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ACE

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FIRST FULL REVIEW - SEE PAGE 42

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TAITO

COM-OP

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Do you really want to get an ST or an Amiga (assuming you don't have one already)? Could it be that the machine for you is actually...*gasp!*...a PC? ACE takes a closer look at the IBM hardware spec and asks whether this could be the game's standard of the 1990s.



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A subscription ACE puts you at the front of entertainment technology AND gives you the chance to recover your whole subscription charge by entering 100 Subgames at half price. Go for it!

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ACE give you up with VGA Thermostat, the ACE price comment, price puzzle, and other really mindless diversions that should keep you busy till the next issue.

166 Reader's Pages

Small ad, big business. ACE readers make deals, offer help in adventures, sell hardware, seek partners, and form user groups. The inside of the marketplace in the peace of your living room, brought to you by... you.

PLAYING SAFE?

The whole future of computer entertainment could depend on what happens next. Household name Amstrad have taken no risks by launching a cut-price, unexciting PC compatible aimed at the home market. Meanwhile, a little known hardware firm are taking a terrifying risk with a high-power, completely non-standard console. They'll both want support from the UK's software houses over the next six months - but what's going to get it?

There's a lot more riding on this than just the bank accounts of the two firms involved. The micro scene is crawling with new-age machines - technical wonders like the Acorn Archimedes, Atari ASAD and Flare One - that can't quite seem to break the stranglehold of compatibility. This month ACE sizes up the opposing forces: how does the incredible power of modern custom silicon stack up against the PC's safety in numbers? Is there still money in being original, or do people just want more of the same?

Originality's not just a hardware issue of course. On the software side of things, cloning can mean big business and even bigger trouble. Do you know your Ramparts from your Rampage? Can you tell the difference between Road Blasters and Overlander? Check out our expose of copycat games, and find out why the big software houses don't think imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

Oh, and while we're on the subject, take a look at the ACE masthead (that's the box directly below this one). Notice anything different? In the spirit of originality, we've got ourselves a new editor. Graeme Kidd first wrote for us way back in issue 4, but now we've got his awesome experience and encyclopaedic games knowledge on our side full time. Just as well now that Production Editor Noel Lawton has moved over to work on our startlingly innovative sister publication New Computer Express. We're still looking for a new full-time staff writer, by the way, so if you think you cut the clumpet, write to us and tell us why. You should be over 18, know games backwards, and be able to express yourself well using the written word. Go for it!

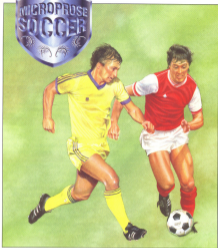
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Overall winner the **WIRED** title sequence, designed by Mark Forrest and produced by David Bellwell of Snapper Films. Computer animation by Digital Pictures Ltd.

GRAPHICS UNLIMITED

■ Neil Mohan reports from the Computer Animation Film Festival



Computer animation is an expensive business, and the Computer Animation Film Festival - held in Wembley on 11th October - was dominated by the flying logos and flashy advertisements of the companies that can afford it. Here was the Smurves ad and the Great composite 'Spacite Sings', but amongst them was some genuinely inspiring and innovative work.

It soon became obvious that last year's winner 'Laser' had set a style that appealed to advertisers, as it was the Bluetan section that proved the most innovative with four entries from the US (this is an international festival) against just one from the UK. From MIT came 'Crista Gets Scared', Crista being a 3D six-legged creature that has been endowed with some of the most 3D techniques, so that the animator can leave the creature to work out what it would do in the next frame. Another entry had been animated by a Day 3 MP, probably the most powerful computer in the world, and no price for pushing it wasn't out!

It also became obvious that the judges were looking for something a bit different this time round: winner of the Features & Shorts section went to 'Tomological Thrust' which used computers to generate characterisations straight out of the Chuck Jones short drawn 40 years ago. An award could also have gone to Apple Computer here, whose 'Pencil Test' was created solely on its 16 bit micro - rather than on the £29,000-plus machines usually employed.

After some animation, during which an experimental sequence from the 'Wall Down' film was given an exclusive showing, it was announced that the title sequence from Channel Four's 'Wired', by Digital Pictures, was judged the overall winner. And so it should be, as it shows what can be achieved in a commercial environment.

SHOW NEWS

TO 22th October and BBC Micro Best Show runs from November 17th to 19th, and if you find the 40-odd hours an interesting machine, a trip to the New Market Hall, Greyhound Street, London, could see dividends - visit the well-known 'Wonderful World of the Archimedes' section and be amazed! Best entries may prefer a trip to Alexandra Palace for the Best Show which runs from 22nd-24th November in the 'Wired' Hall, while winners of Commodore machines will find plenty of interest at the Commodore Show, running in the Reviled, HammerSmith, between 18th and 20th November. Further details from Software Editions, on 0203 878888.

NAVIGATION AND DENIAL...

While hardware wizards Kania, makers of the magazine-writing Speeding Crystal, are set to release a pair of products that should make the games-playing world a happier place to inhabit.

Official confirmation is available for the release of the Sonic Navigator, a joystick which Kania claim looks and feels even better than the Speeding. 'The Speeding is a tough nut to follow', commented Kania following one of Kania's demos, 'and we wanted to be sure that we excited ourselves with the Navigator' she continued.

Designed to fit snugly in either hand, the Navigator contains vibration-based sensors and should be available in your local computer shop as you read this, priced at £14.95.

While happy to wax on enthusiastically about their new joystick, Kania are at pains to deny rumors of a new games console apparently due for launch in the middle of next year. 'Comrade, what console?' was asked as to an Kania spokeswoman. Why follow-up was prepared to go when queried, but here on ACF we're pretty certain that Nintendo and Sega will find themselves getting a good run for their money in the console market during 1988.

While confirmation for the retrofitted console is high



An officially unacknowledged Kania product - the Navigator, in Artist's Impression form...

impossible to obtain, clearly Kania are preparing to launch a major product of the console variety next year. The 'console that doesn't exist' is set to be a thoroughly amazing piece of hardware packed with custom chips that will give the user more than the computing power of machines such as the Amiga, and will cost about as much as the Spectrum v2. Expect very, very fast!

A C E N E W S

COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

graphics and sound like you've only ever previously heard coming out of a dedicated synthesiser. And expect to be playing some amazing games on a Kania-based console by the middle of next year. Software won't be exclusively cartridge-based, and a variety of interesting peripherals are likely to be released to complement the basic unit. (Much more in the way of controllers than Speedings or Navigators.)

Despite the fact that the console 'doesn't exist', a number of leading software houses appear to be engaging in intense discussions with Kania. Maybe they're just working on a programme to play on a programme to play on...? We know otherwise.

ACE ON THE ROAD

Manchester Home of The Smiths, Granada Television and long-standing software house Ocean. The ACE team jumped in the car (M4 for Silver road 200) and headed up the M1 to see what the Mancunian Big Boys were going to be releasing on an unsuspecting game playing public this Christmas... and early next year!

The official version of the title came up for Operation Blast (reviewed this issue) is the first game due in the shops, and will be easily followed by another conversion of a car-top hit, this time Data East's Road Doctor Versus Dragon Kings (which must be



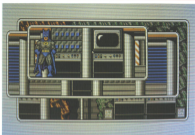
This early shot shows you the kind of graphics you can expect in Dragon Kings for the Amiga.



Another version from Dragon Kings. What's the girl taken care of, but the big boy at the back has a tough

in the running for the 'worst game name of the year' award). Because it's such a mouthful it's not surprising Ocean have shortened the name to plain ol' Dragon Kings. The game is a horizontally scrolling beat-'em-up which you have to work your way through hordes of badies (bats and females) punching and kicking them to oblivion. If you're lucky you might be able to pick up a dagger or sword to make your job easier.

And the Ocean lads don't stop at car-top. If you were to learn they were developing a game based on the character Batman, you'd probably think you were reading a magazine that's some five or three years old. But no... no content with producing a superb-looking 3D puzzle written by Jon Pitman, Ocean are currently working on another new arcade-adventure game based on the Egoist Crusader. The game has a strong 'comic book' feel and though the puzzle haven't been finished, you'll be controlling Batman and



Batman ready for action. Make the window open window display that gives the feel of the comic book original.

confronting some of his arch-enemies like The Penguin and The Riddler. Expect plenty of puzzles and objects to collect and manipulate (save them in your file utility first) in keeping with the Batman image, so you will actually get killed in the game.

Continuing the license theme, Ocean are also working on the more serious of two recent out-titles, Poozoo and Rambo II. Poozoo due on the hot machines just before Christmas with the 16-bit versions following in the New Year. An arcade version of the game is already being developed by car-top company Data East and although Ocean may be incorporating features of the car-top, their version of Poozoo won't be a straight conversion, but a game that follows the plot of the film closely - including a confrontation with the impressive Ewok.



Relaxing playing it out on the Spectrum with the Ewok.

Rambo II also follows the film plot and as John Rambo it's down to you to rescue Colonel Traudler who has been captured by the Russians in Afghanistan. Playing with sport-of-view perspective, you see things



Bonus Belt on the ST showing the cockpit view of a strange alien structure - should you blow it up or not it is taken care of it's leader?

through Rambo's eyes and have to regulate minerals, dig landfills and search a Russian camp, blowing away soldiers and anything else that moves while you do it. Unlike Rambo, Sylvester Stallone's mugs is far from bloodless, so action fans will find plenty to keep them happy.

Ocean's next original product looks set to be a solid 3D strategy/shoot-'em-up tentatively called Orion's Belt for development purposes. Mike Crowley and Barry Gallagher who used to work with Vector Graphics Ltd (Star Wars and Empire Strikes Back) are the men behind Orion. Appearing on the ST and Amiga only, your mission to wipe out aliens will consist at least or levels - each one set on a different

planet around Saturn. The action is viewed from the cockpit and you'll have over 50 robotic adversaries to contend with, all presented in stunning solid 3D animation. It won't all be of blasting however - expect to contend with puzzles to generate weapons and equipment for your vehicle, and part of the action will take place in underground mine complexes.

Looks like the game players country wide are going to be in for some late nights in front of their monitors over the coming months, courtesy of Ocean. Perhaps The Smiths were thinking of Ocean when they said 'Manchester, so much to answer for. That rigger finger at round...

MMM! IT'S DANISH...

Danish software development teams have been making a strong play for business recently with the most notable example being *Search of Atlantis*, a fantastically scoring beach/slash concern with very large animated figures. Although almost all the game went up and sailing in Denmark long before anyone here saw it. So were versions of *Atterburk*, *Katana*, and *Angie Hvas*. What's going on?

Anyone visiting Denmark won't make up their minds. First, the Danish home computer market is more specifically Amiga heavy. Commodore has really done up its Amiga, but with the OS4 and now not only with the Amiga but also with their PC's. It's an odd feeling to walk into a computer store selling 64- and 16-bit computers plus PC boxes and see nothing but Commodore hardware, but you can't do it in Denmark.

This concentration on a single manufacturer has created a huge community of enthusiasts, all working on the same machines. The result? A well-networked e.g.p., photos.

And that's the second thing you note in Denmark - all those games you've heard about but haven't yet been released in the UK are up and running in everybody's bedrooms in private versions. There's nothing about it - just check out any old classified ad column (like the one shown here, taken from a well-known Danish magazine) and you'll see dozens of ads for private software at about price - often as low as £1, including the disk!

To treat that as one example of Scandinavian plus the other titles mentioned above - fully playable versions of *Katana*, *Atterburk*,

Market Ranger, and *Hvas*. Yeah, but everyone's seen all these games, we hear you cry. Oh yes! Oh the Amiga!? Sure thing, but these were all full-screen Amiga versions at budget Spectrum prices...

FALLING BEHIND

If some of you feel they are forgotten enough to think that the Games are onto a great thing, just consider the following. No British software houses is even going to bother setting up in Denmark and producing proper Danish versions of software. In fact no software company with any sense at all is going to wish any of its product out there. There are a couple of Danish distributors representing some UK and American software houses, but not for no-one-but-us deal. With plenty like that it's hardly surprising. In the long term, the Games are going to be left with fewer and poorer title sites.

If you think were exaggerating, consider this: a good Danish computer magazine sells around 20000 copies. A magazine in Denmark sells... well for £1... around 200 copies. No prizes for guessing why...

While ACE sampled the Danish scene and visited with the hackers, one thing emerged quite clearly. None of them thought they were doing anything wrong - on the contrary, they were quite proud of their efforts - and all of them blamed the Danish Government who put a 200% import tax on software and other items, making the real thing virtually unobtainable.

Under these circumstances, it's almost not to be, at the very least, understanding, and its certainly MCI effort to guess why these same folk are looking for other countries to publish their games in.



THE MUNSTERS RIDE AGAIN AGAIN

Alternative Software have launched a new label, Again Again, producing full-price games across all formats. First release is to be *The Munsters*, based on the aged TV serial currently being revived on Channel 4.

Programmers Fleming and Hollingworth, previously responsible for *Demons*, *Demarc*, and leading the 'Teague coding team on the one, which gives *Cramps*, *Herman*, *Lily*, and *Exile* the chance to flex their limbs in an arcade-style environment.

Again Again will also be producing a game written by David, of *Combat Lynx* fame, for which story see update.

Operation-Halloween is another career scenario set in the Middle East where you must destroy 7 enemy forces using the F16 planes at your disposal. In addition to studying the anti-aircraft missiles, there are also opportunities for air-to-air combat. The game will be released for Spectrum, Amibase, C64, PC, and CD-ROM later this year. If it's as good as *Combat Lynx* was in its day, it should be worth watching out for.

DOMARK GET ATARI COIN-OPS

The little hair figure scooped a very impressive following last week with *Man*, giving Domark the right to produce Atari coin-op titles over the next few years. That could mean as many as twenty-five releases by fellow Star Wars and *The Empire Strikes Back*.

How come Domark got the job? After all, our games players are accustomed to seeing coin-op titles being licensed off to the highest bidder, with little attention paid to the probability quality (or lack of it) of the final release.

According to the UK of Domark (Domingo Whalley), it's all down to Atari's desire for a long-term relationship - which could mean that the big arcade companies are at last paying serious attention to us gamers at home, rather than simply off-loading their titles onto the market in a dead-end way, give us

the cash now chums app-raids.

So, stand by for *Indestructibles*, *2000*, *Exotic*, *Diagonals*, and *APB*. Coin-op titles will have already been read up on the inside versions of the first three titles in ACE - and will know that they're not to be sneezed at. Diagonals and APB have excellent reputations as well, and Domark plan to release at least another three titles in addition to the above before the end of next year. All the games will be put out under the new Star Wars label, incidently.

TENGEN

established in the States to handle the company's coin-op conversions. Since *The Empire Strikes Back* wasn't too bad as coin-op conversions go, the deal looks like being a Good Thing for all concerned.

These titles come from a well-known Danish newspaper and show what's available. The prices are in Danish kroner (about 11 to the £). Prices are when reimported to Denmark, so they get a little extra of the local game - often downloaded over the phone line (most have suitable disk alternatives in the States).

20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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SNIPPETS...

● UP AND COMING TITLES FOR YOUR MICRO

DARK FUSION

Genesis
Spectrum £7.99cc £12.99cc
C64 £9.99cc £14.99cc
Amstrad £9.99cc £14.99cc

This scorching shoot-'em-up pits you up against a host of alien attack craft and gun emplacements. Survive the gauntlet of fire and you have to fight the monster from the Pit of Despair before facing the apocalyptic decision of whether to fuseiform with your vanquished foe or face the next challenge alone. Watch out for Dark Fusion in early December.

BUTCHER HILL

Genesis
Spectrum £7.99cc £12.99cc
C64 £9.99cc £14.99cc
Amstrad £9.99cc £14.99cc
Atari ST £9.99cc
Amiga £9.99cc

A three-part action game due 'till soon now, Butcher Hill begins in an immense digsite. Traversing deep in a jungle, you need to collect supplies and ammunition while avoiding traps and attacks from enemy army-elf. Then a jungle mare full of manure and enemy soldiers has to be negotiated before the final showdown takes place in a jungle village.

JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH

Soft local
Atari ST £19.99cc
Amiga £24.99cc
PC £19.99cc
C64 £14.99cc

Based on the Jules Verne theme, this arcade adventure requires you to travel to the Earth's core and return alive. Facing rocks, giant mammoths, dangerous pterodactyls and sea snakes are just a few of the perils awaiting the intrepid explorer — but about.

THE MUNCHER

Genesis
Spectrum £7.99cc £11.99cc
C64 £9.99cc £14.99cc
Amstrad £9.99cc £14.99cc

First billed as T-Breaks, Muncher is a modified version of a program Genesis were planning to release before they signed a deal with the manufacturers of Genesis. Now the rule master from the Disney TV ads is the hero and the action takes place in Japan. Explorers have stolen your eggs, and you want them back... A real postscript of a game.

Muncher



ESPIONAGE

Commodore
Atari ST £19.99cc
Amiga £19.99cc
PC £19.99cc
Spectrum £9.99cc £14.99cc
Amstrad £9.99cc £14.99cc
C64 £9.99cc £14.99cc
MSX £9.99cc

This one is four player board game conversion takes you into the devious world of industrial espionage. The playing area represents the World's capitals, airports, oceans and so on, and each player has to rush about collecting micro-funds that contain details of the Ultimate Weapon. A really nasty player could forget about the micro-funds and concentrate on bumping off enemy agents. If the dangerous world of Smiley and his people gives you a thrill, watch out for this one... available soon.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WWI: PART 1 ANCIENT BATTLES

CDI
Spectrum £14.99cc £14.99cc
Amstrad £14.99cc £19.99cc
PC £24.99cc

Ancient battles is a one or two player wargame from the author of Arnhem and Vulcan, R.T. Smith, that simulates pitched battles in ancient times. Annies from the earliest times up to the fall of the western Roman Empire are offered, and

players choose an army then design the terrain over which battles are to be fought. Could you win a real challenge to Universal Military Simulator, but then LMS fits on the way so wargames will have to wait while the two programs fight out...

DANGER

Local
Amiga £29.99cc
Atari ST £24.99cc

Horde Storm is back, in his latest adventure, the star of Cook is in a desperate race to catch the saboteurs and thugs who have seized his underground lab. To defeat the marauders, he has to attack his inferior in the mountains and pump them up until they go pop. Look out for Horde in the New Year.

DINOSAURFLAYER

Local
Amiga £29.99cc
Atari ST £24.99cc

(preliminary price)

Despite the title, this arcade adventure has no relationship with the classic books. Featuring some 600 screens and over 50 fully-



animated enemies and footprints. The quest involves finding and assembling the parts of a magic medallion, and then confronting an evil dragon who is the cause of all the problems in the land. Dinosaurflayer should be in the shops at the start of January.

NAVY MOVES

Spectrum, C64, Amstrad,
Atari ST, PC
(all prices to be announced)

As the name suggests, this follows up to Army Moves in set in and around the ocean. Starting out in a dinghy, you have to jump waves and avoid aquatic nasties before donning scuba gear to penetrate the enemy base (that's a mini-sub, navigate another underwater cavern crammed with killer octopi and you're onto the second level). The aim of the mission is to capture and destroy a nuclear submarine, and the second stage takes place in traditional arcade adventure style amongst the platforms and ladders of the sub. Wonder if Dynamic will have a gorilla, posing again on the cover of this one?



SPITTING IMAGE

Domark
Spectrum £9.99cc £14.99cc
C64 £9.99cc £14.99cc
Amstrad £9.99cc £14.99cc
Atari ST £19.99cc
Amiga £19.99cc

Hands up who remembers Domark's old game called Spitting Image? You know the one that renamed Gipsi Penetration? Well, now Domark are set to release the official Spitting Image game featuring some of those wacky puppets. The potentially hilarious licence has to be one of the strangest yet for a computer game. The Walking Order (ex Design Design) crew are putting the finishing touches to the game as we write, so expect to see it in the shops before Christmas.

AMIGA

£24.95

FUEL FOR EN



Five Olympic events include Long Jump, Shotput, High Jump, 100m Sprint, 500m, 1500m and 10000m. You will need all your wits to find out what you have to do in order to succeed, and, as it is necessary for all top flight athletes, your judgement is called the most effective equipment for each event is some what a decision which can win or lose you a place on the podium. They will just another sports competition. This is a Daley Thompson event where all the talent and human spirit through to make a thrilling and exciting game play for all the family. Go for the Orange Challenge!



AMIGA

ocean



Your plane has ditched on a mountainous plateau somewhere in deepest Tibet. You and your companions are alive. A large flight moves toward you, you feel your eyes in disbelief - a dinosaur - where are you... and what? Flaming, non-domesticated 30 graphics and 4 way scrolling, give that '80s drama mood as you fight not only to survive, but also that your companions are not all they first seemed!



AMIGA

ocean



From the SNK also the roll-up snare now for your hero. This multi-level, vertically scrolling arcade thriller throws you deep into the jaw and rained cities, nation hold in the of a cruel oppress. Freedom is your ... Guerrilla War the mascot!

16 BIT STATE

ATARI
ST
£19.95

ENTERTAINMENT



SMC start
up a small
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his result
tically
arcade
lives you
the jump
ed cities
d in the
opposit
n your
illa War
!



"Right as possible?"
"Head de jammer?"

This is where the fun really begins. You will need supplies, fuel and other needed resources - the fuel will fly at you on its own, just when you think you are gaining the upper hand. Fuel tanks and a driver. Transport your computers to your services - include power buildings and water tanks and so on. Build up the program necessary to fight off your opponents. Action and excitement all the way with this exciting real-time game, which has that extra bit to something to keep you coming back for more.

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He's back and this time he's taking no prisoners. Colonel Trautman has been captured by the Russians in Afghanistan and there is only one person capable of freeing him. Reopen the minefields, explore the Russian camp, lay boobytraps, avoid detection, see the Colonel and then... move on to the explosive climax! **RAMBO IS BACK!**

RAMBO III is a 3D first person shooter. © 1990 Atari Inc. Atari and Atari logo are registered trademarks.



E OF THE ART

COMING SOON

SPEEDBALL



ATARI ST - £24.99. AMIGA - £24.99
PC AND COMPATIBLES - £29.99

- SPEEDBALL - TOTAL ACTION,
TOTAL AGGRESSION - THE
ULTIMATE SPORT FROM THE
BITMAP BROTHERS.

"SPEEDBALL IS FAST, FURIOUS
AND GRAPHICALLY VERY
STYLISH." COMPUTER GAMESWEEK 1991



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Put on the heels of the highly successful *Superstar Soccer*, *Superskills* again endorsed by England's star striker. To command a permanent place in the national team, sheer dedication, dedication towards hard work and training. The national coach has designed an intensive training programme which will improve your stance, ball control, sharpness and accuracy. Can you prove yourself to be both physically and mentally agile and alert?

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The ultimate golf simulation for your computer. Use more different shots than any other golf simulation. Test your technique by lowering the weight of the computer golf player. A need for all enthusiasts who are tired of their hand at computer golf has never met a challenge as exciting and entertaining as *Ultimate Golf*.

CD-ROM £9.99
ARCADE £19.99
IBM PC £19.99
AMIGA £19.99



AFTERBURNER ● Activision

Take to the skies in your F-14 Tomcat and dog-fight your way through stages after stages of enemy territory. Flip into the enemy fighters with your Vulcan Gun or lock-on to them and blow off a missile. You'll hardly have time to think as you bark and die; you'll stay through danger - it's action all the way here!



(Right) *CAI* - Steep climb is one down, several thousand more to go!

(Left) *Spears* - Banking to avoid the missiles come at you from in front and behind.



The games are getting hot. ACE takes its monthly look at the products that software houses will be tempting us with in the near future. Let's hope they turn out to be crackers and not turkeys...

CHRISTMAS IS COMING!



944 TURBO CUP ● Loriciels

As Loriciels have recently started sponsoring the Porsche 944 Turbo driven by top French racing driver René Metge, they've got together with the great man himself and are currently developing a racing game based on the great French racing team. Turbo Cup features several circuits which, Loriciels claim, are as authentic as possible. As all the cars are the same in the real race, it's driving skill that makes a winner, and the same is going to be true in the game.

TOTAL ECLIPSE

● Incentive

The year is 1900, the setting is Eger and your mission is to stop the course of the sun-god Pa being triggered by the moon that is due to pass between the Sun and Earth. You have two hours to solve the problem. Armed with just a revolver, you'll need quick reactions, cunning and a full water bottle to avoid the curse being activated. This is the first Incentive release to feature the Passage system and if the other Passage game, *Driver and Dark Side*, are anything to go by, this one is going to be a hot contender.

Spears - That's your telephone parked outside the parrot at the start of the game.



F-16 COMBAT PILOT

● Digital Integration

Going head-to-head with Falcon—the winner will be C's combat flight sim based on the American F-16 fighter. Although the game will have a quick-start option, serious pilots will be assigned to the Tactical Fighter Training Squadron where they'll be assessed in five main operations areas. Great sets, and you are assigned one-of-eight technicians and each squadron is responsible for centers within their operations area. The game is due for release on the ST and PC.

