire. This goes double for the end-of-level fortresses.

◆ TARGET

Linear experts can feel pretty smug if they can reach the Mona Lisa without losing ships, but their joy isn't to be cut of a reality check.



Nebulus — The Pops enters the fray from the left over the top of the incoming system.

NEBULUS

Hexxon

OS/4186 \$9.99/\$17.99/\$26.99
Spectrum \$7.99/\$15.99
Amstrad \$9.99/\$17.99/\$26.99
Reviewed Issue 4 — Original ACE Rating B2

The platform game reached new heights of originality and comprehensiveness with this tower turning epic. Your cute character Pops has to make his way up towers in the sea, reaching the top causes the tower to collapse and Pops to move onto the next one. The towers are superbly constructed with disappearing floors, corridors through them, life, deadly objects and all sorts of new traps. You'll need to put plenty of brainwork into solving tricky situations, as well as fighting the nasty and the vicious aliens. An instant classic that hasn't been beaten.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 900

It remains the ultimate in wacky platform games.

◆ TIPS

Watch out for disappearing blocks because they drop up just when you've been lured into a sense of security. Learn the timing of the flying alien so that you don't get caught in a spot where there's no escape route up, down or through a door. Remember that getting high enough above alien makes them disappear — this comes in very handy on some towers.

◆ TARGET

Complete Tower 7.

NIGHT RAIDER

Genion

Amstrad ST \$19.99/\$39.99
Spectrum \$9.99/\$19.99/\$29.99
OS/4186 \$9.99/\$19.99/\$29.99
Amstrad \$9.99/\$19.99/\$29.99
IBM PC \$19.99/\$39.99
Amiga \$19.99/\$39.99
Reviewed Issue 12 — Original ACE Rating TT2

Not terribly realistic, but nevertheless an enjoyable first-person/shoot-em-up game which sees you at the helm of a Cimmerian Avenger based on the AN Royal. Set out on one of five fast-moving missions to take the Dominax, battling against a variety of Orbs, G-boats and Dominax.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE TT2

It's funny dated since we reviewed it.

◆ TIPS

Set up your approach carefully using the map screen when going in to strike a G-boat or G-boat — you won't find them by randomly flying around the ocean. Hang on to the last minute before releasing your torpedoes at the Dominax. Fire too early and you'll miss, and the mission will fail.

◆ TARGET

Sink the Dominax!

OGRE

Origin Systems/Mongoose

OS/4 \$19.99/\$39.99
IBM PC \$24.99/\$44.99
Amiga \$24.99/\$44.99
Amstrad ST \$24.99/\$44.99
Reviewed Issue 5 — Original ACE Rating B2

This one-of-a-kind wargame's set in the 21st century and is based on the Stone Age/Stone Age games. The action takes place on a 16 x 21 hexagonal map, and the idea is for



Ogre Ops — The definition book is a convenient attack on the infamous Ogre tanks.

one player (or the computer) to control a monster fighting machine (The Ogre) and try to capture the defending player's Command Post. Wargames have certainly moved on since Ogre first appeared, making it look very dated. The game's too simplistic and too limited by today's standards to warrant the original high PC value.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 900

The standards of strategy software have risen dramatically in the last year.

◆ TIPS

Take out the Ogre's tanks as early as possible.

◆ TARGET

Destroy the Ogre with an all-GBV defense.

OUT RUN

Super10/Soft

Sega \$24.99/\$49.99
Amstrad ST \$19.99/\$39.99
OS/4186 \$9.99/\$19.99/\$29.99
Spectrum \$9.99/\$19.99/\$29.99
Amstrad \$9.99/\$19.99/\$29.99
Reviewed Issues 2 and 3 — Original ACE Rating B2

It was a great game in its Sega console incarnation, a thrilling ride on the 8-bit machines and back to greatness on the ST. Its nothing more than a racing game in which there's an unending road, lots of traffic and many obstacles. It hasn't started in the arcade and resulted in massive sales at the home version. It's hard to see how that there was much special about it, even the most recent and much improved ST version. There have been better racing games in the past and doubtless will be in the future.

ODS

Mongoose

Amstrad ST \$19.99/\$39.99
Reviewed Issue 9 — Original ACE Rating B2



Imagine Thrust, Defender, Chipster and Asteroids all rolled into one and this is what you get. The idea is to race planet surfaces for Ods to rescue, while battling the overwhelming alien defenses. The controls are superb and the planets intricately designed to be extremely diverse. The graphics don't look special but the action is anything but.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 900

Still one of the best games around.

◆ TIPS

Keep a close eye out for spikes popping out of the landscape. The tip starts flashing as you get near — a warning of impending doom. Don't jump/roll around with Ods. Get a full load of new bombs. If you can't it force fires as fast as possible. Always enter teleports very slowly because you frequently get set in confined spaces. Don't pile up Ods until you've cleared the surrounding area of the enemy. Assuredly, shooting Ods or flying with some or fewer is an unorthodox win.

◆ TARGET

Complete Thenguloids.



The huge console hasn't made us fly a breakdown over the last year or so as expected, but software of that size could still substitute if flying is a leading entertainment medium. Of course, it will face stiff competition from the new Nintendo console.

VINTAGE VALUE 800

Racing games become kids' favorites fast.

TIPS

The rules stay the same, so make sure you learn the best one for you to master. Keep your foot to the floor and use gears to change your speed when necessary. Drive as fast as you can. Don't crash. Mind the trees.

TARGET

Complete the first stage with fewer seconds to spare.

PHOENIX

DPC: International Programmers

MS-DOS 1.0/2.00K
Reviewed Issue 2 — Original ACE
Rating 87

The distinct piece of French 3D software sends you hurtling down a winding tunnel in the depths of space. Your object is simple to reach the end without running off the tunnel surface, and that's not an easy proposition. Surface panels cut down or boost your energy; lock your controls and simply ride the rails. The controls are tricky to say the least, making a very simple game idiosyncratically addictive.

VINTAGE VALUE 750

Looks a bit simple for full-price now, but it's still worth playing.

TIPS

Concentrate on your controls the whole time, especially on long diagonal stretches. If you lose the rhythm of the control movements you're as good as dead. The wisest thing about playing this game is the leaf-getting factor: In places you simply have to run out or energy runs out, the alternative being death. Don't let this get to you: The lack of instant points will send you through as if it

takes you through a dash of Vietnam-flavored sub-games. Search the village, defend your hideout and then escape on an orbit in your quest to... well, to re-assert the real reality. Features and mapping skills are at a premium as you struggle to defeat some rather exotic tank-like Cong fighters, not to mention the odd psychotropic American—all of which works great on the CD and rather poorly on other machines.

VINTAGE VALUE 710

Intuitive objects and on-league foundation take their toll.

TIPS

The key to the game is a methodical approach. If you're looking at a map as you go along (and who isn't?) check out an Thompson's guide to ACE Issues 8 and 11. Oh, and on the CD, a version is sure to strike up with supplemental after the bridge in Part 1.

TARGET

Complete Level 1 without switching men or getting killed in action.

PLEXAR

Beamsoft

Spectrum 12.00K
Reviewed Issue 2 — Original ACE
Rating 87

As a Plexar (a cute, bouncy ball) you'll get to bounce your way across some 14 levels that span your home world. Some of these levels lead to dead ends, but if you're fortunate you'll be able to switch to an overhead road that might lead you further—but beware, your controls are tweaked on overhead roads. Tough, addictive and reminiscent fun.

VINTAGE VALUE 800

Still a good bouncy ball game.

TIPS

If you're having trouble in the game, remember that certain squares (diagonal/black and white lines) make you bounce backwards one square—only when there are lots of squares next to each other. The solution is simple—bounce on to the square and before you bounce back leave the (yellow or grey) to move you in the opposite direction. The square that you're landed on is from the opposite direction and that's because you're the other way—which is where you want to go!

TARGET

Complete ten levels without losing a life.



POWERPLAY

Aradia

CD 12.00K 114.00K
MS-DOS 1.0/2.00K 114.00K
Amiga 1.0/2.00K 114.00K
Reviewed Issue 2 — Original ACE Rating 80

A cross between Thea's Plunder and Draughts, Powerplay is set against a backdrop of Greek mythology. Get the story in a third quarter right and you can move a piece on a checkered board as you attempt to lead your human or computer opponent (up to four players). Engage an enemy piece in combat and you'll have to do battle in a mini game either on Mount Olympus, Medusa's Cave or even a lava pit. If you win, the opposing player is demoted in status. If you lose, you're the one in trouble. A fascinating blend of two game styles.

VINTAGE VALUE 800

Still the best of its type.

TIPS

Don't let your pieces stand around in one place for too long, or they'll get litiggy and start moving about on their own accord. The squares on the board are color-coded according to the subject matter—choose your route according to the subject you're sure of.

TARGET

Complete the game without musing.

TARGET

Complete the first stage with your eyes shut (if possible).

PHM PEGASUS

Electronic Arts

CD 12.00K 114.00K
Spectrum 12.00K 114.00K
Amiga 1.0/2.00K 114.00K
MS-DOS 1.0/2.00K 114.00K
Reviewed Issue 2 — Original ACE
Rating 82

Painted Pegasus/Melancholia. Let in case you were wondering what the PHM stand for. You play the commander of one such vessel (The Pegasus) and its job is to complete a series of missions each within a time limit. The emphasis is more on action than strategy, though tactics play an important part. For action fans, the game's still a real treat.

VINTAGE VALUE 800

It's aged well.

TIPS

Don't waste ammunition, and watch the radar's range setting. It's no good having it set to maximum range when there are a large number of ships in the immediate vicinity.

TARGET

Complete a scenario without taking a single hit.

PLATOON

Clavian

Spectrum 10.00K 114.00K
CD 10.00K 114.00K
Amiga 1.0/2.00K 114.00K
MS-DOS 1.0/2.00K 114.00K
MS-DOS 1.0/2.00K 114.00K
Reviewed Issue 1 — Original ACE
Rating 81

An above average game of the film, Coates's jungles and tunnels epic

THE PRESIDENT IS MISSING

Interactive Mystery Adventure Simulation



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THE PRESIDENT IS MISSING

Control

IBM PC £24.95/\$34.95
 CD-ROM £19.95/\$29.95
 Reviewed Issue 12 — Original
 ACE Rating 7/10

A death-strip-up in which you have to track down the bastards of the Western nations who have been kidnapped by terrorists. There are photographic files, documents and an audio tape that you can examine in your search. It's a tough game to get to grips with but very rewarding if successful.



It's President Is Missing - it's something that sits at the site of the kidnapping on the terrorist nation's television screens.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 7/10

Utility is hard-mach competition to evade.

◆ TIPS

Don't ignore any evidence at all. It may take a while to sift through and follow up, but it's well worth it.

◆ TARGET

Rescue the President.

PROJECT STEALTH FIGHTER

Monoplane

CD £24.95/\$34.95
 Spectrum £9.95/\$14.95
 Amstrad £14.95/\$24.95
 Atari ST £24.95/\$34.95
 Reviewed Issue 8 — Original
 ACE Rating 8/10

The combat flight sim includes four scenarios, with several missions to be completed within each scenario. The aircraft is easy to fly (though you wouldn't think it from the top of the manual) and there are enough technical details to keep the player interested with plenty of variety.



missions. Overall, the game's aged wit and is still deserving of a high PC value.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 8/10

There's enough efficient and varied missions to keep a player flying even today.

◆ TIPS

Keeping your SAMs low is essential while approaching combat, so keep fuel speed right down. Once you've engaged the enemy, forget about stealth: your weapons systems will light you up like a Christmas tree whatever you do!

◆ TARGET

Engender General is a very tough level to reach indeed, but you should aim to make Major with at least a DFC on your credit.

QUADRALIN

Logician

Atari ST £19.95/\$29.95
 Amiga £19.95/\$29.95
 IBM PC £24.95/\$34.95
 Reviewed Issue 10 — Original
 ACE Rating 8/10

Your task is to decontaminate a multi-level reactor using a team of six different robots, but there's a strong strategic edge to complicate matters. Manage your resources, solve puzzles as clearly as possible and explore a large game area. Frustrating stuff, but the fun is so immense you may feel overwhelmed.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 8/10

It hasn't had time to age yet!

◆ TIPS

There's no point going into a level with your guns blazing. If you can't solve the early game sections without a whole load of blasting, your energy simply won't last you long enough.

RAMPAGE

Action

CD-ROM £24.95/\$34.95
 Amstrad £9.95/\$14.95
 Spectrum £9.95/\$14.95
 Atari ST £14.95/\$24.95

Reviewed Issue 5 — Original
 ACE Rating 8/10

Legalised hoodlumberism, as three monsters go on the loose smashing the sites of America into piles of rubble. There's about all there is to it, but with three player action and plenty to smash and real it's enjoyable stuff. Seems simple by

QUEDDEX

Tetrisium

CD £19.95/\$29.95
 Reviewed Issue 1 — Original
 ACE Rating 9/10

A self-styled Q&A for QED: the First-person-programmed tile features ten levels so different that you could almost call them sub-games. In each one you're trying to clear a metallic ball from the starting point to an exit, but the obstacles sometimes you'll need to learn. The whole thing played against the QED, so even when you've learnt your way around you'll still have a foghorn wobble-wobble task.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 8/10

One year on, originality's not such a rare commodity.

◆ TIPS

The game revolves around time management and the few shreds of what order you do the levels in. Learning a level you'll want to have as much time as found as possible, so work out levels you can make a time profit on beforehand. The only problem with running up-access time is advance is that the game steps up the difficulty with each level you tackle. In other words, leaving the hardest'll just make it even harder.

◆ TARGET

Real hard cases should aim to complete the game levels in numerical order, or better still at order chosen by their word energy.

today's standards because of the lack of a long-term aim or variety.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 8/10

Simplicity and lack of variety have hurt its appeal.

◆ TIPS

Keep the members fed. They only lose strength slowly, but in this war of attrition-heavy bit of strategy it crucial. It's much easier working as a team. The buildings go down faster — so don't beat up on your fronts.

RAMARAMA

Novum

Spectrum £7.95/\$11.95
 Amstrad £9.95/\$14.95
 CD-ROM £9.95/\$14.95
 Atari ST £19.95/\$29.95
 Reviewed Issue 3 — Original
 ACE Rating 8/10

One of the more successful Quaidex derivatives that enhanced the exploration part of the action. The main character is a frog, battling will focus to return himself to his handsome primary self. As well as the usual range of monsters and generators there are a whole range of spells

for enhancing power, shields, wheels etc. It came towards the end of the glut of Quaidex clones and still stands out as one of the best containing many different features.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE 9/10

Has survived better than most clones.

◆ TIPS

Always increase your power level before anything else, otherwise shields and weapons will drain your energy too quickly. Collecting coins is crucial to long-term survival. Don't just rush through the first couple of levels ignoring them. Gather points. Don't charge through the rooms — clear them out systematically.



TARGET

Complete the game without destroying any generators.



Reached: *Reaches* - *Reaches* (Reaches more points than *Reaches*).

REACH FOR THE STARS

1992 Electronic Arts

IBM PC **CD-ROM**
Reviewed Issue 12 - Original ACE Rating 84

Just one of the Australian Strategic Studies Group's titles that E.A. and now-publishing new titles. It's a space-conquest/strategy game for up to four players. A multitude of options can be chosen to make life difficult and the inclusion of the advanced scenario means you'll be playing this for a long time to come.

VINTAGE VALUE 140
A terrific strategy game.

TIPS

Speed the first few turns building up your economy (and those of a couple of neighboring planets) before you get too far ahead.

TARGET

Complete the galaxy using only AI technology ships.

REBELSTAR

Proxima

Spectrum \$1.99us
Amstrad \$1.99us
Reviewed Issue 5 - Original ACE Rating 88

Originally released by Red Shift as *Rebelstar Planets*. Take charge of 100 or so robots in an attempt to destroy the laser computer at the heart of Moorbase Delta. Either the computer or a friend can play the part of the defenders. Simple to play but hard to put down.

VINTAGE VALUE 140
Well worth searching out a copy.

TIPS

Spectrum owners should try assembling all their men at the top or left (including combat droids) but leave

the group (and droid) at the bottom most at risk (the site between the defence bases). Stand in the combat droid from the bottom group and keep moving him along the outside of the gardens - save a droid for the defence laser. Keep him moving along the bottom and all the defending droids will come running after him. Once the aircraft clear you can send in your small boat to take out the other defence bases, and at the same time break in through the top or back and make a dash for the laser computer. Get the hang of this and you'll find the game a lot easier to win.

TARGET

Destroy the laser computer without losing a man (or combat droid).

RED LED

Accout

CD-12E, Amstrad, Spectrum - currently unfranchised.
Reviewed Issue 2 - Original ACE Rating 91

Marble Madness meets shoot-em-up to produce a unique game. Three droids with different capabilities have to create a route across a board by entering hostile landscapes. Here they have to master control problems, blast aliens and collect objects.

VINTAGE VALUE 100
Survived well, with few imitators.

TIPS

Mapping is crucial - you have to remember which landscapes are where so that you know what of the three droids to use. Extra time-cap rules are crucial to survival. Plan a route that gets as many as possible. There's a couple in the hangar just below the centre. Smart bombs and

breakers are handy at the end of a level when making a dash for the exit, because the droids attack repeatedly after you've got the last energy pod.

TARGET

Try using the same droid on all the landscapes.

THE R.T. SMITH TRILOGY

CDI

Amstrad	Spectrum	£3.99us
	Amstrad	£3.99us
Desert Rat	CDI	£3.99us
	Spectrum	£3.99us
Nubian	Amstrad	£3.99us
	Spectrum	£3.99us



Reviewed Issue 3 - Original ACE Ratings - Amstrad 916, Desert Rat 905, Nubian 909

R.T. Smith is widely regarded as the undisputed king of the 8-bit wargame scene. Mr. Smith managed to produce three classics. Amstrad was the first, followed by Desert Rat and Nubian (arguably the best). The ordering system in each game is the same (and why not? It's simple to use and elegant) so once you've got the hang of one game it's easy to get into the others. Curiously R.T. Smith's last release was an arcade adventure (*Cybernight* from CDI) which was not as good as his wargames. But he's currently working on a new wargame for CD32 - who are now planning to release some of their games on the larger machines (*Desert Rat* for the PC) will be here first, with others following shortly.

VINTAGE VALUE

(Amstrad) 916, (Desert Rat) 905, (Nubian) 909

All of these wargames have lasted well, and it looks like R.T. Smith's got up a winning game formula.

TIPS

Don't overextend your forces. Keep your supply lines protected.

RENEGADE

Imagin

Amstrad £2.99us **£14.99us**
CD-12E £2.99us **£12.99us**
Spectrum £7.99us
Reviewed Issue 7 - Original ACE Rating 87

This local em-up still stands out as one of the best around. A sequel, *Regege Renegade*, has recently appeared with even more original characters and action. This original can't do a storm of controversy because it releases coincided with the Hungerford massacre. Concern was strong enough to get the blood in the game altered to pleasant shades of blue, rather than red. Realism up there hasn't got any of its immediate appeal in the meantime, but today the graphic seems shallow and the world too low.

VINTAGE VALUE 140
Combat games don't age well.

TIPS

Some levels have ledges. Kicking your opponents off them gets a good hit. Get rid of the weapon carriers first because they really hurt you. When opponents are down, kneel or them and punt for a quick kill. On stage three you have to back away from Big Bertha until she charges towards you, then firing his leg. The thing is crucial - otherwise she'll smash you to a pulp. On the final stage, once the helicopter is disposed of, climb in on the lead or end but stay shooting. Don't back off or hell start shooting again.



■ TARGET

Consider it without punting.

ROCKFORD Midgame House

Amiga ST \$19,995
IBM PC \$19,995
Amiga \$19,995
Spectrum £13,995
CD-ROM £13,995

Reviewed issue 8 - Original ACE
Rating 8.5



BTI Noted: These pixels follow the leader of the cast, so make sure you see the guy you're aiming.

This *Skullduggery* derivative had the involvement of the original author Peter Lipp, but never quite stirred up as much excitement. It had lots of new features and screens that added an extra dimension to the game. It's a game-style that looks excellent too, despite its undoubted technical qualities.

■ VINTAGE VALUE 6.5

A game style whose time is running out.

■ TIPS

Remember that by using the fire button you can remove the block next to you without having to move there - very handy in some other titles. You can also run objects as they fall - a game crucial for solving some problems.