Looking forward on the ST as you come into land.



Looking over your right shoulder as you bank to fly over the airfield.



Spectrom - steering the action from behind as you receive barcodes, laser blasts - and shapings the flap, this time!

**THUNDERBLADE**

● U.S. Gold

Following their success with Out Run (see Christmas, U.S. Gold are hoping to do the same again this year with some more versions of the smash-hits come up Thunderblades. You're piloting an attack helicopter through several stages of hostile territory, with the view of the action changing with the stage. Sometimes your view is from directly above, sometimes its from behind. Get your joystick and trigger finger in shape now, because the one promises to test even the toughest!

ST - steering the action from above as you design the flap and adjust the damage.

**WEIRD DREAMS** ● Rainbird

Lying comatose in a hospital bed, you drift helplessly into the strange world of your subconscious. In the Dal, every landscape, everyday objects become distorted and nightmares come to life. Weird is an accurate description of the environment of the game. As the doctor, you can solve the intricate and imaginative puzzles and return to the real world, the better.

Andy Wilson on a good idea package?

**FALCON** ● Microsoft

One of the best ever PC and Mac combat flight sims is being converted to ST and Amiga. Added features include improved ground scenery and moving ground targets. The game contains some 12 missions and even gives the player the chance to daylight with up to three MiGs. Remember, Falcon's the game adopted by the Pentagon to train pilots in "situational awareness" and STW combat, so it has got to be good.

ST - looking over your left shoulder as you bank into the runway.



ARCADE ACTION

From the SNK estate, the coin-op smash hit now for your home room. This multi-level, vertically scrolling arcade thriller shows you step

into the jungles and ruined cities of a nation held in the grip of a cruel oppressor. Freedom is your aim... Guerrilla War is the answer!



GUERRILLA WAR



AMSTRAD
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COMMODORE

SEGA
SOFTWARE

SPECTRU
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...the name
of the game

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GRAPHICS GALORE

ACE resident plant professor, Brian Latham, tries to tell the future this month by looking at Amstrad's new VGA machines from the artist's point of view. The main dilemma is in doubt as to what CEO go for.

Brian's also co-opted the help of John Downie in the form of a short piece about the Travelling Mate company, who produce computer-generated images for TV (including *Hobbitmesters* and *Knightsmare*). They probably won't be using the new Amstrads - they go for things in the £20,000 price bracket.

There's your month's worth of reader's letters, if you care about science, and becoming a computer graphics artist. Don't forget... if you've got a potential problem, write Brian a line at: *Frank Post, ACE Magazine, 4 Queens Road, Bath, BA1 1 7LJ*



● This month, some of the secrets behind the TV programme *Knightsmare* are revealed, as we interview The Travelling Mate company, the people who bring computers like this to life. No, not an ACE staff writer, simply a reader that is animated and inspired by the action by a *Magazine* computer. Turn the page for more details...

Despite a lead of several years in the Desktop Presentation field with the Amiga, Commodore seem to be cutting things a bit fine as now even Amstrad, together with the other 'X' level companies, Apple, Atari, and Acorn, develop and promote their latest contenders in the graphics arena. With the new challenge of VGA MS-DOS machines from Amstrad, which machine should the graphics fanatic go for?

GRAPHICS WORKSTATIONS

■ CHEAP 'N' QUICK 'N' EASY

A budget graphics workstation has got to be cheap and its got to get good graphics up on that screen quick and easy. Hi-quality at budget, it seems reasonable to set a cost limit of about £1000. Most people would think that bit high, but compared to commercial workstations, most of which start at 5 figure sums, £1000 is very cheap. With that limitation it is only the new Amstrad 486c model that bears comparison - the 486c and 486c are too expensive for the average home user.

Although it is much cheaper than dedicated professional systems Apple's MacII also falls at this point. The MacII may be a constant tone (used in the States) but here it's just a tinkle. Similarly, Atari's new

Computer Workstation ATW (formerly AMIGA at about £5000) into the price too. They can also both offer sort of software at present, though limited compatibility with other machines - the AT and the MacII - contrast the Atari slightly.

So the only machines able to compare with the new Amstrad on the basis of cheap graphics are the Atari ST, the Amiga 500, and the Acorn Archimedes 300 series. Let's start by examining what the Amstrad has got to offer.

A MESSAGE

The most exciting development on the Amstrad 286c is the VGA display. As you will see elsewhere in this month's issue you can choose 256 colours from a 262,000

palettes and display them simultaneously at a maximum resolution of 640x480, apparently beating both the Amiga and the Archimedes into capabilities. It need state explicitly, however, the 486c is a fairly ordinary PC clone.

That's the core of the problem. Although at first sight such an impressive display specification should make the Amstrad an excellent graphics workstation, there is more to good graphics than looks or colour. It is also important to quickly and easily transform the screen with a wide range of techniques, the Amiga and Archimedes and to a lesser extent the AT, can all support painting, 3D modelling, raytracing, image processing and animation. All these require large amounts of computation. As

RISC OBLITERATION?

Compare qualifications for the highest level on the computing power of any processor. To get round the comparison problem, the Amiga and the Archimedes use numerically opposed systems - hardware and software oriented respectively.

The Amiga is still heavily computer-aided, despite its use of the Black Image Twin Turbo. This provides a system of optimized instructions that allow large areas of screen memory to be manipulated without a separate chip, ensuring that colour and movement calculations take place independently of the central processor. The Amiga also has several other dedicated chips specifically designed for particular tasks, allowing the main processor to operate unimpeded for much of the time. Although the method works well for speed, it takes the screen and sound components a bit of initial use

for many other applications, especially those utilised in the desktop range. Nevertheless, the Amiga still occupies its own price range. The new Amstrad, on the other hand, 'system' chips built in a way that there will be enough of the computing load to make more than a respectable reference to the state of graphics power.

An alternative way to cope with a heavy computational load is to use the main processor itself to its maximum number of external processors so that it can operate at very much faster speeds. When a specific task needs to be undertaken, the relevant software instructions are provided in the software so that the computer administrator gets on in any specific job. The sort of reduction in user interface is one of the current fashions of the moment. At present,

the Amstrads range often the only alternative of getting the most out of a budget price. The rest of the software-oriented strategy, a feat in the case of the Archimedes, an assembly language that provides that an unstable graphics operations capability will in some operations be badly missed.

For software using Commodore Amiga, MSX, Fat, and ACE, Software's Local processing capabilities using the RISC architecture of a great city that the Archimedes is unlikely to find itself at an initial value. Additionally, however, and perhaps increasingly, within the UK, there seems to be able to have more success in the PC market. Several of these are already on the market, any of which could provide almost Archimedes power to the Amstrad - at a price.

arrival of the more advanced graphics oriented packages on the standard Amiga or Amstrad ranges, working with numerous volumes over a large area can be up to the main processor and effectively lock the machine for minutes at a time.

This results in excessive time spending, frequent visits to the bridge for filtering messages, and issues between and frustration. The Amstrad 486E chip is considerably slower than the Am28600 and it is unlikely that more advanced graphics software will be able to operate effectively on the cheapest Amstrad. The latest Amiga and Am286 should partially overcome the difficulty, but they are much more expensive and still just barely as effective as the basic Amiga 500 with its same as the basic Archimedes 100 for graphics applications (see box - Am286 vs 286C).

In terms of a budget graphics workstation, neither the new Amstrad 486E has a fine display but probably not enough power to do much with it. There will be low level graphics engine if that is, that will, there is still a whole lot of graphics software available for it, is there not? Well, yes and no.

SOFT BILL

What it costs in printing, there is only a small choice of software available at reasonable prices for MSDOS machines - and even then it's aimed at standard VGA sit-

FANTASY FACT

Robert Harris, the multi-talented (TV's award-winning longrunner program, is chief of the Travelling Mists Company and also responsible for creating other things, the computer graphics on the BBC's *Blackadder* Guide to the Galaxy. When we met him at a graphics seminar displaying a live image of the gas-repressively subjected to electrolyzing tank of lightning and clanking a shapely animal that hopped up with disapproval. We were, of course, be dismissed always, in debating with reality.

You may already have seen *Knightsmare*, in which real people do physical and intellectual battles with a mix of reality and - electrical fantasy in a world peopled with computer-generated monsters like Eric. Your senses legs are suspended by a drill go to tortle, and we were on 15 video tapes, which can be safely removed at that time appears to which the adventure was the last.

This requires some skill work by the camera, for *Knightsmare* is recorded 'live' and is shot in a single session to maintain the adventure's tension level in the fantasy. Day lines, says the game's creator, Tim Childs, on the outside line, you'll be the adventure too.

The interview was, which is *Travelling Mists*' mobile studio, is a little like the *Terminator*. The day we visited, during the International

The Travelling Mists Company specialise in passing off fantasy as reality. ACE went to find out more...



Eric, superimposed on a painted background. (Photo: Robert Harris, the man at the controls of the *Spaceward* *Spaceward* that makes *Knightsmare* possible, says up the model of Eric.

graphics-related Atari ST numerical data to fit up the city look the

er display, for offering -and feature. Considerably it is a write-where where rely on the 4386 and the difficult-ive and in the base 587 board applicators

er install-able files or all enough, and tell how-ity is that of graphics or not" text.

is only a ble at resis- and a 15A, in-

plots of best - 256 colors at 1024000 lines. The Atari and the Amiga can both display approximately 4,000 colors at this resolution as a result of some fairly dense, programmatic tricks. These methods might make 24,000 shades display available on the Amiga but it requires the will of some enthusiast to do it. The best we can hope for is a 256-color, 540x400 version of Deluxe Paint PC - and even this will be probably slow and greedy for disk space at all times.

All the other requirements - 3D real-time ray-tracing, animation, and image processing, all these ARE available to run on 68000 machines - at a price. But in most cases they are only functions if hard disk and co-processors are fitted adding further to the cost. In time, just the possibility of a vast number of cheap Amiga-like VGA machines on the market will result in some of this software coming down in price or outside, vendors being released. This has certainly happened with commercial and office packages. 68000 machines may even end up selling a greater volume of home-styled graphics software not because of their predictable profits. Nevertheless, in graphics terms, the software that counts, so the Amiga is really only competing for the Atari ST. If you want an effective and versatile graphics workstation for under \$1000, an Amiga 500 is still the Pixel Professor choice. ■

PIXEL POST

This month the Pixel Professor has just enough space to check out scanners and hear how difficult it is to become a computer graphic artist...

Dear Brian,

Do you know of any good but cheap scanners available for the Amiga 500? If so, what equipment would I need and how much would it cost? I've tried looking in the classified ads but these don't seem to be any scanners advertised. **Miss G. Scott, Meads, Wrexham**

As always, cheap is a very relative term. There are three scanners that I know of for the Amiga at present but none of them is particularly cheap.

Scanners are devices that allow flat artwork, photos, text (or sometimes even 3D objects) to be easily digitised for use in graphics and DTP applications. Two types are currently available: a flatbed scanner and a hand-held 'mouse' scanner. Flatbed scanners are similar to photocopiers in operation, flat artwork being placed face down on the top surface and scanned from below. Mouse scanners are very much like large versions of the normal computer mouse. In operation the artwork is placed face up on a desktop and the scanner is slid slowly over the required area.

Both types are capable of scanning in black and white or a number of grey scales, though the second option usually costs more. In any case, flatbed scanners are more expensive because they usually scan a larger area and often produce higher resolutions. Mouse scanners only 'grab' a strip about 3 or 4 inches wide. Typically the flatbed types cost \$800 to \$2000 and the mouse type £150 to £350.

For the Amiga, Barcoflex 201-007 (3000) have AMEGAM, a flatbed scanner that doubles as a thermal printer and photographic coating drum, which is therefore relatively cheap but probably outside your budget. Closer to a suitable price is the Handy Scanner from Cameron UK (01 499 8182) but costing around £280 it is still almost as expensive as the Amiga itself. Even cheaper is the hand scanner (3000) available from the Amiga Centre, Scotland (031 827 4242). All three of these scanners 'grab' at approximately 200 dots per inch.

Dear Brian,

Just a quick letter on the Graphics '7 event at anyone who is keen on starting a career as a Computer Graphics Artist. Many people think that getting an artist position within a software house is MEGA TOUGH. In most cases this is true, mostly due to the large amount of artists that you about. I started out on an Amstrad 464 and tried to get a GAO game published, but to be level after this first attempt I was a bit flummoxed about it.

Rule 1. Keep On Trying. You may lose sleep and time, postage money, correspondence, but in the end your efforts will pay dividends. Of course there is no substitute for a good portfolio. Think of it like a hobby and enjoy it, sooner or later you will develop a style of your own and then this will get recognised.

Rule 2. Make your first portfolio your absolute best. It may take taking you 2 weeks or 2 years (usually the latter), but it will pay you well when it is your best effort.

Rule 3. Protect yourself. It is very difficult for a starter to save up funds of cash for legal advice over breach of copyright. Get yourself a registered envelope and address it to yourself. Then have a word with your (or 's) bank manager and pop in the bank certificate, which will be put in the bank's vault. Any dubious activities with your work, it will returned, can then be proved to belong to you as it is dated and registered.

My first work was for Excel Software who required the central panels and title screen for Phoenix. Now I have started work for Ocean Software in-house. This job took me five years to land - so as you can see, it can take ages. There are a hell of a lot of AMSTRAD artists, it and 'it' be out there, why aren't they being snapped up? **Roy Lewis, Warton, Lancs.**

TRY

ily ACE



ommers of 1980.

working Committee, a globe was polishing a very clear blue Brighton sky, turning the world into a sort of crystal-bay landscape which took the hot, a beautifully detailed, hand-world recording developed, aimed at which a distinct but loose left, walk to North, South, East and West.

The Digitaurus program uses electronic scenery generated by a Sparrowed Matrix System on Superwave hardware (12. Mbyte RAM, 280 kbyte hard-disk). The program can normally keyed or loaded to live shots of a computer studio in which the architecture moves to just directed by his team. The scene and the tools use the scenery superimposed and by techniques of lighting control and subtle shading, creating an effective dis-



Recording Matrix's mobile studio - several scenes featuring on much Superwave graphics could be generated in such a small space.

son in which even teardroped objects can be electronically introduced.

Main claim for the technology is create the desktop world has only been available for the last few years. The training and experience with finished set design has, however, been built up over many more years and the artistic feel provides the touch of class which makes the programme work.

The trick is being sold to the USA and the rest that over the last few years the business generated by electronic scenery will become into being more TV programs of increasing complexity. The selling-point of a 3D image at a 32 bit means that only one third current position a possible but, as software develops, remote movements will be taken to complete 3D generated images allowing much more dynamic action. Such a currently scalable. He says that they would like to show scenes on a live set, though this is not currently possible.

The idea of a mobile graphics studio is a clever one that has your living trouble with your remote-year program, you create attack on levels, and you remember the world itself, just pop out into the computer, slip into your Mercedes van, and head up a few hundred thousand pounds worth of hardware, not to mention the team of professional body of your command. This idea can really very noticeable.

GRAPHIC ACCOUNTS



Wishes of glory from Epic's image. Will they ever make a James Bond movie this way?

Other than the new Amiga64 (see elsewhere in this month's issue), the most interesting graphic software at the recent PC(r) Show was the now expanding range for the Acorn Archimedes. Come on a quick trip round the latest developments on the software front...

PRO ARTISAN

The most flexible drawing package available is the professional version of *Claris Artisan*. For Artisan, every facility imaginable including Bézier curves, a wide range of fill options, regular cut and paste, extensive colour manipulations, and image processing, has been included.

Using 256 colours on screen, selected areas 4096 of 32 resolution of 640x480, Pro Artisan compares well with Amiga packages like *Paint*, *Paint and Draw* (HotSpot) 3d high-quality data sets in a wide range of paper sizes are also included in the comprehensive package.

Advanced Memory Systems of 640K Mouse and Printer have an ability to enhance both the AT and Archimedes versions of *Paint* (not originally called *ProPaint* before Logitech took over). Architects like *Paint* operates in the 16 colour 640x480 resolution in either raster operation and window file. Both versions are specifically designed to optimize printed output with a single page size or well to do the usual drawing task thoughtfully implemented. For example, variable robot operates with the red window visible at all times. At this budget price, *ProPaint* seems very good value. To be sure, watch the price for a full review. Contact AMS on 0925 412281 for more details.

IT'S ALL GREEN

Continuing the theme from *Lucid* (448.00 from ACE Computing on 0925 332039) is a 3D modelling and animation system. It is a bit, inevitable, and relatively easy to use, though without doubt 3D's user friendliness. It includes orthogonal or perspective projection, line or wireframe drawing, fill hidden line and surface removal,

and colour scale and object transformations. It is a great, but-though-in some degree of real-time animation of what 3D objects, something the package in the Amiga can achieve. Key features include use in perspective, John Dawkins is getting in gear with *Lucid* at the moment and his report will be on these pages very soon.

NOT SO TAKING

The new *Paint* in *Right* always makes the rank of top candidates among their way to the top most. *Paint* in *Right 2* (Design + 1 Mbyte, available from the Amiga Centre, Scotland on 051 551 4342) is a really improved version of the 3D graphics real-time system from *Blom Magni*. With surface patches, texture mapping, alpha shading, and path extension *Paint* in *Right 2* seems to hold the crown as the most advanced graphics package for a home computer. However, with Amiga 4D well on the way it may be outlasted soon.

MORE PAINT HERE

So, one of the PC Show was the promised Atari 3D paint system *HyperPaint* (300K £24.99) which claims to be the next generation of graphics packages. After a week of discussion we did become apparent that *Paint* here used more logic than paint. For HyperPaint's early set-on-screen paint program - better than *Paintworks* for sure, but in competition for *Degen Elm* or *Art Divide*. The conclusion is to be out by the suggestion from HyperPaint 2's already used discussion.

The only unique feature of HyperPaint's ability to work on really large coloured images. Only on 1 Mbyte machines or larger, though, to

example, *HyperPaint 2* must provide a very wide range of colour facilities in combination of using the 640x480 resolution. Perhaps in the next version of *HyperPaint* would be a better role model for a machine that is being produced or a cheap alternative. Elsewhere in an objective and drawing system somewhere between CAD and painting designed to produce illustrations to 257 resolutions. Look out for the rest of package soon on the AT and Amiga.

QUANTUM STUMBLE

Another opportunity is the latest version of *Quantum Paint* (V1.00) for the AT. After months of waiting with failed levels because of various delays including the printer, it is a bit far from perfect. *Paint* level the screen including a 'ghost' at the window panel, copied over some usually in the drawing area. *Paint* there are still no features that, actually 'cut the 640 x 480 pixel wide-board color' mode is a great and interesting one. *Quantum Paint*, ACE have 44. Again, despite its considerable merits, *Quantum Paint* is still not as useful as *Degen Elm*.

—TO THE SUNSHINE

Electric Image, arguably the most innovative producer of low-cost quality computer graphics software, have now occupied the last stage of their new hardware system. Based around an ARM Paint (between parallel processing render machine), they are now able to produce photo-realistic ray-traced type calculated graphics in real-time. The potential of the machine is such that we might soon be seeing a full-length animated film with the visual complexity of the *Amiga Duck Pond* advertisement. ■

T'R I 'A 'B



V O L U M E • 1



A COMPILATION OF THE THREE CLASSIC
16 BIT HITS FOR THE ATARI ST & AMIGA

£29.99

THE PC ALTERNATIVE

You've been saving all your pennies up so that you can replace your 8-bit machine with an ST, Amiga or Archi. But wait a minute - could you be missing something? Mightn't that hole in your lifestyle be PC-shaped?

Have this for an idea: the world's leading computer companies all build 16-bit machines as a common design so that the same software runs on each of them. Thousands of other manufacturers working to the same design turn it into the number one micro standard, and vast numbers of programmers write software for it. Amended, Atari and Commodore all get on the bandwagon, prices plummet and soon everyone can afford one of these universal machines.

Sound familiar? Well, it isn't as fast as you're thinking. It already happened you see, and the machine everyone settled on was the IBM Personal Computer. Now of course, we all know the PC and its many, many clones are the failed things going to

mean, you might as well go and buy a 386 if you want satisfaction - mightn't you?

BOILING

In the UK, PCs have traditionally been expensive machines. A £1,000 machine is guaranteed in the business sector almost automatically, and even Amstrad's price-cutting option over the last year have done little to change that view of them. It's a self-fulfilling prophecy: games buyers shun the PC or buying software buyers shun the PC, games very reluctantly produce better at them, and so the PC really is boring.

Left to itself, the British market would probably never break out of that vicious circle. It's not going to be left to itself though, thanks to the hotly discussed attitude in PCs that you'll find on the other side of the Atlantic.

In the USA, better computers have to do all manner of different tasks. People don't just want to play games, they want to do word processing, programming and any number of other things as well. Because of this need for versatility, and because US buyers are typically prepared to spend a good deal more than their British counterparts, the PC makes a natural machine for the American home.

The aspect of all this is that American software houses produce large numbers of PC games, and many of these are very high quality items. This can shake out the best of them, and soon when UK competition, on 16-bit-32-bit thinking in mind, what Dangerous Minter and Interceptor did for the ST was Amiga, respectively, a few good imprints could similarly help the PCs games reputation over here.

ENCOURAGING

But why, you might reasonably ask, does it matter? A lot of games-oriented PC could be almost as good a games machine as an ST or Amiga, and not about the same, is that really what the world needs?

In a word, yes. It's probably possible a PC user available at a low enough price, but would probably have better games and more of them. The enormous American PC user base would just provide

THE 8086 FAMILY

The PC series is based on Intel's 8086 family of chips, dating from the late 1970s. The early members of the family took an elegant approach to the problem of handling large memory sizes. It's hard to dispute that the 8086 is open chip for use in those computers in Motorola 68000. It's faster in program, can't handle as much memory (only 1 Meg compared to the 68000's 16 Meg) and is slower at normal good speeds.

The newer 80286 and 80386 chips are a great deal faster than the original 8086, but they still more and are still complex beasts to program. The improvement is extensive, but computer advances in the 8086 series keep Motorola ahead in the language tool market.

There's a school of thought to the effect that upgrading the 8086 line will neither a just bringing good money after bad. Why, therefore, new chips just in order to keep compatibility with old ones? With more power increasing in chips and boards, it's possible for totally incompatible chips like the Intel Pentium or Amdahl MM to run 8086 programs at a reasonable speed. These emulation techniques are already paying off for Archimedes users, who can expect their hardware design range of games with PC titles (see CASH ST, ACSI issue 1).



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effective inputs, but also state some very healthy concerns about the games market in the country.

With a multi-million machine world market—something neither the IT nor the Ampco has yet achieved—there'd be enough of a return on software licenses to take their time developing games. They wouldn't have to be the chumps to get their money back, because even the slow sales would be selling in vast numbers.

INTERESTING

The basic thing about compatibility is that it encourages software development. The best thing about it is that once the software base has built up, it gets very tough for manufacturers to improve the machine design. There would rather have an old, low-performance machine that runs the software than a revamped one that doesn't.

Subtletywise, the original design of the IBM PC revolved around IBM's little library of central processor chip sets, and with that-again, that was a very poor design. While even the cheapest modern PC is a great deal faster than IBM's original machines, personal computers are still getting the price/performance benefits made some years ago. That was the typical mid-price PC of today that was not enough processor power for most entertainment purposes, what it lacks is graphics power.

GRAPHICS

Because of the PC's age, and because it wasn't really state-of-the-art when it was first introduced, there was no real graphics standard included in its specification. The worst the designers could do was the PC's "open architecture" where, theoretically, you could plug in some hardware later on if graphics became important.

If the worst case possible, the PC would probably be dead and buried by now. As it was, graphics standards became very big business indeed. A whole range of intense graphics standards appeared later, mostly from PC-compatible manufacturers, but the three dominant ones all came from IBM: they were the Color Graphics Adapter (CGA), the Enhanced Graphics Adapter (EGA) and the Video Graphics Array (VGA).

You can check out precise details on the different standards below, but the important point one or two. VGA, can do anything EGA can do, and EGA can do anything CGA can do, so there's no point in argument over which came best. If you use almost VGA, get

it—but be warned, full VGA facilities will be very expensive machines. Otherwise, go for EGA; if you possibly can.

CGA is very poor start by modern standards, but for today's PC buyers, it's the only game in town. While EGA is gaining more and more ground with games writers, and is unquestionably a whole lot better, there's still no ultra-cheap machine available without EGA. And these a serious games card building computer artists will have to carry on paying the extra.

CGA

The original PC color graphics standard, CGA, has looked rather cheap for quite a while now. Most games run on a four-color (262144) screen rather like the machine



THE PC 200

And about the cheapest PC compatible ever sold in this country, the Super Professional PC200 is a top standard IBM machine with a 1.2" disk drive and a VGA display. The use of the familiar name suggests that Amibird see the PC200 as a home machine and are trying to distance it from the power user's new PC2000 range. It's not surprising then that the cheapest system, shipping in at around \$245 including VAT, has no monitor and is fitted with a TV monitor.