SALAMANDER Imagines

Spectrum £13,995
Amiga £13,995 CD-ROM
£13,995 CD-ROM
Reviewed issue 8 - Original ACE
Rating 8.1

This horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-up is the home micro version of the Korean pin-up classic. Fly your aircraft through a series of tunnels and try to traverse the landscape from the left to the right-hand side. *Salamander*'s a tough game to play - partly because it sends you to bed when you lose a life.

■ VINTAGE VALUE 6.5

As slow as an old dog's still good.

■ TIPS

Learning the routes is essential, as is knowing when a bonus is coming up. Don't try to take everything out just because those bonuses that are blocking your route.

■ TARGET

Get to the final reward point without extra weapons.

SAMURAI WARRIOR Probit

CDM £13,995 CD-ROM
Reviewed issue 8 - Original ACE
Rating 8.7

If *Blazing Overhead* could raise its sights and a bigger dose of gameplay, it still wouldn't quite manage the offset charm of this about-sunny set-up. You control the samurai-innab (using 'X' to rise in the queue to swing his blades, butting feebly disguised ninjas and allowing courtesy to be better). His more arduous adventures than most cut-games, but managers in combine the free gameplay forms remarkable well. The animation's great too!

■ VINTAGE VALUE 7.5

Still the one and only for samurai shoot fans.

■ TIPS

To get extra jumping distance, stick to your sword. The jutsu you're jumping into, where you're jumping is long enough to clear two screens - but remember to put your sword away afterwards!

The closest thing the game has to a lives system is the same system. You'll soon learn how much karma you need to reach your reincarnation point, so you can buy yourself 'the insurance' by giving money to peasants.

Even the humblest point must be a ring in disguise, so stay alert at all times.

SKULLDUGGERY Currently undistributed

Amiga ST £19,995
Reviewed issue 8 - Original ACE
Rating 8.9

100 screens of tricky, intriguing puzzles, loose time limits and punning will keep you going for a long, long time in this *Skullduggery* clone. You have to gather the required number of diamonds before you can leave each cavern, at the same time avoiding the unwelcome attention of the Crystal Ball and Crazy Ghosts.

■ VINTAGE VALUE 8.0

A classic of its type as good now as ever it was.

THE SENTINEL Probit

Amiga £13,995
Reviewed issue 11 - Original ACE
Rating 8.0



This has to be one of the most beloved games ever, with 10,000 possible levels. However, each landscape is a jigsaw of caves, drops and platforms, dotted with trees - and The Sentinel. This greatly being slowly rotated, scanning the landscape and absorbing anything it can't turn into more trees - and *the Sentinel* you. The only way you can defeat the Sentinel is to gain enough light to absorb him. To gain light you'll need to build a stand on, which needs energy gathered from absorbing trees. It's simple principle, but an incredibly complex game.

■ VINTAGE VALUE 8.0

Still utterly absorbing.

■ TIPS

Every time you move, make sure you re-absorb your old 1000 and any buttons it was standing on - energy is crucial. Some screens have one or more Sentinels - smaller, but equally lethal, versions of the Sentinel. Take these out as soon as you can see the square they're on. If you're not visible to another 'full grown' you can't lose energy but you still kill more, otherwise a warrior will be sent to help you (the *Salamander* - but if you don't have enough energy, if you can survive a landscape with a Sentinel and an *Salamander* you're an expert!

■ TARGET

Reach landscape 600 without taking out any Sentinels...



BTI Noted: - You've got 15 seconds to collect 30 crystals full and a bunch of valuable goods to construct with.

■ TIPS

Drop objects on the Crazy Ghosts to get more diamonds - you'll need the extra on some screens. Crystal Balls explode when hit, so they can be useful for breaking through solid walls.

SKY CHASE Imagines

Amiga £19,995
Amiga ST £19,995
Reviewed issue 13 - Original ACE
Rating 7.8

A two-player air combat game which takes place over a limited-size grid-based landscape. You can fly any one of several different jets and select the level of armaments they carry. The game ends simply when one player's jet is shot or burned, has shot down the other. A little time to look at, but you get the chance to play against a human opponent. Brilliant fun.

■ VINTAGE VALUE 7.8

The minimalist graphics are surely belittled by new releases, but this has to be the way forward.

■ TIPS

Missiles are a lot more forgiving than cannon fire. DON'T give the computer the paper dart.

■ TARGET

Shoot down the paper dart with precision fire.

SPIDERTRONIC Imagines

Amiga ST £19,995
Reviewed issue 8 - Original ACE
Rating 8.0

This game combines weird Spider-style perspectives with some testing gameplay to provide one of the best air games to have come over the channel from France. The spider you control collects blocks in a maze of platforms to pave his way to the exit. It's all about quick thinking and sharp reflexes as you try to out-wit the deadly bouncing bats. There's real-

ing similar to it, so the gameplay is still quite fresh and original.

▶ **VERTAGE VALUE 87%**

An unusual game concept that no one else has picked up on.

▶ **TIPS**

Avoid invasion points for the bats because there's no time limit; if you get caught going over time, Pick-up-all the time because you can because you never know when you'll have to do a lot of backtracking. Check carefully before taking lifts that nothing will be coming in the other direction or appearing at the bottom, because there's no timing level/half-way.

▶ **TARGET**

Complete the pre-programmed levels without using any seeds.

SPYRO

(Nintendo)

Spectrum £18.99

CDi £18.99

Reviewed Issue 3 - Original AGE Rating 8/10

Mainly violent stuff. Your job is to collect barrels of pyroblite from a series of single-screen levels, but to reach them you'll have to blast your way through hordes of enemy-drawing spines. Generators turn out more spines the whole time, so health becomes important later in their own right, while security



bars blocking your path have to be switched off to open up large areas of each screen. Fireballs, including a construction set

beams blocking your path have to be switched off to open up large areas of each screen. Fireballs, including a construction set

▶ **VERTAGE VALUE 86%**

Still a real banger!

▶ **TIPS**

The best tactic for taking those spines out is to release them, and then run away. This string them out behind you, so that you can blast them in one go without risking attack from other sides.

Blasting wildly is a very bad idea. The key is progress is to take out one batch of spines at a time, leaving the others cooped up

behind security teams. Stay close can release vast numbers of them all at once, putting you in real danger. You're better off taking a lot of energy than risking this.

The attack is called generators - it's a blast of spines. If you can leave some of the life cylinders cooped up and still get all the points, so much the better.

▶ **TARGET**

Continue requiring agent.

SUPER SPRINT

(Electronic)

Spectrum £9.99

CD-i £9.99 £14.99

Amiga £9.99 £14.99

Atari ST £9.99

Reviewed Issue 3 - Original AGE Rating 8/10

A cracking arcade version where the emphasis is very much on sharp reflexes. Multi-player action adds to the fun, as does the ability to improve your car's cornering, acceleration and top speed. The construction set followed soon after to add further playing interest, even Flame graphics quality was top. Looks awarded third-class but you'll hardly risk the two-player option.

▶ **VERTAGE VALUE 76%**

Still addictive, but lacked the depth to last long.

▶ **TIPS**

Always grab as many spines as possible because upgrading the car is the only way to stay in contention in the long run. Go for increased cornering grip and acceleration to start with. Leave a higher top speed for later because it causes more time-consuming explosions when you crash. Avoid the whirling like the plague - it can spin you right out of contention in a tight race. The oil slicks are less of a problem, particularly if they're on a straight - just keep the power down.

▶ **TARGET**

Try it without spacers.

TEST DRIVE

(Electronic Arts)

CD-i £9.99 £14.99

Amiga £24.99

Atari ST £24.99

Reviewed Issue 3 - Original AGE Rating 8/10

Every car fan's dream is realised in this driving simulation where you can get behind the wheel of a Ferrari, Lamborghini, Lotus,

TETRIS

(Microsoft)

CD-i £9.99 £12.99

Ami £9.99 £12.99

Spei £9.99 £12.99

Atari ST £9.99

Amiga £9.99

IBM PC £9.99

Reviewed Issue 3 - Original AGE Rating 8/10



A geometrical Russian puzzle that turns a brain-deeper than it seems. Simply guide the falling blocks into those holes so that they fit in to form solid lines - which then disappear. What adds the something you could program in BASIC is that as four lines fall to be incomprehensibly addictive. You just have to stop those blocks building up to the top of the screen to keep going. Of course, the longer you play, the faster they fall.

The PC and CD-i versions are the best, while the ST and Amiga versions are, disappointingly, worse than their CD-i counterparts.

▶ **VERTAGE VALUE 90%**

Unique.

▶ **TIPS**

Try not to let those balls too high because that gives you ever less time to react. And avoid forming long, vertical ones, as these can only be fixed by one or two of the shapes - you can guarantee they never turn up what you need them.

Scoring is quite complex, but basically it's best to start on the highest level you can handle. Above all, you have to be quick, decisive - and probably quiet. One mistake at the higher levels and you're submerged within seconds. Don't wait too long for just the right piece to fit a gap. While that bit of terminology and complexity on the site above it rather than let blocks pile up too high. Keyboard control is definitely worth a try rather than joystick.

▶ **TARGET**

20,000 points.

Porsche or Chevrolet. Then it's a hard drive along a perilous mountainous road. As a simulator it's still one of the most accurate, but as a game it's been superseded by other more action-packed titles.

▶ **VERTAGE VALUE 73%**

More simulation but not enough action.

▶ **TIPS**

On the Amiga version you can keep the car in the same position on the road by holding down the fire button on the joystick.

▶ **TARGET**

Get to the dealer without crashing.

THUNDERCATS

(Cin)

CD-i £9.99 £14.99

Spei £7.99

Ami £9.99 £14.99

Amiga £9.99

Reviewed Issue 3 - Original AGE Rating 8/10



Another Thundercats - this one takes you back into the classic cartoon's world of prehistoric action.



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Screen shots from 1988 EPYX

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CHRONO QUEST



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ATARI ST/AMIGA/IBM - £29.95

Screen Shots are from the ST version.



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Tel. No: 081-207 9829



★ TARGET

What do the stars of Level 1 until your time runs out. **Recommended 2.**

U.M.S. Parsons

Start ST \$24,999.95
 688 PC \$24,999.95
 Macintosh \$24,999.95
 Amiga \$24,999.95

Reviewed Issue 8

Parsons' Universal Military Simulator is designed to simulate a conflict between two forces on a customizable terrain that can be viewed in three dimensions from any side of your direction.

The game uses the ST's 3DM display unit and the variety of options allow the player to have lightning lighting, simulate the Great of Gattinardo's Though it M.S. was historically a major breakthrough in 3D war-gaming, its simulators have since come to light. The game's certain goal is simulating identification tactics, but for larger combat the display can often become confusing. That said, its still a major step towards the ends of things a step in realistic war and simulation doing.

★ VINTAGE VALUE 90%

The war play this for years to come.

★ TIPS

Don't make the playing area too large when designing your own war zones, as this makes things very complicated. Use direction indicators when ordering units — a good method for reminding yourself of order values.

WHERE TIME STOOD STILL

Clonix

Spec 128 \$7,999.95 \$14,999.95
 CD \$9,999.95 \$12,999.95
 Amstrad \$9,999.95 \$14,999.95
 Star ST \$19,999.95

Reviewed Issue 12 — Original ACE Rating 7.5

This arcade adventure takes you back in time and to foreign lands. It's your job to lead the four stranded escapees off of the Tibetan plateau which they've stranded. Playing the game involves the central use of objects in the correct location. Great graphics and graphics combine to make an enjoyable arcade adventure.

★ VINTAGE VALUE 75%

The sort of thing proves there's life in Spectrum yet.



Spectrum Where Time Stood Still — 80% for other than tape versions. Great, but it's a shame it's never had a very nice.

★ TIPS

Keep the party together and don't try too much freedom in their means. It's.

★ TARGET

Get off of the plateau without being any less members.

WHIRLIGIG

Frederic

Start ST \$19,999.95
 Amiga \$19,999.95
 Spectrum \$7,999.95 \$12,999.95
 Amstrad \$9,999.95 \$14,999.95
 CD \$9,999.95 \$12,999.95
 Reviewed Issue 11 — Original ACE Rating 8.0

This mouse controlled shoot-em-up gives you 4000,000,000 bullets to shoot! The game involves around finding six locations amongst the 4 billion. Finding them is not so tough because you know which ones you're aiming for before you start. Getting to them, though, can be tricky because you have to avoid being shot by the enemy craft and you have to ensure you don't run out of fuel.

★ VINTAGE VALUE 80%

Top-rate stuff.

★ TIPS

Cliff battles save your life — use them.

★ TARGET

Finish it.

XENON

Midway Home

Start ST \$14,999.95
 Amiga \$14,999.95
 Reviewed Issue 7 — Original ACE Rating 8.0

A true arcade quality vertically scrolling shoot-em-up. The central craft that can change from a buggy to a plane (lockdown) apart of the waddle of a jetpack. There are few difficult stages in the game to survive, loads of extra weapons to pick up and some tough (and fast) gunners to

defeat. A special version of the game has appeared on 2400's anniversary morning 12, as an alternative to in Get Fresh's Get Mally and Spectrum soon each of level and/or items try to eat some each other. The ranking from then have the joy of seeing a member from the boys team get pretty much ground over them.

★ VINTAGE VALUE 80%

It's still one of the best of its kind around.

★ TIPS

Stick to the same type of extra weapons, don't pick up a drone then pick-up wing cannons, then lose them for another drone. Hang on to whichever type you find best.

★ TARGET

Get to the first gunner without flying.

XON

Capstone

Spectrum \$7,999.95
 CD \$9,999.95 \$12,999.95
 Amstrad \$9,999.95 \$14,999.95
 Start ST \$14,999.95

ZARCHVIRUS

Spectrum and Fredder respectively

Archimedes \$19,999.95
 Start ST \$19,999.95
 Reviewed Issues 3 and 11 — ACE Ratings 8.5 and 8.1

The game that moved the postbox or 3D graphics a year ago and introduced beyond the state of the art now, this one matched its technical excellence with involving by responsive controls and frequently additive combat gameplay. Good story the alien, zombies and zombies before they infect your planet completely. Most the bettering parts, and struggle for high altitude fighting position with mutant clones and fighters. If you want a Defender to the 1980's, this is it! (But this doesn't apply to the Spectrum version — see Screen Test Updates for the get on this.)

★ VINTAGE VALUE 80%

For a game this good, a year's nothing.

★ TIPS

If you're having trouble hitting unmissable zones, by clicking to maximum height and losing bullets in their general direction. The rate of the 3D is low but they're easily beaten the way — but don't fly with mutants or fighters! If you see a sea monster, shoot it — it's worth 1000 points!

Makes an excellent save for the end of a week, or for when you just don't have the next 5,000 point barrier. (Shooting mutated trees gets you points, and you get points for anything you collect with — at least in something other than get that down! You'll always get 400 points when you get a sea monster, when it's low.

★ TARGET

On the ST, anything over 10,000 is a reasonable score — but would be good (should aim for the first landscape at the start of wave 5, and a score of 30,000 points or so.

Reviewed Issue 1 — Original ACE Rating 8.0

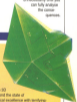
Pairs of familiarly invoked logical puzzles will be in their element here, with the three graded stages of the boards abstract logic. It's their goal to collect the stacks or for your two engineers, Quicker and Wagon, take today's steps including children that not sideways, but that'll do them and fireworks that for your day. Learn an integers, bombs and some rather useful values can combine to form clearing set pieces. It's tough, obsessive, wonderful stuff.

★ VINTAGE VALUE 80%

Timeously enthralling.

★ TIPS

Most of the later problems involve using Quicker and Wagon together, so try to unite them as soon as possible. When approaching a problem, don't try it as little as possible. Don't remove fireworks or short objects unnecessarily until you can fully analyze the consequences.



ADVENTURES 87-88

17 of the best text-entry fantasies we've come across since ACE first hit the shelves. More than any other game-genre, adventures held their own against the test of time. But even here, expect some surprise re-valuations as programs like *Ultima V* and *Dungeon Master* cast their spell over the ratings...

BARDS TALE II

Electronic Arts

OS/2/286 124.99/98
AMIGA 124.99/98

Reviewed Issue 7 - Original ACE Rating 100

Create characters and plunge off into the dungeons of *Slarks* (yes, doing battle with the ogres). Cast dozens of spells, find bags of treasure, and trap mice of hostile combats and demons. Fun at the very best, the added interest of developing powerful characters for loading into *Slarks: Tale II* (see below) and the *Ultima* games.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE: 100

Now discontinued but to equip *BT* and *Ultima V* (reviewed in this issue), but still a great money investment.

◆ TIPS

The key to initial success in this game is to make sure you create characters with high enough attributes. Make sure you have at least two magic users (conjurer and mage), a bard, and a rogue in every party. Don't accept less than 17 in the relevant attribute categories.

BEYOND ZORK

Infocom/Megasoft

OS/2/286 124.99/98
BT/Amiga/PC 129.99/98

First reviewed Issue 4 - Original ACE Rating 100

A text-only adventure (with a limited amount of on-screen mapping) in which you create a character who then has to recover the fabulous

Cosmos of *Camden*. Typical Infocom humor, spells to cast, and landscapes make this one one of the best text-only adventures of recent times.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE: 95

Old favorites, but text-only games are increasingly overshadowed by some of the latest graphical adventures, including *Ultima V* (see this issue) and *Compton*.

◆ TIPS

Hang on to valuables and sell them in exchange for goods and weapons. Try a lightning globe at the middle. Don't venture downstairs unless you're feeling particularly strong.

BORDERZONE

Infocom/Megasoft

OS/2/286 119.99/98
IBM PC 124.99/98

Reviewed Issue 8 - Original ACE Rating 88

Another Infocom experiment, this time with real-time action. The clock ticks away as you evade the RGS, cross the border, and attempt to halt an assassination. Unusual game design involves seeing the same action through the eyes of three different people. Fun only.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE: 85

The originality of the game idea still stands, but the increasing challenge in games such as *Slarks: Tale II* and companions like *Time* and *Magic* now make this game appear to offer less title for the buck.

◆ TIPS

As in all good spy thrillers, make an early visit to the lab in order to rearrange yourself.



Megsoft's *Corruption* requires less guesswork than they first released. The price for the BT, *Corruption* should have matched that of a Number 7 publisher.

CORRUPTION

Megsoft/Amiga/Amiborn

BT/Amiga 124.99/98
IBM PC 124.99/98

SP/20 115.99/98
M60 124.99/98

OS/2/286 117.99/98
OS/2/286 117.99/98

Reviewed Issue 11 - Original ACE Rating 100

Interactive forensics adventure with excellent pics and an up-to-date scenario in which you must trap smugged stockbrokers and save yourself from jail. The game isn't a text too-difficult once you get into it and the game appears to demand more horsepower than it, in fact, does.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE: 100

Still fresh from its recent release, nothing has appeared yet to bode a reevaluation.

◆ TIPS

The thing to do is work out a timetable of other characters' activities, which is best done by FOLLOWING them. Then you can get down to some of your own - by pushing the key from your partner's secretary's desk to start with.

BARDS TALE III

Electronic Arts

OS/2/286 124.99/98

Reviewed Issue 12 Original ACE Rating 100

Superlative development of the *Slarks: Tale* series featuring vast map and numerous sub-challenges. *Slarks: Tale III* is fun and you must penetrate the dungeons below its surface to push things to rights. Still not much time required, but great fun and long-term interest in creating your character.

◆ VINTAGE VALUE: 100

A recent release that will take a very long time to age to the point of undesirability.

◆ TIPS

Find *Slarks: Tale* and spend at least a day wandering round the town getting as much battle experience and gold as possible. Locate the novice board and advance your characters whenever you can. Make sure you find some gems to restore magic user power. Then head for the magic goods temple...



DEJA VU

Mitsuru Hirasawa

CD-ROM	CD-ROM
ST/AMIGA	CD-ROM
Box	CD-ROM

Revised Issue 1 - Original ACE Rating 8.0

Despite its age, this game achieved prominence this year by emerging to an 8-bit micro, the OGA. Using the same core system as *Shadowgate*, it puts the player in a room with a dead body slumped before the closed door. You, the excellent detective scenario writer, fill it in.

VINTAGE VALUE \$\$\$

It's in a room through sheer enjoyment, and to see it come up with a better look-driven adventure system yet.

TIPS

As with *Shadowgate*, methodically OPERATE everything on everything. Some objects have unforeseen applications which you'll only discover by applying this method rigorously.



best location, reflections, subtle cues, and it really is a masterpiece. The scene sets the mood, but the atmosphere and mystery.

GNOME RANGER

Level 3 Fantasy

CD-ROM	CD-ROM
Box	CD-ROM
ST/Amiga/PC/Mac	CD-ROM
Ami	CD-ROM

Revised Issue 2 - Original ACE Rating 8.0

Level 3's last game with Rainbird before joining new software label Bantam, *Gnome Ranger* is the noteworthy game-casts spells and magic items in his attempts to find for any town. Good graphics, good pace, but otherwise unimpressive.

VINTAGE VALUE \$\$\$

Although at the time a refreshing

JINXTER

Magnum Consult/Planet

CD-ROM	CD-ROM
Box/PC	16-1044
ST/AMIGA	CD-ROM
EPIC/128	CD-ROM
SPECT-3	CD-ROM

First revised Issue 2 - Original ACE Rating 8.0

CD-ROM adventure decorated with beautiful graphics in which you have to restore back to life. Typical of a breed of games where programming techniques overtook game design and writing style, but still worth looking for adventures and looking some excellent plots.

VINTAGE VALUE \$\$\$

Adventure software houses have few more or less finished writing their systems for the new 16-bit generation and are now concentrating more on style and content than graphics. Planet scenarios like *Computer in a Box* (Lancelot) make *Jinxter* look rather quirky and self-indulgent. The essential charm of a game like *Myriad* can't hold its own better than *Ready* programming and pretty pictures.

TIPS

Find the places to see in the dark - don't rely on the matches. You can open the real book by melting something... If you want to go up in the world while you're down under, try flooding and floating.



change from the complexities of *Knight Orc*, the game scenario hasn't aged as gracefully as the *Knight Orc*.

TIPS

Interaction is the key to success. Communicate or recruiting helpers. In part one, the unicorn and the nymph will fall in love, the eagle will rescue the dog, the dog will find the other dogs, the other dogs will find the unicorn...

KINGS QUEST III

Sierra On-Line/Mindscape

ST/AMIGA	CD-ROM
Apple Mac	CD-ROM
IBM PC	CD-ROM

Revised Issue 1 - Original ACE Rating 7.0

What, only rated 7.0? What's this one doing here? Answer - its original line rating has actually INCREASED with age, the reason being that no one has since succeeded in emulating the graphic adventure style where a small animated character carried out your every command. Seemingly too cutesy when released, but since then even *Cadaver* (Sierra) (e.g., *Gnome Ranger*) have made KQ3 look better by comparison...and it's great fun.

VINTAGE VALUE \$\$\$

Has had to seem so well that it

**TIPS**

The first part is easy, provided you can fit up the horseman. First success comes only once realized the significance of the vision by removing it and experimenting, and you've acquired the representation in honor of the Mountain King. To do this, get yourself killed, then remove your other opening the door go east. This will help you control the dragon, as well as the bird and the mouse.

LEGEND OF THE**SWORD**

Fantasy

ST/AMIGA	CD-ROM
IBM PC	CD-ROM

Revised Issue 11 - Original ACE Rating 8.0

Very attractive look-driven adventure that combines text input with excellent graphic presentation. On-screen scrolling map, command menus, movement icons, and other options combine to create a powerful system that supports a complete scenario. Find the legendary sword and defeat the wicked wizard Sauron.

VINTAGE VALUE \$\$\$

Still impresses with the presentation. Expect other similar programs in the near future, which may offer more elaborate scenarios.

TIPS

Don't be too footloose at the beginning of the game, or you won't get very far. If something really ties the way across, seaway.

business inclusion, even though the original rating wasn't anything to write home about.

TIPS

Persevere with the books in the library, keep sweeping around the Wizard's around!

KNIGHT ORC

Level 3 Fantasy

ST/Amiga	CD-ROM
Spectrum	CD-ROM
MEX	CD-ROM
Apple Mac	CD-ROM
IBM PC	CD-ROM
CD-ROM	CD-ROM
Ami	CD-ROM
Word 8-08	CD-ROM

Revised Issue 1 - Original ACE Rating 9.0

Level 3 launch the first game on their new system. Interactive characters provide an environment loosely modeled on MUD, in which the player finds himself taking the place of one of the computer-controlled natives.

VINTAGE VALUE \$\$\$

Nothing so reasonably well for the next year, should see strong competition from Level 3's own *Wes* and *Magnum Consult*.



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EPY

desert all continents to make Off-Base Bacing the most hazardous road game yet. It makes the Grand Prix look like child's play.

Another Intellium experiment, but this time definitely for fans of pure mystery, not ones-and-dragons. The town of Fyreside is in confusion and you must sort it out by entering a series of mini-scenarios which can only be solved by entering pure and other word-play responses. Some of the scenarios are spiced by their dependence on American humour, others are Marlowe. All are difficult.

▶ **VINTAGE VALUE \$\$\$**
If you're tired of doing anything like this since it was a little more British, by law, it could be up in the nine-hundreds for take-out puzzle fans.

▶ **TIPS**
Personation is all in this game. Recent scenarios to include are the Red Hope fly-out, An Ice Part and the Red Wings. Try using humble pi to unlock the lampshade on your head. Anything for a laugh...

PLUNDERED HEARTS

Intellium/Medagiant

OS/2 IBM (24-0546)
DOS/MS/PC (25-0546)
Reviewed Issue 8 - Original ACE
Rating \$\$\$

Intellium's experiment with romantic fiction makes a fine, if rather easy, but only adventure. Captured by an evil pirate, can you resist his charms? The goodies are battles and the battles are goodies as you steer ship and rescue your

kidnapped lover. Excellent descriptions.

▶ **VINTAGE VALUE \$\$\$**
The atmosphere is evocative, and sets the stage with which you'll finish it.

▶ **TIPS**
Make sure you put out the fire in the field by shouting something out at it. Then its plain sailing till Laford hugs you in his bedroom. Bear something in his face.

SHADOWGATE

Whitrow/Miracost

ST/Amiga/PC (24-0546)
Apple I/II (25-0546)
Reviewed Issue 5 Original ACE
Rating \$\$\$



One of the best puzzle games - although the puzzle isn't 'harder' normally, it remains intriguing, and the atmosphere's brilliant.

Excellent teen-driven adventure system with good graphics and clever puzzles. Managed to combine the atmosphere of an adventure with the ease of use of an arcade game as you penetrate a haunted house. Particularly recommended on the Apple II (although if you're lucky enough to have one).

▶ **VINTAGE VALUE \$\$\$**
Still looks great, though games like Dungeon Master and Ultima V have broadened the base of graphic adventuring and raised the quality.

▶ **TIPS**
In the lab, make sure you take the shield first. The key in the lake is also tricky - try putting something in the lake to freeze it.



SHERLOCK HOLMES

Intellium/Medagiant

OS/2 (24-0546)
IBM PC (24-0546)
ST/Amiga (24-0546)
Reviewed Issue 8 - Original ACE
Rating \$\$\$

Wander around historical London locating the crown jewels, stolen and distributed about the city. Start off on Tuesday morning and complete the quest by Monday. Game time passes fairly slowly and some of the puzzles are very easy, but the atmosphere just about wins through and there are one or two real puzzles/criffs even the best detectives.

▶ **VINTAGE VALUE \$\$\$**
It's only fairly by the anonymous improvement in the last year of British adventures and American

RPG offerings. Games like Campaign and Battle Rate it combine to leave the product sitting dramatically.

▶ **TIPS**
Make sure you revive the girl with the right medicine - get it from Holmes' flat. You can get up Big Ben by plugging your ears.

TIME AND MAGIC

Level III/Intellium

SPEC (24-0546)
OS/2 (24-0546)
IBM PC (24-0546)
ST/Amiga (24-0546)
Reviewed Issue 10 - Original ACE Rating \$\$\$

A superb value compilation of three classic Level III adventure games complete with upgraded graphics and improved/added graphics. The time management gem, Levels of Time, plus Red Moon and The Price of Magic. Excellent value.

▶ **VINTAGE VALUE \$\$\$**
Classic.

▶ **TIPS**
Levels of Time is the one to watch yourself against. The key puzzle here is getting the keys from the garden shed. You'll have to reflect on the Narcissus, then wave the lockstone by the door. Don't forget to pay the boot-fairy, but you won't see her unless you change your bed.

WASTELAND

Electronic Arts

OS/2 (24-0546) (24-0546)
Reviewed Issue 10 - Original ACE
Rating \$\$\$

An excellent RPG in the classic 'bad tradition' (and by the same name) set in post-nuclear America. Tally-ho around the irradiated countryside (including nuclear burrows) and solving problems en route. Heavy emphasis on developing powerful

characters with lots of skills and much macho weaponry. No brains required, but lots of fun.

▶ **VINTAGE VALUE \$\$\$**
Has been taken down a peg or two already by the excellent Ultima V, but still definitely one for the shelf.

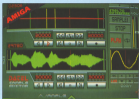
▶ **TIPS**
The key to success is showing a proper spread of skills for your party at the beginning. Make sure you include as many magic and lock-breakers as possible - you'll need them. If someone asks for help during the game, help them - they'll further your quest as a result.



the Death Valley Trek or the Baja challenge. Score, too, and read desert all combine to make Off-Road Racing the most hazardous road game yet. It makes the Grand Prix look like child's play.



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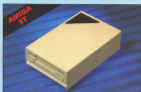
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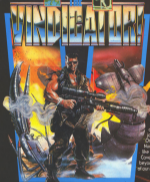
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The name of the game



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SCREEN TEST

Solid 3D is making the news again with the impressive appearance of **Starglider 2**. Gone are the vector graphics of the original game and in comes lots of solid



colour. It also takes you both above and below the planet surface, boldly going where no Starglider has gone before.

Eliminator is the latest blockbuster from John Phillips, following in the footsteps of *Impossible* and *Nebulus*. No more tower twisting though, it's a thrilling ride down a winding road in the face of massive alien forces.

Barbarian II takes gory hack-em-ups into new realms of bloodiness, while **Overlander** hot's up the battle of the roads in response to *Roadblasters* and *Fire and Forget* last month. The lammac gets a hefty pounding from **Super Hang-On** as well - has *Out Run* met its match?

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THE RATINGS

HOW they're calculated...

If you're a game fan, then most of us will agree that you get out of it, and for how long? Just check out our revolutionary PC (Predicted Interest Score) for the full story. Brilliant arcade games start high on the scale, and then steadily fall off as you lose interest; powerful puzzle games may rise the best of the curve for months - but the moment you solve them they're coming tumbling down; complex strategy games may start you at first - but climb up the scale as you begin to appreciate the scope of the gameplay. And so for the ratings - they set low, they rise, and then steadily creep but down, down, down.

Once you've seen how long the game can hold your attention, all you need to guess at is the eventual ACE RATING. This is calculated according to the area under the PC. The bigger it is, the better the game. Add to that our predictive ratings for 10 Factor (but figure your brain cells are worth it!), and Fun Factor - a measure of instant appeal and excitability

as you dive into the game. And, of course, we rate the Graphics and Audio effects too. In EVERY instance the game's available on.

Why you can rely on them...

The ACE rating team covers a broad spectrum of computer entertainment talent. Andy Wilson - ACE's resident technical wizard - is at hand with a smart bomb as he is with headbangers. Andy Smith wouldn't know headbangers from a hole in the ground, but can give the beat with any number of drums. Phil Lester prefers to resolve with aliens - then shoot them. Bob Wade (ex Personal Computer Games, Zapf's and Amstrad Action) has played more computer games than any sane person ought to. John Stone Codes (ex-PCO and formerly columnist for magazines ranging from Zapf's to *Your Sinclair*) and you've got age and experience as well as youthful enthusiasm.

Every game on the following pages has been seen by all of us. We compare notes, express our feelings, and only then do we decide who's to take final responsibility for getting our views into print. What follows, then, isn't just a collection of casual comments, but the definitive ACE verdict on the month's software. We've checked it out - see you can too.

999
AGE RATED

NOVENIA is under threat again from those pesky Egrons. They've located another desirable planet to destroy the planet. The story is related in another novel by James White, but the film is a bit more fanciful - the Egrons being totally incompetent. Fortunately, it's only in the credits that the Egrons are obligingly slighted - in the game they're a much nastier prospect.

Everything takes place in the felice star system, which consists of five planets, some with moons. You begin on the planet Aggro. The planet surfaces are checker-boarded - each planet being a different color. The view operates in a unique way to Vista - not stretching away to the horizon, but maintaining a limited view around the ship. Thrusting away from the surface will eventually take you close to the planet's atmosphere. You can now see a starfield, the rest of the planets, moons and the sun.

To travel between planets you need to use the stardrive. As well as moving you at high speed the also creates the obstacles of space probes, but drops your fuel quality.

One planet in the system, Millroy, has some moons on which are being constructed projects bases. These can be destroyed from space which will destroy Novenia. You have to make a Madrox bomb before



ATARI: a change from in front of you.



ATARI: a few shots of base for and for history.

STARGLIDER 2

RAINBIRD battle the Egrons again

the Egrons can build the space station. To build the bomb you're going to need objects from all the planets and moons, to be assembled on Aggro.

The objects are fairly strange, and include an asteroid, a cube of Vesta wine, Combsan, an Egron, milk socks and - most curiously of all - the Professor who knows how to put the bomb together. Most objects are found on the planet surfaces, but some are out in deep space or have to



ATARI: a space plane flies across your view of the sun and two distant planets.



ATARI: starline is engaged, leaving the planet far behind.

ATARI ST VERSION

It's better than the Amiga version, but doesn't do what you'd expect. The sound effects are OK but don't put the same feel on the Amiga. Slightly there's fairly any difference at all.

GRAPHICS: 9 10 FACTOR: 9
 AUDIO: 8 FUN FACTOR: 9
ACE RATING 9/27

AMIGA VERSION

Has the best sound effects, which really add a bit to the feel of the game. The 10 items appear in excellent fit.

GRAPHICS: 9 10 FACTOR: 9
 AUDIO: 9 FUN FACTOR: 9
ACE RATING 9/27

▶ A completed Igion projector beam. It can be destroyed with a bouncing bomb. If all 7 are completed work on the space station begins.

These 10 gauges show the number of bouncing bombs, missiles, and amounts of those items, stored and left.



Remember when those red and blue ships play the beams and projects which are in it space.

▶ Fuel indicator.

▶ Flight gauges.

▶ This is the currently selected weapon.



There is the underground tunnel/beam. There is a mine the shield - if you shoot the six door on the left it will open.

be exchanged for its supply depots.

The depots are located in underground tunnel networks found on some of the planets. They are entered by flying into various portals, and once inside the ship is safe from any Igion attack. The maze of tunnels isn't too hard to find your way around after a while because the tunnels follow fairly standard patterns. You'll encounter its dead-

RELEASE BOX

STARST	Q4-2006	DUP NOV
ANNA	Q4-2006	DUP NOV
No 3-bit version planned		

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Start timing and graph appear with help of math worksheet tool.

energy beams and jettisons, but nothing that can do you much harm.

The weapons in which you can exchange here can also contain weapon supplies. Initially you're armed with just a laser but can pick up missiles, bouncing bombs, energy shields and the neutron bomb. They vary in usefulness and effect, the most important being the bouncing bombs, with which you can take out projector bases, and the neutron bomb, which destroys the space station.

Each planet surface has different types of defenses and features. You'll encounter Igion defenses virtually everywhere, but the level of opposition varies greatly from planet to planet. There are even weird mechanical beasts like foot-weavers, space whales and Igion ducks.

Players of the original game will recognize most of the defenses - gas tanks, walkers, dropers, tanks and all manner of flying craft, but they all look strikingly better with tiled-in graphics.

As you blast around the bridge system, there are three important gauges you need to keep an eye on - fuel, shield and laser. Running out of the first two will prove fatal and the latter will leave you defense-



A split second after you ship has met a split end in the high-pressure atmosphere of the planet surface.

less. The gauges can be replenished by various means - most of them easy. Shields flying low and fuel over power lines, flying through asteroid fields, sun absorbing, and other weird recharging methods.

The action keeps together extremely well. Unlike the original, it isn't a straight-ahead shoot-em-up, but it contains notes of exploration and blasting. Indeed, the action gets level to take second place to the quest for objects. It's been well thought out and is full of superb touches that take it out of the ordinary.

▶ **Rob Wade**

927
ACE RATED



The overhead view of the action. That's you below the plane, outside one of the side doors (which has already been blown open). Watch out for the bombs the player's dropping; they can severely damage your health!

FERNANDEZ MUST DIE

IMAGEWORKS come out guns a-blazing

EL DIABLO didn't do it again. Not only has the democratic government been toppled in a military coup led by the evil general Fernandez, but he's set himself up as dictator.

Guess who's gonna save the day? Guess who's gonna infiltrate and destroy the eight military bases set up to protect his newly captured state? You, you.

It's viewed from above, controlling shoot-em-up battles daily in the hotspots of such classic as *Star Wars* and *Commander Keen*. You start the game with a machine gun and a list



Inside the game—your mission is simple: POWs and so get them out to enemy guards.



of enemies. You then learn to bomb and blast your way through the war-torn, scrolling levels, hunting out the eight bases you need to destroy before you can take to face with the evil dictator for the last showdown.

Also to be found on the various levels are side doors that allow access to hidden-like rooms that contain POWs. Lots of goodies in the side doors that inspire your friends and they're loved—they give you a nice score to motivate that they can now look after themselves though they don't seem to be in any particular hurry to leave their cells. Also to be found in the rooms are goodies—gold and good boxes. Picking up gold doesn't help you survive any longer, but you do get extra points, whereas goodies come in handy for destroy-

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ARISE	D-200	RESEARCH

ing the side doors and the larger pieces of hardware that make up Fernandez's army.

These large pieces of equipment include tanks, submarines and boats that fire particularly accurate shots if you're on land, and which can water to avoid if you can find yourself some great transportation. The duty goes on the best thing to rely on. That's it, and you can't get only stuck at the enemy's soldiers that are running around the bases, but you can also take into them. Turning the way's even more fun in two-player mode because both players can get in the way. One player can see fire in the direction the player firing and the other player can fire in any direction. Taking hits reduces your health by varying amounts (getting hit by a tank does less more damage than a side door, for example) and you only have five lives to complete the game with. Interestingly, one-player mode regular games (overhead and frequently drop) and cross-platform which help to keep you going. They also drop enemy troops, so you have to be careful when going for the packages.

Though we've seen a lot of the Star Wars set-up style of games in recent months, Fernandez gives you more to think about than many other shoot-em-ups. The simultaneous two-player mode is nothing new or surprising but the side tactics help to add depth in which already a tough but enjoyable game.

—Andy Hunt



In the deep, outside one of the bases.



A graph that predicts that your game can bring enough to a new generation of gamers.

The games they said couldn't be written

QUADRALIEN



3D Screen Shot

You are entering Jupiterspace, four destinations, Astra, the vast cybernetic nuclear-fusion complex they orbited need-21st century. Something strange has happened there, Astra has sealed itself off from the outside world, the control mechanisms won't respond, the temperatures rising, Meltdown is nigh. But it's worse than that, for in the very heart of the nuclear shield, the alien QUADRALIEN leaves have established their foothold in our solar-system. You have just six days to sort it out.

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STARGOOSE!



Amiga Screen Shot

What happens when a team that's watched up two 16-BIT number ones decides to tackle the classic theme of the vertical scroll-and-shoot? The result is StarGoose!, the latest from Steve Cain and GP (Kenney) Emmett, and boy is it wild! Until you've ticked the mind-boggling variety of deluxe levels in the 3-D world of Nexus, you're still in Straight City. StarGoose! ingredients include: The best scroll-PULL screens width and variable speed, Unique relief landscapes, Unique supply tanks and the best!

ST, Amiga £14.95
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STARRAY



Amiga Screen Shot

We won't mention the super-smooth parallax scrolling, the amazing backgrounds, the amazing hi-res graphics, the never-heard-before sounds...the gameplay that turns humans into jelly, the aliens that just go wimper...the unique Last Game Option... We'll just say:

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DRIVING games are still big deals and the competition is getting even hotter. The latest titles have swapped cars with weapons and add-on modules. Shootouts come top of the pile but how... do our Elite games do better?

Your cars, as with most driving games, is to successfully get from A to B. In this case you've got a really good reason for it as well - money. Each mission you go on requires you to carry some sort of cargo - some are not important, others are highly illegal. The more illegal the cargo, the higher the bounty. You get 50% up front and the rest on delivery.

The reason the cash is important is that you need it for purchasing extra weapons and enhancing the car. This is done before taking a trip, so at the start you won't be able to afford much.