Superior to other hard to use the benefits of such a set-up. Plugged into a TV, you lose the 48 column definition needed for most serious applications. It returns you get a colour display but that's small resolution green hair pair CGA graphics card box.

With a monitor, the PC200 will double for a very useful machine to have around for all the usual, non-demand applications. Its entertainment potential seems low, and anyone looking for an inexpensive machine would certainly do better with one of the newer PC150 or 1640.



resolution mode of the Amiga's OPA. The big weakness here is that there's no palette as such — just two-color schemes, either white-on-black or black-on-white. Most CGA games use the former scheme because of its higher contrast, but still get by very nicely in red, green and yellow.

Though its primitive stuff even by 8-bit standards, the CGA screen does have one big advantage: it's very small. Small in memory terms, that is to say. The advantage here isn't in the space taken up — all 800x600 display cards come with whatever memory they need — but in speed.

The main factor in a machine's speed as a games machine is its ports — in particular, the bus that connects the processor's bus during a game gives an offering of the contents of several memory banks. A more powerful processor can get the job done quicker, but equally a slower screen (in memory terms) speeds things up by loading the processor with less to do.

On the power front the typical PC central processor won't match the Amiga's machines' M68000 core bus, but the CGA's tiny MC screen makes this make up for this. By contrast the ST has to work with a refreshing 320 by 200 colour display, while the Amiga's very large 640x400.

VGA

If CGA is cutting up a little at the edges, VGA is still quite cost-adding. As a games standard it's at least in the same league as the ST and Amiga, with a typical game mode of 320x200 pixels in 16 colours. The

THE MAIST MACHINES

In America the Macintosh, Amiga and ST — collectively known as the MAIST machines — are commonly seen as the best step on from PC compatibility. They certainly offer more power to your money and don't suffer from the PC's memory restrictions. That said, these 68000-based machines don't come anywhere near challenging the PC's vast user base even when the three of them are taken together.

The whole problem is that the three machines can't really be taken together. They've got incompatible hardware and disc formats, are aimed at different markets, and are built by fiercely protective manufacturers. They're also got different operating systems, and because that's all based around ROM-based software it's difficult things for programmers to get on with.

EGA-equipped PC does lose out on palette size — you only get 64 colours to choose from — but its 640x480 high-resolution makes the 68000 machines card rivals.

Of course, that kind of colour freedom and pixel resolution makes an EGA screen a pretty sizable thing. That doesn't mean that games can't do very well on, even with a big standard VGA title providing the picture. The screen memory is very densely organised to help speed things up, so that for every program a 320x200 screen can take less work to handle than its 640x400 equivalent.

VGA

The latest display standard around right now, VGA offers screens of up to advanced pixels in 16 colours out of 64, or 320x200 in 256 colours out of 256,000 colours. Both of these modes require high-class, high-price monitors, making them rather a small market for games-makers at the moment.

The 256-colour mode has other problems too, at least as game-writing goes. In particular, the screen is huge (640) and there's no hardware help to reduce this burden. That kind of level would let an ST emulator, and a typical PC clone, do even better with the power of an ST. The programmer's left with an unmanageable choice either to stick to game styles that don't need large, frequent screen clearances or to make fast games in high-speed 8000 or 8000 machines, cutting the potential market still further. Not surprisingly, most people go for option (a) and stick to 68K emulators, on the basis that the VGA can manage these too.

It's on the other side of things that the 256-colour mode really comes into its own. The preferred base is enormous, while the Amiga may be able to manage more colours on screen of course, the VGA's freedom of colour use and enormous palette more than offset this. For day-to-day use, printing it'd be a no-brainer.

The cheaper of Amiga's updated PC2086 series, the PC2086 offers VGA graphics at an impressively low price. A single disc system with high-resolution monitor will set you back a hefty \$279 including VAT, but that setup gives you VGA at games and VGA-games potential. It also provides a great machine for all those useful, serious applications you'll normally associate with PCs. In justly spending as much money you're going to have to want that serious side of things — but you can still have great fun with Deluxe Paint, Word, Editor, A1 and more.

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PC 2086 - VGA at an impressively low price





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Screenshots taken from ATARI ST

Screenshots taken from SPECTRUM

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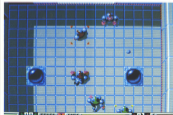
The British public don't know quite what to make of PC games. If the PC belongs in the office, as most people seem to think it does, what are people doing producing leisure software for it? The odd pop-up, high-factor game like *Flora* makes sense as an executive toy, and on the same basis you could understand adventures with less mobile graphics-quest-based displays. But what about grand sims like *Bliver* or *Dillon*?

PC games certainly can do things. While more and more of the big UK houses are converting their computers into the PC as a matter of course now, these are a recent phenomenon. There's usually little reason to use the PC's games effectively, and the resulting games tend to make the PC look like an expensive child's room. The great divide of PC gaming fell here across the Atlantic. This isn't just a legacy of the machine's origin; either the driving force behind PC game development is still the



THE SOFT UNDERBELLY OF THE PC

Never mind the hardware - what about the games? Whether you've got a super-fast 80386 machine with a £1,000 monitor, or just a Sinclair PC200 plugged into a telly, a PC's only as much fun as the software running on it. Andy Wilton investigates the games PCs play.



American market, and its pricing tends toward an expensive post.

THE AMERICAN EFFECT

The PC may be a business machine as far as the British are concerned, but across the Atlantic its big name is in the games market. PC games are hardly a novelty in themselves of course - after all, the PC's been around longer than the Spectrum or the C64. What's making the headlines now is the explosion in life games, and the enormous improvement in graphics that this means.

A realisation is PC games is being created. The average American PC is a powerful beast, some far more expensive than its British counterpart. Fast 80386-ported processors are becoming increasingly common, and VGA capability is reckoned to be not about essential. Putting a CGA game on the kind of equipment is like using an SF to simulate a Spectrum, so it's only natural that there's a big demand for better looking software.

That's not to say the UK's standards have been laid for the US games industry, mind you. While the standards in Europe has been with graphics, looks, smoother graphics.

The Bliving British: Bliver Ball (Image: artwork from a website for better when your PC's got VGA graphics).

Left and below: The arrival of Defender of the Crown (Chaosman) in VGA form shows just how far the standard is come on over the last year.



gible colors in the States have looked to include gray-scale as a way of getting their views.

The other paid old role-playing games have flourished, and text adventures are still going strong. Could Seven Cities of Gold, the Silver Stone, or Indiana Jones adventures have topped the charts in the US? They did in America; you may see the same trend at work in the rest of light duty. Spectrum strategy games are increasingly complex, by UK standards, while Subterfuge features high resolution series of games set so intense they aren't really games at all.

CONCLUSION

The depth reflects an important fact about the American computer market on a whole. Computer sales in the States are a picture painted by UK standards, especially in that the UK has levels of Christmas sales, the average person who buys one of our products in the US is probably about 20 years old. This age factor is particularly pronounced with the PC because of its strong office presence. There is a significant knock-on effect of people buying PCs in their work hours.

These sales were hard to like because games with a lot of long-term appeal, and don't avoid spending in new hours waiting through a manual. US games players don't go in for home-joy coordination and text adventure games so much, possibly because they release just aren't up to teenage standards. They also seem to be a different type of subject matter. Topicalized games are rare things in the States, while sports personality licenses are much sought after.

The problems with monthly output: heavyweight PC games is that they tend to cost rather more. PC games will soon get to have how good games like Falcon or Inferno V are, and won't be put off by either using VGA screens. The same doesn't go for people starting off buying PCs in Spec-

tron or CGA centers is going to choose a PC over an ST or Amiga solely on the basis of some color and-looking screens and a glowing write-up. A cheap game won't be upgraded over if a table is light under a basket.

English references can change all this, banishing the "heavy" but still image. As long as the heavyweight titles are getting VGA level, giving them the usual regard they so richly deserve. They're being joined by new titles, and conversions from elsewhere in the 16-bit camp. Consequently, it's software house you'll normally associate with the Amiga, don't expect to release their glossy first-class Defender of the Crown to the US. PCs, and there must be plenty of others eyeing up the huge pool of potential buyers.

OVER HERE

If it's not just American titles getting on the VGA bandwagon, we're catching up in the UK too. Solid 16-bit conversions feature have taken a good look at EGA and VGA systems with a view to writing for them, though they say you're unlikely to see Center Command on the latter.

The Heavy Britain are another set of programmers writing on EGA platforms, with the recently released Speed Ball sleeping up on their PC debut. Amiga PC expect the release that EGA is a very timely game standard, and makes for a far better Speed Ball than CGA could hope to manage.

Scientists claim more striking use of that 16-bit color EGA screen too, turning an old value-speed first class into a cracking double-paced puzzle of the same size.

The trends even reached the continental coast, with games like Chris 900-rated Jason of Arc appearing in EGA PC form. The strong graphics potential could even have been

THE EGA REVOLUTION

For details on the EGA standard, Graphics Adapter display, you'll have to leaf back a couple of pages in a well-stuff though, EGA gives the PC a 16-bit color high-resolution screen to rival ST or Amiga displays. It also provides running hardware help, allowing games to update the screen faster than would normally be possible.

visually oriented French and German programmers away from their Amigas.

WHAT NEXT?

The hope now is that the EGA PC will become an automatic second or third-choice 16-bit machine, giving conversions of major games almost automatically. The process will take time after all, the Amiga had a struggle for a while both there and IT games will get directly over to it. Carrying a 4860 can go over to a PC is an obvious look by comparison.

For the time being, EGA machines are the exception rather than the rule in the country. Eventually standards will move on as they have done in the US, or that CGA, EGA by the way and EGA becomes the minimum acceptable set-up. The potential rewards are real when into the US market could give the software houses a huge boost, if they can overcome the depth and realize that American games demand.

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LICENSED TO CLONE

imitation: it's been going on for years. Chaucer and Shakespeare collected up other people's stories and re-worked them, each producing similar versions of *Troilus* and *Criseyde/Cressida* for example. But *Troilus* wasn't a coin-op, and nobody minded much.

Nowadays, pop producers are sampling recordings, borrowing other people's sounds as well as other people's tunes. Software publishers, too, draw inspiration from each other's work, sometimes to the point of abject plagiarism. In the trade, corporate piracy of ideas and licenses is a hotter issue than home piracy nowadays... With the big companies relying more and more on arcade licenses to provide the hits, they're getting aggressively protective about what they regard as their "property". But the record of time reveals that the sinned against are as much the software sinners, as we discover...

Official versions of coin-op games stand a good chance of clearing up at Christie's, to the point where reseller software houses that concentrate on original games can't get a look in during the bidding session. No wonder license holders are lately about protecting their rights.

Recently, Activision has been getting barely protective of its P-Type license, concentrating five games from other software houses (mostly supplying what one licensee once aptly referred to as a message from the programmers to the effect of "think you to P-Type and the legislation it has given us").

A month or so ago, *ES Gold* withdrew *Great Glenn Riders* following pressure from Nintendo who felt it looked a bit too much like *Super Mario Brothers*. Warning the fact on the other foot, *ES Gold* prompted *ES* to make noises about libel after receiving notice that *Overlander* bore too striking a resemblance to its coin-op licensee, *Overlander*.

Last year there was a *Breakout* revival. The official license to *Atariwood* acquired by Imagine met up with *Redwood*, *Atariwood*, *Barty*, and *Quarx* along with a host of other fact led a French magazine to review sixteen games that bore a striking resemblance to *Atariwood*, and admit that they hadn't covered all the possibilities. Ironically, while the owners of the official *Atariwood* license growled its disapproval to their rights, the coin-op company which had sold them the license was itself sued by the people who brought *Super Breakout* into the arcade. Tunny out world, isn't it?

THE OLD, OLD STORY

The only thing that is new, is the fact. The entertainment software industry came into being with back/backward clones of existing

games, and as it grew, it built itself by cloning "official" inspiration from existing products. For a long time, people didn't even think about buying licenses.

Despite today's legal stereotyping, publishers and programmers are apt to long on cloning - or at least borrowing and re-working ideas. Maybe there really are only a handful of truly great game ideas, which are bound to crop up again and again, or maybe the creative spirit that brought games like *Wolfenstein*, *Knight Lore* and *Mines* *Mines* has been extinguished by the scramble for coin-op licensing opportunities.

The thoughtless began right at the start, when the first home-computers were released. Many of the staples of today's

software industry who are now getting a hot under the collar about clones were involved in small software enterprises that began by selling totally unofficial versions of games like *Space Invaders*. But *Cosmos* of Activision, for instance, began his career in the software industry with *Galactik*, but none of that later. Programmers were eating very big brains long producing official arcade conversions often heard their own copyright and cloning games they had seen in the arcade, with never in mind of a license agreement to the end.

Industry veteran Andrew Stevenson recalls the early days: "It simply didn't occur to people that there was any kind of problem with rights. Everyone was doing versions of arcade games, so you just joined in."

These companies changed the game-plan and latched with the life - like Interscope Inc. with *Energy King*, *ES* with *Energy King*, or *Arts* with *Ministry* *Mines* - even. Games started that way, but at least they were the first company to buy the an arcade license (at *Fluorochrome* with *Supreme Software* who went for the IBC rights). Others just went out and cloned themselves, like *Galactik*, who produced *Defender*, *Invaders*, *ES* *Invaders*, *Atariwood* and *Galactik*.

As official licenses were acquired, direct cloning of "license" games continued. And before its demise, *Mega-Gen* was preparing to launch a series of budget arcade clones, and a few years ago *Sublime* Inc. had the same idea, releasing *Classic Blunder* on a budget format. Classic cloning still hasn't died out. About a year ago, *Frontier* released *Atariwood* *Classic* and enjoyed great success with its quarter of clones - *Space Invaders*, *Atariwood*, *Invaders* and *Space Wars* - which apparently became one of its best-selling budget titles. And not an official license in sight.

"Large companies, like *Cosmos* and *Activision* are beginning to realize that if you're going to pay large amounts of cash for licenses, you're not going to put up with other firm's duplication of the game." David Bantz, *ES Gold*.

Frontier's version of *Space Invaders*



SEEKING INSPIRATION

Looking for the crickets for inspiration was common in the early days of games programming, as Doni Linnqvist at Working Order (now Design Design and Crystal-roids): "When we started Crystal roids, I thought two books about language and Space Invaders and coding that game Space Invaders. We didn't do exact copies, but borrowed here and there." Tomi Rautio owed quite a bit to *Ballistics*, and from the true facts learned from Tomi Rautio were inspired and adapted for a space-game, which appeared a little while after the arrival of Star Wars in the crickets. Doni like:

To those days, we were just kids getting on with it. David Henderson, 'every now and again he looked at someone being hit and all but we were in bed now - for instance, we wrote a game and called it *Planet*, and even knowing that there was an arcade game with that name. It would have cost a lot of money to fight the issue in court, whether we won or lost the case, so we called the game *Planet*."

"You must have heard it said that there are only six jobs in the world, and every job is directly related to one of these six. Well, there are probably only six or seven games in the world too." Steve Wilson, Elite

It challenged, companies leveled in beds of Microsoft, its initiative was up against Activision, with *Cadaver* in the jungle to *2000* (and *Invaders*). They took our game into a case, and that they were going to sue. Talking to my solicitors, we found that it would probably cost us \$10,000 to go to court before we got a decision, so we went cheap, we'll look it into court." In the absence of legal aid for companies, as John points out, a large company can bankroll a small one before a case gets to court.

John also believes that you shouldn't be able to copyright an idea. "Copyright exists in the material content - if someone copies game graphics from there's a case, but people 'look up'."

When we brought the first companies to competitors about the rights to a game - in 1981, it produced a version of Pac-Man for its crickets, and started making issues about home computer clones of the game. Bug Byte was licensed of said software. Nintendo, which didn't have a home console yet and a spot of bother with Atari over *Jelly* was:

The cloning continued, however, in a very uncontrolled manner. Pac-Man is one of the great game 'theater', which has spawned one and over again - while Grand Scud has done the same thing and collected about dozens in the more recent Pac-Man arcade machines, other companies have continued to license Pac-Man, right up to 2000 with their recent *Pac-Man* and *Miss Challenge* game, reviewed. Don



Asteroids judged to be 'a mirror image' of *Arcade* in *Level 1*

SOFTWARE PROTECTION

Buying arcade rights has become a highly competitive and expensive business. Leading software publishers had agreed each other to the opportunity to produce the official version of coin-op games, the strike-one sign, and are getting together last year, for instance, the *Carl Plant* license is rumored to have cost US-Gold in the region of US\$1,000 - well in the cost of programming the version.

to top the advertising bills, could be the expense of producing the data, tapes, disks, and so on, and you realize that all that bit of US-Gold money was riding on the success or failure of the title.

Publishers need to sell a lot of units in order to recoup that bit of investment, and they are understandably wary of having an expensive bit title underwritten by a third, or fourth, game publisher without a license. The arguments that there's plenty of titles for everyone, or that a real lot of coin-op arcade game will buy the official version along with unofficial versions doesn't convince the owners of expensive licenses.

Last year, there was a lot of up-and-coming writing in *Computer Trade Weekly*, the industry newspaper - several companies announced the acquisition of licenses with expensive arcade games, and that their actions would be watching for clones. This year the issue has gone slightly more public.

And where does driving inspiration come about? Is it legal? "We're programers such as John Wilson and Steve Crow guilty of

THE SAGA OF MONOPOLY

Archie games were not the only source of inspiration in the early days of the software industry. The classic entertainments, such as card games and board games were converted to the home computer in those days. Clearly, no-one was the rights to these, thoughts or ideas - they are in the public domain and anyone can copy them up with a computerized version without the aid of anything someone who looks right.

Properly trading games, the three, go back a long way - as far back as Egyptian times - but Monopoly continued in the country by Washington under license from the 1930s, has enjoyed monopoly or commercial property trading board games for around 60 years. In the early 1980s, a handful of software houses produced monopoly-style property trading games without approaching Hasbro. Washington got upset - even though the US Appeal court had ruled the Patent Office, the company had granted Hasbro the right to the Monopoly trading name, and despite the fact that property trading games have a long history.

In the Museum of Childhood in Edinburgh, for instance, there's a board game called *The Fox and the Geese* which was manufactured in 1800 by Hasbro. It has a square board with a Treasury in the center, paper



has arranged around the edges of the board, *Public Service* and featured players how to deal with Go To Jail square and collect \$200 for completing a circuit of the board. *Searchlight*? And the game was an additional version about 20 years before American board game Park in Boston bought the rights to three games - one called *Monopoly* and two others on which I was based. The London's Game and Finance.

In May 1980, Ken Crocker and Christian Patten announced a game called *Autobank* in the *Space* - published by their company, Autobank, it was just one of a number of unlicensed property trading games released around that time. Washington reacted with an impact, so Autobank changed its name to *Go To Jail*. Later in 1983, just as the first Christmas sales period was coming, Washington sued and Autobank with another impact, to prevent the marketing of *Go To Jail*.

Autobank made it clear that they wanted to fight, claiming

that their computer game was not based on Monopoly but on a number of property trading games that were already in the market. The system was withdrawn from the store after a few days, and about six months later Hasbro announced that Washington didn't intend to sue the maker any further. By the time, most of the other small software companies had filed, however, who were their property trading games. Sadly, the loss of the suit was how some committed suicide around the time - the purchase of moving *Planet* software became the first to Alan Barr, one of the first casualties of the entertainment software industry.

Nintendo Leisure Center publish the official licensed version of Washington's *Monopoly*, and have the market to themselves.

Interestingly, between April and November 1983 (a period when the 'top' computer games were selling well, sales of the Monopoly board game were very well to Washington, apparently increasing by 20% over the same period in the previous year, or an argument that most of a recently the present bit of history, but actually increased sales the first sales period).

programmers with Activision and Blizzard. Last of these they put programming in the Ultimate Edition in much the same way as Monet painted in the Impressionist style? And does the same hold true of Bioshock AEs, the people behind Grand Theft Auto: Stories and a number of other titles?

Personality comes into copyright news, too, it seems. Mark Cole of System 7 had a spot of bother in the States over InterAction of Kansas, which stole Cole's thought-reaction-time arcade game Karate Champ. I think that might have been a personal thing between Cole and that guy's ortho physician. If it is the stolen, "the man went silent" and the scores were different, but there's only so much you can do in a lawsuit game - outside of threats, after all. Mark reserves.

So long as the theme for a game is in the public domain - like chess, backgammon,

traditional videogames or sports - there won't be much of a case for copyright infringement. Or can there? Intelligently raised quite a row two years ago (see box). Sometimes it's difficult to determine who owns what - as in the case of the Activision/Blizzard lawsuit over that ladder out in the woods after the Activision lawsuit had been said for home computer ownership.

Activision had the rights in Assassins, bought from the cash-up company, and then US Gold came up with Remnants while Gameln was working on P-Robots (now to be released as part of a licensing deal with the manufacturer of Chuzzleit). Those games involving mistakes awaiting the piece up, but where does the copyright lie? As for Street of Dreams, game out, Chevrolet have been naming a commercial that stars a Mini-page-type model for three years.

There's certainly an element of publicly facing opposite muscle in the disputes about licenses, along with the desire to maximize the fruits of an expensive license deal. Sometimes the big boys can co-exist in harmony, as happened with US Gold's Grand-Ad, Nintendo's Dual and Sega's Decans. Directly, sometimes they fall out. And sometimes they don't come - like Nintendo, who did nothing about the host of imitations that fol-

lowed leaders like Knight Link. AIG AIG and Beyond? But then Ultimate came into the marketplace in the first place, made their money and went back.

ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES

Spending money on a license nowadays is a speculative investment, a form of venture capitalism in effect, with work often subcontracted to programmers. To honor the spirit of the software industry and protection of their rights, under license copyright law it is usual at the moment (taking aside a separate and the last) some agree a done-dealer is unusual.

One strategy that no one has had yet is to buy the license, announce the acquisition in the trade and at last, after six months or so, reveal a company would have produced more than the original, as the license holder could step in, unless the best version for publication and then syndicate or all the others, thereby saving all the expense and hassle of being a programmer.

"We will not tolerate infringement of our copyright. To prove this requires an enormous amount of work and time - often looking at games frame by frame - but we are willing to do it." Red Cross, Activision

THE WOLF PACK

The "Military shoot-em-up" is hardly new to the home computer or the console machine, and Operation Wolf is the most recent in a line of earlier titles that include Commando and Red Memory. The Christmas, Ocean is set by two well-established fans with its official license of British machine-gun-man game. The latest version, but looks at itself for Ocean, and also casts a critical eye over two other games that could easily have been inspired by the arcade machine: PORN and Vietnam. But where does the strain end? Operation Wolf isn't nearly enough original.

Gary Sherry of Ocean is philosophical - it's highly unlikely that Ocean will be rolling off to the courts to take action against Wolf-like games. "It's a shame", he

says, "but any Ocean license makes unofficial imitations look just like pirate imitations." While tried to get as close as possible to the look of Operation Wolf - you can't do games like WRC Le Mans, Darius and Wolf and actually announce the controls, but we've got to close up possible. Our game stands up - we've created the feel and atmosphere of the original in as far as it is possible to do so."

It's not too impressed by Ocean - "It's very original, our game stands up well in comparison - we've got better graphics, better control", but is he too worried by PORN? "We see it a while ago, and again don't feel too threatened - it's all small games in the distance."

Mungo Wright-Lair of Software Horizons, the people behind Vietnam, can see some similarities between the game and Operation Wolf.

"Obviously it has a similar type of gameplay - nobody can deny that." But it seems unlikely that any similar styling has taken place. "Our programmer has, and works in Liverpool, and I doubt he's had the opportunity to play the arcade machine. The first we got was for me to make an exciting 3D commando shoot-em-up, and then it was just what he came up with."

Top Left: Vietnam.
Middle: PORN.
Left: Operation Wolf.

Activision's Howard Reemart urges when he is asked about PORN in the context of Operation Wolf. "It's going back in the same old subject", he says. "But how many different types of Battle games are there, or how many different types of game can you have that involve using a gun. PORN is certainly not programmed from Operation Wolf. Although he admits that PORN might have drawn some inspiration from games like Wolf, Howard Reemart points out that it was being designed and written months ago as a game to go with Activision's Dignity peripheral."

It seems unlikely that Software Horizons or Software Art will sue Ocean Wolf for a story it could be argued that they would have done a much better job. As Mungo Wright-Lair says "It's quite a popular game theme at the moment, so it's not unexpected, and you can't really blame a game theme. The problem is the manipulation at the moment is to come up with original themes that are popular with the public."



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SCREEN TEST



644 version - If you run out of rockets you can always revert to jumping machine-guns like this tank.



Spectrum version - your damage meter has reached the top. Another hit and you'll be finished, here.



C64 version - out of ammo? like up on that magazine and hope you hit it with one of the few that should you're given.