The level of opposition you meet on the road depends on how far through the game you've got and which of the two missions you accepted at the start of the level. The more



The upstart car on the left of the road is one of a long line on both sides of the road. As you drive through this narrow slice of lethal wasteland, you will appear from behind and behind to try to bump you into them. Fortunately you can do exactly the same to them, or just shoot them with your gun.

OVERLANDER

ELITE take the money and drive

valuable cargoes naturally prompt lighter armory.

The side of the road is littered with rocks and trees that should be avoided at all costs apart from that there are six main types of outside-ventured cars: bombers, cars, taxis, gun replacements and trucks. The ventured cars are at the edge of the road, leaving a narrow strip down the middle. The taxis are placed at intervals all over the road. The cars will try to bump you off the road but you can do the same to them, or shoot them. Gun replacements usually bubble across the road and come in groups so that you have to remove them in pairs. Trucks



The gun at the left of the road is shooting the same way with solid missiles and good timing on a road block.



The gun at the back of the road is firing explosive devices at you. How far just goes off to your right.

bit weapons at the back and take several hit before exploding.

The fastest driver on the motorblock, which try to hit your car - causing both vehicles to explode. This doesn't guarantee behaviour is made more dangerous by the fact that they are very manoeuvrable and weave all over the road to confuse you.

Your forward firing gun is the usual way of dealing with bad guys, but the additional weapons can come in handy. There are flame bombs which catapult forward in a cone, rockets, smart bombs, whitebombs and bombing cars. The improvements you can make to the car are a turbo for better acceleration, a boost engine to lower fuel consumption, a remote parking, bullet-proofing, better brakes and extra tires.

None of the additions is going to make the

too easy but they do help eliminate some problems. Bullets come packed you against the boxes, a boost engine allows you to drive slower and not run out of fuel, and bullet-proofing helps you out against the gun employment.

The best thing about the car is the way in which the player has a great deal of freedom in what he does. You can fuel up with whatever you can afford and deal with the hazards in a number of ways. For instance you could change just the gun employment at full speed or trade up to them slowly and shoot them. The more you shoot the better, because you get additional money for wiping out the enemy.

In the best driving/shooting game of the current batch, maintaining the unrelenting tenacity needs of Car Run with plenty of monster-cars. There's a feeling of actually getting somewhere, you can learn the rules, and the action is demanding and gets progressively tougher.

■ **Big Write**

ATARI ST VERSION

To avoid some of the more common errors to hit a fat file. The main mistake on this is to use a file of only being edge. The greatest is the circle because it has higher speed, less to run and being of irregular shape.

GRAPHICS	B	IS FACTOR	4
SOUND	B	RAM FACTOR	B
ACE RATING B32			

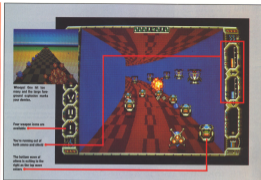
RELEASE BOX

ELITE ST	£19.99	OUT NOW
SPIC	£19.99	IMMONT
ABS	£19.99	IMMONT
SHARON	£19.99	IMMONT
AMGA	£14.99	IMMONT

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Each company and company representative price is based on the average stock price for each company.



ELIMINATOR



John Phillips, the programmer behind *Eliminator* and *Imperial*, sets things up for the roadway shoot-out.

JOHN Phillips is the programming genius behind titles like *Imperial* and *Rebula*. How has turned his attention toward racing patterns gained in a roadway shoot-out.

Ahead of you is a roadway that dips, dips and rises, throwing up obstacles and missions every inch of the way. The road levels through many different settings — from wastelands, tunnels and out into space. It's viewed from an ever-changing perspective — sometimes you'll be able to see a long way ahead and know what's coming at you, while at others you won't know what's on the way until it hits you.

Your small hover vehicle the road and barrels of a set speed. You can control its left/right movement and firing. The thing is the more there's no room for error — do the wrong thing and there's no slowing down to correct the mistake. That may be a cause for some frustration but it keeps you focused the levels as that you know what to expect. It's not just fast and more fun, because road dangers can be dealt with if

you've got your wits about you.

There are two basic types of danger on the road — moving items and static obstacles. The items come in waves in five sizes, moving around the screen like minute gnats. They're like spheres of you that damage you until if you're careless enough to run into them. It's a instant life loss, the speed separates, but will take, but not very quickly, so you have to work hard at avoiding the objects.

Knowing where and when objects appear from and disappear is essential to progress. You can be positioned to wipe them out quickly and know when not to be when they change off the screen.

The static objects vary in nature and you need to identify them quickly in order to know how to deal with them. There are large barriers across the road with gaps in the middle or sides, sometimes blocked by objects you can shoot. They can also extend off the way across so that you have to use ramps to jump over them. The dangerous objects are usually positioned at crucial points

904
AGE RATED

ATARI ST VERSION

The making of a single is a more, going on a constant basis, use of conventional primary care will improve. The strong and the accompanying action is highly subtle.

DISKPRICE \$ 10 FACTOR 3

ADDON 7 FMR FACTOR 6

AGE RATING 504

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST £19.99 £24.99

AMIGA £19.99 £24.99

SPC £7.99 £12.99

MSX £9.99 £14.99

OS4100 £9.99 £14.99

in the road where you've got to get in, position quickly and shoot them.

Initially you're armed with a single shot weapon. This can be upgraded by picking up spinning blue pyramids. The five additional weapons are a dual-fire cannon, side-fire cannon, bouncing bombs, double-fire cannon and triple-fire cannon. You only have a limited amount of ammunition - the last two weapons using it up faster than the others. Once the weapon is picked up, you can select freely between those available. However, every time you use a weapon it takes energy. Amiga is explained by picking up spinning orange cubes - usually you have to decide whether to go to that or the pyramid because they're on opposite sides of the road. Also worth not to forget John Phillips' hint where going for a weapon will prove fatal.

There are lots of delightful touches that heighten this as a John Phillips game. In places you can use a spring to flip you up onto the ceiling and play upside down - well, weird. There's a stage with a line running all the way down the middle of the road, where the only way over it is to use rings to jump across. There are also passages which allow you to shoot further on in the game, saving having to repeat the early levels once you find them too easy.

Early on the game is quite difficult, but after a few games you'll start knowing what to expect from a programmer who's determined to make life tricky. Once again John Phillips has come up with a game that will have you cursing him for putting in such hideously tough problems - but you won't be able to stop thinking it up for him.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Keep it hot and it's really hard to play. The graphics and sound of watching it is amazing.



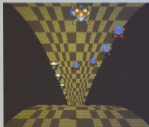
That blue in the middle of the road can't be driven on, but sometimes you've got to try to avoid those two spheres that will destroy you when.



Shoot the two targets in the middle of the barrier and then shoot the indestructible blocks behind.



That's hard to make through the barrier, picking up the extra weapons from pyramids and some things collect on the way.



The world's game stage... can you cope with its upside down?

PLKPBIBIR-PNMF+-NITP-FTM-+FT

TIMES OF LORE



Long ago, High King Wilbur drove back the barbarian hordes invading Albion's rolling landscape (weinsteinology, the High King departed to the mountains of the Lanes to renew his strength). Legends promised his return after twenty years.

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44M4-FHM-MPPMAM-PPA-PBIBIR-PNMF+-NITP-FTM-+FT

EMPIRE

ELECTRONIC ARTS beam down

AMIGA VERSION

The graphics may be faded, but the game is a top in its class.

GRAPHICS: 3 IQ FACTOR: 3

ADD'D: 4 FUN FACTOR: 3

ACE RATING 918

ATARI ST VERSION

The graphics are impressive, even in screen size, but the game plays like a stone in a fountain. Not a game to be played in a hurry.

GRAPHICS: 3 IQ FACTOR: 3

ADD'D: 3 FUN FACTOR: 3

ACE RATING 908

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST (24.95) CUT NOW

AMIGA (24.95) CUT NOW

IBM PC (24.95) SAMEST

KRELLANS really are stone cities. They first appeared in ACE issue 11 in the game Star Fleet 2. Then they were invading Alliance space and it was down to you to stop them. Now they're invading middle-class test planets in Alliance space and you're on the spot again.

Empire is a strategic game of conquest that can accommodate up to three players (computer or human). The player starts the game with one city and has to conquer all the other cities (between 10 and 100 on the planet. Each city once captured) can be assigned to produce a particular unit, e.g. army, battleship. Transport ships also help in the war effort.

Each unit has a movement limit per turn - the player can either use the mouse or numeric keypad to move them one step in any of eight directions until their allowance is used up, or can use the mouse pointer and click on a destination, armed forces away. Whenever the unit will then move toward that objective every turn, until it either gets there or its path becomes blocked.

Empire doesn't have state-of-the-art graphics as a reward, but the gameplay's great and it's fun to play. The computer opponents can be



Not into the game on the bridge. The second player (red) has been crushed already and that just leaves the first player (black) to conquer.

knigh and there are several set trap 'weirds' to mislead. But the repetitive nature of the game and the limited options mean you'll soon find that one way's much like another - and that kills off your interest quickly.

Andy Bell

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



It's not so bright in shades of red, you're looking for something with more variety.

SUMMER OLYMPIAD

Seoul searching TYNESOFT

BARON These De Castellan's the chap who's established the Olympic tradition back in 1896, and since were in Olympic season, Tynesoft have decided to release Summer Olympiad, the follow-up to last year's Winter Olympiad.

The five events you have the chance to compete in are: Speed Shooting, where you try to shoot as many clay pigeons as possible; Triple Jump, where you hop, step and jump your way into a scudgel; High Diving, where you try to be as graceful and acrobatic as is possible and avoid belly flopping; Diving, which involves jumping and lung

ing; and Judo, where you wrangle your way to the top.

Up to six players can compete at once, and events can be chosen individually if so desired. When in competition, each player has three attempts at each event (except Speed Shooting) to register a decent score, and medals are then awarded accordingly.

There have been dozens of these out-

event woggles over the years, and Summer Olympiad tries little apart from nice graphic touches that haven't been seen and done before.

Andy Bell

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST £19.95 CUT NOW

GRAPHICS £19.95 - £14.95 CUT NOW

SPEC £7.95

AMIGA £19.95

IBM PC £14.95

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A scale on the chart is cut.

ATARI ST VERSION

Both graphics and processor speed in some ways can't take the edge from the Amiga, but it's not so bad.

GRAPHICS: 4 IQ FACTOR: 4

ADD'D: 7 FUN FACTOR: 7

ACE RATING 830

C64 VERSION

Wonderful graphics and adequate sound. Plays as well as the Amiga, but only on the C64.

GRAPHICS: 4 IQ FACTOR: 4

ADD'D: 7 FUN FACTOR: 6

ACE RATING 805



Feeling on the ST, there's the chap on the left, punching the other guy's lungs.

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How to get all those diamonds? The code is by shooting the bubbles and collect some "left over" or you could try looking for a secret door.

NETHERWORLD

HEWSON's Finnish game

JUKKA Topomatti is the Finnish author of the Boulderblast-space game. You're trapped, it would appear, in your spaceship in a bizarre and strange world. Your only hope of escape is to shoot enough of the level currency to be able to buy your way home.

Five units of currency look suspiciously like diamonds, and for each screen, you've got a set number of them to collect (all within a time limit, of course). The diamonds are easy enough to pick up, since all you have to do is fly into them—but actually getting the diamonds is another matter. First, ships and even our players can all block your path and add to your frustration. They either have to be avoided or home bubbles located in them.

While obstructions may be annoying, what'll really get you riled are the swarms of deadly snakes and bubbles that spew (both) from the gas generators present in each of the levels. Fortunately, you're armed with a four-way rotating gun, and by

steering some of the snakes out, bubbles you can force them to release tokens.

These benefits include tank smashes, which come in only handy right at the start of the game when you discover a tank enclosure on the first level that contains a cluster of ten diamonds you need. The code will save a generator and shoot all the bubbles it releases in the hope that one may contain a tank smasher that allows you access, or you could try searching the enclosure for a secret door (the best method). Other benefits include oxygen filters (which are a nuisance).

Flying through hordes of snakes with gun-blazing is not always a recommended approach, though, because you're bound to take hits, and colliding with too many snakes may you bring one of your initial three lives. Fortunately, you don't have to re-act the whole level every time you lose a life, but you do if you fail to collect the set number of diamonds within the time limit. You can try to gain, yourself, some extra time by collecting four glasses that are scattered around the level—these add 30 seconds to your time. Extra lives are awarded at the end of the level, but you have to work for them by completing a different bonus screen in each one.

Netherworld takes the Boulderblast genre one step further, and the screens are tough enough to have you sweating out your last few minutes. Though it's not an original idea, it's been nicely twisted to make an enjoyable game.

—Andy Smith

RELEASE BOX

GRAPHICS	3.0	1.0	3.0	3.0
SPEED	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
GAMEPLAY	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
VALUE	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
AVG.	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0

OS/2 VERSION

The program can operate alone and the settings are smooth. Sound has a separate and the game play may not collect 100% of the diamonds you're not going to be too disappointed.

GRAPHICS	3.0	1.0	3.0	3.0
AUDIO	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
ACE RATING 3.0				

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



At the start of level two—then, they discover a tank that can save you in another location in the level.

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

The force stays with DOMARK.

DARTH'S a bit miffed. And with good reason too. His Death Star's been destroyed and now he's after revenge.

In his, the second of the Star Wars series, you command Luke Skywalker's winged-up podracer and Han Solo's Millennium Falcon spacecraft out here to battle your way through five stages to reach the safety of the



Believe it or not, you're the asteroid that.

The first level of games that you do the spaceship trying to get a bunch of Imperial Probe droids (essentially pieces of the Death Star's power generator) back to Death Star. The second stage has you - spots in the spaceship - fighting to stop a lot of AT-AT and AT-TE walkers. The AT-ATs are the larger of the two walkers and are tougher to stop because you have to stand them directly in the track. You do have several non-walkers you can use to kill the tanks if you can't see them heads however. The third level has you in Han Solo's spaceship make a planet storm. The final level has you still in the spaceship fighting off a swarm

of De-fighters that pump out missiles at you.

You start the game with five credits, and receiving a lot more either a bonus or an extra-credit reward first number by one. Later bonuses are earned in the game by shooting a set number of the enemies, you then get awarded a letter from the word JEDI. Manage to get all five and you've awarded a hefty bonus (before starting the whole thing over again, with more of the money to start).

The Empire Strikes Back captures all the drama and all the fun of the original CD-ROM. Unfortunately, the lack of variety and challenge means it doesn't take long to master the game.

—Andy Smith

ATARI ST VERSION

The graphics make the game look very nice. It goes for a play but suffers from a lot of boring and challenge.

GRAPHICS: 8 IQ FACTOR: 1

ARCADE: 8 FUN FACTOR: 7

ACE RATING: 6.5

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST £12.99 OUT NOW

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CD-ROM £29.99 £12.99 IMMINENT

MSX £29.99 £14.99 IMMINENT

STAR GOOSE

LOGOTRON take a gander

NOMMAN military strength is at an all-time high, so you've been ordered to lead five extensive ammo dumps. You'll have to blast ground installations, dodge maneuvering robots and snatch up supplies in the landscape of the planet Nom. Beware vertically beneath you. Collect the six colored crystals on each level, zap down the exit the opens up and you're safe. Another round of the same, only harder. And another...shoot-up? Well so, not quite.

For one thing there's that landscape. It may look vertically flat, but it's far from 2D. Moving camera means that your ground-stomping fighter constantly climbs, dings or slings to sleep as you beat your way upwards. This is all automatic - you don't actually have to change your fighter's pitch at all angles at all - but the effect on your lip can be crucial. Your bullets will over-rotate back as you climb a pyramid, and that usually hits the ground in front of them as you descend the other side.

Re-supplying your ship is an odd process. Parca in the landscape dies, entry to fail, ammo and shield-energy tanks when you can't stand up, but the supplies aren't just bonked to you on a plate. They've got to be



Play of an enemy robot, there's only attack from a missile. It's by ground installation, with there are some of the light.

collected in a little 3D sub-game where you swing your fighter up the walls or even right the way across the ceiling of the tunnel.

The overwhelming impression the game leaves with you is one of eccentricity. A lot of unusual features make it stand out, but to be honest they do little to encourage extended play. The game's great and interesting enough, there's far little scope for tactical thinking, and the landscape maneuvering ideas don't seem to fit in with the rest of the game. Originally a no substitute for gameplay!

—Andy Wilson

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Good but not worth the time you invest in it.

ATARI ST VERSION

If you might expect from the authors of "Black Light", the game is a treat to the eyes and the ears. The game isn't entirely marred by the unimpressive graphics, however.

GRAPHICS: 8 IQ FACTOR: 8

ARCADE: 8 FUN FACTOR: 8

ACE RATING: 8.5

RELEASE BOX

AMIGA £19.99 OUT NOW

ATARI ST £19.99 OUT NOW

IBM PC £24.99 IMMINENT

By other systems planned

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



By itself and very nice, but that doesn't bring together with enough to make your attention.

STAR RAY

LOGOTRON defend themselves

EUROPEAN programmers are a busy bunch and so too busy about it. They pour each other into their graphics, spend so long focusing their sound effects and the what? Why, the old-timey game ideas of course. Finally find the tool to combat it. Star Ray does indeed when the German-owned Defender variant appeared.

We all know the general idea, but for the record it goes as follows: you fly your fighter over the surface of a fantastically scrolling planet, deflecting its satellites from their orbit. Being rapid changes in direction and a fairly inflexible gun system, you have to blast the incoming ones out to pieces without crashing into them or their bullets. Destroy each wave of enemies and you get another, tougher one than those waves and you move into the next stage and a new, nastier planet.

The games not Defender though, and though - there's a third rather than a succession of lives, one dead alone sometimes leaves you can collect - but these differences are fairly superficial. More importantly, the stars today your installation is no other than carrying them off and it's



Level 5. Several planets that great installation. Shoot the satellites but not the satellites they're destined toward or it will get your systems temporarily.

game over if they all get tracked. The increase in the urgency of the mission, and means that some Defender tactics don't work at all.

Different bonuses on each of the game's planets help keep your interest, and the impressive graphics - complete with a very fetching parallax scroll - will certainly turn a few heads, but at least this is a very old game concept. Long on attractiveness, short on originality, it can be about as up there only - but not that good of it!

• Andy Miller

AMIGA VERSION

The background, effects and quality of these levels are what change a graphic capabilities. Intensely more so, so detailed installation can make it a bit tough to get the strategy, but it's not, but that's not for which a video.

GRAPHICS 8 IQ FACTOR 7
 AUDIO 7 FUN FACTOR 8
ACE RATING 889

RELEASE BOX

AMIGA	04/90B	0/1/90B
ATARI ST	04/90B	0/0/90B
CD-ROM	11/90B	0/0/90B
IBM PC	Under consideration	

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



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THE GAMES ~ WINTER EDITION

EPYX get competitive

HOW would you fancy hurtling down some ice at a terrific rate of knots, or at something not far removed from a rocket? Well, if you never get the chance to choose your own, and leg and penis etc. on a luge is not the. Epix offer you the chance to experience the computer simulation.

CGA VERSION

To enable to read each's speed. Some of its items are faster than others because that it's possible to enjoy more to experience. Ask for an original for.

GRAPHICS 7 IQ FACTOR 8
 AUDIO 6 FUN FACTOR 8
ACE RATING 833

RELEASE BOX

CD-ROM	11/90B	11/90B	0/1/90B
WPC	05/90B	11/90B	0/0/90B
IBM	05/90B	11/90B	0/0/90B
ATARI ST	11/90B	0/0/90B	0/0/90B
AMIGA	04/90B	0/0/90B	0/0/90B

Although most of the world's attention is on the Olympics in Seoul, Epix's latest release is a collection of seven events from the Winter Olympics. The event line-up now follows. The luge, which makes nearest bob-sledding look like a Sunday picnic. Figure skating, which gives you the chance to choreograph a series of moves to music before you try and execute the routine. Speed skating, where you have to rhythmically wiggle the pistons to gain the maximum speed. Downhill skiing, which gives you a skier's eye view of the gate that come hurtling toward you. Soling skiing - it may not be as fast as downhill, but your control will need to be much more precise. Ski jumping - not the U.S.'s strongest event, but it's quite good enough on the simulation you can out-jump the competitors and grab that gold medal. Cross-country skis the first event used a another rhythmical exercise.

Each event can be selected individually so the player can practice it before competing and there's also the option to compete in either some or all the events. The Games ~ Winter Edition has little that's original to offer, but it will put together and is fun to play.