OPERATION WOLF

OCEAN spray bullets

OR Dip Wolf as it belligerently howls by the remnants of enemy loss where his loud remembrance tells up and down the country rising in the sound of hundreds of machine-guns (not-a-bit better). The official version of the game has been a while coming to the home console, but now the 8-bit version is complete with ST and Amiga due to better timing for an all-console release. The Ocean managed to capture the excitement of the console?

The game is divided into six stages and your prime objective is to get to the fifth stage, where the hostages held there in a concentration camp can make sure they all get aboard a getaway plane that's about to stage off.

Armed with a machine gun and a tank of rockets, you have to shoot and take away of the enemy, killing as many of them as you can before they steal you. Each mission

fully-scrolling stage contains a detachment of enemy forces which has to be blown away before the section is complete. Larger opponents in the form of tanks, helicopters and gun boats look up the first soldiers, and can only be destroyed with multiple bullet salvo or single rocket.

Targeting the enemy involves moving a crosshair sight around the screen. Striking the fire button changes the cursor into a bullet hole for a line-of-sight spitting up from the foot. If your aim is not that good, setting out with enemy magazines of bullets and long-range, you can rocket-equipped - so wait for the sign to keep the bullets present as you try to keep everything out, and make sure to pick up ammunition as you go. The car game to be tricky at times, because you have to shoot the extra enemy clips and rockets that are lying on foot before they go scrolling of the screen. If the enemy is gnawing up on the screen, you have to decide whether you can last and the next clip appears, when you might have more opponents on screen and less chance of sustaining life. Level enemies every across the screen, and are an extra source of ammunition - if you manage to shoot them you're awarded with extra ammo.

A meter monitors your health, diminishing as you take hits and falling dramatically if you take away one of the non-renewable status, status or hostages. Shooting would last 100 of medicine on the ground reduces your damage level, and completing a section allows for a bit of restorative 300. Other extras that appear on the ground include stacks of dynamite which can be used to blow, clearing the screen if you shoot them.

C64 VERSION

The only one of the three released here that gives you the option to play with either mouse or joystick. Playing with the mouse is the easier option, but you do get more control and precision at the start of the game if you play with a joystick. The colour palette is the lightest on the C64 so you can find your way through the fog but the weather isn't as bright as you'd expect. Playing on systems it may be a bit to begin with, but the most things performance says it.

GRAPHICS: 8 IQ FACTOR: 1
 AUDIO: 8 FUN FACTOR: 8
 AGE RATING: 0-4

AMSTRAD VERSION

The most colourful and with the lowest level of the 8-bit to be seen about the graphics, quite a lot if you've played the other versions. Surely it was intended for it.

GRAPHICS: 9 IQ FACTOR: 1
 AUDIO: 7 FUN FACTOR: 8
 AGE RATING: 0-4

SPECTRUM VERSION

The graphics are all in monochrome (though the colour changes to each stage) so it can be tough to see the better sometimes. The game loads a bit slow on 128K machines but is multi-task or 256K machines, but that doesn't play this for a long time to come - even if you manage to complete it you'll find yourself coming back whenever you feel the urge to take away at some point.

GRAPHICS: 8 IQ FACTOR: 1
 AUDIO: 6 FUN FACTOR: 8
 AGE RATING: 0-7

Stage one on the Amstrad - with no rockets remaining and five tanks and four helicopters left to destroy, your chances are slim.





The up and down keys are used to move the character.



Stage two on the Spectrum - you've just destroyed one gun boat and you're one more rocket left for the other one.

WOLF

The stages get progressively harder. After Stage Three some of the enemies get cunning and start wearing bullet-proof vests, so you have to shoot them in the head to dispatch them.

Operation Wolf was never a game to test your brain power - its undiluted mayhem and non-stop murder did the work. The final version of the game did surprisingly better to the original coin-op, not only for all technical and gameplay items captured, but so too for the excitement, making it one of the most satisfying small computer shoot-em-ups to have appeared in a long time.

By Andy Smith

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	£19.99	AVAILABLE
AMIGA	£24.99	AVAILABLE
IBM PC	£19.99	AVAILABLE
EGA/CGA	£19.99 + £2.99	REQUIRED
SPECTRUM	£19.99 + £9.99	REQUIRED
AMSTRAD	£19.99 + £9.99	REQUIRED

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



It's not easy to get the hang of, but master the controls and you're hooked.



Wolf is available on the Spectrum, Amiga, Atari ST, IBM PC, and Amstrad.



The Wolf is available on the Spectrum, Amiga, Atari ST, IBM PC, and Amstrad.



UPDATE SPECIAL

SPACE HARRIER I and II

ST • Elite £19.99dk each

SPACE Warter a one of the latest, most colorful and action-packed arcade games around. On the home computer, it was very successful in its 3.5" floppy (and is proving just as good in its ST incarnation).

It takes the interesting perspective of having everything coming straight at you out of the screen. You control a man with a jet-pack, who can fly anywhere about the screen and shoot from the top with a laser.

The landscape rushes forward, bringing onto ground objects and all sorts of alien waves straight at you. With the ground objects it's a simple matter of seeing them coming and getting the hell out of the way or blasting them if they're destructible.

The alien, of course aren't such a simple matter. Not only do they follow many different movement patterns, but they also shoot occasionally, and can come spilling onto the screen from right next to you or gradually advance from the far distance. The amount of perspective is what makes the game so enjoyable and yet so difficult. No matter where they are in terms of perspective the alien are still there.

There's a very impressive collection of

ARCADE ACCURACY



Obviously the ST gives the essence of all the excitement and fun of the original, speed and challenge of the arcade version.

100% OF SCORE 9

alien to deal with, although they haven't been altered much, for the additional cost. They range from massive gas-toting robots to leeching designs that suck the alien from the fire tank. At the end of each level is a massive guardian that has to be hit many times before it expires.

The basic game is certainly a great one for sheer speed and zapping action. Space Harrier II - essentially a second data disk - doesn't really offer much that's new, but fans will probably enjoy the extra challenge.

• Top Pick

ATARI ST VERSION

The game is guaranteed and more fun for - so fast it flies. It rates excellent use of color and has some subtly designed items. The music is good and has an ambient feeling about it.

GRAPHICS 9 IQ FACTOR 1
 AUDIO 7 FUN FACTOR 8
 ACE RATING 7.25

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Big, bad robots are just one of the many advanced effects.



912

fortunately there isn't any of that standard learning of the alien enemies in the game. Instead, it concentrates on the battle to crown a King of France and rid the French countryside of the scourge of the English invaders.

After a history of events presented in a pleasant stop-and-go, Joos shows a map of France that reveals the current position of the land and the location of castles. Joos of Arc commands an army that a player can order attack. You take the role of Charles, late in the throne and can control Joos's army. The first objective is to gain the throne, which involves conquering Orleans and Sens.

The main game menu offers several options, but at the start, all that is available is



A list of the French characters currently available to you. On the right are the attributes of one of them. Clearly, that's a great menu to scroll on a digitizing monitor.

the option to commence a campaign by moving the army commanded by Joos and attacking other castles or towns. As time goes on instead on the open field, while conquering a town or fortress is a matter of lighting your way inside.

In open field combat you use teams to control soldiers, archers, cavalry and bombardiers. Generally, weight of numbers will triumph, but a lot can depend on factors such as the weapons, which get the high ground and when you control the force. Attacking towns is more dice-based. First there's a combat sequence where you have got to fight just arrival soldiers at the gates, then the walls must be broken, creating the noise and killing of thousands of you. The situation is reversed when someone attacks one of your towns - you defend the wall by throwing rocks and so.

Failure to gain the crown results in Joos being imprisoned and the game ending, but as King you can access the other options on the menu and the real game begins. The King has to choose the whole of France from the control of English and other rebel forces, and all the commands of your disposal need to be used diplomatically, espionage, diplomacy level, Royal Treasury, Royal Justice, raising a

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	£19.99dk	OUT NOW
AMIGA	£14.99dk	IMMINENT
IBM PC	£19.99dk	OUT NOW

No 4-bit systems planned

JOAN OF ARC

A well-done game from RAINBOW ARTS



(Above) The initial map of France showing Joan of Arc's army as the blue flag, and French held territory in white. The icons at the right access the option menus.

(Lower above) Starting your way into the woods you have to leave your knights in several sections and send the arrows, in order to get to the gate.

(Right) The battlefield where arrows will fly. All the figures are tiny, but the action is clearly put together as the various groups of soldiers, archers and cavalry clash.

ATARI ST VERSION

The graphics and presentation are very nice and atmospheric indeed, making Caladrius of the Tower fit quite. The cut pictures and animation all look great, but there isn't much sound and no music at all. The problem is the slow scrolling which leads to pauses between the action, but this might depend from the graphics mode.

GRAPHICS 9 IQ FACTOR 7

SOUND 6 FUN FACTOR 6

AGE RATING 912

IBM PC VERSION

The IBM graphics are compatible with the ST's and at the graphics console it exactly the same thing. The CD32 version doesn't look half as good but it plays just fine.

GRAPHICS 9 IQ FACTOR 7

SOUND 6 FUN FACTOR 6

AGE RATING 912

well as a helping hand. Espionage can reveal what's happening all over the country, while the helping hand is a similar option that allows the king to bump off or kidnap opponents. If an opponent has been captured, you can dispense some Royal Justice and execute him. French characters can also be executed and recruited, in particular if you're in a good mood.

The Royal Treasury is absolutely vital because you won't pay armies, ships or castles else if you haven't got the loot. The only way to get cash is to impose fines on the provinces controlled by the king - don't be too harsh, and remember that one type of rye tax has to be collected at the appropriate time of year, not the moment, and twice a month.

There's an obvious comparison with *Defender of the Crown*, and *Joan of Arc* wins convincingly. As well as the intricate sequences, the strategy side of the game is well thought out. When you become King the game isn't over - it has only just begun, and it gets better and better.

• Sid Meats



Royal Army and starting a campaign.

Most options involve dealing with the great 15th-century characters. These split into three main groups: French characters, English and other potential enemies, castles and spies. Each character has strengths for politics, strategy and as an army leader. Great politicians can build up diplomatic relationships for the release of prisoners, peace treaties and alliances. Great army leaders can obviously lead successful campaigns, while strategy options to affect most things.

The attitudes of the spies are somewhat different, because you use them to espionage

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Plenty to do right from the start and the depth is not so vast.



LAP 3: 16

ET:00:57

LT:04:39.4

925

Imagine a game that has the best of console control found in Ferrari Formula One, but with up and down controls thrown in as well. A game that takes you into a whole new dimension of race games that promises a vision of the future along the way.

Basically, that is the way other race games. You're taking part in a championship but one so more against four computer opponents. The track-and-weather conditions vary, and pit stops are available - the difference is that the tracks go underground, loop-the-loop and even try to crash your car. The weather includes particle storms and cascading and major atmospheric. As for the pit stops, they consist of replacing large chunks of the ship, which takes a briefing from mem-

Here's a tight left turn coming up - can you mean part that get in front of you? **NOTE:** It's under that bridge and you'll be played into situation, arranging into the light on the other side.



POWERDROME

ELECTRONIC ARTS pedal to the metal

way into the walls and floor.

The six levels will test anybody's flying skills because they twist and turn all over the way. There are thin gaps to squeeze through, walls that close in, and tight loops that both horizontally and vertically. At last they seem possible, but positioning and maintaining your tightly-responsive ship will soon change that.

The ship has many variables that affect the way it performs, including different fuel systems, various size, brake size, pitch-roll stiffness and lifters. The lifters are necessary to fly through different atmospheric like atmospheric medicine - give the wing-one and the engine won't perform at all well in a hostile atmosphere.

Flying round the course you'll inevitably bump into the walls, floor and ceiling eventually. Lots of the ship get damaged, and the damage state is added to the controls. With both wings lost and the nosecone in tatters, the car feels like a supermarket trolley with all its wheels locked in different directions. The only way to cure this is to make a pit stop.

The pit are a very hi-tech affair where damaged body parts can be repaired, fuel tanks on board and sold on the race ground. You can also modify the base of the car to make it handle better, although this is

best done during the qualifying session, rather than during a race.

The other competitors are of varying quality but are going to be no easy thing to beat any of them, let alone win a race. As for winning the championship that's one of the better odds going. If the computer-controlled race



You're at the back of the grid at the start, as soon as the lights change you've got to check on the engines and see to that fuel gauge.

The pit screen where you can replace bits of the craft and get refueled.



isn't challenging enough, you can use the alternate option to look up a another 2D or Amiga-style fly against human players.

The controls are pretty tough to get used to, but right from the start you'll be hooked on it and have the bang of things after half-an-hour play. A casual player, especially inexperienced and which will have you totally addicted to it within.

■ **Get Hooked**

ATARI ST VERSION

The graphics give an excellent impression of speed and movement, and you can feel the ship around in all sorts of ways. The actually need 6 or 8MB free for the monitor to get the best effect. You'll be having yourself a real time with the ship on 1 turbo, 2 turbo and 3 turbo. The real disappointment is the sound - it's really hard to hear any of the game without.

GRAPHICS 9 10 FACTOR 4
SOUND 2 10M FACTOR 7
AGE RATING 935

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



We're hard to start with but it's always got that special something that keeps you at it.

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	04.1994	0.07.1994
AMIGA	04.1994	14.07.1994
IBM PC	04.1994	07.09.1994

OFFICIAL

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons

COMPUTER PRODUCT



HEROES
OF THE LABYRINTH



FOOL
OF RAINFALL



HISTORY will never be the same again. We've seen fascist of Zeppelins, aerial wars, submarines and moon bases (during World War II)? Put reality on hold when stepping on your rocket pack because all manner of strange things are going to happen, in fact the further you get the weirder things become.

It isn't like you're in for a fairly conventional WWII setting, as Hitler starts clasp on the opening screen. This impressive reality masterpiece on your first task is to put on a rocket pack and chase a Zeppelin across the Atlantic ocean from America. This is just one part of the main mission to stop Nazi Germany conquering the whole world. They're doing it using uranium bombs - produced from mines on the moon. To stop them you will have to get to the moon and destroy the base.

To get to the moon you have to beat the five goals that make up a mission called, about three missions in total if you remember like the Zeppelins fleet from invading America. To achieve this you have to complete many other sequences taking around the world as Rocket Ranger, and also the strategy elements from your home base at Fort 50.

In the west coast you have a map of the world and five agents. Each agent can be sent to a country to activate it. They will send back information on what is there - uranium supplies, rocket parts or other valuable targets. They can also upgrade resistance to slow down the Nazi advance. Unfortunately they can also be discovered and killed, so use them carefully because without them it's very difficult to track down all the rocket parts.

Once 50 has loaded up with uranium in the rocket pack he has to go through a maze of sequences at Fort 50. This isn't easy, particularly with a heavy fuel load, but it's essential you practice it because before waste a lot of time. You get three attempts at hitting it, and you'll be glad of them. When other sequences you get depend on which location you fly to. The currency boppers automatically and depend on how much fuel you put in the pack. Choose the wrong amount and you'll end up crashing down in the ocean and ending the game.

RELEASE BOX

AMIGA	CD ROM	REVERSO
IBM AT	CD ROM	JANUARY

AMIGA VERSION

The graphics and animation are top of the world. There's a tremendous range of scenes that get the best out of the Amiga. The music and effects are also excellent. There's also some digital speech, but unfortunately not all text levels towards being appropriate.

RAMBERS: 5 ID FACTOR: 5

SCORE: 7 FUN FACTOR: 5

AGE RATING: 0-14



After a bruising fist fight you've knocked out the Nazi guard and can escape with one of the five rocket parts.

ROCKET RANGER

CINEMAWARE at full thrust



The war zone is where you can use your five agents. A rocket factory has been found in the middle east and the Zeppelins fleet is busy conquering Europe.



You're in the foreground and have to shoot the enemies in the temple. Get them all and you'll get lots of uranium.



Don't you consider the professor and his daughter that your intentions are good?

There are two types of aerial combat, one against sequences of Microsoft's 3DPA and the other starting ground based vehicles game. On the ground there's a gas battle with agents in a mixed tempo and hand-to-hand combat with slides-guarding the rocket parts. You aren't given much help on how to complete them at all, but the action can ultimately vary. However, every time you complete a sequence it gets harder the next time you attempt it.

The subplot that runs throughout the game is to rescue Professor Otto Bernstein and his daughter from the Nazis. This will considerably reduce the Nazis' efficiency but is not essential to completing the game.

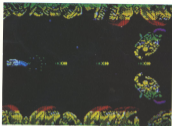
This is probably the best CinemaWare game yet, blending superb graphics with credible action and strategy. There's enough variety and depth to it to keep you interested, although the pace of the game is slow since you have to go through a lot of graphic sequences before you do anything.

■ **Rob Park**

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Some sequences aren't well explained, but it's a wonder when you know what you're doing.



R-TYPE

The genuine article from
ELECTRIC DREAMS

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	£24.99	840007
AMIGA	13.9	
CDI/CD	£2.99 + £14.99	840007
SPECTRUM	£2.99	842007D
AMSTRAD	£2.99 + £14.99	840007

ARCADE ACCURACY



A superb conversion with little if anything missing from the game.

COIN OP SCORE 5

SPECTRUM VERSION

One thing R-Type doesn't lack, even on the Spectrum, is action. The sound effects are just about what you'd expect from a Spectrum, what you wouldn't expect is just how close the programmers have managed to get to the original coin-op. It's remarkably addictive and guaranteed to give you a sore trigger finger.

GRAPHICS 5 IQ FACTOR 4
AUDIO 5 FUN FACTOR 4

AGE RATING 8/1



The front of the third and-of-level guardian (and you thought the last one was tough)



(Above) The middle of the third and of level guardian. Keep firing! Keep firing!

(Below) You've got nearly 800 bullets now, but only use the left.



(Above) Pumping away with your laser at the start of level two.

(Below) Hold the fire button and you get a super-charger laser ball.





ACE feel brought you news of this here sci-fi way back in Issue One. Now, some 15 months on, Beam! Systems have completed the home micro conversion.

Controlling an IP interstellar attack craft set to exact revenge against the evil Zyda Empire, you travel through eight increasingly difficult stages, creating death against a constantly-revolving background (each section looks separately). In each stage there's a multitude of flying enemy ships and ground-level gun emplacements to contend with, and of course an end-of-level guardian to dispose of before progressing to the next level.

The action commences with your craft equipped with a turn-firing gun which can operate in two modes: tapping the fire button releases small laser bolts, while holding the

fire button down causes a steady jet below the main playing area to start chugging up. If you release the button on the screen reaches the top, a mass powerful laser bolt is fired - well, exactly when you come up against tougher enemies who can take more hits before blowing up.

Extra weapons are available if you manage to shoot the small homing creatures that hop across the screen and then pick up the items they leave behind.

One of the most useful add-on weapons is the probe. This ball-like object comes into the screen from left to right and fires a shot whenever you stop down. Called the probe, and it can be placed to the front or the back of your ship where it acts like a shield. Hitting the spacebar on the keyboard detaches the probe from your ship, sending it to the front or



B-Type on the ST, it's not actually too tough yet but here's a taste of the game's graphics. Watch out for the update review in a future ACE.

4 (best) The second set of level guardians. He's proved too much for you this time...

(Main picture) ...and now you've got the measure of him. Being able to detach your probe is especially helpful here.

back, depending on where it was first attached - the so-called home when you're up against one of the end-of-level guardians because they each have a vulnerable spot that you need to shoot and its usually in an awkward place. Hitting the spacebar again returns the probe to your ship.

Other weapons include three-way laser shots, which keep up the fire power of your probe, and homing missiles. Extra weapons obtained from the earlier stages are lost whenever you lose a life.

Up to 26 ships are available to complete the game with - you have a total of five credits, and each credit buys five ships. Once the fifth ship in a series has been lost, you have ten seconds to pass the fire button and continue the game from the last intact position with another five ships (along that one you die if you lose credits), or you may elect to start back at the beginning again.

B-Type is a superb sci-fi game and Beam! Systems have done a remarkable conversion job. The gameplay is hectic, the graphics are great and it's tough and addictive enough to keep you playing for a long time. B-Type doesn't win any prize for originality, but for sheer speed, addictive gameplay and music action it's a winner.

by Bob Bell

4 (best) Collect some items and your response is greatly increased.

(Main picture) Be the first white robot!

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Tough and addictive, you'll be playing this for months to come.



SENTINEL WORLDS 1: FUTURE MAGIC

ELECTRONIC ARTS send in the cadets

In a world of an intergalactic Crime space-craft and its crew, you are told to visit and a spot of trouble set in the colonies. Transported slapping from Cadet and Horizon to new weapons in the Scout and Mission systems have been attacked by faster ships and appear from nowhere, take no prisoners and disappear before they can be identified. It is your job to find out who they are, and set a trap to their activities.

The initial testing is fairly interesting in an attack, and you can suddenly switch in level of the spacecraft command screen.

It is immediately obvious that, despite the fact that you've arrived World 1: Future Magic it is so full of battle-animations, demanding instant reactions on the old die button. Indeed play is rather more impressive

in what above Marjorie - you don't get this range of colour on a GEM monitor!



in what a future market: all you do as an enemy ship appears, simply press and tug the joystick and another for launch and let the ship computer take over. It's all a bit boring at you sit back and watch the fireworks, down in a particularly low resolution.

Despite appearances, you have control-socket-control over the weapons, as the Command Console Crew can 'hack' into the computer programs, entering them to the alien base requirements. The degree of success depends on how far you've reached experience level - which is where the little Flying Game-IMP element comes in.

In the SFX section, each new member has Strength, Stamina, Dexterity, Comprehension and Charisma points - enhanced by Experience gained through the game. At the

On the surface in your ATX, about to explore the depths of Western Flow



start, the crew is a pretty young bunch, so the immediate concern is money, which is used to buy fuel, extra training, and weapons. This is where the fun really starts, as you go planet to planet to carry out various missions (and credits appear), take minerals, and send notes - some of whom might know about the systems nearby.

Galactic planes can be found in the galaxy, from the Metropolitan Empire of the Galactic Tower to the distasteful 'Vest' in which flowers at Neoparis. Most of the characters are pretty shallow but occasionally, particularly as you grow more experienced, you meet someone who can reveal a lot more about what's going on. With luck from time to time you may return to a game graph from the 'Penetration' booklet supplied with the game, and take another step towards solving the mystery.

Despite World 1 it is actually a fairly together a well-implemented early system of character development and exploration with a real mystery surrounding considerable detective work. The action sequences are pretty weak and of course the sound up to the PC's usual appalling standard, but perhaps it is a bit early to expect Starquake 2 editors contained with a plot of this com-

You've entered a local beauty and engaged the owner in Conversation



TYPHOON

IMAGINE go carrier-bagging



Stage 1. These attacking aircraft look pretty mean, but they're going to be the head of your carrier...

BLOW along in the tough airborne land complete with six levels of ever-evolving action.

Things start off quite tame with an Atari-style sequence of shooting waves of enemy aircraft attacking land-sea, and missile-dodging. As you slowly edge you start to see signs of your usual live force if you get hit, but besides do you get any points...

After a short time, the scene opens to

RELEASE BOX

SPECTRUM £7.95 £11.95 £14.95

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the skies above an aerial carrier. Head on still, you're faced with the same job of dodgy gun missiles, but you now have to shoot the missile launcher on the aircraft carrier. Not too difficult once you know how to time it, but the missiles hit you if a life if they make contact.

Once you're destroyed the aircraft carrier the scene changes and the game becomes a visually amazing shoot-up-up where you just an evading helicopter, are doing battle with attacking helicopters, and occasional tanks. Apart from your third being given you can also drop tanks if

SPECTRUM VERSION

The graphics are top, with smooth scrolling, and the sound effects are good. Combined with some fairly tough programming and a wide range of obstacles to contend with, it's a sure fire winner for success. Tough but fair - and plenty to do!

GRAPHICS 6 HD FACTOR 4

SOUND 7 FUN FACTOR 4

ACE RATING 654

MENACE

PSYGNOSIS blast the opposition

THE developers of *Demotron* have got to be some of the most ghouly, nihilist and insane creatures this side of a DMS office. They shoot an "arcade" game formed by six of the most feared rules that have ever existed. Apparently, a large scale attack would prove too costly, so it dawned on you to try your craft through an increasingly difficult level in an attempt to destroy *Demotron* - what do you mean, you've heard it all before?

Psychosis made no bones about this being yet another arcade beat - and indeed, it has been done very competently. Each bit you take costs the minutes that you use to attack reduces the strength of your shield. Shoot all the demons in a wave and a 1000-point mystical appears. Either called the bonus, or should be spelled out, to cycle it through a range of benefits that include bonuses, items, increased speed, bonus, temporary invulnerability - and shield replacement.

At the end of each level is the new ob-

scurey end-of-level guarantee, and five levels later one of you tells the other: "Success with a guarantee never plays on in the next level with all your benefits intact - vital, as the levels get harder."

There's nothing to fear the old guy calls one info, but there is that damn team calculation control to all good arcade games. You'll either fight through the six levels or lose interest quite soon. (Though, as don't expect to be playing it outside your nose.)