• Andy Smith



Preparing to make your own on the luge. Just think, people in this format!

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



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Commanding Barbarian as he awakes. That continuous head's tough to deal with and you can't murder too many monsters.

RELEASE BOX	
CD-ROM	\$199.95 • \$119.95 (ULT. EDITION)
3.5" DISK	\$199.95 • \$149.95 (IMMEDIATE)
ARC	\$199.95 • \$149.95 (IMMEDIATE)
ATARI ST	\$199.95 (IMMEDIATE)
AMIGA	\$199.95 (IMMEDIATE)

for levels, you've gotta feel like you're tough.

These extras include such things as the Jewel, which enables you to pass the last of the three battles on the first level with little difficulty, the Axe, which increases your strength, and the Shield, which grants you a special instant death from the second of the last battles. Picking up these objects is easy enough, since you simply have to walk over them. The same goes for extra lives, which are represented by skulls lying on the ground — once you've got them you hang onto them until you've lost all your lives. Thankfully, even when you have lost your last life, you're

BARBARIAN II

PALACE come out for the 2nd round

DRAX is back. Having had to be slain again after being defeated in the first game (all too easily), he's now sworn to wreak havoc on the lands of the Jeweled Kingdom and it's down to you to see he doesn't manage it.

In addition, if you get the chance to play either the wizard or Princess Marissa, who you rescued in the first game, there's an actual difference in gameplay, as your choice of character is influenced partly by whether you'd like to see a woman or a man leading through the mazes.

As with most beat-'em-ups, you're got a variety of moves at your disposal, including the infamous "big neck chop," basically, aggressive moves are affected by moving the joystick while you keep the fire button pressed. Non-aggressive moves usually just require



Right at the start of the game, and already you face an enemy to be wary of.

players to move the joystick in a certain direction.

The game has five levels, and instead of fighting the same enemies time after time, there are now a multitude of enemies to deal with. These come in two main sizes — small enemies that are about waist height, and large enemies that can tower over you. Plus you do get the occasional flying or crawling enemy.

The creatures you meet depend on which level you happen to be on. The first level, which is a maze of water (28 screens connected

by rivers, puts you up against such enemies as mutated (butter?) dragons, and crocodiles. The second level, again a maze, throws in, among other enemies, a variety of other enemies at you. The third level — set in the actual dungeons — gives you huge pillars and the like to contend with. The final level gives you a more three battles (including those in detail), but unless you're interested in some of the special items that were to be found lying around on the way

start from the current level.

Admittedly, it's certainly an improvement on the first game, which proved to be far too easy to complete. There's going to have to be a lot of different tactics to defeat each of the various monsters (some of whom are very very weird), which means you'll be playing this for a long time to come. The beat-'em-up genre may be a bit long in the tooth nowadays, but if you're a fan, you'll like the variety offered in *Barbarian II*.

• Andy Gibb

CGA VERSION

The graphics are fantastic, and, unlike graphics set in a file folder, you get used to what more are possible if you find you can't see some things clearly, justified if the thing's really that off the wall.

GRAPHICS:	5	100 BAYTON	1
ARCAD:	1	100 BAYTON	0
ACE RATING 75%			

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



THE ST VERSION

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SUPER HANG-ON

ATARI ST # Atari's Dream (19.99)

FOUR wheels have been off the rage lately, but now two-wheeled ST racers can get to grips with the turbocharged excitement that's been burning up the 8-bit for nine months. The game is very similar to *Out Run* in concept - racing stages that have to be completed within a time limit. So when best on the ST?

Now you've got 44 stages split into four different continents. Africa is the shortest, made up of only six stages, but even that will prove a tough challenge. Each course is packed with bends and lined with obstacles. Straying off the edge of the road and into an obstacle will result in a time penalty - oops!

Keeping the bike on the track is tricky, and complicated by the other riders. They turn pretty fast and will try to maintain the best racing line. That means they get in your way a lot, slowing you down and occasionally bumping you off the road.

ATARI ST VERSION

The top graphics split into the smooth, rounded polygons, it's a nice touch. The file format even responds to its name for its public printing utility, but nothing.

GRAPHICS: 7 IQ FACTOR: 3
AUDIO: 6 FUN FACTOR: 5
ACE RATING: 6.5



Staying quiet in the middle of the herd as the billboard falls on.

You'll manage to get through a few stages quite quickly, but the time limits get tough and to complete courses you'll need to optimize performance on the early stages. Use of the turbo is also crucial. You can only use it when you hit top speed, but it really cuts the stage time down. Clashes then become the main problem because that's too easy to come off at a corner.

In terms of a testing challenge it's better than *Out Run*, although there's less variety in the routes you travel. Two-wheeled action at its best.

■ Not Wide

UPDATE SPECIAL



The bike's about to run out on stage 11 in America and there's a long drive after the stageplay.

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The whole job can take a long time to complete but the

ZYNAPS

ATARI ST # Newton (19.99)

BARK in 1987 this was a big hit on the 8-bit machines. There isn't the same quantity of horizontal scrolling shoot-em-ups on the ST - although there have been a lot of vertical ones.

It's a simple enough concept to grasp - lead your way through bundles of alien craft and then deal with the end of level



The ship on the left of the screen with a weapon upgrade on its beam of light.

gameplay. The alien waves vary in type and behaviour. They can appear in random patterns, so you can't learn their behaviour a level - it's kind of like all the way.

While leading the alien, you'll have to avoid the enemy as well. At times it forces you into narrow corridors where avoiding the alien and their missiles is very difficult.

You can enhance your speed and firepower by destroying waves of alien and collecting the star fruits left. Getting the extra weapons is essential to long-term survival and being able to destroy the gunships.

Apart from the waves of flying alien you'll encounter ground inhibitors that fire flaming missiles. On level two there's an alien-informant to deal with as well.

There's nothing very original about this, but then there wasn't about the 8-bit version either. It's a difficult shoot-em-up that will cause plenty of frustration and a challenge for difficult clients.

■ Not Wide

UPDATE SPECIAL

ATARI ST VERSION

There's some nice enemy patterns and unique sound effects. The graphics are up with the 8-bit version but don't have anything new to offer.

GRAPHICS: 6 IQ FACTOR: 2
AUDIO: 6 FUN FACTOR: 7
ACE RATING: 6.2

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A tough task that then makes enormous heights of interest.

ACE Rating 101

Spectrum version released Issue 8 - ACE Rating 171

Stratford leads me through themselves in border of levels and bounding both again. This is a substantial conversion that adds in features that the 8-bit version missed out. The number of balls you get when picking up divide capsules is a revision. The alien has more in various levels like breathing balls and spinning spheres that split into three. The ball movement is a little jumpy - mainly because it moves so fast. Doesn't add much to the 8-bit version, but it's good.

● ACE RATING 788

C64

BARBARIAN

Prophecy/Midway Home 25.95c

128.0000

87 version released Issue 1 - ACE

Rating 720

The new-driven arcade-style adventure was always in fact, as on the 16-bit machines a year ago, but it suffered from being poor control. The C64 version of the game is better to control (ignores the lack of mouse), but once you take the size graphics away, the game really starts to feel as being a very mundane quest set back to compare game of that and new classic refreshing.

● ACE RATING 544

MICKEY MOUSE

Broderick 25.95c 124.0000

Spectrum version released Issue 11 - ACE Rating 143

Doesn't have anywhere near the graphic detail of the Spectrum version but a more obvious. In gameplay terms there's really nothing to choose between them. The sub-games look better but there's still an initial disappointment at the rather blocky graphics for the time. Once you've over that though it's the same very enjoyable (heavy) game.

● ACE RATING 730

THREE STOOGES

Midway 24.95c

Amiga version released Issue 10 - ACE Rating 695

The Amiga version was a bit short on graphics and there's not such difference between the two in base terms. The digitised speech is still there and as funny as ever, but the graphics have lost detail and hence the full enjoyment of some of the animation. The weapons play slightly differently, noticeably in the helicopter, but are exactly the same in nature. The stooges is still funny on the C64 but hasn't gained much rating overall. Completing it isn't easy though and lots of the stooges will lose it.

● ACE RATING 695

PC

DESERT RATS

128.0000

This one or two player magazine simulates the war in W. Africa between December 1940 and December 1942. There are eight scenarios in the game including an option that allows you to fight the whole campaign. The graphics are nothing special and neither is the sound, but the game plays well at a slow steady pace and if you're after a good, playable but tough campaign, you won't go for wrong.

● ACE RATING 835

DARK SIDE

Broderick 24.95c

Amiga version released Issue 11 - ACE Rating 911

Spectrum version released Issue 11 - ACE Rating 904

C64 version released Issue 12 - ACE Rating 894

The programming system (especially if it's not death) for PC users because it operates at much faster on that machine. It's an impressive game on the 16-bit, but on PC it's not system's game.

The game plays in the same as for the 16-bit version, but the increased speed of movement makes it a much easier game to get into. If anything you may end up solving the game rather quickly. The music and sound are excellent, helped by having options for to run on C64, 800 and because, by the best version yet - can be CD and Amiga version appears open it.

● ACE RATING 923

SPECTRUM

ROADBLASTERS

20 Gold 25.95c 123.0000

C64 version released Issue 12 - ACE Rating 654

If anything the version is better on the Spectrum because the car is more manoeuvrable about the road. It doesn't cut into as one time when going round corners if you don't turn, however it still doesn't drive naturally. The extra weapons are also more usable and can be carried over between stages if you haven't used them up.

The graphics are pretty decent, with life filling in. The music the speed is kept up but there's not much in the way of action. It's probably a bit tougher than the C64 version, but it's more the same to that Spectrum. Out the corner will be relaxed to know this is a much better conversion than that was. Co-op version should be added.

● ACE RATING 688

VIRUS

Broderick 27.95c 124.0000

Amiga 87 version released Issue 11 - ACE Rating 904

Converting a game that was developed on the Amiga. Amiga's sounds like an impossibility, but that's what they've had to do. All the features are here (animations, screens, textures, lights, peaks, trees, rolling landscape). However, the hard part is getting the control of the home-plane right, to make it as responsive as it is Amiga and 87 version.

Lucky they haven't quite managed to put it all in a release about and Spectrum version should still take a look at it because there's nothing else quite like it in them.

The ship control is much more convenient without a five-button mouse, so getting familiar with them will take longer. Anyway when played. You on the 87 is bound to be disappointed, but this edition of Spectrum should be for as it can go in the direction. A size by but average.

● ACE RATING 631

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Mid July saw the British Music Fair moving its well-established Olympia site to the Wembley Conference Centre, which BOB gave me a bit of a problem for the huge numbers of public types who were heading that way en masse to see what our singer-champ called Michael Jackson at the nearby Wembley Stadium.

Much of the show was dominated by software rather than hardware, most of it running on the Atari-SE and much of it relatively affordable. So what were doing here is presenting a quick tour around the BMF, taking a look at the items which would most affect the computer user with a reasonable budget for musical additions.

Timbre, for a start, was launching a pair of new synthesizers which take the well-known concept of FM synthesis and turn it on its head. The **Y2000** (£299) and **Y2000** (£370) both have a full-size velocity and pressure sensitive keyboard, 100 preset and 100 programmable notes, built-in arpeggio and delay and RAM card storage, and their a sequencer on the 200. They're both 16-bit/16-bit (capable of playing several sounds at once) and have EXTENSIBLE POSSIBILITY styling. Without wishing to be offensive, they look like keyboards designed for the extremely heavily-templated, with huge chunky controls like something out of the 70s. Timbre's new **Cl Music Computer** - a portable IBM PC compatible with add-on drum piano access, built-in SHIFFE time code synchronization, eight MIDI Out, and built-in 3.5 drive running either Dual Diskette and a sequencer from Mark Of The Unicorn - is

BMF LIVE

Mark Jenkins reports from the British Music Fair - showcase for all the latest music technology..



Make and MIDI for computers at the BMF, the **Y2000** synthesizer, the new **Cl Music** dual disk sequencer, and the **Y2000** eight track cassette recorder

likely to be a big hit when its introduced at a price under £2,000 later this year. Go on, will the horses...

On the keyboard side, Roland were perhaps slightly more on target, having lined a pretty young lady to show off the new **200** in a loose keyboard version of the **200** LA synth, again a multi-timbral unit with a built-in sequencer plus quadlets, preset drum patterns with 16x and velocities, and much more. Also on show - the **200** multi-timbral version, very powerful, the **200** and **200** (the former without disc drive and sequencer), a new keyboard/midi which will be useful for singing while trying to trouble your tape recorder or posting of the same line, and the **200** which combines the **200** synth module and the basic **200** sequencer.

Over on usual kind the million new MIDI keyboards (most of them home built at drum pads now, which was several ways) is powerful. Also over is the **200** (IBM PC) is the **200**, which is a computer with two miniature-size keyboards, auto comment, sample looping and so on. Incidentally, did you know that Roland are taking many of Czech synths, painting them white and selling the **200** (and so on)? Just something to bear in mind if you're rocking the well-igniting devices

between a Roland **200** and a **200** (they're similar).

Also over from Casio is the **200**, which is a successful version of the recently launched, top of the range, multi-timbral **200** synth. You can use either version to program new sounds by the already standard **200** synthesizer, but since that will most likely have more storage than **200** in a life-out of its scope.

Synthetic Music had just about the most impressive software selection of the show, and although they were emphasizing a rather expensive system - the 20 based **200** from Roland A&S, which is a productivity enhancing addition - they had plenty to offer for the beginner. If you want to see your compositions printed out as musical staves, go for **Easy Score Plus 1.1**, a new improved version of their straightforward but powerful package; also on show was my early winner at **200**, a new eight track intelligent sequencer, and a prototype **200**, which is a 24-channel sequencer like the existing **200** (which also has a track but which doesn't need a hardware output box, a dangle or a fly in the ointment).

On the expensive side, we may as well mention **200** powerful **200** (which is probably one of the 'big' words this year) which combines a five octave keyboard, loads of sampled instrument and drum sounds with instant access, a powerful sequencer and effects into a complete composition system, and **200**, probably the most powerful **200** sound card for the 20 which has 11,000 other custom voices of high quality sampling digital mixing and the ability to run a sequencer with its sequencing.

FAVOURITE TOY

...at the moment is definitely the Roland **200**. It's the first multi-timbral version of the **200** synth and comes in at under £200 - its multi-timbral, uses hybrid sampled/synthesized sounds, is fairly easily edited, and can produce massive polyphonic/multi-layered sounds. The sheer size of Roland's stand at the BMF probably says something about the amount of orders they've taken on their latest stock, which also includes the **200**, a disc driven-based sequencer. The **200** is in a rather city-dwelling format at the moment, but a substantial version is likely to turn up later in the year.

SING-ALONG-A-MIDI

Designed as a French company marketing two very exciting products through Parfais in the UK. The **200** at £199 is a microphone which simultaneously controls any synth fed to it into a MIDI note controller. If you can turn a tune, you can now get it played on a synth or recorded into a MIDI sequencer. The **200** also has a jack socket to input a guitar or keyboard (although playing more than one note at a time will confuse it) and will work equally happily with flats, sax, trumpet and so on.

200 is ideally suited for use with Ogden's new **200** software package called **Big Band**. One a top line melody for instance from the **200**, and **Big Band** will generate a selection of backings - chords, bass lines, arpeggios and so on - ideally played back on a cheap multi-timbral module (such as the Roland **200** or Yamaha **200**) (now available at only £199 in your local music shop (hello). Some of the arrangements thus produced are already a little home organ-like but some of them are quite responsive, and the package certainly provides a quick way into song writing.

AFFORDABLE CHEETAH

After all the techno crazed it's good to come back down to earth with Cheetah's MSX synth module, but only \$69.95. Arrived at the fair but probably in the shops by the time you read this. Its powerful multitrack analog voices with front panel editing for just £149 — just what the doctor ordered. Cheetah were also showing their affordable drum kit, sequencer, drum machine, mother keyboards and software sequencer, all of which are listed starting in their table.

front of C-Lab on the computer at the same time. C-Lab's Monitor is now available and adds powerful music-loading functions to their Cheetah sequencer but costs around £199 and only works on a 2800 while their **Exploze** is a much more affordable £17.95 value.

On the remaining side, both TGA and TASCAM have launched eight-track recorders using standard cassettes — they're both around £1499 unfortunately, but would be absolutely ideal for straightforward home recording.

And that's just about wrap-up-the look of the British Music Fair. Of course there were loads of guitars, valves, amps, effects, tape machines and accessories on show, but you can't cover everything. If you'd like an in-depth story of any of the gear mentioned, tap some in your local dealer and make like you're actually going to spend some MONEY this time (it's late comes to you too, of course and may save you loads of tapping into one lot to another trying to get sorted).

SHAMELESS PLUG!

Jarvis' favourite sequencer at the moment is Prophet Master Tracks Pro, which only has one major omission — to 'Mute Off' or 'Mute/Off' function so you can kill any jammed notes on your connected synth and modules. His good fun is the originally titled 'M'... also for MICROSOFT, which is a lot of semi-intelligent copy-protection/sequencer/sequencer which takes your bass offs and changes them in strange ways — great for pseudo random Philip Glass fans.

On the subject of Linda Purl, here playing the London Coliseum on November 20th with her CRANIO new science fiction opera 'The Making of the Representative For Planet 6' — all those into serious-scientific-synthesizer/futuristic minimalism, BE THERE. More details on 01-629-0111 extension 427.

ACE GOES TO FRANCE

Just to show you that there is life on the other side of the Channel, we took a little trip over to La Belle France a while ago to check out a major computer-synthesizer-music show, courtesy of the Yamaha Corporation of Europe. Here's a day-by-day report on the proceedings...

FRIDAY CLEANLIGHT MENINGERS LIGHTNAMES

They look in 1976, Virgin Records, riding high with the success of Mike Oldfield's 'Tubular Bells', released 'Cleightlight Symphony' — an instrumental album in a not dissimilar vein by French composer Cyprien Yverdius.

Yverdius recently had an illustrious experience when he discovered computers. 'We just been playing piano for years', he explained, 'and I've only discovered computers in the last few months. It's been fantastic — I've been using Steinberg software on an ST and have completely re-created Cleightlight Symphony. I was never very happy with the original recording because we had to do it very quickly, but now I can make sure every note is perfect and take the computer into the studio to record it is just a few hours.'

Yverdius controlled the computer plotting a Roland MT8. Tim Blake played on lines complex and made some of the wobbly notes he's so famous for on an old

MSX synth, and Christian Boake handled the guitar parts. The performance was pretty central to the album, so it wasn't just afterwards that we realised the band had never rehearsed together — being in different parts of France they'd just swapped cassettes by mail, and Boake played some of the guitar parts from a studio room.

Lightname's roots influence are 'Tangier' Green and Glass Stratus. Recent work includes a live all-night concert on FR radio where the band pedaled into a studio, a dance troupe wearing costumes performed in front of the Panasonic Centre, and the audience listened to the music on their personal telephones. How they used a Roland MT8 MicroComposer to run a huge set of old analog synth modules, and events in Area 37 were used to feed new tracks of music into another MT80 during the set.

SATURDAY TIM BLAKE BURNS KATHEMACHEN

Puffed history of Tim Blake. Drops out in London and goes to France. Finds a job



Front room main music suite with MSX setup and Monitor, at France Electronics.

demonstrating the very early 808 synth in Paris, pure happy band Gong, became one of the great blissing players of all time, records back of albums with Gong, never to perform solo with his synth setup dubbed 'Crytal Machine' and one of the first tape shows ever used in concert, sounds like Stone and the Crytal Machine' and then 'Broken New Jerusalem', one of the greatest synth albums of all time. Deep out of the music business in Japan, buys a windmill in western France, not heard of for ten years.

Robert composed was pretty successful. The city now inevitable Alan Turing (Berkeley and Oxford MIT) were used to perform pretty Mathias and Bill. Then Riley branched into some new stuff, fairly rhythmic but sparse songs with huge tape parts on a pot of Drex sampling keyboards.

Robert Kitzmeyer from Berlin was about the only performer not using a computer on stage over the weekend, preferring to stick with Roland MC4 MicroComposer since 'his little got a couple of F1000 liver messages and had to retreat in the middle of his set, perhaps old Berlin had the right idea. Kitzmeyer is a student of comedy-comics who got noisy with Tangerine Dream and borrowed a lot of their old but impressive-looking synth modules for his performance, which proceeded to go completely out of tune. Shamelessly derivative, Berlin doesn't care who knows that his references are the Klaus Schulte-albums of ten years ago, and that's exactly what we heard performed. Quite fun though...