•Neil Lester

pleats, some of the graphics look pretty good on an EGA display, but if you have to put up with CGA, be warned - the game has obviously been designed for EGA and can get downright confusing at times. The main stumbling is the impossibly slow response time to the keyboard - almost unworkable even in a hot machine.

It may be a bit rough round the edges, but *Demotron* is a certainly a step in an interesting direction.

•Neil Lester

RELEASE BOX

IBM PC CD-ROM REVISED

IBM PC

Adds the more control responses, corrects the graphics-related bugs of the last CD-ROM version (strictly EGA - particularly as you seem to have control). The disk copies, on the other hand, is simply not up to the previous graphics, and some of the best got locked to read. The game is not any slacker though.

GRAPHICS 8/10 FACTOR 8
AIMING 7/10 FACTOR 3

ACE RATING 8/10

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Completed at first, but utterly addictive when you discover the hidden plot.

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST CD-ROM (REVISION)

AMIGA CD-ROM (OUT NOW)

No instructions for Atari version.

You're at the end of level 1 and up against a really alien monster throwing all sorts of... well, things... at you. Your shield's gone, though, and you've picked up a jolly extra weapon along the way.

AMIGA VERSION

Both sound and graphics are as in the usual CD-ROM versions, but use the graphics feature substantially. The action is fast and furious, but no better than the other that is open after good things about are up currently available.

GRAPHICS 7/10 FACTOR 10
AIMING 7/10 FACTOR 10

ACE RATING 8/10

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Good start here too.

ARCADE ACCURACY



The fact is, no computer ever has been going to have what you call an arcade, but this version the game has been translated accurately.

COIN OP SCORE 8

On the keyboard and dead boards (if - you get it). And look out for interesting exploits, while you're at it.

•Neil Lester

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Top-notch it is!



081350
SCORE

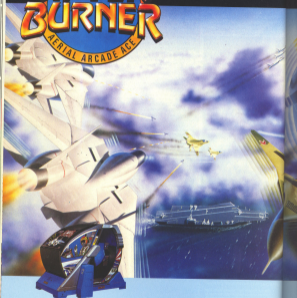
SCORE
LIVES
LIVES

DMA
LIVES

AFTER BURNER

AERIAL ARCADE ACE

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 **ACTIVISION**

 **SEGA**

AFTERBURNER - THE ARCONSA

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.ATTLE. ROLL IT..



Sega Genesis (above)



ST (above)

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HOSTAGES

INFOGRAMES' captive audience

INTERNATIONAL *Embassy* is the subject of this French-based strategy video console action. A group of business executives have taken control of an embassy and are holding several hostages for ransom. As the head of a local French SAS squad, it's down to you to *Volontaire!* The enemies can't free the hostages.

The game breaks down into three sections. The first part of the game is concerned with putting three of your teams to predetermined positions outside the embassy. These chips are your machines, which watch the embassy windows. Once you've positioned the machines, a helicopter drops all three more men who you have to guide down the outside of the embassy and into the windows. Once inside, you have to clear the three bases of terrorists and rescue the hostages before taking them one by one to a safe room for collection.

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	£24.996	OUT NOW
AMIGA	£24.996	IMMINENT
No other versions planned		



Terrorist searchlights illuminate one of your machines in the first stage...



Commander Michel confronts a terrorist inside the Embassy.

ATARI ST VERSION

Each section is clear, unmissable and put together very well, giving a very atmospheric feel. Sadly the slow pace is what the general impression that a lot of French games have great graphics but produce little in the way of steady gameplay.

GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	4
SOUND	3	FUN FACTOR	7
AGE RATING 600			

Several difficulty levels affect the amount of time you have to complete the mission. Though the nature of the game may be a little clunky, its low to play cost will have you on the edge of your seat for the first part. However, once the novelty of the graphics has worn off you'll find that there's actually very little gameplay and after you've completed it a few times you'll be looking for a fresh challenge.

• Analytix

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



WHAT'S *Mad Mix* is a classic bubble display, getting its acid in the Pepsi Mad Mix game? Well, the cute, grinning little bubble has gone: waterworks, stinging stunts and called *Mad Mix!* What more do you need to know?

For old Mad Mix fans there's the Pepsi V8. In a sequence of fifteen tricky stages, and he has to be in it to string through the obstacles grabbing up bubbles (lump on the floor. And if the bubble landed you of Power Mix, you won't be surprised to learn that a quarter of giant-size rooms the streets of Hollywood.

There's no test to get into a - after all,

RELEASE BOX

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AMS	£7.996	£12.996	OUT NOW
ATARI ST	£14.996	IMMINENT	
AMIGA	£14.996	TBA	

SPECTRUM VERSION

Madmix - 10 extra words and effects as to how the game, and despite the announcements, they have that a predicted game state. Complete, but also unless you really want to win a prize from PepsiCo Ltd.

GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	5
SOUND	3	FUN FACTOR	6
AGE RATING 534			

MAD MIX

US GOLD's soft drink

Pepsi comes in one flavour only - but on the plus side, like one step-on pedals on the floor and temporarily mutate himself into other machines... like a ghost-hopping hippo. Depending on whether you make Mad Mix a Mad Beer - he grows large and can suck the glass out of ghosts, sending them flying, back to their sixth lot.

The third level has a total of five after again this which he can mutate in order to deal with the hazards encountered on the mission - ghosts aren't all that easy to stop but in his quest, and as you might expect,

he gets more difficult on later levels. For instance, Mad must never go to another room until all the bubbles have been cleared from the current version of Pepsi Village on the second level, in bubble-blowing, icy-blasted, and he comes around sucking his walk and needs to be stopped.

A few good touches embellish the level. Perceptible gameplay, but the Pepsi Mad Mix game often ends with a missing, other than bubble-gathering and the chance to win a prize in the past promises between US Gold and PepsiCo.

Remember take the bubbles out of Pepsi and it gives life.

• Game Aid

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



In *PepsiCo* mode, the fanged bubble eats off a ghostie.

ACTION SERVICE

INFOGRAMES' play soldiers

TRAINING with crack Cobra commando is certainly not for cowards. Four grunting assault courses must be completed before you can embark on a top-secret mission - which has yet to appear in the pages of *Action Service II*.

The maneuverer under your control is a spunky character capable of all manner of movement, the dice being, though, that control takes a little getting used to.

Your basic physical fitness is checked on the first course where you must negotiate walls, ditches, barbed wire, ladders and other objects - and run like hell. Obvious screen orders at you during the levels - "pushup," "go," "get up," "in ear" - and that orders must be obeyed instantly, otherwise



Watch out for the Red, **STAINING** into the muddy zone keeps your bonuses intact.

ATARI ST VERSION

Good for once you have found out what to do, the match is good to see the digital images of your leaders. Simplest graphics, explosions and sounds add atmosphere. Expensive to start with, but lack of demographically means *Action Service* pays quickly.

GRAPHICS 7 IQ FACTOR 3
SOUND 5 FUN FACTOR 5
AGE RATING 3B7

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	04/1988	OUT NOW
AMIGA	04/1988	OUT NOW
IBM PC	07/1988	IMPACT
3-1/2 versions under development		

you lose points. For the dip also needs to be avoided.

Stage Two is the Red Route. Grenades and bombs must be picked up and tossed while you avoid mines and the like. Again, fire must be evaded. After that comes the Control Test where hand-to-hand skills are tested like shuffling anyone you meet on the way and dodge white bullets, grenades grenades and opponents' punches. Stage Two is a combination of the three previous tests.

An interesting video replay feature allows you to rewind and then replay and examine your efforts over a course. You can see where you went wrong, learn from mistakes and do better next time you attempt the stage. An auto driver construction mode also exists which lets you create your own routes and tests.

Richard Martin



ALBEDO

Laser-light lampoonery with LORICIELS

DICK is creator and master of the planet Albedo. Made of metallic dusties and infested by a variety of unpleasant creatures ranging from Noveas to Bubble-Cone Worms, Albedo is your zone



like you feel lucky? They'll need to be "one that beats your laser bolts for beautiful. A few power shields will make him think twice about attacking you.

RELEASE BOX		
AMIGA	07/1988	OUT NOW
ATARI ST	07/1988	OUT NOW
No other versions planned		

until you sit it every gritty situation, including Dick.

The first thing that hits you when playing is the music (best sampled sound file you've never heard before). The music plays throughout the entire game, where some sound is pulsating orb-shooting a constant stream of energy that you direct at the icons.

Your mission complex eleven levels which must be completed before you get a boss or Dick. The first boss can be completed in any order, but the remainder must be pointed off in sequence.

The controls for each level is amusing, most confusing... what is why the levels last so simple. While the backgrounds and aliens are different, the layout is very pro-

ATARI ST VERSION

Wonderful use. One of the game's biggest effects are excellent. Control is sometimes sluggish - especially when there's too on the screen. Many and quite graphics are good.

GRAPHICS 7 IQ FACTOR 5
SOUND 5 FUN FACTOR 5
AGE RATING 711

AMIGA VERSION

Time is marginally faster than the ST's. Smoother animation and control during graphics, but otherwise much the same as the ST version.

GRAPHICS 7 IQ FACTOR 5
SOUND 5 FUN FACTOR 5
AGE RATING 711

Albedo. Although shooting is the game, different levels demand different strategies. For instance, in *Novas* you must shoot everything quickly before it touches you, while in *Worms* you must prevent certain aliens from touching other aliens.

Albedo will be remembered more for its music and Dobby music system than for gameplay. Nonetheless all the gives there is a game - certainly not at the most mind-blowing variety, but one that requires it level built a base and provides enjoyment.

Richard Martin



BOMBUZAL

IMAGEWORKS on a short fuse

919

Crowther, Blazak, Miner - these names you'd never expect to find on the credits for a single game, but they've all contributed to this one. Tony Crowther was responsible for the programming, but both he and the other two designed their own level layouts.

There are 120 levels of explosive mayhem in which you have to set off all the bombs and survive without ending up on a large red star on the ending. Each level is composed of four tiles set in one plane, but you can view the game from a 3D overhead perspective as long as you have a 3D monitor. There's also a map that can be called up toward the whole level.

Both screen size to be completed within a time limit. If the time runs out or you fall soul of one of the many traps you lose a life. The timer keeps running when you've got the top of screen, although the screen is paused. Fortunately, just everything is started against you. When you die there's the option to reset all the screens you were on, and passwords enable you to return to the game another day and avoid ploughing through all the screens you solved in a previous session.

The only way to explode a bomb is to set it off yourself. This might sound a damn easy thing to do but small bombs only destroy the tile they're on - it would explode until you've

Amiga - the 3D view looks great. You're the blue guy with the bag eyes.

walked off the tile. An exploding bomb can also set off other bombs and mines that are within a maximum of five blast radii.

You can set off larger bombs as well, but only if the robot you walk into is a

RELEASE BOX

AMIGA £19.99b £19.99b

AMIGA CD £19.99b £19.99b

CD-ROM £19.99b £19.99b OUT NOW

No other versions planned

AMIGA VERSION

Both the 3D and 2D graphics are excellent, but you can see more on the 3D one. The music and effects are just fine, making a superb package.

GRAPHICS 9 IQ FACTOR 7

AMIGA 9 FUN FACTOR 7

ACE RATING 919

CD-ROM VERSION

It's much harder to set what's what on the 3D view but it looks great in 3D as well. The levels offer a great deal for the Amiga version and generally it's a better bet not to purchase.

GRAPHICS 9 IQ FACTOR 9

AMIGA 7 FUN FACTOR 7

ACE RATING 919

teleport that while you're in the blast Mine can take it of a problem because you can't clear the tiles as you can with bombs. They have to be detonated by a bomb not them or by some other remote device.

Two other types of bomb make life even more complicated. Level bombs start to melt because they, well, melt. They change in size as they depending on when they're set off they can produce a small, medium or large explosion. Then there are the lucky A-bombs which detonate all the other bombs on a level when they are exploded.

The last two have different characteristics, too. Mineral ones are destroyed by explosions but Level bombs are blast-proof. They're like tiles are impossible to step on, while Level bombs disappear when you step off them. Finally there are staked tiles, which you can use to move bombs around.

You can also have other features on them that affect other bits of the level. Points generate each in an explosion or an exploding square is another form big the bomb. Spikes blow you off in a random direction, while switches are a crucial part of many levels because activating them changes the map.

Unfortunately you're not the only thing that can move around the place. Two characters called Dealer and Miner travel along turning right and left repeatedly whenever they can, killing you as soon as they do. Dealer and Miner - can be manually controlled to set off bombs and mines while you're still, arrange to die.

The puzzle can be tough and the levels themselves are tough enough to keep you glued to the screen. You'll manage all the levels eventually, but you'll really get your money's worth in the process.

★ **Get It!**

Amiga - this mass of bombs, mines, teleports and ice could take ages to work out.



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NUCLEAR Fusion is the combine of two into one with the consequent release of large amounts of energy. Likewise Fusion is the combination of two game styles to form EA's best 3D programmed game.

The style in question is a shoot-'em-up and a maze puzzle. The two types of game are often played using two different casts. There's a motherboard which lies over the landscape, and a crawler which can be carried by the motherboard if it hovers along the ground. Obviously the crawler is more restricted in movement by the ground objects, but there can take tasks which only it can complete.

There are 18 game areas which have to be searched for parts of a bomb which then

AMIGA VERSION

The graphics are good but the actual display size is small, not using the full height of the screen. The music and effects are above high quality, but fail to make an impression on the Amiga's graphics.

GRAPHICS: 7 3D FACTOR: 8
 AMIGA: 8 FUN FACTOR: 6
ACE RATING 6.07

RELEASE BOX

AMIGA CD ROM REVIEWED
 ATARI ST CD ROM MARKET

FUSION

ELECTRONIC ARTS go fission...

has to be detached back to the start view. You'll encounter the types of enemy - few released by ground engagements and the rest a static gun. The projectiles released all fall in as you, but not all of them can fly over ground obstacles. They can be destroyed by steering them, as can the generator if they're shot while producing an object.

The crawler is much less manoeuvrable and more vulnerable than the motherboard, so it's best to trade the landscape in the motherboard, before venturing out in the crawler. The motherboard can pick up enhanced weapons and obstacles but these aren't transferred to the crawler.

The crawler has its own set of switches that allow you access to other parts of the game. Combinations of switches are needed to remove bits of scenery or to open gates to other areas. The main problem is that the gameplay is too slow when accessing the switches. There's too much wandering around with nothing to do. If you can get up with that it's tough to complete, but it's never going to get you very excited.

● Not Worth



The skull at the bottom right of the screen will regenerate energy. To get at the yellow switch you'll need to get a green circle that can use the crawler.



TRACK SUIT MANAGER

GOLIATH over the moon

FOOTBALL games have always been big sellers, but hardly a month goes by without someone claiming to have invented the 'ultimate' simulation. The one depends with the money and administrative side of things and lets you get on with team management.

Take in control of a European national team - it doesn't seem to be one of the more common - and one thing to qualify for, and win the Heineken and World Cups. Everything is run via the calendar - group matches

friendly, tour and the final.

Your control over the team is alternative - you can choose from a squad of 100 players, each with individual reports on their and their opponents who can be suspended in

RELEASE BOX

SPICE 2.0 (1988) REVIEWED
 AMIGA 2.0 (1988) MARKET
 ATARI ST 2.0 (1988) MARKET
 CMT 2.0 (1988) MARKET
 OR128 2.0 (1988) MARKET
 IBM PC 2.0 (1988) MARKET

SPECTRUM VERSION

There aren't any graphics in sports, so it's probably fairly supposed to tell you how far we get when, when changes and heat sounds.

GRAPHICS: 1 3D FACTOR: 0
 AMIGA: 0 FUN FACTOR: 1
ACE RATING 5.88



Football and Fantasy are classified as CG, but there's plenty of time left in the game.

winer depth.

There's no graphic action for the game, but you can have 100-by-100 reports of games if you want them. There are very detailed, but do take a long time. You can speed them up, or be realistic not involving your team, get just a quick detailed level-down of the games.

Other teams and players can be scouted to assess their strengths and weaknesses. There's tremendous variety in the tactics that the team and individual players can use.

It's not a football game to be played lightly because you have to analyse a lot of information to get the best teams and results. The more it takes a lot of time before you get interesting results. It also means that football breaks will be able to get totally immersed in it.

● Not Worth



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ELEMENTAL

LANKHOR'S great ordeal.

DIFFICULTY Landing a live all-fallen 30 sides a wheel can get it wrong and you're got a quarter today in your hands. No amount of tactical skill, preparation, strategy or wit can save a game that's way too easy or way too hard. Luckily easy games are all too common these days, but Lankhor have come up with a lot of it's only here, a game that's absurdly difficult.

The game is the planet Elemental, where you shoot your way through The Great Girdle to ensure that it is not that qualities you see on what is the unlikely event that you actually survive. Sixty lives will be delighted to know that the Girdle involves nothing other than handling around a series of one-screen screens collecting things, turning them into other things, and putting them down again.

Isn't quite easy enough, said you.

RELEASE BOX

Atari ST	1199s.	REVIEWED
to other versions planned		

The Blue-line you control (initially a little red) is continually pursued by spherical and other more exotic-shaped scores. By clever manoeuvring you can lure the spherical entities into orbitations, but their exotic cousins just keep after you. To stop these you need to pick up yellow blocks from one of the screens of squares.

Drop a yellow block in an empty nearby path and the entity turns into a red capsule. Pick up the red capsule, take it to a TV screen and it turns into a green capsule. Take the red capsule holder, slot it into place



That's your ball up by the orange W' like, but it has only seconds to live!

ATARI ST VERSION

Imparts an extra obstacle and the standard screen effects are great, but as a game it brings a poor record to testing your head against the wall.

GRAPHICS	3	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	3	FUN FACTOR	3
ACE RATING 273			

and your halfway to completing the screen. Get all that!

If the clunk-erotic sound with-battering, it might at least be nice to try it out. Unfortunately you won't be able to. The noise comes so fast and so powerfully that you can't do a thing. It's often impossible to get from your start point to all 64 squares without dying, so taking things any further is a matter of luck rather than skill. What is the point?

★ **Andy Wilson**

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Unplayability will end.

SPACE RACER

LORICIELS future biking

HOVER Bikes are the wild riding machines of the future. Unlike one of those tripping machines you can travel at high speeds across the undulating, two-dimensional landscape.

The race took at the four best place on three cycles. Do each one you had a single - follow the dotted line as closely as possible and avoid the outside hazards and other bikes. The most thing about the dotted line is that the closer to it you stay, the more accelerated



Whizzing through the gorges, trying to avoid other racers.

the use of energy.

Staying next the centre line is tough because not only does the boat veer left and right, but it also dips up and down. Staying too high above the ground will slow you down, making it a 17000 miles.

All along the route, on both sides, are pyramids, advertising hoardings, signposts and other hazards. Diving into them can have a number of effects - instant explosion, stop you dead or spin you out of control for a while. Games require your strategy, which effectively acts as a time test.

ATARI ST VERSION

Actually the same as the Amiga. The fact is, if anything, space is better but there's little to choose between them.

GRAPHICS	3	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	3	FUN FACTOR	3
ACE RATING 700			

AMIGA VERSION

The graphics are very fast, smooth and clear. The backgrounds and obstacles look good too. The controls are excellent and have plenty of variety. Would not a pleasant time for opening the lines enough to the digital world and atmosphere.

GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	3
AUDIO	3	FUN FACTOR	3
ACE RATING 700			

The other bike will try to stay on the centre line as well. You can bump them or steer them when they get in the way, but they won't slow you down considerably.

You can battle the three courses online, with it together as a championship. Its collective driving and which want to become really. What it looks a variety in the opposition. A few more levels and types of obstacle would have been nice.

★ **Rob Ross**

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Edge of appeal but not enough to cause us concern.

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Atari ST	1199s.	REVIEWED
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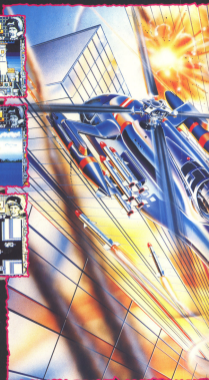


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GAME OVER II

Daring-do from DINAMIC

IT is not over yet. There are still battles to be fought here encountered in Game Over to deal with, and as we sets off on another mission, the time is for the experienced hero of the rebellion.

A sign of horizontal Goldenrod means you go, then it's time to scramble over a rail-road landscape before descending into a cave system well-stocked with equally adept, enemy fighters and bits of pure strategy. Survive first, and it's time to mount a strategic assault and gather forces reassembled

on the spot for the access code that allows you to reenter the second level. A strange space-hopper sequence leads into a spot of arcade-adventuring underground before you gain the entrance of a labyrinth. In one another volcanic zone is shut up the guards in the prison that holds Aelia, the main female trying to come.

Lots of different things to do, but nothing spectacular - a pack 'n' rate of personalities in a great cast-based selection.

● Game Set



RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	£ 9.95	OUT NOW
AMIGA	Native plans for this version	
IBM PC	£ 9.95	ANNOUNCED
OS/2	£ 9.95 / £ 9.95	ANNOUNCED
SPECTRUM	£ 9.95 / £ 9.95	OUT NOW
AMSTRAD	£ 9.95 / £ 9.95	ANNOUNCED



Major looks to be in his ship and Monte ready of the incoming waves of aliens.

SPECTRUM VERSION

A good deal of the you get Game Over II includes the package. Offering a comparison ground for performance games that are not too demanding.

GRAPHICS	5	IQ FACTOR	4
AUDIO	4	FUN FACTOR	4
AGE RATING 5-13			

ATARI ST VERSION

Relatively good graphics and controls effects are made up for the low-level mid game. Offers not too much in exciting, but reasonably entertaining.

GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	4
AUDIO	4	FUN FACTOR	4
AGE RATING 5-13			

SUPERSPORTS

GREMLIN get on the Seoul Train

IN the wake of the Seoul Olympic comes Gremlin's collection of alternative sports, compiled by Silver!

Five events follow, starting with Cross-Country, in which you have 30 seconds to 6000 targets that pop up in an alleyway. Mind you don't miss the alley end or your score falls. High Diving follows, where you jump

off a diving board, anything between 40 and 400 feet up in the air, aiming to perform acrobatic stunts before landing in a swimming pool. Then it's on to the Side Swish, where two funny wretched talking slugs stand either side of your character - another 30 many slugs as possible in 30 seconds. The penultimate event is a Crossbow contest where target-waddling grems remain on the line - before you line up the right-hand line of

AMSTRAD VERSION

The graphics are decent and well-suited to gameplay in great and you're off with the real impression that if Gremlin had managed to make up to make the graphics better to make sure have a much bigger profit.

GRAPHICS	4	IQ FACTOR	4
AUDIO	4	FUN FACTOR	4
AGE RATING 5-13			

and at all both of those targets placed at level stages. The last event is the Old water Assault Course where old trees, so challenging jumps have to be repeated.

Supersports has been well put together and a great fun to play, but the routine crossing and the events are not too much. The facility to play with two players is lacking in level difficulty, but in this there just isn't enough in the game keep you playing for very long.

● Game Set

Make something on the Amstrad.



SPECTRUM VERSION			
Great graphics and good graphics don't make the rest of challenge.			
GRAPHICS	5	IQ FACTOR	4
AUDIO	4	FUN FACTOR	4
AGE RATING 5-13			

RELEASE BOX		
OS/2	£ 9.95 / £ 9.95	ANNOUNCED
SPECTRUM	£ 9.95 / £ 9.95	OUT NOW
AMSTRAD	£ 9.95 / £ 9.95	OUT NOW
No plans for IBM PC version		



SDI

ACTIVISION's peace shield

BONZO might not be on his way out of the White House but his peace shield - the Strategic Defense Initiative - continues to be developed. As it looks to eventually succeed it has still to be refined or proven, but it sure provides good recreation for game addicts.

Multi-megatons of nuclear death-decides are totting their way through the atmosphere on their way to turning Earth into a radioactive wasteland. Just like bringing a football in the mainframe. You are a satellite whizzing peacefully around in orbit when suddenly all the best offensive hardware pops into view. Naturally you're going to get your laser tip whizzed up and zap everything getting past.

You control the movement of both the satellite and its laser sight, using the mouse in a manner in combination with a joystick. Mouse-only control moves the sight, or the satellite when the left button is held down. Alternatively, a joystick can be used to move the satellite, which can allow simultaneous two-player games, one person on the mouse controlling the laser and the other moving the satellite joystick.

The screen scrolls slowly from right to left, bringing on background scenery and all sorts of tubes. The weaponry starts all simple enough, rockets on air slowly across the screen and ground bases appear on the planet background. The weapons work even when you're flying to the satellite. It's impos-

Your satellite has enhanced weapon power via that big blue circle.



The offensive screen where you, standing in orbit, are shooting for the kill.



The defensive screen where you have to stop the missiles hitting your base.

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	£19.95	OUT NOW	
CD-ROM	£9.99	£14.99	IMMEDIATE
SPECTRUM	£9.99	IMMEDIATE	
AMSTRAD	£9.99	£14.99	IMMEDIATE

sible for you to wipe everything out, because if any offensive weapons get past you enter a defensive stage at the end of the level.

The weapons seem slow to get number and cause a greater number. There are fast moving ones, but by firing into you, they don't shoot at you, and a particularly nasty group that spins into the middle of the screen, coming into a spot where they can get an easy kill.

The defensive screen doesn't exist, but stores the base which has to be defended from the incoming missiles. There is a bar on the horizon and from the sides. Again you use the satellite to shoot down the missiles before they hit home. If the base survives the attack, it's on to the next offensive screen.

There are 12 levels and while the early ones are easy, the action starts to get tough at Level Four. Progress is aided considerably by picking up pods that give a range-boosting speed, time movement and extra sights. These additional sights can be quite confusing because they come in a delay pattern before the main sight sees its way to low levels at which one you are moving directly.

Additional, tough and packed full of bonuses, SDI makes its own-up original by being very well paced in fact. One of the best one-up conversions this year.

Bob Ross

ARCADE ACCURACY



An excellent conversion for graphics, gameplay and even the control method if you don't like a joystick, you'll love it on the ST.

COIN-OP SCORE 6

SPECTRUM PREVIEW

The action starts just as fast as the ST and you'll need few systems to get the best out of it. The background isn't there because of the monitor speed, but it adds to the game in the good.

ATARI ST VERSION

Excellent handling, action, graphics design and explosions. There's a different piece of music on every level and the music sound graphics. The dual joystick works well, but it's definitely recommended you have other two-players on a joystick that can be substituted, changed or otherwise swapped out.

GRAPHICS	6	ISS FACTOR	3
AUDIO	6	FUN FACTOR	6
ACE RATING 644			

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE

OCEAN going for gold

DALEY Thompson is not a stranger to Olympic success - or is he?

RELEASE BOX			
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JAMES	02/86	OUT NOW	
CD-ROM	03/86	04/86	AMMST
SPECTRUM	03/86	04/86	AMMST
AMSTRAD	03/86	04/86	AMMST

OS VERSION

Must install after installation here and the loading screens aren't as subtle as the Amiga version either. The graphics and sound are up to snuff.

GRAPHICS 7 IQ FACTOR 3
AUDIO 5 FUN FACTOR 7

ACE RATING 6-4-4

ing games. This is his first patch-wagging game endorsement.

The ten decathlon events are the 100 metres, long jump, shot put, high jump, 400 metres, 150 metres hurdles, steeple, pole vault, events and 1000 metres. They are all included, along with some training sequences which help competitors prepare for the events.

The events are the usual combination of patch-wagging and button-pressing.

AMIGA VERSION

Unsurprisingly, to get the best graphics both the presentation and the action itself. Most and effects are completed as well. Cheating shows is a bit out of place but you can't tell whether you have made the wrong choice.

GRAPHICS 8 IQ FACTOR 3
AUDIO 6 FUN FACTOR 7

ACE RATING 8-3-3



Daley prepares to launch himself into the long jump pit.

but there are a couple of additional bonus throws in. One is the chance of bonuses for each event - a range of about 10 available, and picking the right one for an event can seriously impact performance. The other addition are the training scenes, in which bottles of Lucozade can be used after prolonged bouts of hard wagging which can leave you absolutely frocked.

Wagging games aren't exactly new, but the one is nicely put together. It's certainly better than the original. D'n Decathlon and should appeal to most sports freaks.

By Web

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Wagging is fun, but it's not the most challenging game you'll find here ever seen.

POW

Hungry like the ACTIONWARE

BOTH Sega and Nintendo have tight jaws that attack in their systems, and someone that when you're in the gun to shoot various enemies besides from various your living items. Slow, bombs to Asteroids software house Actionware, Amiga version can do the same.

Whether you are the light gun of simply stick to playing the game with the aid of a mouse, the obscured the same. You have to work your way through several stages killing off enemy soldiers before finally reaching the



In the jungle, you'll find the. Watch out for those poor innocent animals.

of your buddies and seeing they make it safely to a pick-up point.

You're armed with a machine gun with rate of fire clips and an infinite supply, and if you're using the mouse a small sight appears on screen and you can fire to line up your shots on the enemy. One must be taken during several sections on innocent enemies and dogs often wander across the screen. Shooting an animal is not desirable, but it does reduce your score drastically. Shooting the enemy however, is a pretty good idea, especially as many of these dogs attack clips and rate of fire which you start to collect. Shooting tanks and helicopters that appear later in the game is no problem, provided you've got some rockets - more like

RELEASE BOX

STAR BT 02/86 AMMST

AMIGA 02/86 OUT NOW

As it is wrong planned

Original light gun - 03/86 now in CD-ROM

AMIGA VERSION

The graphics, sound and action are great. Although it's not as fast, you'll probably burn it out after a couple of weeks and will only need it up in the Main for a quick 30 minutes.

GRAPHICS 8 IQ FACTOR 1
AUDIO 8 FUN FACTOR 8

ACE RATING 7-5-5

right end of a vehicle, press fire and a rocket launches catastrophically.

Kill the enemy off quickly, because it doesn't take long to them to start shooting at you, and doing damage to your health meter. But old enemies appear now and again, and shoot health a little if they're shot on the ground. POW is not going to start your knees, but it's a satisfying blast while it lasts.

By Andy Lee

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



It's playable stuff, but not challenging enough.

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FERNANDEZ MUST DIE

UPDATE SPECIAL
ST & ImageWorks (EA/1994)

GENERAL Fernandez isn't too different. Just as we sit at a register and you're got the glorious task of giving them a one-way ticket to oblivion. It's the same basic idea as the CD-i version reviewed in Issue 13, but there have been quite a few changes - by no means all for the better.

The 4d version made quite dramatic attempts to distance itself from games like *Condemned* and *Just Witness* by taking



side-scrolls and other features. On the ST it has reverted to being a more standard view, its purely vertical scrolling and less other features from the 4d side-planes, particularly, and grid is added.

Obviously the ST version is slightly superior to the 4d. If the title gained a ruffing edge to the gameplay it really is extremely tough to survive the constant attention of the enemy soldiers and gun targets, but it feels wacky in the task. There are still associates in real, able to blow up and passers to rescue but there are just point-scores that help top up your number of lives.

ATARI ST VERSION

Sharp, clear graphics but not as good as Lemmings. The exposure and sound effects are less in comparison.

GRAPHICS	7	IS FACTOR	3
AUDIO	3	FUN FACTOR	7
AGE RATING 6-74			

The default view of the game has also been modified slightly. Instead of displaying boxes you have to tell the wares members of the Junta. They are found in buildings which do not sit, as a Fernandez of the end of the game.

This version is a little disappointing because it's expected the ST to score more boxes. However, it's still got plenty going for it.

—Gus Wain
PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE


DRILLER

UPDATE SPECIAL
Amiga and ST & Incentive (EA/1994)

FREESCAPE Incentive's tremendously impressive solid 3D system, truly takes it into the 16000 machines with the eye of drilling and tunneling. The scene is the plain, black, black, where underground gas workings are working dangerous operations. You

ST - an aerial view of the start location. The control panel has been jacked up considerably and the graphics more fast.

task is to place drilling rigs and heavily relieve the pressure, below Mord is blown in place.

The game may not demand much in the way of geological knowledge, but you will need to think hard and shoot accurately. You also need to know a little of words, because the solid 3D used to depict the caverns every puzzle and hazard is very impressive still.



On the 4d machines the sound engine was tempered by the slow frame rate of the display, but there's no hint of that in these latest versions. Considering that here music will give you each screen, the display is very fast indeed. As with the PC version, the video speed makes the game a lot more appealing prospect for those fans, even though the original puzzles are unchanged.

A last, valuable piece of software when it was launched about a year ago. Driller has lost nothing in the meantime. The ST and Amiga may both have a great big solid 3D titles, but the best, we'd feel a Freescape puts the one at a class of them.

—Andy Wain
AMIGA & ATARI ST VERSION

The mouse-aid control system is nice in these versions, but it's crucial and works well. The target colour range makes for the best looking idea of what it's like to drill.

GRAPHICS	8	IS FACTOR	7
AUDIO	4	FUN FACTOR	9
AGE RATING 10-3			

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE


Great to look at, great to play, but you'll love it eventually.

NEBULUS

STAR 87 & AMIGA 88 Version C19-004

UPDATE SPECIAL

VERY few games have stood out in the past year as exceptionally original, but this was certainly one of the few. It mixes platform action with exciting tower falling graphics, to produce one of the most addictive and challenging games ever. Really a poor one for the latest version comes, not just with the enhanced graphics and sound you would expect, but with extra levels as well.

You control a cute little thing called Pogo who is always centered on the screen, he appears from a submarine at the bottom of a cylindrical tower, which you view from the side and have to climb to the top of. The most original thing about it is the viewpoint you have on the action - as you walk round the tower it rotates, revealing what was hidden from view. It's a very simple idea, but it brings a nerve-racking edge to the otherwise so commonplace and creates a unique display.

Having scrawled at this innovative graphic style you'll look got caught up in some outrageous gameplay. When tested down to its essential elements it's a platform game composed of every living problem and complex puzzle, often requiring lateral thinking. What makes it different from the run of the mill 2D platform shifter is the viewpoint tower idea and the clever inventiveness that author John Phillips has put into the puzzle.

Climbing up the tower is mostly a matter of following a line of platforms and the Aard the way that one can plainly at hand has said to avoid the enemy. The cheapest trick of all is the disappearing plank, that vanishes as soon as you land on it plunging you down the tower. However, this is where another of the game's brilliant touches comes in. Falling doesn't kill you as long as you fall onto a plat-

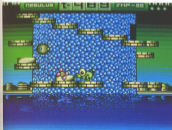


Amiga - that pink ball is launched for Pogo. You must shoot it with a sawball to give it a boost back down the tower.



ST - a neaty trick this one. To complete the tower you have to let the spinning alien to the right of Pogo knock him down to the platform below. These snail-paced balls provide him, so you've got to shoot fast too.

Amiga - one of the nice touches on the ST and Amiga is the water at the base of the tower. It reflects delicately and reflects the movement above it. However, in this shot you're about to be plunged into it by the spinning alien - and you can't swim.



form further down the tower - it just serves as a setback.

What does kill you is plummeting to a watery grave at the base of the tower or falling to reach the top before the time limit runs out. This means you get plenty of chances to learn the tower, even when you're making lots of mistakes at the beginning.

You'll also learn to take the spinning alien, who periodically appears from the edge of the screen heading straight for you. The easy way to avoid it is to go up or down before it arrives, or go through it sideways just before it reaches you. Downways take you straight down to the other side of the tower, but you can't let what happens in go, wait for you.

The very short sawballs, but these will only take not-falling blocks that bar the way out pink bouncing balls. The other dangers come in various guises and all follow similar movement patterns. They either attack vertically or horizontally, bouncing back and forth off whatever gets in their way. This means there are a lot of losing positions to be avoided, usually in tandem with some other hazard.

In between towers is a bonus stage where you control the submarine and shoot fish which then have to be collected to give extra time on the next tower. This is also loaded to a whole new sense of tension which makes the games lasting appeal over games.

The game can't be praised highly enough for its originality, graphics presentation, addictive gameplay and testing challenge. There had several less than well thought out in the programming to make it classic game over better.

■ **Col Ross**

STAR 87 VERSION

Graphics are just as good as the Amiga, but the sound effects aren't quite so top. The levels are all identical to the Amiga.

GRAPHICS: 7 10 FACTOR: 8

AUDIO: 6 FUN FACTOR: 8

ACE RATING 952

AMIGA VERSION

The graphics and sound effects are the best of any of the versions, just pipping the ST. The new levels are superbly designed and will give even experienced players a good run for their money.

GRAPHICS: 8 10 FACTOR: 8

AUDIO: 7 FUN FACTOR: 8

ACE RATING 952

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



The graphics and addictive gameplay make it an instant hit. The extra levels keep it going strong.



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The events are speed cycling, tandem pole vault, hammer, parallel bars, single, double and diving. Some of them are real-world wags, but the cycling, hurdles and pole vault all involve a fair bit of fantasy.

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	£19.99	MAR '89	
AMIGA	£19.99	MAR '89	
SPECTRUM	£2.99	£12.99	FEB '89
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systems the true most technically complicated events, and therefore the ones with most exciting stages, are the parallel bars, rings and diving, which involve a series of logical moves that require skill and precise footwork.

The presentation is excellent with opening, commentary, medal ceremony and a comprehensive instruction booklet that details



Whoo! You've taken a tumble trying to do the hurdles. You're not getting up from that one.

CGA VERSION

Graphics and animation are up to the usual high standard that Epix maintain in the 80s. The manual points the way up a between the screen and joystick.

GRAPHICS 8 16 FACTOR 4
AUDIO 7 FUN FACTOR 7

AGE RATING T13

some memorable moments from each event and offers hints and tips on tactics.

As you would expect from Epix, each action is both well put together and challenging. Its best played by a group of people - where the competitive nature will be strongest. A worthwhile addition to the Epix sporting range.

• See Also

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Clancy sporting when that will last.

CYBERNOID II

Pirate pranking with HEWSON

THOSE pirates are back again, and this time you've been delegated to ship in his name, pop a few boats and get it all back again.

The music is not classic from the wagner genre, although additional features have been added to try to get it up. It's a 60k screen area, featuring a dual-300-up and an arcade adventure, with the ship on fire on the loading. Each screen pre-

sents a bunch of nasty aliens who have to be turned into an alien or jet-rocket.

The bad guys come in all sorts of shapes, sizes, and behaviour patterns. On most screens they come in good numbers and you'll need all your 600 and weapons to destroy.

The weapons have been beefed up, which is just as well with all these raised clone around. You're now armed with bombs, time bombs, shield, bouncing bombs, mines, smart bombs and more. These can all virtually all known items, most, but are in short supply at the start. Later weapons can be picked up along the way on alien-ruins, or video weapons in the form of a humanoid being gun and a large sphere that makes the ship.

Despite the impressive beginning it's still an extremely difficult game to play. The



Starting at the bottom left you are contacted by a somewhat of alien letters.

adds are stacked against you and the dying clone, using weapons in the process, it's even harder to survive. This sort of more generous aspects to many game books but there's not much mystery and so once you've been writing a few interesting text.

• See Also

AMSTRAD VERSION

The new taking of the three, with the same setting graphics.

GRAPHICS 8 16 FACTOR 4
AUDIO 6 FUN FACTOR 7

AGE RATING E72

RELEASE BOX

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MSX	£8.99	£12.99	OUT NOW
CMX16	£8.99	£14.99	OUT NOW

*In all versions under development

SPECTRUM VERSION

Graphics and sound up to the standard of the first game, but very slow. Gameplay is just as difficult and frustrating.

GRAPHICS 8 16 FACTOR 4
AUDIO 6 FUN FACTOR 7

AGE RATING E72

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Some old thing at first, then the addition files, but it soon picks up to have an average game.

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RADIANT

You simply can't get the entire system for running a Dungeons and Dragons game onto a home computer — but more and more people are having a good try. American strategysimulation experts SSI turn their hand to the second AD&D licence, and Andy Smith checks out how well they fare.

POOL OF RADIANCE

US GOLD/SSI start playing for keeps

921

Most of the time you have been the first game released by SSI to carry the official Advanced Dungeons and Dragons label, but it wasn't much of a role-playing game (RPG). It had some strong role-playing elements, but the emphasis was placed on the arcade-style tactical action. The second AD&D licence, Pool of Radiance, is however very much closer to that ever popular board game format.

Pool of Radiance isn't a game you can get up and running in a moment — but then that's true of most RPG-enhanced software. It's also rather more intricate in structure than games like the Mech Force series, which again is not surprising — one of the criticisms levelled against AD&D itself is that the rule



Outside the City Council building in Mar Pelion. Right, who's the some Old Kingdom?

system has become far too complex, requiring annotations with regulations of every possible opportunity. There's little change at that in the case of Pool of Radiance, however.

INTO THE FRAY

Try as you might, you won't be able to take the game for very long without getting into a fight. Once a combat situation occurs (how you encounter the enemy determines whether you are the winner), it's a fully fledged tactical support. The screen changes to show some of your party and its opposition. The characters themselves, in turn, acknowledge their relative status — the higher the, the more moves they get during combat.

You can turn over control of characters to the computer or opt to make all the tactical decisions yourself. The basic types of weapon, if you choose, are ranged weapons (sling, crossbow, long bow and arrow) and melee weapons (like swords, maces, and spears). Which you use depends on the type of enemy



In combat. Don't forget to handle wounded players!



After most battles you get the chance to share out the spoils of war.

you're fighting. For example, a long sword has more effect against large opponents such as Trolls and Golems than a broad sword would whereas the latter is more effective against smaller opponents such as Kobolds.

The fight continues until either you kill all the enemy (or two members) or your party is destroyed. When a member of your party dies a series of bells toll and the character and the corresponding cut disappear from screen. If another member of the party manages to damage the wounded character the required hitpoints remains unmissable but recovers after a few days rest. Forget to damage a wounded character and death ensues. We'll discuss, and you'll enjoy the loot and rewards collected by the vanquished enemy.

CONTROL PLAY?

in, three teams is ever going to fit all. The ADAM system puts everything under a player's control.

You start the game by creating a party of up to six characters (see "Character tool" below) you've given a brief tour of the city of New Britain, and left to await trials, tortures and adventures wherever you wish.

The screen display during the majority of the game is divided into three sections. The top left of the screen is your view of your surroundings and the top right shows the names of your party members and their current and hit point levels. The game is



In the game, behind this door's a party of the most recent recruits of Deus. This side of Montreal.

RELEASE BOX

OS/2	386	REVIEWED
PC	386 and Alpha format T&A	

OS/2 VERSION

Though the graphics may suffer some of the art and its sound effects are, you'll find you can become absorbed in the game world and just be playing this for months to come.

GRAPHICS	T	IQ FACTOR	B
RATED	4	PER FACTOR	B

ACE RATING 92%

controlled by selecting various options from the menu at the top of the screen.

For example, by selecting a party member from the list at the top of the screen, and then by selecting the view option at the box, the screen clears to show you that character's abilities, job type and so on—plus a cameo of the character that you choose at the start of the game. Another menu gives you the option to view that character's equipment. Select the option to choose which weapons the character will have ready when entering battle. By selecting DRG from the sub-menu, you're taken back to the main menu, where the MCH option puts you in direct joystick control of

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Before you start the game, you have to create your band of adventurers, creating a party of six to eight characters from a choice of six races, including dwarves, elves, halflings and humans. Once you've distributed names, race and gender for your character the computer randomly generates an ability score. These include strength, wisdom, dexterity and charisma ratings which affect how the character plays during the game.

Next you then choose a class to give to your character. Do you want your character to be a fighter? Mage user? Or a combination of several such classes? Here the race of the character is important here—for example, human characters can only belong to single-class, whereas dwarves and gnomes can be jobs-of-all-trades.

Finally, you must decide the alignment of the character. Alignment is the philosophy the character is following. A character with chaotic good alignment clearly may prefer to eat and drink and use force properties to bring his benefits to



himself. It shows each character will default to and other attributes and any-punch-levels. Once you've created your party you can save their attributes and begin to play the game proper.

The character creation screen, where you opt to choose (and select) your character for should look like this.



Your character's vital statistics, including what weapons he/she'll be carrying, armor class and hit points.

the party and you then get a leader's eye view of the surroundings as you move about the environment, interacting with its features.

The City Council building is a good place to start looking for things to do. The Council ones has work for "willing bands of adventurers and they pay well for a job well done. You don't have to accept any of the jobs if you don't want to, but a good introduction to the game is provided if you start to go and help out the city's share-of-monsters and other necessary characters.

Once you enter the stores it doesn't take long before you find some staties like Bowmaster's bow and battle companions. Victory means that your character are awarded a number of experience points, which are crucial to the development of their skills and ratings. For example, fighters get stronger as they gain additional experience. Wizards can wield more powerful spells, and thieves become more adept at their art.

Consequently you might meet non-occupational characters in the game who may be able to give you some information, or who may ask you to do them a little service.

Whether you pay any heed to what you face, or whether you decide to undertake extra tasks is entirely up to you.

Trying to replicate the complete concept of the ADAM system on a home micro, along with the social aspects in the game is an ambitious project. It has gone a long way to obtaining that aim, and have produced an admirable IPW-enhanced computer product, one that will not only please hardcore ADAM fans but will appeal to anyone looking for a game to keep them entertained and playing for a long time to come.



CAPONE

ACTIONWARE play da Chicago piano.

As the post-crime target game operates between static indoor and outdoor outdoor scenes, you tend to be dead. The gangsters who wander outdoors or peek out from cover. Talk too long and they open up with Tommy-guns.

Innocent bystanders pop up occasionally, and must be avoided. Explosives also get in its appearance, with gangsters taking behind cover at TNT

blast buildings or dropping sticks at dynamite. These two low-level and collectible machine gun don't exactly amount to traps, but they're all you're getting.

Old style strip-on-ups like this are a big step down from Operation Wolf or Actionwarrior even PCW did its a shame to see an. Always wanted on such shallow gameplay.

■ Andy O'Hara



RELEASE BOX

PRICE	£2.99	£12.99
AGE 15	15+	18+
TYPE	2-D	3-D

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



AGE RATING 15+

VETERAN

A sheep in Wolf's clothing from **SOFTWARE HORIZONS**

There are three classes to complete in this Cpr Wolf clone. You've got several machine guns to choose from at the start of the mission, each with differ-

ent firing rates and ranges. The screen doesn't scroll at all - unless the enemy comes onto it from the sides. As you'd expect, you've got a limited supply of ammo and rockets with which to destroy the soldiers, tanks, helicopters and machine gun nests, but you can pick up extra supplies from the ground by shooting them.

The gameplay's slow, the digitised speech is awful and it's doubtful you'll be playing this in a year's time.

■ Andy O'Hara



RELEASE BOX

PRICE	£14.99	£19.99
AGE 15	15+	18+
TYPE	2-D	3-D

By software horizons

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



AGE RATING 15+



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FINAL ASSAULT

EPYX climb peaks

FINAL ASSAULT appeared way back in *ACE* issue 5 and was then an Intergame game endorsed by the Scooter and coded Christian Challenge. Since then, Epyx have brought the rights to the game and have apparently made some 100 changes.



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You're still left with a 'waggle the joystick to climb the mountain' game that gives you six climbs to complete you can string up to three climbs together if you wish. You have to make sure you're using the right equipment at the right stage of the climb or you could find your climber getting into difficulties, but select the training option and on-screen prompts will tell what equipment you should be using at each step.

The gameplay has been improved but it still isn't got you very excited. You'll soon be looking for new mountains to try.

— Andy Smith



ARTURA

GREMLIN travel through time

TRAVEL back to the 18th century in this magical quest to collect a series of mystical rare stones that allow you to liberate Missus, apprentice to the villainous Marquis who stands before where the stone houses of Alison are hidden, which you need to...

And so it goes on, depicting the fact that this is really just a block-Lamp-type arcade-adventure. You need to explore each stage to enter of rooms and levels waiting for the start of the same line involving the swiftness and the early creature. Your victory is achieved by

lets but can be restored if you know where to look in the appropriate systems.

Artura is not terribly difficult, and the determined player will complete it all too soon.

— Bob Peck



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APPROACHING HARDS

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STRUGGLING ON

After abandoning the ship you capture an ADRECK in order to continue advancing on the planet. A dagger is the only weapon you rely on to fend off the inhabitants. You fight against the enemy forces. You have to steal a wingsuit. And advance forward, to fight ahead. Nothing can distract you.

THE PRISON

The cross enemies, boomerangs and forest, there are enemies all over the way to the prison becomes more hazardous the further you advance. You take command of a helicopter, descend into the entrails of the planet, and arrive at the prison. It is heavily guarded. Will you be capable of freeing ABDOOL?



APPROACHING HARDS



STRUGGLING ON



THE PRISON



THE PRISON



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SUSPENDED ANIMATION

Andy Smith plays with some puppets and saves a world from destruction before escaping from a prisoner of war camp and capturing some gangsters in this month's round-up of what's hot and new in the arcades.

On the second stage, "We're about to slug it out with GI Joe!"



(Right) The stage theme, that small character's a mean one!



(Below) Ouch! We're gonna get you back on your hands.



And it's all over but the shouting. Oh well, time to get some more money in the slot.



THE LAST APOSTLE PUPPET SHOW

Homedata 30p

Don't let the wacky title put you off, this beat-'em-up packs in the old punch. The game is one or two players and as it you try to walk your way up a mountain fighting various increasingly diabolical opponents. In fact, so standard, but what makes this game different is the display.

Most arcades have stunning sights and backgrounds, but whatever they don't have that 'real' look to them, and at best they look like posters. L.A.P.S. on the other hand has stunning characters and backgrounds with a tremendous 'realistic' quality. The characters look just like the puppets you might see in a children's TV programme (the puppets in strings, not the glove variety). The animation of the characters is not brilliant but the shading and the backgrounds give it one of the most televisive 32 displays yet.