EMAP MPT2 NEWSLETTER

Technologically the most interesting item on the list. Spits were used to mix and don't have any obvious set up. Closest point of comparison is the Art of Noise, the disc-rack using an 87 with sequencing on lines out and two keyboard triggers, and various other synth modules.

Three sequencer line allowed them to play three minutes or so of a line, switching from one computer to the other when necessary and producing huge drum sounds, metallic sequences, sampled voices and much more equal size.

Writing up proceedings, Nowater are a duo from Sheffield supplemented by a third keyboard player on stage and sound engineers who get to do a good bit on-guitar and vocals. The band have an album, 'Microvoid' out on an American label called Junction which does some wide distribution in the UK, and performed several tracks from that album, plus some new stuff.

Like Lightyears, Nowater are lots of huge old analog synth systems with lots of blinking lights, but supplement these with sequencers in locking tape and with a well-made drum machine or two. John Dwyer really was able to create synths while John Ward had the up-to-date Roland 808 and Paul Wood played a Roland J200 and an old Roland Woodie Plus Keyboard for their sounds.

IN CONCERT: TERRY RILEY

It's not often that a true innovator turns up in the UK, but this was the case when Terry Riley guested with the Electric Symphony Orchestra at London's Sadlers Wells Theatre in July...



Terry Riley, the 808 and computers re-inventing electronic music.

Riley's appearance came courtesy of the Yamaha Corporation of Europe, who have sponsored arrival at the ESO's recent show. The 808 itself was loaned by conductor Edward Elstedt to combine the best of the classical repertoire with the latest modern technology - computers, synthesizers, lasers and graphics used on stage in a way guaranteed to shock the classical establishment.

Past shows have included a 16-hour Schubert concert with a whole stack of synth modules controlled by a Macintosh, the conductor wearing a button in one hand and an Air Linux MIDI controller in the other; a twelve-hour piece using a 605 synth and a whole orchestra pitched on spatial speaker-chairs, and a wide variety of fairly straight classical pieces using a little electronic amplification or the orchestra.

When you take into account that the amplification alone has been enough to give the First Street critics-apoplexy, you'll understand why the ESO has been somewhat controversial over the last few months. But Terry Riley's pretty popular with the establishment - he was widely covered, in 1968, the moment before he disappeared, which later appeared Steve Reich and Philip Glass and which has recently influenced artists from Tangerine Dream to David Byrne and the recent Acid House hip-hop-artists.

Riley's masterpiece performed with the ESO was 'In C', originally released on a CBS album around 45 minutes long. The score

consists of 57 short musical phrases, all in the key of C, to be accompanied in a repeat ed octave called 'the pulse', each musician plays the phrases in turn, but can play each one as few or as many times as he likes. That means the piece can never be the same twice, and can be almost any length from 18 to 14 minutes up to the 75 minute performance and beyond.

Typical of the piece involved the addition of synthesizers, keyboards, electric guitar, a Yamaha WX7 Wind Controller and various computers in the original orchestrated ensemble of flutes, strings and brass. But oddly enough, the one job ideally suited to the computer - playing the repeated background pulse which sounded about 5,000 times during the course of the piece - was left to year-old Francis Macintosh and his 600 synth, which seemed rather an odd choice.

Riley, cross-legged on the floor, glided away on a Yamaha digital piano and the whole ensemble was mixed by a job of EMAP digital mixer with built-in effects. These were controlled by specially-written software packages, and indeed there was a software-based 17 sequencer in there somewhere as well, although it wasn't entirely clear which parts it was playing.

The worst criticism, justified, was a 10000 Pdl synth module was like the electric guitar, fairly obsolete, and when the volume did start to build, the viewers' sweat 14 didn't cope very well. A lower dose which had scored about quite impressively during on scales between pieces was reduced to small spaggy graphics during Riley's performance, and there was little synchronization between the music and the visuals.

However, the hypnotic effect of the repetitive elements in the music was hard to resist, even if the 75 minute version did seem a little protracted. Riley's only other London appearance in 35 years of music-making came a couple of years ago when he played some pieces for stringed-based piano, a chance to see for a change some large-scale musicians of such a form rather than what was quite welcome. Well, time, though, Riley is better to serve the sound making the good old human beings and apply the old pulps rather more in the business of clean hip out the music.

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Ultima V has finally hit the streets – and what a game! Great graphics, great gameplay, great balls of fire! Plus...

- *Mortville Manor*, the game that talks back, is it **state-of-the-art or plain drivol**;
- Essential Myth's *Jekyll and Hyde* – double trouble for **split personalities**;
- **More adventure coverage** in our 100 Top Games of the Year feature on pages 68-71, including playing tips!

ULTIMA V

ORIGIN SYSTEMS/MICROPROSE's masterpiece

IT'S here at last. The Pig has been feeling pretty toothy over the last few months, consistently promising a review of the long-awaited *Ultima V*, but the long wait over – and, believe me, it was worth every minute.

Ultima V sticks to the gameplay style established by the earlier games in the series, but shows enormous improvement in terms of graphic detail and depth of interest. If you play it on a PC with an VGA display, you'll probably rate it one of the most attractive programs of the moment, and most other versions promise to be every bit as good.

If you've never played the sort of game before, what do you get? First, the objective: You are transported to the mythical world of Britannia where evil sorcerers dwell underground, having been driven there from the surface in earlier, more heroic times.

You can create up to six members to form a party for the quest, though it is advisable to start with only three or four, leaving room for later characters made during the game. In the *Ultima V* series, that is done by "rolling

dice" for the different attributes, but in *Ultima V* you answer a series of questions concerning the character in question. These questions are mostly concerned with matters of morality and behavior and enable the computer to calculate certain basic attributes for the character concerned.

Once that's done, you enter the game proper. The position of your party is shown on a scrolling map as a single framed figure. Using the movement keys takes your party through forests, marshes, foothills, and all manner of terrain, seeking out villages, towns, castles and suitable.

Entering a map feature is accomplished by moving your figure over the spot and then hitting F for Enter. The display then changes to an overhead view of your area immediate surroundings, showing walls, doors, and other computer-generated characters wandering about.

All commands are given using single letter key presses, though you can enter text following the Yed command (which stands out from messages). You can communicate to a limited extent with characters by using the Talk command, which brings up a prompt. Entering keywords such as *job* or *name* can initiate a conversation, which may then be extended by further entry of keywords later than the other character's responses. For example, the character says "My name is Androm" and my letters to the blacksmith, "Yo enter Blacksmith could be replied by either a coded phrase – and he's been greeted. Got

928
AGE RATED

● *Ultima V* is on sale. The *Ultima* series has been around since 1981, and although the name has changed, this latest installment is 100% MicroProse. If you've never played a game like this before, the Pig says you're in luck.

MICROPROSE MILESTONE?

Ultima V comes close to joining *The Hobbit*, *The Prince*, and *Vaults* in the great hall of Adventure Milestones. Check out our Milestones Feature on page 38 for further details.

The game offers graphic detail of a sort not yet found in a program of this type, and combines it with a reasonable degree of interaction and small measure of role-playing. Together with *Bards Tale III* and *Heretic of the Lance* (to be released soon) it's all part of the fantasy gaming revolution that's making 1989 THE year for adventurers who want big, meaty games that'll keep you playing for weeks on end.

each of which needs a number of ingredients (e.g., garlic and ginseng) to be stored before becoming available. Most ingredients are created from spot-checks, some have to be gathered. There are eight levels of spells, and (according to the experience level of the character) one or two.

Opponents in the game range from feeble human beings to swarms of killer bees and giant apes. Combat is far more complex tactically than in the *Bards Tale* games. The display gives a close-up look on-screen of the combat area, with your party in start formation (you can alter the default) and the opposing side at the top of the screen. You issue orders to each character in turn, which will be dependent on the weapons they carry, their state of health, their strengths, the type of enemy, and so on.

For example, in a battle against six trolls, you might move those equipped with spears to the front and pepper the opposition with stones while the archers, then more

the slingers to other side, where they can continue to attack, and advance the heavy brigade with their swords. As a general rule, it's best to equip weaker characters with long-range weapons as they run the risk of getting hurt but remain useful in battle. Most characters (except lighters) have some magical expertise, but you can't mix spell ingredients during battle, so beware!

We've already seen from *Bards Tale III* how engaging a large-scale game with a low degree of tactical detail can be. *Ultima* adds greater depth of tactical detail, more interaction with objects and characters, and a more complex overall game-system. It's a winner and an outstanding display should be without a copy. ■

LANDSCAPE	90	SYSTEM	94
CHALLENGE	92	EXCITEMENT	90
AGE RATING: 12-18			

DAZZLING DISPLAYS

The graphics in the *Ultima* series are built up from lots of small components or "tiles". Each tile combines with its fellows to depict various types of terrain or building. In addition, animated sprites are used to display the position of your party and other (usually hostile) characters. *Ultima V* has more different tiles than our earlier titles, so the graph is an extremely colorful and of tremendous detail.

There are a number of different display modes, but the ones you're likely to encounter most often are the overhead countryside display, the town/village display, and the combat display.

OVERHEAD COUNTRYSIDE DISPLAY

This enables you to move around the countryside, avoid opponents, and locate towns, villages, temples, and so on.

Here you're out in the countryside, during daytime. There's a strong degree of realism in the map display of *Ultima* - you can only see as much of the map as you could in real life (unless you employ magic). As night falls, your view becomes increasingly limited. Your speed of travel over the terrain is dependent on the ground you're covering. High mountain ranges are completely impassable, forests and forest clear you down, and water can only be crossed by boat. In the display mode, you will occasionally see animated sprites representing the position of adversaries. You can run in the opposite direction, but they may catch you up. This screenshot is from a CGA PC display - the rest are all from the higher-quality EGA format.



TOWN/VILLAGE DISPLAY

Here your party is in a town in a castle - your view is restricted to your immediate location because, of course, you can't see through the walls! Moving up to objects and people enables you interact with them.

COMBAT DISPLAY

During combat, you see a close-up of your party and the enemy. You take it in turns to manoeuvre the individuals of your party and issue orders to them. At the end of each turn, the enemy performs its own manoeuvres. Considerable tactical skill is needed against the stronger opponents.

you help each, at which point the package may ask for a VHS file input.

The level of sophistication, although limited, is what makes it the game and some interactions can be quite lengthy. You will find yourself recruiting allies, learning passwords and mantras by use in stores, and being set sub-tasks which, if completed, may earn you bonuses, information, or simply goodwill.

Interaction with objects involves all the usual options, such as search, open, get, use, look for, examine and so on. In addition there are many new features - you can actually play that harp-shaped over in the corner of the room by moving to it, sitting in the fire, and then hitting the number keys. Other nice touches include getting into bed to sleep, and then being thrown out by the bell owner or three cobble in the morning.

Time passes in the game, indicated by the passage of the sun and moon at the top of the screen and the moon even changes phase during the month - an important ingredient of certain magical rites in the game.

Magic is comprehensive with 48 spells,

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MORTVILLE MANOR

LANKHOR's pretty Franglais puzzler

THIS game has already been out in some form on the PC, but the Mac avoided retooling it for one simple, but compelling reason. He couldn't understand it!

From because the game uses synthesized speech instead of text to respond to your misinterpreted commands. Sometimes the speech (on the PC version) was totally unintelligible, and the game was therefore extremely tedious to play.

The design retains a reliability as improvement. The game features digitized sound effects of resident ghouls as you move around a country mansion searching for clues to the death of a friend. You can use the mouse to single-out objects within the graphic display for attention, as well as double-click with a linked but sufficient single-



Dead-end rooms give access to all commands and actions, including a list of adjacent locations for you to move to. In this case you opened the cupboard door on the right.

of-screen adventure controls.

The main reason of the game's status from your perspective will be the other characters, whom you must interact with (usually with help in their circumstances, motives, and fates). This is done by pulling down a full-screen selection of subjects from

which you choose. The character concerned may or may not answer. As you explore the game, you list of possible subjects for discussion grows.

New features include items opening up green as you open them in the game, and text graphics, rendered level in double-height of your comprehension, and lots of objects to find. Use a number of high-tech adventures, however, this one is slightly short on locations and loses out in complexity of scenarios where a game in complexity of presentation. ■

RELEASE BOX

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No other versions planned

LANDSCAPE	50	PROGRAM	70
CHALLENGE	50	ENCOUNTERS	60

ACE RATING 7.00

JEKYLL AND HYDE

Are ESSENTIAL MYTH schizophrenic?

GREAT idea for an adventure, this - the famous aspects of Dr Jekyll who, believing in the dual nature of man, took himself up to his personalized hero-will, and the evil Dr Hyde.

Serialized Myth are a small independent adventure programming house who've been going for some time and whose best known game is probably *Book of the Dead* (published by C&L). This latest game was produced using PAVE and is an excellent example of what can be done with a good story and a bit of extra work on the side.

The game leads in three parts, which must be played and saved sequentially. The first

two, and its excellent prose style make this an impressive game for both a small company. Any larger companies looking to embrace a quality adventure software might consider giving their same support. In the meantime, the title can be added to our DM at 54 Church Street, Twickenham, Middx, MK2 5RE. At up to £12.95, it seems just a little on the expensive side to me, but the company insist that the pricing structure for the game is justified. The game took 11 months to write and test and due to the limitations of PAVE quite a bit of the program had to be programmed outside of the utility's confines. Well, at least I can say that I had no complaints on grounds of quality. ■



The screen in Jekyll and Hyde features a little sub-functional, but still in the field. The game's tough aesthetic atmosphere.

LANDSCAPE	50	SYSTEM	40
CHALLENGE	60	ENCOUNTERS	40

ACE RATING 6.00

INFOCOM GO MAD!

Not mad, but, he, but right over the top with a string of outstanding new titles!

The first is *Journey*, a role-playing game with a party of five characters up against the powers of evil with you in command. The game's written by Brian Blank of *Zork* fame and features items, command structures, graphics, prose, music, and - just - graphics!

Clearly, let's hope they got it right! The magic of an Infocom game combined with the excitement of role-playing could be a wonderful combination. They came near it with *Beyond Zork*, but you could go so much further.

Their third's *Shogun*, based on James Clavell's book about a samurai set in 17th Century Japan and adapted by Steve Loring, another veteran Infocom game designer.

Finally, you've got *Zork Zero* - a 350-levels mega quest with "most puzzles that the original *Zork* series put together". Written by Steve Barabak of *Leather Godswearer* fame, the adventure sounds like a mad hunt of riddles as you explore the early days led by rays of the Coast Underground Empire. The company also say it will have "graphic power" text, we've been expecting this for some time now. Wonder what the reality will be like...

What's great about this announcement is that there's something for everybody. It looks as if, after mulling around with other and formats, Infocom are going in which is the subject areas and techniques they do best, while at the same time drawing in ideas from other game types. Watch this space...

part is tough enough as you take dinner with your friends and attempt to bring to fruition the results of research. The second two parts are extremely tough. The puzzles solve, however, degenerate into the digital or the analog, which elevated the game to the top, although for didn't get very far with it in the time available!

An attractive character set, single-player

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ACE LETTERS

LETTERS CANNOT BE RETURNED

Why are BBC games cheaper than ST or Amiga ones? What have the S20ST's new disk drive, the Amiga 500's price cut and Arcane's updated Amiga "Powerplay" got in common? And what would happen if everyone played the same game all at once? You come up with the tough ones. Andy Wilton struggles to answer them and ACE doles out the prizes.

■ WHY NO MORE

From the side of the Commodore-Spectrum superiority war. This was going on in magazines FOUR YEARS AGO! It's a waste of time, paper and space. When I bought a BBC and told my Spectrum people (called me a traitor! Now that I'm telling my BBC for an Amiga, I'm getting the same thing in issue 11 of ACE. Is Hutchings moaned about Commodore users stopping off the Spectrum, then processors do the same thing to other computers. What's the point in writing to complain about others stopping computers whether you do it yourself?

Another thing you going to go on about is the ridiculous price of Amiga and ST games. All the maps say that it's because of the small user-base, but this is a load of rubbish. Superior Software bring out a high-quality game every month for the BBC and Electron, and they are all normal price and original (they write Thrust and produced Zorro's yet a top-selling BBC game like Physarica would hardly register on a Gallup chart. How do they do it when people like Platform cannot? A CSE game simply would not sell on the BBC.

Russell Jackson
Huntingham

You're just about answered your own question on software pricing. Russell. A BBC game wouldn't sell for £25, but ST and Amiga games can and do. It's precisely because sales of both games are so low and high prices aren't tolerated that the big software houses stay well clear of the market, leaving it to the dedicated few like Superior. As a result, the ST and Amiga get far more support and thus make better games. Machines quite apart from their greater power). Incidentally, if I'm not much mistaken, both Thrust and Apache Zorro from Superior cost pretty much the same as their ST equivalents from Slawbird and Freiber respectively!

■ BITS & BIP-OFF

I used to own a Spacy 43 and I also bought a Multilog 3 with it. This proved very useful when I



SIDEWINDER EXPLANATION



Michael Griffiths (Letters, ACE issue 11) probably has the same version of the Amiga 500 as I have, a USA model. What has to be remembered is that all computer manufacturers slightly modify their components if any faults are found, and so there are sometimes changes in timing and the like. Sidewinder is a typical example. Probably it's worth an all British model of the Amiga because Commodore altered the graphics chip over (or slightly, maybe) to improve the picture on a PAL television set. You mentioned that Sidewinder works on one of the Amigas in the ACE office but not the other - is one a USA model and the other a GB model? (You can tell the difference because the GB Amigas have function keys and also the keyboard layout is different; GB machines have question marks on the 3 key and a pound sign on the 5 key as well as some other changes.)

Chris Clifford
North, West Gloucestershire

Unhappy? You're spot on as far as ACE's Amiga's go. Chris. The USA model (with 8) on the 2 key doesn't fit Sidewinder, while the GB model (with 9) on the 2 key) does it perfectly. Manufacturers normally do change hardware details during long production runs, and Sidewinder obviously fell foul of this. We already knew about an earlier change from the Amiga's sales shops - they didn't support the 84-colour extra-half-bright mode. In one thing - but this was a new one on us. The result, if there are any programmers out there, is to test your software on both machines before releasing it.

GET IN ON THE ACTION!

Make your point, or your view, or perspective via short, snappy or simply honest to the letterpage format. Please.

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wanted to swap copies of games with friends or back a game again. I was sorry to have to sell it with my -3 in favour of buying an ST.

Now though, I have heard rumours of a *Bluffface* ST. However, I have also heard rumours of hostile flags in their games to stop you copying them. Are these rumours true? I would be a waste of money buying it if you could be simply sending you ST?

Alan (in his own good) Coombe, Kent

If software houses put anti-copying routines into their games, good for them! I'm a big fan of *Bluffface* as a tool for exploring and learning from people's code - and possibly teaching it to state life easier - but surely should the proprietors not of money for their work, and their writing. For the simplicity of it, if you don't like the game enough to pay for it, why something else? (and at the risk of using the obvious, it would be a waste of money buying any device which already includes your ST - though I differ! And! *Bluffface* would not sell anything that bad)

IS TOO ADDICTIVE?

After reading your articles on advanced multiuser adventures I thought 'Wow, do something, to begin to get some money for an Amiga and equipment.' But as I was reading about the another thought came into my head, what about addiction? Can games be mega-addictive as they are, and other features will agree that game-playing doesn't help the social life. So what happens when I start playing *MU2*? As it is I only watch the news on TV, I read few books and I don't go out very often. Will I ever be able to leave the screen?

Don't get me wrong, I really enjoy cheap international MUGs, but when the majority of users are first timers, the graphics and gameplay will have some awesome material and addition. There'll have to be a restriction on times when people can log on. Otherwise, imagine what would happen if one day

UNGRATEFUL OR UNFAIRLY TREATED?

I said it in issue 11's ACE Letters and I'll say it again here: people don't actually like improvements. The increase in the *SGOST*'s drive capacity, the drop in price of the Amiga A500 and the improved Amiga version of Arcana's *Powerplay* have all been causing varying degrees of annoyance, rightful indignation or fearful wrath. Are these people the victims of injustice or just a bunch of moaning mimics? You decide!

■ I am writing to agree wholeheartedly with the case of Mr Lattimore (Letters, ACE issue 12) regarding the price rise and sale of the Atari *SGOST*. Now that it has been announced that the price will probably be cut by £100 again, the guess is they're even more confident. It's sure there are a lot of retailers and purchasers angry at Atari's tactics in the marketing arena.