The actual game isn't too fancy, and you have a wide variety of moves to use against your opponents using the standard punch and kick buttons. As in most of these types of games, when you position the joystick while you press a button affects just what move you make. Pull down, or the joystick and press kick and you'll do a leg sweep, push up and kick and you'll do a high kick aimed at the enemy's head. At the start of the game it's just you versus another puppet, but as you progress up the mountain, the opponents become more numerous and you can be fighting off hordes of the enemy that come raining at you from all directions. Don't let the puppet title fool you into thinking the enemies are soft though, they're not and once your energy bar at the top of the screen reaches zero your head goes flying across the screen bloodlessly (thank goodness).

The game concept may be old hat, and the animation may seem a little to be desired, but it has a lot of things worth going to be seeing more of, it is so good because from the future does indeed look bright.



Boop! That's got paid for that end-of-level question.

FORGOTTEN WORLDS

Capcom 30p

Would you shopping next time you're playing a shoot-'em-up? The latest one is two-player Capcom offering could be just what you're after.

In the game you take control of an airborne character armed with a hand firing gun, and you divide by one several "helper" shooting at the badies that attack you from every direction. Controlling your character involves using two joysticks - the first moves your character up and down the screen while the other is one of those joystick-tilts. Twist the joystick and your character rotates. Push the joystick and you shoot.

Now, here comes the shopping bit. As you destroy certain aliens, they drop Gemmy coins. Fly over these and collect them, and at various points during the game a shop will appear from the background. Fly in through the door and you can purchase your power-ups. You can, of course, opt not to buy anything but wait 'til the next stage when you'll have more Gemmy coins - and be able to buy some cooler weapons than if you survive the end-of-level-questions.

Best everything is right here are going to enjoy playing Forgotten Worlds, which may not be a tertiary ongoing game, but suggest this to play.

Left: Flying through the Egyptian stage with plenty of firepower.



Right: There goes another question!



Not quite the corner store is it?



EXTENDED PLAY

SCRAMBLE SPIRITS ● Sega 30p

This mixed fun shoot, vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up set in the 21st century and gives you a small, ten-fingered partner to fly. You're armed with a hand firing gun, and power-up weapons you a fighter escort that you can use to attack other enemies or power-ups (depending on what bullet you press). Great fun, but again it's nothing original.

P.O.W. ● SNK 30p

Escaping from a Prisoner of the Camps to easy take - especially when the guards know you're trying to bust out and come after you armed with rifles and machine guns. The game is about setup-up, essentially, but any one-handed you manage to escape, you control. It's a Pinetop-style, but it's not half bad and it will work something.



P.O.W. ready for a fight. Pick up that machine gun and you won't have the toughest time making your way out of there.

ASSAULT ● Namco 30p

A little different from the one we did last time, but you've got two systems to control a tank instead of one. You're driving through a maze-like version of a level, and instead of firing directly you fly the tank over before power-up forces again. The control method's easy to get used to and is a fairly methodical way of avoiding the shots the enemy tanks fire away.

GANGBUSTERS ● Namco 30p

Large cartoon characters make an appearance in this new level from above shoot-'em-up. Some heavy-duty robots have stolen a whole village of cash and as a justice officer it's about to go and bust them up. They're cartoonish, though, who better not want to stop you by shooting you, but should you survive at the bank robbery. It's not terrible but they're really not in the middle of the real world (unlike the 3D) so you really have to stop them and go back to work.



The fun factor then to the nearest waiting Block Man where you'll receive a power-up. It's a tough game to play, but it's a great fun.

SNY SOLDIERS ● SNK 30p

This vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up for one or two players gives you half a dozen missions to complete, each set in a different country and time period. You're flying a spacecraft and the enemy will reflect the country and time period you're fighting in - Coastguards appear when you're fighting over the North Sea, and mercenaries and bombers show up in 1944 France.

Both weapons are given to you at the start of each mission and you have a choice of several, including firing missiles and "bombs". You only have limited amounts of each weapon though, so make sure you save some for the end of each mission!

CRASH ● Sega/Atari/Commodore 30p

It's not long before an original idea appears a batch of clones. This one is an Operator (with a gun) for one or two players. You shoot guns a machine gun mounted on the front of the submarine, and it's a little while the lights around the screen, picking off the badies as you go.

BLAZING BARRELS

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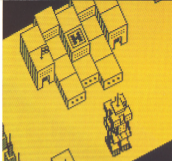


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Tired of dumb opponents? Bored by old, slow electronic thump-poppers that just wander into your field of fire? Well, so you should be. Just because modern robotics move in slightly more complex patterns than the Space Invaders of yesteryear doesn't mean they're interesting. If the bad guys are listless, they aren't really bad guys at all - just targets, obstacles or timing problems to be dealt with.

Unfortunately once you get beyond breadboard-style "learned" behaviors you run into some living programming problems. Even when robots are being administered, they rarely go beyond a mixture of command-and-learning behaviors (at least because these are the simplest patterns to program). Random elements can make learning slightly more interesting, but the bad-guy behavior remains predictable.

The next step after learning is evasion. At its simplest this is just the learning routine used in chess - so it was in Pac-Man once you'd eaten power pills, and in Space when you activated your repulsor. This was a fairly minor improvement on total stupidity, but better things are possible with a little more effort.



Robot Earth (Advanced), a supercharged wargame where you could see the results of your orders in real time, handles all turns. If the winning system had been a little more complex, you'd have had some really smart robots to work with.

GET SMART

What if games were packed with nasties that could think for themselves? What if you could program your own forces to attack intelligently? What if programs could actually slag it out for control of your computer? Andy Wilton looks at how artificial intelligence and programmability could change the face of gaming.

ARTFUL DOGGERS

As early as 1916, bad guys were wearing steel helmets to try and stop out of your gun-sights light air. Missiles and MIGs have been steadily slippery ever since. In Atari's *Lightyear*, Cotto Kinops acts as bad guys who could actually duck (despite the fact he's built to avoid your kinetic bullets, while in *Star Wars* *Blaster* comes up with a real spaced leg of behavior patterns. It's bad enough when pods fall out of your

line of fire, but the way the game's autonav and lighters work at getting a height advantage is positively impressive. The learned, complex, behavior patterns can make things unconsciously difficult.

There's still a lot of ground to be covered there complex behavior patterns may be figured out, and an effective counter-measure found. Well, if it long enough and you'll still be able to beat the *Artificial* test of the bad guys' tactics - and once you've done that the

game turns into a turkey shoot. The same technique works against the wonder-less other line, so the technical challenge evaporates.

This is the "level head" problem: seeing to ugly level. The bad guy behavior patterns may be intricate, but they're also fixed. The only intelligent opposition you've got is the programmer, and when you figure out a way to beat him he has no way of responding for not without punishing a weapon at any cost. Most of AI's work always been built at multi-player games as a way round the problem, but there could be other means.

As suggested lately in Atari's *Alien* (ACE issue #1), there's no reason why bad guy tactics shouldn't develop to cope with any killer technique you use. *Alien* AI's suggested doing this by an evolutionary process, so that those worms of class would be stopped by whichever ones survived longest this time round. In practice that probably wouldn't be the best way of doing things. Techniques used in certain experimental chess and draughts programs ought to let complex tactics learn quickly from their connected situations, while building up a long-term knowledge base as to what tactics seem to work best against you.



Star Wars: Rebel Assault (AT). You can set a destination for your *Wings* amphibious tanks, but you can't tell them what to do when they get there - so massed attacks, coordinated reinforcements and simultaneous air cover are all out of the question. A higher level of command system would allow games with whole fleets of ships to them.

HELP WANTED

Once the bot guys start getting ahead, you'll have to rise up too. If you're all alone against a vast horde of legions, there you clearly aren't going to last long. You'll need help, and it best be in intelligent help.

Of course, if a games writer can make your opponents learn to do the same for you helps, but that won't produce a game most people would want to play. After all, if your buddies are doing half the work you may not feel very involved in the proceedings. For better or for ill, intelligence is part of your game stock. If you've programmed this, that's

Don't panic - write not talking about learning machine code and writing your own routines (though that can make an excellent game in its own right, see the *Code War* book). In fact, programmable helpers would only be a slight advance on the sort of centering logic you get in games already on the market.

In last year's *Alpha Prime* (now *Great Stone Games*), Heiber found you could use your robot to offload enemy details or installations. It wouldn't be going that much further if you could give them secondary tar-



Great Stone (PG) could techniques from intelligent games like this help make chess-empire chess smarter?

goals would let you do this, and it would have other advantages as well. For one thing, it would help prevent God-Eye View, the problem whereby a program commander can get information that a real-life commander wouldn't have access to. Another example is the score-based weapons model that lets the point a little score decay.

PACED INTELLIGENCE

Maybe we set nondestructive pieces to search for the enemy center group. If you led if you can attack with several, shell it

from over the horizon or pass on the news to your own submarine flotilla. In real life, especially in *NW II*, in some initial period, you'd only get the results of the search when the news pieces got home safely. If they were destroyed by the enemy, that's another ship again, you'd never learn a thing about it.

Clearly the knowledge machine won't translate very well to a finite state if you actually have to control the score pieces yourself. The pieces may get lost often, but you'd have seen the enemy group yourself and can act accordingly. Programmable brains could carry out complex commands, while at the same time maintaining the Chinese wall's necessary to prevent you finding out too much, too early.

Of course, the easiest means that you see out on all the action. At the best, these offshoots could let you watch highlights of each mission - reconstruction in your command line in real life - and give details of how your units were put into position. This would serve the additional purpose of letting you see what the shortcomings of its own bugs in your orders were, so that you could improve your programming style in future. ■

ART!

ers for any spare minutes they have left, or set damage levels beyond which they should retreat for repairs. There's a daunting list of what to do if they encounter obstacles or come under enemy fire at all, and you've got the beginnings of some wireless events - and it's all your own work!

PLANS OF ATTACK

Building programmability into a game could contain one notion of what gameplay is all about. Imagine it in five possible scenarios.

Take a full-time weapons in the style of *Clash Command*, for example. You front up a limiting group to offload enemy shipping, but you don't actually want to have to command the mission personally. If the game's coming to real time you might well have to split-an-attack at your own feet, organize sub-atomic patrols or prepare for the important strategy you're making now.

The problem is, you're sending these battles out to offload a moving target - enemy warships don't necessarily sit still whether willingly or not - and you're not quite sure when it'll be when they catch up to it. Which means you don't know how strong the anti-attack line will be, precisely what sort of ship they'll be attacking, whether they'll run into an enemy combat oil patch or any number of other important factors.

What's needed is some system whereby you can give detailed orders covering different possibilities. A simpler programming lan-

guage would let you do this, and it would have other advantages as well. For one thing, it would help prevent God-Eye View, the problem whereby a program commander can get information that a real-life commander wouldn't have access to. Another example is the score-based weapons model that lets the point a little score decay.

Maybe we set nondestructive pieces to search for the enemy center group. If you led if you can attack with several, shell it

ers the enemy's data and spent writing successful *Core War* programs is a tricky business. After the initial maintenance, operating system "MIPS" code is a little like a program you write for a machine. You're not sure how many other know where the other is. This is the essence of *Core War*, multi-task between the programs, creating instructions for each other, and so on. The highly aggressive *Core War* programs are all written in a special language called "Pascal code."

Rebels in any line of assembly language, as each of your program instructions can also be considered words. The idea your program code is change itself, but that's the very program change too. The standard aggressive *Core War* programs are all written in a special language called "Pascal code."

CORE WAR

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This month the Cowled Crusader takes a critical look at Lancelot, brings you the Paladin's guide to Lords of Time, plus the final installment of the Pawn solution. All that, plus more reviews, hints and tips from the country's premier adventure reviewer...

LANCELOT ST SCREENSHOT



...all here. Lancelot was in Arthur's wedding bed! Bedchamber walls tremble and a lightning bolt strikes the roof, killing it and reducing Arthur to ash. Lancelot stands over Gawain, the King and Lisa Brink. Sir Sir Gawain! Gawain! Gawain! Gawain! Sir Sir Arthur said, 'Welcome to Camelot, Lancelot. Arthur has foretold that you are fated to become the greatest of all knights. We are honored to have you at our court.'

Lancelot on the Bridge

LANCELOT

LEVEL 9/MANDARIN's Holy Grail?

THIS game has been expected for some months now. Following Level 9's all with Mandarins, it seems likely that Lancelot will be the last Acorn adventure produced under that label. What sort of reception does it offer?

A pretty decent one, for about last month we saw Logica Back, developed after Lancelot, and although I wouldn't necessarily put guesses before knights, I would in this case. This is a obvious disappointment because the Acornians seem to really one of the great opportunities in adventuring. One fine (and old) game based for the Holy Grail, with its exploding rabbits and flying knights, managed to boost a little better than the days of Lancelot and the Round Table.

Level 9 have made some pretty tough

choices for this game. They are in accord in saying it is their best yet, and further more we have been informed that Peter Austin is an expert on Acornians. To a certain extent their claims do have some substantiation in the game. To start with, the locations have an understate as of substantially about them, as do the characters of the various knights and the occasional flourish of early English prose.

So what's the problem? Simply that the game, while appearing to contain last moments, keeps getting spelt by apparent contradictions and poor design. For example, the characters are great and - as in Logica Back - lead interesting lives that greatly enhance the atmosphere of the game. However, they also have slight speech tendencies that do not do much credit to anyone, least of all themselves.

For example, it's quite amusing when the Damocel Molestead says to Lancelot, who is carrying a hot cobble, 'Well you drop it! It is not amusing, however, when she says it again's often felt just it down. At other times, the characters' responses and outbursts appear more more illogical. Even an innocent suggestion to Arthur can get you the reply 'Don't bother me with that! I am the king!' or words to that effect, which may amuse once, but never again. Once suspects that the character is simply saying I don't understand, in which case

PILGRIM

ADVANCED COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

why not be more direct?

However, all the men be forgiven, when you find characters engaged in interesting activity or, for once, replying with convincing relevance. You can also toggle the game graphics to some pleasant low resolution for some idea of the variety here) because

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LORDS OF TIME PLAYERS' GUIDE

BY THE PALADIN

PART 1 Lords of Time, one of Level 1's early classics, has seen something of a revival after being resumped and included in their latest Time and Magic trilogy. So let's play it again... shall we?

I hope you won't need any help getting as far as the inside of the time-piece? Good. Once inside, get the ficker going so you can get out again. (The clock seems to suffer from an identity crisis and thinks it's Dr Who's Tardis. To travel between the time-zones turn one of the numbered cogs, then swing the objivob, then go out. The cogs should be taken in ascending order, with one exception, which I'll tell you about later.)

First, you should find yourself at the end of a driveway. A wander round this quaint bijou cottage should be well rewarded, and make sure you get something to keep your hands free for later on. (There are valuable treasures to collect throughout the game, but these, in the main, are not necessary to finish the adventures. Is it valuarier? Examine it and see.)

Before taking in the garden, go and get toolled up at the road works down the lane. Back at the garden you'll need something that... To reach the keys you'll have to do a rain person a good turn first, and let him admire himself. To find him promenade along the stream at the bottom of the garden, and bridge it upstream.

Once you've got inside the shed, make sure you take everything. One object is essential for later problems and the other is used to put an old man (the widow) out of his misery.

Take a short cut back to the clock, along the outside of the cottage. At the compost heap, eat the mushrooms, and gain a little insight. Finally, at the carport, tick the petrol can and take a look at the bottom of the Porsche.

Back at the clock drop everything valuable, but take what you picked (gum) up at the road works. Bong! It's a bit chilly here in the ice ages. When you are tripped by the woolly elephant, light a fire with the fuel and scrap wood. The frightened mammoth leaves some things behind. To get further you'll have to be kinder to another member of the animal kingdom - you did bring the cat food didn't you? A spare point may find a better home in the compost - but remember to tangle with the tooth fairy, so you can shine light on later problems.

Now that the tiger's been placated you can wander round the caves. You'll need to break the ice a couple of times and make some ice to walk across. Release the queen and she will give you something which is useful to another member of royalty later on. That wraps it up here so take a short cut south, down the tunnel.

More next month. See previous page for final solution to Ye Pawn - long awaited by many patient Pilgr who have been robbed of their victory by shortage of space...



NO PROBLEM!

■ Once again, fellow Pilgr come to the aid of those in distress. This month's Truly Virtuous Ones include Jason Hand, Mark Coleman, Ross Hildray, and Wayne Piper.

KINGS QUEST 2

Leave cockpit open in wizard's bathroom, then look behind it to find magic map.
To dodge wizard on the pirate's ship, stay on the ladder.
To defeat the Phages, use the steam boiler.

BEYOND ZORK

To earn more compassion, use the levitation to lift the baby fungus from the quinkstand.
Jump off the intricately hinged bridge using the umbrella.

CONSPIRACY

Open cabinet in cubicle and search it.
Smash heavy window with screwdriver from glove compartment.

Theresa leaves her office at 10.00 - get into key from her drawer and enter Claudia's office.
When Nurse Stephenson leaves the ward, get up, get the papers and pillow case from under the empty bed, then go to operating theatre, get bandage, and wear it.

Put all except papers into pillow case and tie it in knot. When in ambulance, remove clothes from pillow case and put them on. Remove bandage. Get up, open ambulance doors, and jump for it.

SHADHWATE

Operate hatchback on middle mirror in mirror room.
Operate speaker on hat.
Operate key to the world's worst on globe.
Hit get in tunnel with silver arrow.
Operate star on square in tunnel.
Operate right panel in throne room.

DEJA VU

Operate cord on stand in lift and on wall.
Operate springs on container marked **SHRIMP**.
MTRB, then operate springs on wall.
Springer hit lady with redwood postcard.



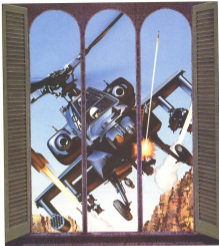
CONTACTING THE PILO...

Fancy seeing your name on these pages? Fancy making friends around the world? Don't forget that the Pilgr is always looking for letters from fellow adventurers, hints and tips, and correspondence on any adventure-related subject.

The address to write to is **THE PILGRIM, ACE MAGAZINE, 4 QUEEN STREET, BATH, BA1 1EJ.**

Remember to include your name and address - and don't forget to put ACE on the envelope, since the Starbuddy Pilgrist loves to carry a flag and we wouldn't want you in the wrong publication, would we?

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Screenplay by Andrew G. Gougeon

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Atari ST cover 1989

JEAN-MICHEL JARRE

IN CONCERT

When Jean-Michel Jarre said he wanted to gather 2,500 technicians, 200 musicians, 40 tons of generators, scores of searchlights, lasers and slide projectors and a stage full of synthesizers and computers together for an open-air concert in London's Docklands, people said he was mad.

They were right — he was. Anyone else would have taken the English weather into account (it had been 100°F in a summer without, why would it 100°F in the summer?) but Jarre's well-representing idea about stage lighting the way old-time to consider an audience sitting watching his stage show in a kind of freezing drizzle. And there were the press seats, carefully chosen by the organizers to afford a view of only half the show — most of the public, who had paid a mere \$15 for their tickets as opposed to \$20 for the unaccommodated grandstands (only Princess Diana got to leave a bit of pleaser shoving over her head) had the pleasure of standing up for a few hours to try to get a good view at all.

Luckily the organizers had managed to thwart them by placing Jarre's stage at one side of the massive Royal Victoria Dock while the audience watched from the other side, hundreds of yards away. This made it a spot difficult to view the stage setup, with its stacks of keyboards, sequencers and computers, and even more difficult to see the

point of facing dancers and other performers on stage when even Jarre himself was just a very unimmaculate spot in the distance. Considered one of 300-millimeter lens that the sort of thing the average member of the audience is likely to be carrying in his back pocket made it possible to see just a little more.

But of course, the main action was going on in the sky and all around on the building of the Docklands, with four huge projected images created to accompany the themes of Jarre's new album, *Revolution*. These main revolutions were being projected — the industrial revolution which crossed the Docklands in the first place, and which was 50th, represented mostly by stills from TV shows such as *The Man From Snowy Mountain* and *The Saint* — and the telecommunications revolution of the 80s, represented by satellite dishes, antennas and Jarre's computer-generated motifs.

The album itself makes for unusual listening, with sampled metallic sound courtesy of the *Sense III* (Spotlight, Abel 9900) and other instruments mixing to electric woods, digital



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ocean

and cooling synth sweeps and a few of the rolling sequences which otherwise form more up-tempo material. But there's little in the way of memorable melody there, and the date material from the Corporate and Spieswe'LPs' stand up much better on the night. There's not to say that the music was remembered unconsciously - it all got very close to the album, really, but that may have been something to do with the three 24-track tape machines whirring away behind the giant three-tiered lighting stage.

MUSIC, MAMMOTH, PLEASE...

Jarvis' side during the concert was more that of a conductor than a musician, with his central console supposedly collating the action at the lights, lenses, slide projection and music. During the Houston concert he played some parts from a modified Yamaha 4030 remote keyboard stopped around his neck, but for that show he had a sequencer now firmly built - all pointing out bits of music, which Jarvis used microphones on the end of a pole to click. Still, it all managed to fool the Radio 1 DJ who hosted the show on its live night radio transmission and, whose gullibility was matched only by his lack of knowledge of modern musical instruments (what the hell is a Sequencer anyway?).

Music critics at the time, the 100 odd who really were singing, the drummer Joe Bonomo was hammering away for a good part of

the time on his large Sinscra-branded kit, and at least one of the synth players (Douglas-Pepper) came out there got the old Space Jet album re-recorded* 1. Mailed Steve, Neil van Duinen and Francis Street was visible complete with remote keyboard and computer monitor. Bob Marvin (yes, that's Marvin from The Stockyard) put in an appearance virtually got in the way of any possible view by wandering around the stage and planting itself in front of the musicians.

Jarvis' famed laser lamp sequences, which are more interesting visually than musically, was rendered almost totally pointless by the fact that smoke and fog made both music and laser sound even the shining objects gone which supposedly have to be seen when cutting the powerful laser beams to trigger off the synthesizers effectively invisible, and while the effect of the SWING overlights playing on the outside of the low circle was breathtaking, it was ironic that those same clouds spread most of the evening dropping limiting water on the audience. And in the nature of the substance which makes the whole Techno-Dance so depressing. Like the Brou-

den and Lyon concerts, Destination Dordrecht was intended for the people - with a privileged few paying spectators to the concert than paid-off showbiz. But the very brand of the music, which seemed to be a clearly guarded secret even from the press until just before the event, made sure that that was impossible. Even discounting the safety objections from American Coast which led to the show being cancelled just days before its original date (organisers did not even know a license of that stage), the fact is that there were very few angles from which the show could be seen outside the club itself. But the whole thing will probably have followed on television later this year, with the sequences electronically edited out and big view-ups of the stage - a pity they couldn't protect a few for the paying customers on the night.

St. Jack-Michel bringing high technology music to the people? Really. But in the programme for the concert there was a full-page advert for the new Vangelis album, Time, which isn't being promoted by any means concert but which steps out on a stage including TUNIS. How Techno bringing high-tech music to the people.



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INTRO MCMXCIX...

In case you hadn't figured, **Intelligence** stands for 1999, and it would take until then, to look at all the music software available through the extremely profitable London-based company.

Sure, there are other software specialists such as Syntronic Music (why handle the HitList AI's limit, but no-one else can quite the range) of MCM, who stock scores of software packages for the Atari ST, Commodore Amiga, Apple, Macintosh, IBM PC and compatibles, with Aristocrat packages directly on their way. Most of these lines are American, from companies such as D.T. Peppert, Soundsoft and Intelligent Music, but there are several British lines such as Freedom coming up, and inevitably the Archetype lines will be UK-based since the machine has hardly taken off in the States.

None takes a look (nearly) at several packages from MCM's range, covering sequence composition, scoring, sample editing and graphics-to-sound conversion, and will be reviewing them in detail in the coming months. Here for the entire MCM range are from as little as £40-75 (the Creative Image Manufacture) to as much as \$475 for Cue 2.0, a film score preparation package which runs on the Mac.

INTELLIGENT MUSIC MEDIUM

Atari ST £29.95

Intelligence is a STRANGE, if unexpected party in the tradition of Intelligent Music's more expensive 'MF' packages, which is an 'Intelligent' auto-composer, taking your input in the form of a few notes and turning out variations, accompaniments and all sorts of musically and extended possibilities.

Intelligence has some of the same possibilities, but takes graphic patterns as its source as its starting point. You draw on the main part of the screen using the mouse, in a choice of orange or grey-blue, and every pixel plays a note on connected MIDI sythes or modules (so you want even, need a music keyboard) to use that one.

Musicalities to the left of the screen play higher notes (the overall octave can also be set) and pixels higher up the screen play lower notes - so by scribbling square or circles you can create scales, fills and rhapsodies. There are four miniature control panels on the screen at all times, and the first of these sets the MIDI channel your notes go out on, the volume and length of notes, and the speed of which notes repeat if you hold the mouse still. Obviously it's up to you to choose a suitable sound on the sythes to interpret the note characteristics you want to create.