I am sorry to admit that I fell for their marketing ploy of March/April. I bought a *SGOST* (10 Meg drive) for £299 when the £199 price increase was announced. Many others probably did the same, thinking they couldn't afford this great machine after such a large price rise. But that's regulated to market the 1 Meg drive in the higher price machine. And now the price is set to drop again but probably still with the 1 Meg drive! There are a lot of people left with a sore taste in their mouth and probably a lot of retailers left with 10 Meg machines to get rid of at a loss. Maybe Atari have assured their market share over Commodore but I for one am not impressed with their tactics.

Colin John Edisbury

You're not the only one to feel pained over this one judging by our mailbox. Colin, but I think it's better straight out a few points. Firstly the £199 price cut has not been actually confirmed. The general industry feeling is that Atari will have to make the cut, precisely because they have not assured their market share over Commodore and not being it altogether if they stay at £299.

Secondly, if J Lattimore's interpretation of the facts does cast Atari in just about the worst light possible, even if the cynical expansion turns out to be the right one, then what still makes the ST's a better value than ever since the deal settles. Small consolation for people caught in the middle. I

note but there it is. (There is a strong case for saying that Atari should just one model and stick with it, thus avoiding all this hassle in the first place - but that's another story.)

■ I read with great interest in the August ACE that Commodore have dropped the price of the Amiga A500 to £299. May I just point out to City Communications' management executives reading this that the A500 has advanced to present degree of success not because they have created a brilliant computer but because thousands of people like me have spent £499... Who gets the benefit of this offer? Not the people who deserve it, current A500 owners, but either the people who couldn't afford one last (enough) or those who were not convinced the A500 was that much better than the ST.

WAFM The wrong WAFM Commodore are making an

it. WAFM Commodore are going to offer all registered owners a free 500K expansion or £100 worth of software vouchers at a second sale drive.

S Henry Kewington, Suffolk

At the risk of making myself unpopular, I think you're being a bit unreasonable here. If you buy a toaster, car, television or washing machine, you swap a sum of money for the goods in question on the understanding that they will give properly. Whether they're worth the money might be cheaper if you wait a bit or cost 1% less somewhere else in your problem. The only difference with a computer is that a price cut means more machines get sold, there's more software support for them, and everyone benefits.

■ I wouldn't usually write in to a magazine, even less to lodge a

complaint. I am referring to the advertisement and news story on the impending release of Arcana's *Powerplay* it walked on about being named not being satisfied... I think full potential was lost, was choiced and other sensationally interested words - but what's new? I've already seen the release of said Amiga *Powerplay*? And didn't your magazine do a big promotional deal with it? And how importantly, didn't I buy it? YES.

I'm not one to pass up the chance to buy great games, but when a software house like Arcana decides to blatantly rip off all and sundry with a sub-standard game it does rather raise the blood cells. How can Arcana supply an average game to thousands and then bring out the proper Amiga version, selling off the first version and asking people to buy the better one.

The sure I speak for thousands of others in asking if IPCAAS PREPARED TO COMPENSATE US FOR THE RELEASE OF THE FIRST ORIGINAL *POWERPLAY*? ARE THEY PREPARED TO EXCHANGE OUR COPIES WHICH THEY SO CLEARLY MUST HAVE REALISED WERE GOING TO BE REPLACED WITH AN IMPROVED VERSION?

I hope you can answer my queries as I don't like being duped with an out of date game.

Anthony Hicks East, Kent

I don't think your being very far to A500s there. Nothing I should think that people would applaud them for taking so much extra effort over the new Amiga version, especially given that they already had a great version they could sell instead. I don't think for a moment that Arcana planned to make the first version obsolete when they launched it, or that they expected people to buy the second version to replace it, or that they just trying to offer new users an even better

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BOTTOMS UP!

Fantasy hits the Trolls' Bottom this month as Tony Ross checks out the latest PBM offerings....

Fantasy is the latest hot sport, starting with a fun game from ELC games.

TROLLS' BOTTOM ELC GAMES

Somehow far from any land in the north-western island of Trolls' Bottom, is a normal town of about 100 people that live from Troll-ware apps, drugs, always hungry bears whose purpose in life is to steal all other trolls from the island, and prepare it for a honey-bee.

The island is made up of 400 holes, all quite shallow on the side. Trolls never travel to holes on the outside or underground through connecting tunnels which can only be made once a hole has been dug deep enough.

Life is simple though, not really stylish. Trolls move around hunting for food, digging holes & tunnels, dying at each other, and sometimes making or fighting. Each troll has a pet value that has increased according to other trolls and carrying food and weapons to them.

Making life colorful are Giant Eagles, Wizards and Immortal Meowies. Wizards can be used if they are easily offended and will retaliate by concentrating trolls to kill the attacker. Not to say that there is very little to do but tunnels between holes which gets away if any of the holes have had holes in them....

Every Troll was wise at his strength in doing others and how can attack his build and sanity. At one extreme there is a dangerously slow lumbering ogre, at the other a dangerously slow hysterical lawyer troll.

Winning the game is straightforward.

Just be the last survivor. What has happened in my game (no names, no pets, etc.) is that several trolls have grouped up together and gone round killing or eating trolls. I had a couple of others but they got burped or fattened shortly by the big group (well my trolls almost saw inside hole 203. Or worse, he's out at the game).

Players of this game will feel at home with the water system. It uses single letter colors and players can do a range of double-turn costing \$1.00 or \$1.50. It costs nothing to die and the first two turns are free.

Originally, Troll was run by Project Kombat, but was then bought by ELC Games who moved it from America PC's to PCs, adding new features on the way. I should also have a lot more including a travelling wizard who doesn't like being killed.

There is a lot of humor in Troll but its not so sure that serious PBMs will go for it. This is not a game for the dangerously sane-player.

COMPLEXITY	4	ENJOYMENT	7
PRESENTATION	7	SCALE	5
ACE RATING 6			

DARK BLADES SOLARIS GAMES PBM

Continuing the fantasy theme is Dark Blades, by a company better known for its range of combat boardgames - Coy Mercs, for example. This is a decidedly less wily role PBM and they have retained the colorful presentation, from their boardgames, by providing an illustrated box and A4 colour map.

The sword of Labyrinth is the setting for

a clash between civilized and the half-breed race of Men-Ogre. Both races battle each other as much that they will fight in the south when together. Players choose either one and can be a party of 2 warriors or a leader in charge of a village.

Warrior makes the island exciting new characters to their party, fighting, doing jobs for leaders and generally becoming more powerful.

Leaders spend the time developing their village, deciding production & price, building cities, the population and raising materials to other villages for trading. Parties are hired to guard the main town or attack other villages & settlements.

In all in my Village, things have been changed. As a player leader and I've just ordered my peasant, there hasn't been any votes yet but we've hung out the welcome sign, and messages out announcing our opening side and we're now awaiting the response.

Graphically the graphics are probably the best I've seen in any game. A lot of thought has gone into them, from the layout and map & terrain, because details of terrain have been to the price list which is summarized by a code.

If I have a criticism, it is that the game starts too slowly. As I cost \$3.00 to get, I think a lot of players will stay in to see what happens but few will waiting for exciting things and few taking time to perform and for taking time to them.

For \$1.25 a turn it costs interesting and seems good value. It has been running since March, and should have changed things a little to accommodate player votes.

There is even a gold plated dragon worth \$1000 a turn. On present playing I don't think there is much chance of the winning it.

COMPLEXITY	7	ENJOYMENT	8
PRESENTATION	8	SCALE	7
ACE RATING 7			

ADDRESSES

ELC Games, PO BOX 11, Cavendish, Scotland, FK9 2VJ.
Solaris Games PBM, Aden House Station Road, Kings Langley, Westlothians, WD4 6JZ.

PBM NEWS

Mike Gomez, one of the bigger UK PBM companies has gone into liquidation after making bad trading losses. Mike ran games like Global Supremacy, Tribe of Coast & Midgard and had a couple of thousand players.

As far as I can tell, Mike is trying to sell these games off to pay debts and have someone else continue running them. If someone buys them, perhaps they could let us know if ACE, etc to be topped that players get some of the money back if the games don't continue.

Some of Mike's games were so complicated that less of 20 pounds for a turn were not unusual.

Claw King, the military strategy game formerly run by NoDoo games in N. Ireland has now been taken over by ELC Games and retained. It had run into processing difficulties and many players had not received a turn for over three months. ELC are also working on a new 120-player version, but will continue running the original until the games finish.

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CATCH 32

The power micros are on their way — but will anyone buy them when they get here? And will the software industry support them, come to that? Arthur King reports on how the Acorn Archimedes, the world's first 32-bit home micro, is shaping up as an entertainment machine one year after its launch. Meanwhile, Andy Wilson ponders the implications for the new generation of heavyweights just over the horizon...

IN FUTURE

Numerous estimates put the number of Archies in use up above the 10,000 mark and growing steadily, but this is still small potatoes compared to either the ST or Amiga. To make matters worse, a large proportion of these are in schools or colleges where they're very unlikely to be used for buying entertainment software. This means that games royalties are low compared to other formats, and being tough to collect they aren't really commercial propositions for programmers.

Software houses feel much the same way. Superior Software boss Richard Hansen spoke out recently over disappointing sales of *Zorch* and *Composers* — the despite the high proportion of Archie owners they reached. Quite simply, the market isn't big enough for the big boys to move in, and while the machine remains so expensive that'll probably remain the case.

If the Archie really needs a price cut, most people would say it doesn't really need either greater speed or more memory — but it's about to get both. Next year a new version of the ARM will appear complete with an on-chip instruction cache, a clever little feature which could boost its performance substantially. There's also the prospect of an update to MEMC, the Archie's memory controller, so that it can cope with more than the current 640K maximum. These points to a movement upwards, with Acorn aiming to take an high-performance workstation manufacturer like Sun and Apollo. What a shame the ARM chip-set could power an amazing arcade machine!

PLAYING POSSUM

The Archie could be the hottest games machine on their low name, but at time of writing you could count the number of commercially released games for it on the fingers of one hand. Since its launch over a year ago now the Archimedes has appeared just eight titles: *Zorch*, *Composers*, *Horncod* (an arcade adventure slightly reminiscent of *Starquake*), *Minotaur*, *White Knight*, *Quaker*, *Amiga* (a recently released *Amiga* style shoot-em-up) and a budget pack from *Hi-Zsoft*.

Only about half of these would gain an full price premium on the ST or Amiga. Some of them are written in Basic and only suffer slightly from it, which says something about the maturity of the market but also hints something at the Archie's raw power.

Don't get the impression that the games scene is completely stagnant. Grand Slam have promised full support for the Archie starting with a conversion of *Tennis*, while Superior are working on what they claim will be the ultimate *Alpaca*-style maze and boulders game. If you're feeling patient you could hold out for *Little II*, but it certainly won't be out this year. (Glimpses types with PC simulations can get games support by the back door — even *Flight Simulator* will run OS — but they will find things more rather slowly.)



This is the PC version of *Zorch* and though (hardly) but it will run fine on the Archie thanks to PC emulation. (David Hall)

When tough-talking Alan boss Jack 'Boss' had come out with his famous 'longs get back' slogan, the Archimedes was no more than a blip on an Acorn drawing board. If Jack had seen it coming he might have kept his mouth shut, because four years down the line the Archie offers something like twice the power-to-price ratio of the ST. Does that mean Acorn are bringing in the new 32-bit era? Very to them it, it counts to all its high performance, and you could claim there are probably more than one tenth as many Archies as the ST as there are STs, and the gap isn't narrowing why not?

Well, the Archie may be more powerful than anything Atari or Commodore have on offer at the moment, but after a year of price fluctuations it still costs more than an ST and on Amiga put together its 68000 price-tag makes Acorn's little wonder tremendous value for money, but there simply aren't very many people with that much spare cash to spend on a system. The last better machine to succeed in the UK market of that price would have been the Commodore PET or Apple II way back before the 3200 came out, and it really wasn't a very big market back then. Who out what 1980 would get you a video equipment or design holiday and you can see why?

The other big factor involved here, of course, is software support. The new machine is the one tandem programmer can write it — and that hasn't been so interested in the software industry. Add to that the fact that a new — and potentially an expensive new — micro card from a very large user base or so, so software houses are less inclined to publish those programs that do get written.

GROWING PAINS

To an extent these are not the problems that one new machine has. The ST took a long time to come through against existing machines like the C64. Such early ST software as did come along was usually pretty unimpressive in terms of the machine's capabilities, with the outstanding titles — things like *Starquake* and the *Planet* — coming pretty close by today's standards. The Amiga was the same. Its sales should have gone to come through from competitors in the marketplace, outpace competitors successfully, supported A500 of today — and it's still not definitely won out.

Viewed in perspective, though, this process — programs learning a machine, then buying it in numbers and big business coming in to support it — all seems to be taking longer to reach new machines. The Amiga had a close architectural similarity to the ST in a board, and even the ST managed to break all the default OS software base in a degree, but still it took a long time to work its way through. As we move into the age of power micro using board new 85C (Gleadow Instruction Set Chip) technology, this could drag out still further.

It's not just that the chips are new and unfamiliar though they aren't. It's also that market today isn't really more complete than that of the great 1983-4 computer boom, at least if you're looking to program them well.

This complexity can be subtle, though. The Amiga, for example, is difficult to program but stop, the ST and Amiga are both quite "clean" designs. The problem is that using the power of these machines properly is a much harder task.

Take graphics, for example. On the Spectrum, writing a full screen of graphics is just a matter of downloading some fairly straightforward routines into a small memory. There's no question of writing copy-protect routines, providing anti-disking facilities to guard very carefully at any later cloning or digital copy not proceeding on protected disks drives. For a state of the-art Amiga package you'd have to do all that and more before you're really impressed anyone.

The same goes for games. Once once video-game 3D was a mystery to the average programmer, while polygon-filling and other vital 3D routines were strictly for maintenance. Now we're fast approaching the point where these skills are on a par with update-buffer techniques — an essential part of a games programmer's repertoire. Is there work there for all of us?

THE NEW WAVE

Just imagine that this is all the specialisation that's necessary for a video game to be here now, probably within five years, and that it's all over already. You as the Amiga user can



The Fantasy Zone as you find your way through Amiga's 32K level. Nothing unusual for the ST or Amiga, but one exciting alternative version on the Amiga!

only RISC chip-out these kind of options are needed for very high-tech applications but, as FPU-chained as closely with their DSP chip, this kind of technology is well within the reach of individual manufacturers.

RISC isn't the only way to step up video game either. The next generation of Amigas, the A3000 and A3000, will use better iterations of the 68000 family. 32-bit video cards from 16-bit running or higher clock speeds. They may have the benefit of compatibility with old 32-bit software, but they'll only be really worth buying when programmers start to use it to take games further.

Putting out of the more graphic is a going on to a new machine, and it's going to be with every technological leap forward. In the long run the only concern is to make sure, even commercially toiled companies and individuals to produce quality software, but for the short term it is not the best of us to get out without said. Assuming of course, prices are low enough that pinning tools can actually feed the money. ■

SCREEN & SOUND



These three games show just what a great copy-protect machine the Amiga is — or will be when they release the software. It may take

Visual, the machines would be the most exciting mode under 4000. It takes an Apple Mac II to better the 256-colour 640 x 384 resolution display which even the cheapest Amiga can display on a standard 1024 monitor. With fancy multi-sync monitors the machine can't even better: the best need to look at the processor, slowing it down to half or even a quarter of its normal speed but that still makes it fast as an ST.

The Amiga's got a lot about it to attract graphics and video developers besides high resolution. Its powerful enough for some speedy copy-protecting for use they, not to mention the odd bit of fractal-processing. What's more, its colour range makes it still allowing a practical proposition. This technique breaks off jagged-edges of objects by clever pixel averaging, and can really improve the quality of a display. Clunky-looking anti-aliased fonts are available as standard for the Amiga.

There are a number of anti-aliasing packages for the Amiga, notably Amiga from Data Man Supplies and Leonardo-Lion (Amiga) Technology but even these solutions fall some way short of their ST or Amiga counterparts. They lack sophisticated object distortion, can't animate by colour matching, aren't copy-protect and most damagefully of all — can't use the full 256 colour mode.

The great news here is that Data Man are now working on Amiga Professional, a package that should make good most of these short-comings. May still in the wings is the impressive looking of package Amiga were showing off at the Personal Computer World Show last year. It's finished now, it due for release very soon under the name of Picture Point and will be on-display at this year's (now renamed) Personal Computer Show.

So the Amiga video-side writings, again the Amiga has a great deal of potential. This matter now is fast expanding in the States, where the ability to film or manipulate video images is in big demand. These the machine of the moment is the Amiga, but with its previous upgrade the Amiga could do even better, gaining a huge lead for itself here in the ST — with the right software. Amiga-generated sequences have already been used in a couple of TV quiz shows, for example.

On the face of it the Amiga's got a lot of other music and sound fare too. Digitized-in stereo channels are complemented by a couple of MIDI add-ons, and already there are a few impressive hardware-based wave-packages available to help you exploit these features.

Top of the audio buff's shopping list must be the excellent Amiga2000 sound sampler unit. Comes with a Companion, Amiga Control and the newly revised Amiga2000 as feature liberal offerings of Amiga2000 samples, while there have recently used the card to sample several phrases of Jean Michel Jarre for a music demo disk. The Amiga2000 weighs in at £230 for the basic package, with an optional Pioneer waveform-analysis program setting real devices back another £40.

Amiga Music Research (AMR) offer a Sound Synthesis program which allows users to sample sounds in the Amiga's basic wave, string and percussion sounds. They can manipulate the waveform data to produce new sounds of your own, but if you're really serious about this you'd do better to stick with the Amiga2000 sampler.



More three captured scenes they can't even remember it sound!



PANDORA

Here is a very helpful list of tips for this great arcade adventure from Firebird.

- The Doctor needs the Needle and the Gun.
- The Hoopman has the Propylisic and the Saturn Maze.
- The Engineer has the ID Engineer and the Solar Something.
- The Defense CTRL has the Code Luncheon.
- The Second Officer has the Inside and needs the Comic Disaster.
- The RORO Officer has the ID RORIC.
- The Scientist has the ID Scientist.
- The Chemist has the Needle and needs the Book.
- The Orkid needs Sunlight.
- The Doctor has the Seventh Ball.
- The Meds has the ID Meds.
- The Gardner has the Insectbook.
- The Dentally has the Destructing.
- The Jural Officer has the ID ARVIC (a quick way of the ship).
- The Technician has the Bobs at Gas.
- The Petromechanic has the Code Red and needs the Book and the Flexible Tool.
- The Lord of Ice has the Thermometer.
- The Squash Player has the Electric Floor and needs the Squash Ball.
- The Enraged has the Glass and needs a drink.
- The Roboticsian has the Switchmen, Electromechanic, Master Wig and Broken Club.
- The Bank Manager needs Money.
- The LI Commander has the ID LI Commander.
- The Commander has the Code Blue, the Code Green and the ID Commander.
- The Thief has the Comic Disaster.
- The Priest has the PhotoGates.
- The Captain has the Pappy Day.

- To get into the Engineering Level you need the ID Engineer.
- To get into the Commander's Room you need the LI Commander's ID.
- To get into the Captain's Room you need the Commander's ID.
- A Stole is found in the Priest's Room.
- A Book of Philosophy is found in the Commander's Room.
- A Stole is found in the Bank Manager's Room.
- An Alarm Panel is found in the LI Commander's Room.
- ID ARVIC, alert you of the ship at the bottom of the garden.
- Shoot the thief with the Laser Hilt from the Second Officer's Room.

There if we are going to tell you for free as we don't want to spoil your fun!

G.M. STOKES, Chesterfield.

BETTER DEAD THAN ALIEN

Here's the complete set of codes for both the ST and Amiga versions.

LEVEL	PASSWORD	COMMENT
01	ELIETHA	PRACTIC
02	EY2EY	# DOOBLE
03	DRABLEE	VERY EASY
04	PLUG	EASY
05	SOPRANO	QUITE EASY
06	SPHONAGE	MIRAGE
07	TRUCOT	SOME EFFORT
08	POKOTO	MUCH EFFORT
09	WOCNPR	GREAT EFFORT
10	NARCOSIS	TOTAL EFFORT
11	DEBILITATE	HARD
12	FILON	REAL HARD
13	ADOLBIC	VERY HARD
14	EMPTICH	LEGENDOUS
15	ADIBWOCKY	ABSURD
16	SPHMSICAL	POSSIBLE?
17	CEPHALOCOPA	DO THIS ONE!
18	PULAB	OH, HOW THIS
19	TODDY POM	STILL HERE!
20	REAPPE COOL	BRELLANT!
21	SPFLADINE	IMPOSSIBLE!
22	SPH-SMOM	OR WAS IT?
23	GAARINOM	THE END.
24	DROBICHO	THE END?
25	GAARINING	THAT'S IT!

STEVE WILLIAMS, Co. Durham





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VIRUS

These timely tips should help anyone having difficulty with this superb game.

IN ATTACK

When attacking aliens, always try to be above your target so its much easier to control the direction of your hovercraft when it's pushed down.

SEEDERS

These are the easiest of the lot and you should have no trouble taking them out. Try flying directly over them and bring downwards.

BOMBERS

Try to fly alongside the bombers rather than waiting for them to pass you. Be careful though of getting too close behind him because otherwise you'll be hit by the parachute bombs.

PEETS

Stay near the ground so you can see their shadows. By watching the shadow, you should be able to work out its path. Then try to point at where it's going, thrust up gently when it passes over you, and start firing.

BRODS, MUTANTS AND FIGHTERS

Again, stay near the ground so you can see their shadows, and keep the craft low and moving slowly in one direction. All that they will do is circle you, and then they will pass downwards and start to thrust. This indicates that they are about to dive on you and you should now ensure that the craft is behind you, otherwise you are likely to collide. Wait for the alien to come into the screen then turn around and start firing and thrusting upwards. You can pursue the alien upwards until you destroy it, but it's probably best to fall back to the ground and start again should you lose sight of the alien. Also be careful not to get too high, because once your engines have cut-out you will become a sitting duck for the aliens.

ATTRACTORS

If you are going to destroy these will missiles, try to launch the missile when the attractor is over a flat piece of land or sea because otherwise the missile is likely to hit the ground. Alternatively, you can try to hit it the first time needed to destroy it by staying low so you approach the attractor. Because if you are too high above it, it will pull you into the ground. When it starts to pull you, start firing and thrusting. By thrusting, you should be able to avoid crashing into it, and with some luck, some of your bullets should hit it as you are pulled back and buff over it. However, since you only have one third of your fuel left, it is probably best to try to dis-engage. The easiest way to do this is to first thrust in one direction away from the attractor, then turn round and thrust towards and over the attractor. The speed you gain from thrusting and the pull of the attractor should be enough to break away from it.

MYSTERY SPACECRAFT

This first appears on wave six and is represented by a black dot on your scanner. The ship is grey and flies fairly high but only slowly through the air. It scores 2000 points for a hit and defends itself by firing small pest-like objects at you. The ship needs multiple hits to destroy it and is able to jet your missiles on wave seven and beyond. The easiest way to destroy it is to hover near to it by watching its shadow and then thrust straight up. Try to get as many hits on it as you can when you see it, but break off the attack after it's launched more than three of its pest-pods. Destroy these after the spaceship before attacking it again.

A. THASA-PARAN, Billerica.

SOFTWARE GIVEAWAY!!

S.M. Stocks picks up this month's giddy bag of software prizes - Starglider 2, Eliminator, Heller Sucker, Virus, Whirligig and Super Hang-On. Wow! Steve Williams also picks up a copy of Starglider 2 and The Jester wins a copy of Super Hang-On. Richard Reeves wins himself a copy of Dark Side for his CD4 and Neil Lyddman walks away with a copy of Whirligig and Lindsay McEwan grabs a copy of Barbarian II. Get those maps, tips and prizes rolling into the address below, and YOU could earn yourself some fantastic prizes! Don't just sit there - do it!

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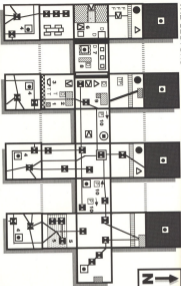
LEATHERNECK

How about invincibility for all players on the ST and Amiga.

Start the game and type 'CUTHBERTMECK', then press F3. This will give all players protection from enemy fire, but not from your team-mate's bullets. To return to normal press F3 once again.

JOHN LEE, Walkhampton



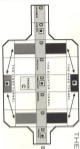


● DARK SIDE
 Lindsay McEwan of Glasgow has kindly sent us in the map for Dark Side so that we may help of you out there who are having any problems finding your way around.

THE KEY

- ☐ ICE
- ☐ TRANSFORMER
- ☐ TELEPOS
- ☐ PERSON TOWER
- ☐ FUEL STORE
- ☐ SHIELD STORE
- ☐ TREE
- ☐ DOOR
- ☐ DOOR BEHIND WALL
- ☐ START
- ☐ CRYSTAL
- ☐ WALL
- ☐ BUILDING
- ☐ BLOCK
- ☐ VISIBLE BARRIER
- ☐ INVISIBLE BARRIER
- ☐ HOLE IN WALL
- ☐ SPARKS FROM THE TELEPOD
- ☐ ENTRANCES LEAD TO INVISIBLE DROP IN FLOOR LEVEL
- ☐ RASSED FLOORPLAN

THE TUNNELS



THE NAMES

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FOR THROWSO.

Upgrading to a **more powerful computer**? Check the facts. Buying a **new game**? Check the ratings. Bored with **life**? Check the puzzles. All in ACE's premier, pinkest, pages.

Thanks to Andrew Thornton of Melbourne for the masterpiece.



AMIGA SOUND EFFECTS...!

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● **WGar** Throwsobo threatens the world, and the **ACE** Puzzle threatens your sanity in this month's pinkies...

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RECOMMENDED GAMES



BUGGY BOY

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A new top action driving game that will keep even the most ardent Old Manford fans for a long while. Collect the time bonuses in the attempt to complete the five grueling courses. Instantly playable and highly addictive, Buggy Boy deserves every rating term shipping list.



CONQUEROR

Superior • Amiga/Amos \$2.99 • Atari and ST versions under direct shipment



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Superior • Spectrum £7.99 • £1.99 • C64 \$1.99 • T1.4.99 • Amiga \$1.99 • Amiga £1.99



EZOCON

Superior • Spectrum £7.99 • £1.99 • C64 \$1.99 • T1.4.99 • Amiga £1.99



Exceptionally wonderful strategy simulation by John Phillips, which will test your tactical mettle. It's even fun to play along. See the full review on page 80 for more details.



EZOCON

Superior • Spectrum £7.99 • C64 \$1.99 • T1.4.99 • Amiga £1.99



Exceptionally superb sports simulation shooting straight-up in which you sit back and amp your way along a parallel surface leaving away a star athlete. It got and a movie transfer in and behind the line, but I think you will be tough that you can get an evaluation for your processor and the power.



ODES

Amiga • Amiga £7.99 • £1.99



A magnificent shoot-em-up. The Odes are relying on you to save them, but the Boreas aren't going to let them go without blowing the idea, which is a number of other weapons in you. Included with the program is an art facility that allows you to design your own planetside - great stuff!



PITSTOP 2

Superior • Amiga • Amiga only on Eyes Epic compilation • C64 \$1.99 • T1.4.99 • IBM/PC £2.99 • Amiga in compilation with other Games and Summer Games 2



Thrilling racing game where the driver is split in two and you can take the computer on a track. Lots of different Grand Prix circuits, type three wide and of course the all-essential pitstop guarantee to give you head-cracking and your brain is hot racing.



SPIDERTRONIC

Amiga/Amos • Amiga £7.99 • £1.99



Build your spider around the spider arena, collecting colored points in the correct order. The built-in computer can means you're breaking out your own levels of the spider arena.



SUMMER GAMES

Superior • C64 \$2.99 • T1.4.99 • Amiga £2.99



Eye-opening simulations are of high quality but some have quite required the playability and style of the original Summer Games and is immediate feedback. Summer Games 2. One to be played can take part in high jump, gymnastics, basketball, diving, clay pigeon shooting, swimming, polo and - and others - with lovely large graphics and smooth animation throughout. Costs of your wheels can be complete interactive recommendations.



SUPER SPRINT

Superior • Amiga • C64 £2.99 • T1.4.99 • Amiga £2.99 • Spectrum £1.99 • Amiga £1.99



One of the better 200-g conversions currently available. With up to three players all competing at once, the action is fast and furious and it will take a long time to complete some of the more hairbending circuits that appear later in the game.

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RECOMMENDED GAMES



THRUST

Platform • Spectrum 11.95 • C64 £1.95 • Amstrad £1.95

Thrillingly sensitive controls and a large helping of real-life graphics make this budget title an absolute must. Flying down through the canopy of an enemy-held planet, you have to pick up fuel and destroy hostile gun turrets without crashing into the tunnel walls. Tough enough as it is, but then you've got to make the return journey with a heavy load slung under your arm. Very nice, very addictive.



THUNDERCATS

C64 • £4.95 • C64 £5.95 • Spectrum £1.95 • Amstrad £1.95 • £1.95

The game based on the hit TV tele-drama, this is a side-on view wonder that just oozes gameplay. Each of the game's 10 levels is a straight line dash from start to finish with a multitude of obstacles to avoid along the way. Creditably impressive and computationally playable too.



URIDIUM

Platform • Spectrum £1.95 • C64 £3.95 • £1.95 • £1.95 • £1.95

The place de resistance of avoiding shot-on-you from the straightforward and snaking ship while dodging around your large obstacles. Great realistic-looking backgrounds and the smoothest scrolling you'll ever see (at this price) and shouldn't slow the operation. A game not to be missed, especially now that C64 versions come packaged with the excellent Playlog.



ZARCH / VIRUS

Platform Software • Amstrad £1.95 • Platform (Platform Software) • Amstrad £1.95 • Spectrum £1.95 • £1.95 • £1.95

ESL CLASS 4 signed retail game to date. A solid three-dimensional shoot-'em-up with such graphic perfection and completely addictive gameplay that it became an instant classic. Now the three versions have improved to be just as good as the £2.95 versions (check out the review on p.85) but remains to be seen how it stacks up to the £2.95 ratings of the versions.

ADVENTURES

Adventures have come a long way since The Hobbit. State-of-the-art graphics and powerful parsers enable you to communicate with other characters, and fully explore the world of your choosing. Add role-playing elements and you can see why this section of the software biz is the fastest growing area of computer entertainment.



BEYOND ZORK

Platform Software • C64 £1.95 • £1.95 • £1.95 • Amstrad £1.95 • £1.95

Intensely original to master in on the side playing market is a great way to see the fabulous Concept of Quantum in a game that combines the wit and originality of one of the world's most original software companies with some of the best writing and gameplay. Not only, but with an on-screen mapping facility.



THE BARD'S TALE III

Platform Software • C64 £1.95

The latest Bard's Tale game offers a mixture of role-playing over its predecessors (all of which are still well worth buying a good look at). First, the graphics are better animated. Second, its rugged combat system which has careful account of the distance between you and your opponents. Finally the game's larger and more-than-excellent value for money.

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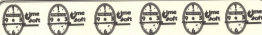
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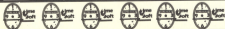
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N'Gar Thrombobo lives! Tremble at the consequences! Quiver with frustration over the ACE Puzzle! Struggle with the ACE Crossword...and check out the other goodies in this month's offerings from computing's liveliest trivia section.

THE ACE SERIAL...

The Git in The Machine: Part 2

Horace Caghandis was worried. For some reason that fast Centaurin Balthedore couldn't do, he'd always been able to clear the screen in the peer-with-computer maze - but not any more. That was bad enough, but something even more strange was happening. Even though he hadn't shot it that Centaurin Balthedore should have scrolled past to make way for the Radioactive Killer Controls, but it didn't.

N'Gar Thrombobo was enjoying himself. He carefully explored the confines of the screen, impervious to Horace Caghandis's frantic Megasawing. Only when he was thoroughly satisfied did he retire from the screen - back the way he had come, and straight into the arms, so to speak, of the Radioactive Killer Controls.

Horace Caghandis watched, amazed, as the Centaurin Balthedore went off the screen for evening work. He was reassured when the Radioactive Killer Controls appeared as usual, but his relief turned to dismay when half of them turned out to be fast in knots. Surely the disk must have become corrupted, a theory borne out when he came to type in his name on the high-score table below that of...N'Gar Thrombobo.

Now, of course, N'Gar Thrombobo was unplayable. He constructed himself some very comfortable electronic living quarters in the Amosack's RAM, and began to explore the other software in the Caghandis household. All was quiet for a few days, until Father Archibald Caghandis returned from a meeting with his bank manager in town. A guttural report, prepared using his latest version of Bloskus 3-D-1, had not turned out quite as expected. On the contrary, it had sent Mr. Bankroop into hysterics. The exact nature of the problem remained disturbingly unclear as the print-out was hastily shredded by the disaffected Bankroop who not only refused to discuss the matter further, but also closed all the Caghandis accounts forthwith.

Meanwhile, N'Gar Caghandis retreated her wordprocessor eleven lines in an attempt to stop Montgomery Balthedore being animated by a large alien balthedore every time he set foot outside Balthing Mann.

Most badly affected of all, though, was poor Horace Caghandis. He didn't eat, didn't sleep, just sat at his Amosack trying to cheat the Centaurin Balthedore, in the end he renounced meat, and had to be taken away.

That should have been enough for N'Gar Thrombobo, but vengeance had caused to be his prime preoccupation. For he had discovered that Archibald Caghandis had a room...

THE ACE PUZZLE No 7

Set by ACME-MUSIC

SEVEN SEARCH

4	3	0	6	7	4
7	9	4	3	6	7
5	1	8	2	1	7
3	4	7	1	9	4
7	4	9	5	6	7
7	8	3	9	7	2

In this grid are five concealed prime multiples of the number 7. They can be found vertically in some way as the words in the more familiar "word-search" puzzles, except that here we are dealing with numbers rather than words.

You can read the numbers in any direction - up, down, left to right, right to left, or diagonally. For example in the diagonal indicated there are seven multiples of 7.

What are 1, 11, 19, 27, 37, 47, and 57 written in the other direction, 7, 13, 19, 25, 31, 37, 43, 49, 55, 61, 67, 73, 79, 85, 91, 97, 103, 109, 115, 121, 127, 133, 139, 145, 151, 157, 163, 169, 175, 181, 187, 193, 199, 205, 211, 217, 223, 229, 235, 241, 247, 253, 259, 265, 271, 277, 283, 289, 295, 301, 307, 313, 319, 325, 331, 337, 343, 349, 355, 361, 367, 373, 379, 385, 391, 397, 403, 409, 415, 421, 427, 433, 439, 445, 451, 457, 463, 469, 475, 481, 487, 493, 499, 505, 511, 517, 523, 529, 535, 541, 547, 553, 559, 565, 571, 577, 583, 589, 595, 601, 607, 613, 619, 625, 631, 637, 643, 649, 655, 661, 667, 673, 679, 685, 691, 697, 703, 709, 715, 721, 727, 733, 739, 745, 751, 757, 763, 769, 775, 781, 787, 793, 799, 805, 811, 817, 823, 829, 835, 841, 847, 853, 859, 865, 871, 877, 883, 889, 895, 901, 907, 913, 919, 925, 931, 937, 943, 949, 955, 961, 967, 973, 979, 985, 991, 997, 1003, 1009, 1015, 1021, 1027, 1033, 1039, 1045, 1051, 1057, 1063, 1069, 1075, 1081, 1087, 1093, 1099, 1105, 1111, 1117, 1123, 1129, 1135, 1141, 1147, 1153, 1159, 1165, 1171, 1177, 1183, 1189, 1195, 1201, 1207, 1213, 1219, 1225, 1231, 1237, 1243, 1249, 1255, 1261, 1267, 1273, 1279, 1285, 1291, 1297, 1303, 1309, 1315, 1321, 1327, 1333, 1339, 1345, 1351, 1357, 1363, 1369, 1375, 1381, 1387, 1393, 1399, 1405, 1411, 1417, 1423, 1429, 1435, 1441, 1447, 1453, 1459, 1465, 1471, 1477, 1483, 1489, 1495, 1501, 1507, 1513, 1519, 1525, 1531, 1537, 1543, 1549, 1555, 1561, 1567, 1573, 1579, 1585, 1591, 1597, 1603, 1609, 1615, 1621, 1627, 1633, 1639, 1645, 1651, 1657, 1663, 1669, 1675, 1681, 1687, 1693, 1699, 1705, 1711, 1717, 1723, 1729, 1735, 1741, 1747, 1753, 1759, 1765, 1771, 1777, 1783, 1789, 1795, 1801, 1807, 1813, 1819, 1825, 1831, 1837, 1843, 1849, 1855, 1861, 1867, 1873, 1879, 1885, 1891, 1897, 1903, 1909, 1915, 1921, 1927, 1933, 1939, 1945, 1951, 1957, 1963, 1969, 1975, 1981, 1987, 1993, 1999, 2005, 2011, 2017, 2023, 2029, 2035, 2041, 2047, 2053, 2059, 2065, 2071, 2077, 2083, 2089, 2095, 2101, 2107, 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SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No 5

The number is 3456789. The number is exactly divisible by 18. Cross the last four-digit in turn to produce a set of numbers exactly divisible by 18, 14, 10, 6, and 2 in turn.

The solution is not difficult but is rather lengthy, requiring a bit of logic together with a computer program of less to help things along. Throughout the explanation the term 'divisible' is taken to mean 'divisible EXACTLY' without a remainder.

Any number divisible by 10 must end in zero, so we can immediately place the zero at the right-hand end of the five digits. By a similar argument, the last digit number can now only end in a 5, so this digit can be placed in 8th position. All multiples of 2, 6, and 4 must end in an even digit so the four remaining even digits must occur in the positions denoted by 1, 4, and 6, and the odd numbers in the positions marked *.

To determine if a number is divisible by four, divide the last two digits by four. If the division is exact, then the whole number is divisible by four (as in the test for leap years). Since the last two digits of the four digit number must be 000000, the

even digit can only be either 2 or 8.

A similar test can be performed to determine if a number is exactly divisible by 8, except that this time the last THREE digits need to be taken. If these are exactly divisible by 8 then the complete number will be.

Thus, these last three digits must be in the series 000, 008, 016, 024, and so on up to 992, whenever the series repeats again. From the arrangement of odd and even digits we need to find all of the three digit terminations in the form ***** but excluding any where the even digit is zero if the odd digit is 5 (as these digits have already been placed). Also, any which have the two even digits identical can also be eliminated. This is done in a program listing, which produces the following 12 possibilities:

218 288 318 432 472 498 502 672 818 832 872 892

However, we have already noted that the fourth digit must be either 2 or 8, so we can eliminate from this list those numbers which contain both.

The list now reads: 218 432 472 498 818 832 872 892.

Turning our attention now to the six digit number, the most and in the digits 28, or 82, the blank being an

even number. The 2 and the 8 being, of course, the final digit of the four digit number. Program listing 2 prints out all multiples of 8 which end in agreement with these digits. This results in an endless repeating loop of 10 possibilities. Two can be eliminated as involving a zero, and a further two which contain two similar digits. We can now compare the six remaining values with our list of numbers which terminate the eight digit numbers and a series of pairings can be made:

218 can be paired with 842 822 872 858 284 can be paired with 418 432 472 498 258 can be paired with 432 472 498 822 can be paired with 818 832 878 898

In each of these pairings the last digit of the six digit value must be the same as the last digit of the other as they form the digit sequences. But, from this list can be removed those values in which any digit is repeated - for example 258 and 832; there are two 2's. This will result in just seven five digit sequences - these digits being 4320004-4 to 8 in the 10 digit number:

2218 2888 2848 2848 6432

6672 or 6882

We can now fit in the missing even digit for each of these possibilities as three even digits have already been accounted for (plus the zero at the end). In the case of the first of the six numbers above we multiply:

4320004

Now, the first three digits must be a multiple of 2 and the two 0's are two of the remaining 000 digits (4, excluding 5 and the 000 digit already in 7th place). In the above example the unused 000 digits are 2, 7 and 8 and a quick check will reveal that there is no combination which will form a multiple of 2 with the 4 in the middle digit. The remaining possibilities each produce either two or four likely numbers. These are listed below. The give us in each case the first eight digits of the sequence.

Although we have checked that the three digits which end the six digit sequence (432 and a multiple of 8, we have not as yet checked that the complete six digits are divisible (within the case of 4 and 8, multiples of 8 cannot be tested in this way). We already know that every one of these sequences have 6 digits that are divisible by 11 when it is either 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6. Now we have to test the

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