The second control panel creates delays of up to two seconds and repeats the notes you create on the same sythes with the same note, or as a different sythes or a different MIDI channel of the same multi-timbral sythes with a different note and maybe a compression up to another key. The third control panel is a data recorder - any notes you input are played back singly with

equal spacing and will continue to loop if you wish, so you can create repeated sequences or even drum patterns if you have a set of drum sounds loaded up on your sythes (samples) and play along with them. The recorder also allows you to change tempo, play back in real time that is, speed exactly as you entered the notes, slip a set percentage of notes, or randomise the positions of notes.

The final control panel, the Integrate, will create its own musical patterns by scanning any picture on screen and playing a note each time a rectangle crosses left of pixels, and the Integrate can play up to four notes at a time - it's the only polyphonic part of the package.

You can save a fragment, which is a complete control set up for five panels, on a Monitor, which is a complete live performance using the Mouse. And that's about as far as it goes - after that, it's up to you to choose interesting sounds, perform in musically useful manners, and make something of the results.

Intelligence music files are compatible with MF and with D.T. Peppert's Customised Sequencer, Peppert's Music Studio, No. Stenburgh's 24 and lots of other Alan Peppert packages. But if you're really interested in converting graphics to some kind of musical accompaniment, you'll probably be frustrated by the simplicity of the graphic input, only two colours, no advanced features such as zoom and line-drawing, and no compatibility with the obvious auto packages such as Degas and Musicware. It's all very well abstracting your musical interests to include graphics, but Intelligence unfortunately won't do much for those who want to stretch their graphics interests to include music.

DALE'S 'KEYS'

Atari ST £79.95

'Keys!' isn't any the estimation mark, but more on, DTS is a basic composer and real-time creator which should work well for anyone interested in creating musical pieces and seeing them printed out on paper. It's also compatible with D.T. Peppert's Multi-Program Environment system, and so can run simultaneously in your music with a more powerful D.T. Peppert's such as EDS (Keyboard Customised Sequencer) and with sythes and sample editors, so you should be able to create a new sound on your sythes, compose a piece of music with it, and print out in standard musical notation without once having to reach for your test button.

To concentrate on Keys itself, we find most of the functions on a single page with most of the usual Atari GEM layout in sight (as usual with D.T. packages). It's not Keys I write completely in GEM, BASIC, and while the object is not particularly sleek and chunky, there are some applications which are slightly prettier in operation, on the feedback screen. It's usually the new when you call the package to play notes and constantly update the screen display of

the score line. If you score the Music II Auto-Composer Music (which will look at it a moment), for instance, the playback slows down.

You can enter notes into Keys using the mouse or a MIDI keyboard, and it's possible to enter single notes or whole chords, either one note at a time or by defining the chord you want and entering the root note. Once you've entered a chord please you can repeat it on every line as you like, with any transposition you like, and then play it back either on a sythes or on the built-in wave chip (so long as you don't try to use more than three notes at a time in the latter case). The on-screen keyboard flashes the notes played if desired - a useful teaching aid.

Notes of any length (though with rests can be entered as whole notes) is stored (even as General MIDI) - in other words, it does store around the usual range of grand piano. The Edit bar lets you change any note, or its duration, or its velocity (volume or time) on velocity-responsive sythes so Keys doesn't require you to be a brilliant keyboard player to prepare and play back quite complex pieces.

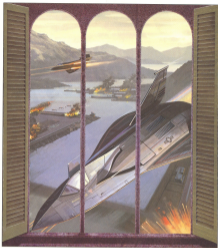
One nice feature of Keys which may appear tedious at first is the Auto-Composer, which makes up its own music based on parameters you provide. Going into Auto-Composer Music creates a new screen to appear with twelve parameter settings ranging from Key Change Frequency, Chord Degree Change Frequency, and Harmonic Interval Intensity to more complex settings such as Musicality and Harmony Degree and MIDI Channel.

Simple applications of the Auto-Composer at first give results like 1990s computer music - quick runs, fills and wobbles which you probably won't find very inspiring or useful. But after a while it begins while then devoted to looking at the package you'll probably find the Auto-Composer coming up with passages interesting enough to catch your attention and for you to save away and use in your compositions.

You can print your finished pieces into musical lines of a time on a dot matrix or laser line printer, with a SEQ-TO-ALL routine making keys like compatible with the more professional Dr. T. Peppert package or well. The A21-70000 file makes the product of Keys compatible with D.T. Music, recording MIDI sequences, which will look at another time.

The main problem with Keys isn't that the layout is very fiddly and that some quantity you won't get into it very easily - although aimed at the beginner and expert alike, the package looks complex enough to put off others. But there is - denying that it is a relatively inexpensive and effective way of getting back musical music composed and printed out, with a helpful routine to cope with being inspiration. There is a good reason.

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ROLLING THUNDER

3D Cool!
Impassioned warfare of the North-pole as looking an outstanding 3D picture!
System

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THE ACE FIDO AWARDS

Sometimes, you just can't win. Over the relatively short life of the software industry there have been many winners, but a good sprinkling of losers have punctuated the ups and downs of the entertainment software world. Only the winners reach recognition and acclaim — so it's about time the balance was redressed.

In the true spirit of heroic failures, near misses and total foul-ups, we present a set of alternative awards for your amusement. (Barkie the dog says "ruff" ...)



GAMES THAT CLOSED A COMPANY

For contenders on this list include megagames *Bandersnatch* and *Psychopace* from the original Imagine (but the outrageous fights in the office, a company-wide pendulum for fast vehicles and the basic problem of selling more games than there were computers to play them on were other contributing factors). Then of course there was *Scud* of *Carbon* from *Tandem*, the arcade action messiah who was really proud that they were doing their best adventures. Little did they know it was to be their last game.

16-bit journalist turned software impresario John Peel made a fortune with *Vehicals* through his company Legend, and went on to type *The Great Escape* Race beyond the bounds of human endurance, featured megahits in stadium orders and then went to ground soon after the game was released once people worked out how amazingly appalling it really was. A new all-time low for quality of packaging, instructions, artwork, programming and gameplay was reached with *TOSM*, and even today there's rumored to be a somewhat miserable cardboard box manufacturer in Essex with something like 100,000 empty *TOSM* boxes in his warehouse. The whereabouts of John Peel remain uncertain.

Perhaps bravest and dafdest total game concept was *The Shadow of The Unicorn* — a game from Micro-Gem which came with its own hand-made add-on for the Spectrum that acted as a copy protection device, dedicated joystick interface and memory expansion. Sadly, the game written to take advantage of the extra memory was just a fairly run-of-the-mill effort, so different from any other mid-range Spectrum game except that there was much more of it, it cost twice as much as most other Spectrum games and was restrictive to the retail trade — retailers made so much profit on a £7.95 game as they did on

Shadow. Micro-Gem faded away not long after their untimely demise.

Console foul-ups of all time (so far) must be the series of TV tie-ins produced by MacKen, a company partly funded by the Welsh Development Agency. Picking up the sound idea of producing official versions of mega-popular TV games they went on to release titles such as *Measure Hunt*, *Bloodbusters*, *Countdown*, *Stukey* et al, finally expiring with *Estimote*. Despite the poor programming, MacKen should have been sitting on a goldmine — except they apparently negotiated generous royalties based on percentages of the retail price for the game concepts, music and cover illustrations. Royalties that were so generous, that MacKen could have been making a loss of 10% of the retail price on some titles and software processors had been given their discount range.



OVERALL LOSER

The Welsh Development Agency via MacKen



COSTLY GAMES THAT NEVER MADE IT

A five- or maybe even six-figure sum was written off by Rainbow Software a couple of years ago, when they pulled the plug on *React For The Moon*, a mega-project commissioned from ODE. In other financial terms, *React For The Moon* might well be the most expensive software abortion to fail. Else apart a lot of money and many programmer-hours on a team led by Richard Wilson trying to produce an R160-strength version of *Shanty Dog* in 1985 and 1987 before settling defeat, abandoning their losses and

handing the license over to Gargoyle to produce a playable and suitable game. More recently, Activision apparently spent another five-figure sum discovering that *Leah* (or couldn't really be affected) on the DSX before abandoning the idea, and *Warcraft* cut their initial strategic game with arcade-soundlines project, *Arms* on which appears to be permanent hold, after previewing it at the 1987 PCW show.

Then there was *Willy Meets The Warden*, a Matthew Smith game intended to solve Matthew 261. Got Willy Smith's tax problems which never materialized, and of course *Ellis's* 3-bit computer version of the pencil-and-paper classic, *BattleShip*. Originally intended (and



(advertised) as a full-price, mainstream release, challenges can't see the light of day as a freer magazine commitment and popped into an E!E comic companion the other Christmas, but never came out of the closet on its own account.



WHITE ELEPHANT OF ALL TIME AWARDED
Resistant to Reach For The Moon, a real Apollo 13 of a game.



SLOW GAMES A' COMIN'

The dark days of Ocean were bright days for magazine publishers — nearly a year's worth of colour pages featured the continually-delayed arrival of Street Hawk and Knight Rider. Multiple re-releases (which lead to an early version supplied via a mail-order catalogue), followed multiple re-releases until Ocean could finally delay no longer and released a pair of games that achieved the most desirable ratio between advertising spend and game quality ever seen before or since. Ocean learnt several lessons during the period according to Gary Bracey, Ocean's Software Manager, and has done things very differently ever since.

Amongst other disadvantages there was Star Trek, acquired by Televisual, announced in 1986, and proved to be the PCW show of that year as a Starship Enterprise stand with gorgeous panning symphonies and not a missing screen in sight. Originally planned for a Christmas release in 1987, all that ever arrived was the ST version, earlier this year, by which time early versions and demos of the game had been broadcast widely on the public circuit.



BROKEN TRANSPORTER AWARDED
Star Trek



GAMES WITH 12 PENALTY POINTS ON THEIR LICENCE

Given the title and profile of the Esquire's author... but we've already covered that one.

Off on the back front, there was Dr. Who, produced by BBC software specialists Mongoose, as their first major foray away from the BBC computer. The Mongoose team were, believed their Spectrum, Commodore and CPC programmers and looked the adverts. A clear six months after the first-figure adaption had hit its circuit, the Citi and CPC versions of the game stood their way out. All Mongoose needed was a Tomb, and things would have turned out fine and dandy.

Play! The Citi had all the ingredients for a top-ranking licensed game — blood, gore, frantic action, tension and a hit series of movies, albeit with 18 certification. Unfortunately, Boman (in their naive period), hired a team of educational programmers to do the deed, and no amount of in-pack blood capsules and gory attacks could make up for the awe-inspiring staidness on screen supposed to be Jason. If this was state of the art, the art was Primary School.

Shoring the 1986 PCW Show with Star Trek was another fudging failure, this time one that was led in to a mega-successful TV series and promoted by a leading software house as one of its great upcoming games. The company? Interbusiness House. The product? Inspector Gadget. Despite the attributes of the central licensed character, the programmers and game designers ignored cluttered, and the planned full-price release suffered out quickly, after some delay, as a budget release from Mastertronic.

Honorable mention for scoring penalty points on a licence must go to Angus Pines Software for Man Madroom — the game came rather late, and had little to do with the title figure that fronted the TV series or featured in the movie. Powerful marketing and PR saved the day, however, with syndicated magazine editors opening up to put Man on their front covers.

But for overall dis-service to licencees, Penelope must take the honour. Snapping up a host of valuable licences to IPC comic characters, includ-

ing Roy of the Rivers and a clutch of 2000AD characters (collected for a mere £1,000 apiece, so the licence has to), Penelope spent a lot of time and money developing games before parent company Macmillan pulled the plug out of the aquatic, squandering Penelope and leaving the licencee high and dry. So far, Emerald have picked up Roy, but as for the rest...



GREENEST SPILLSPOINTS
The venerable Penelope



PRE-RELEASE NERVES

In their formative years, Boman underwent "an expensive learning process" according to Dominic Sheehy. After grabbing a James Bond licence for their second game, the Bomanes were apparently told by game designer David Bishop that the New 3D Jet game design would fit on the Spectrum "no problem". Two weeks before the launch, the Spectrum ran out of memory and gameplay had to be jugged off, leading to a very different game to the ones released for other machines. And last-minute litigation turned Spitting Images into Split Personalities.

Acision had a few problems with their mega-hit Ghostbusters on the Spectrum — in the course of to get the game into the shops in time for Christmas, they forgot to check whether it worked with a Kempston Interface. The Kempston joystick interface was, and still is, the most popular joystick add-on in the land of Spectrum gaming, as you would have thought...

Think again. The first version of Spectrum Ghostbusters loaded fine with a Kempston interface attached to the computer, but when the appropriate joystick option and the ghost in the machine caused a crash. And who wants a crash? Thousands of games had to be replaced.

US Sports 1986 World Cup Carnival disappointment was less of football fans paying for and playing a game they already had. Much disappointment. The official version of the fiasco involves US Gold being let down at the last

NEVER MIND THE GAMEPLAY, FEEL THE PERIPHERAL

Only two worthy contenders in this field — a driving sim and a surfing sim. Rapt! Software sold a classic steering wheel with their Formula racing game for the Spectrum and you could a real James Hunt killing it left and right across the top row of keys. Not surprisingly, the game never really caught on, later resapping in a very similar incarnation on the Mastertronic label.

Overall winner has to be Surfing, from New Concepts — another company partly funded by a Developers Agency, this time the first one. Available initially only for the rubber-keyed Speccy, you needed to stick a little plastic flourish over the centre-key on the keyboard, balance a little plastic surfboard on it and actually ride the waves with your fingertips. Greatly graphics, unpolished gameplay, and awful advertising artwork didn't help the product sell at £12.99 (incl). After a short while, New Concepts apparently withdrew from the games market...



POSTHUMOUS PERIPHERAL
New Concepts on-foot surfboard



ment by a team of programmers, and being forced to read around for a possible football game that could quickly be enhanced and included with the posters and other goodies in the World Cup Carnival package. Step forward Art, with an ancient soccer game. Harder than *Maradona*, that old Gold-one, many people said at the time...



MOST ARTFUL GAME OF THE SEASON AWARD

US Gold, who sold back 50 copies of their last

release (solution to a painful problem, even though heavy customers were left sick at joints).



GAMES WITH SOMETHING MISSING

Ignoring the claims to infamy of a host of arcade adventures and a small army of mediocre releases that could well have been so much better if only... a few releases make the shortlist:

When the company still had all the software incompetencies supplied by its name, Igoe released a cricket game that was not only tedious but basically incompetent. *IndiCricket* incompetent, indeed - much of the user interface involved trawling into the BASIC and changing the contents of variables, but at least the game eventually crashed into BASIC to make the player's life easy.

More recently, and during the life of ACE, we have been treated to *Go!* - a wonderfully pretty game from the Centers, published by Ocean, but a game that curiously avoids gameplay. It isn't a difficult game to play. In fact there's no point in playing it - if you realised what the aim of the game was when you started, it would probably only take about half an hour to complete, but as you don't get tipped off when you start, it takes about 4 hours to realise that YES, that's all there is to it.

And of course there's *Alasimods* from Britain, for the Amiga, the game which has

attracted the lowest ACE rating so far.

But for real top-voting on the Black Pyramid's completion entitled *Don't Buy This* stands up in this category. Released as a deliberate laugh in the early days of Proton, when all they published was budget software, this was a collection of 'Sunday Sport' games - games that were in fact, they were almost good. There was a dog, that had to track flying obstacles, and to dash it fast to stand up because it was falling when it sat down. Then there was the go-kart simulation, writ-

ten by Tony Rainbird (the man who went on to set up Rainbird software for Talismanoft), where the controls reversed as you went round a bend on the track. A delicious set of awful games, said under an honest title for a fair price.



DON'T BUY THIS AWARD
Don't Buy This from Proton

GREAT MARKETING DISASTERS

(Imagines, and time around)

Apart from that, well-mentioned budget house Commodore wrote a special game for the *Face Against Time* appeal, got lots of coverage including TV airtime for the project, released the game and sold themselves in the fast-rising tool by forgetting to clear the rights to the pictures used on the map. The estate of Jesse Owens, the track athlete featured on the cover, hadn't been approached for permission to use his pic, and declined to give permission retrospectively. Cue total recall of distributed games and delays while the delays were requested. By the time the game was on the shelves, everyone had nearly forgotten about it.

Plus old Proton Leisure swapped up the rights to a franchise, destined to be a cut-throat business. Eye and produced a more than competent computer version. Packaging it in an imaginative and eye-catching manner (the box was praised by the Design Council), they set back and confidently awaited mega-sales. Sadly, the computer game didn't prove to be a massive hit - not was the bootleggers. Few people managed to play the original, let alone the computer game: the problem was all acute that Virgin Books even published a 'how to' book on it, but it was too late to save the game.

And when it came to presenting the stage of its company, System 2, at the PCW Show some three years ago, Mark Cain had a problem. Several games, all of which came up with sets of a bunch of highly-qualified referees who pranced around suggestively on his stand at these hourly intervals to a throbbing beat. Cue large number of tongue-lolling punters, hordes of complaints and the end of the tempo show.

But then Proton-ding Mark very nearly launched a game called *Twister: Mother of Miracles* and was only saved when someone told him what a fraud was...

Enter *Twister: Mother of Miracles*.



THE MARK CAIN AWARD FOR GOOD TASTE IN MARKETING
Mark Cain



And finally (adopts a Dennis Norden voice), it's not just the world of entertainment software that suffers from those embarrassing little bloopers, those little snippets of life that everyone concerned wishes could be edited out. Certainly not.

The 'suits' over in the world of spreadsheet-serious software also have those little moments they'd rather forget. Like the marketing people who put a free demo disk of *Holzwriter*, a wordprocessor, in no less than 80,000 copies of a magazine, inviting readers to get hands-on experience before they bought the full version. The demo version was 'crippled' - you couldn't print out, and a few other vital bits were missing. Or were they?

As many readers discovered to their amazement, all the files needed for the full implementation of *Holzwriter* were on the freebie disk - all you needed to do was examine the disk with a disk doctor utility and 'undelete' them. Silly boys had merely taken a standard *Holzwriter* disk, hidden the missing files by changing their attributes under MSDos, and sent the disk off to be duplicated...

And on that note, viewers, it's time to hand over to the commercial break.

CINEMAWARE

P R E S E N T S

ROCKET RANGER

Only YOU can stop the
Interplanetary Spread
of the Propelled
RACE FRENCH!

SEE THE BEAUTIFUL YOUNG DAUGHTER
OF A FAMOUS SCIENTIST...
HOLD CAPTIVE BY A GANG OF
GODLESS GOOSESTOPPERS!

A Master Race
from Outer Space
threatens the Fate of
the Free World!



Cinemaware presents *Rocket Ranger*

Executive Producers Phyllis & Robert Jacob • Produced by John Caffier • Directed by Kellyn Beck
Photography by Peter Koninski and Tom McWilliams
• Direction by Rob Landeros • Original Score Composed by Bob Lindstrom

With the zapping of ray guns and the cries of Zombie Women Rocket Ranger brings back all the action, romance, thrills and spills of the Saturday morning serial! Yes Rocket Ranger has arrived at last.

Now available for the Amiga £24.99 and C64 (Disk) £14.99

"Coming soon for the IBM and Atari ST."

ROCKET RANGER

LETTERS

yourself and your readers, a name: CLK.

Clk, Amiga specialists, recently supplied me, with the utmost of dispatch, data for two recently-released games, at very competitive prices.

It's no difficult to imagine my fume and frustration when the games failed to load and, ultimately, I was forced to return them.

Equally, it's not difficult to imagine my surprise at hearing Mr Simon Halley phone me from Clk to explain that we had contracted a virus, previously unknown to him, he then went on to explain that he would send us, at no extra charge, two more copies of the games plus two virus-killer disks.

I am not particularly familiar with computer software companies, maybe such events are common. But for this occasion, I feel that Clk and Mr Halley deserve the highest praise for action which I consider to be above and beyond the call of commercial duty. Please, please pass on this story to your readers.

Tom Jenkins
Oswestry

It just goes to show that some mail-order companies are trustworthy and helpful. So there's your free plug for Clk. Don't ☐



EXCITING!

I walked into my newsagent and looked inside again. I went and bought a pair of sunglasses and then re-entered the newsagent. With the sunglasses on I managed to look at the cover of your October '88 issue, without burning my eyeballs out!

This was the first issue of ACE. For ever thought, as I looked through it wondering if my (I.5) had been well-sorted, or whether it was another waste. Well, ACE itself is a good magazine, clearly set out and with generous settings, so that it

looks?

That quite. I wanted to read a few star-rated reviews. There are plenty of them around and at least two games a month would surely be reviewed? Star-line manages plenty, so there are a lot of things reviewed. The star 4-0 is having a backbone at the moment, so help it out!

Then you weren't very nice about the Cric Amiga on page 35. It's a great insect - I've got one and so have thousands of others, and there's still plenty of software coming out for it. Getting the photo I like it you actually have an Amiga, so if you don't want it I could give it a good home!

Your competitors are great too, but I don't understand the Ace Card way of doing competitors, so please enlighten me.

In general, remember the minority merely (including MEX and BNC) and keep having interesting features and keep blinding people with dazzling colour on your front cover.

The Monitor
Birmingham

Well, we do call the magazine ACE, which stands for Advanced Computer Entertainment. What means that means of stars

software have no place in our pages, it's not that we're got anything against the Amiga or even Amiga 8-bit machines, it's just that we've got too much to concentrate on the mainstream machines.

As to the ACE card, take a look at the ACE Card page (page 12) this month and if all will be revealed, you need to write in if you are a new reader in need of a card ☐

ATARI HUMILIATIONS

I read virtually all the computer magazines available, and have noticed that several have mentioned that Atari are intending to release a new 'Super' ST early next year. This wonderful new machine will, it seems, have 4096 colours and stereo sound. Well, surprise surprise, Atari are releasing what is virtually an Amiga clone! Does this mean that they finally accept that the standard ST is inferior to the Amiga, and a Super model is required to try and equal (or presumably surpass) Commodore's line? Doing this is really a waste of time for Atari, because the new ST is sure to be compatible with all ST's - lets face it, the market will be too small to justify Super-ST-only games.

JET

£24.95 (Commodore 64/128) £24.95

The award-winning premier jet fighter simulator. Strikingly beautiful carrier-based sea missions complement multiple land-based combat scenarios. Jet also lets you explore the world of SubLOGIC Scenario Disks at lightning speed!

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If you doubt this, then please take note of the way in which they (software companies) can't even write software that takes advantage of the Amiga's extra features, preferring to put their money into the ST. The only people at Amiga who've got their act together is the marketing department. I would love to read a reply directly from someone at Amiga to see if they could possibly justify the way in which they continually upgrade their machines, leaving the earlier buyers in the cold.

Spinks

Hi, When quoted an Amiga spokesman refused to confirm or deny the existence of a new Super ST, but went on to say that Amiga always seeking to upgrade the quality of their product. Would you like to try other ways Spinks? OK

MILO-CROSSING

I have been playing *Carrier Command* on my Amiga and have been amazed with the smooth graphics and the equally good sound, but one thing crossed my mind. With all the talk about multiple-player games over the telephone or using local LAN/Modem, I wondered why the writers didn't incorporate this into the game as it is the obvious way to do. Then such things as championships for the game could be set up. With less words of course. Also you could have two people per turn, so you could have more complex modes.

Matthew Randall
Hemel Hempstead

It's chickens and eggs, really. While your idea sounds fine, it's unlikely that *Realtime* or *Planet* would have found a commercially worthwhile way to implement the concept. When *Realtime* cut the price of phone calls and modems become as cheap as pocket calculators, then multi-player phone games could come into their own. Maybe *Realtime* are in an odd position to start a little project. OK

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

Instead of your readers moaning about the price of software or the problems of piracy or low cost programs, why don't they get a free company brochure for a few pounds, the programs they are thinking about buying? Then if the program turns out to be rubbish or so steep that it's complicated within a day then only a few pounds are lost. If the program is good then it can be bought. This will encourage software houses to make quality

software. Also it will ensure value for money in what's bought, although for computers such as my Amiga A500, the licences are still in their early stages, software licenses for computers such as the Spectrum are real. If people can read buying the game with the most advertising, and wait to test it in the comfort of their own home, then quite a few problems could be solved.

Stuart Parker

Headbrags

Given the lack of opportunity to actually play games in computer shops before you buy them, licenses could serve a useful purpose. Paying a fee to read software sounds like an oddity in principle, but the reality is that while licenses work fairly well for books, software licenses tend to work poorly. What's more, software houses usually sell their software on condition that it not flow out, so software licenses are effectively breaking the law.

And you wouldn't want to encourage people to be accessories after the fact, now would you...? OK

POWER XTREME

I am the owner of a CMM4, I have one of the old black power packs, and after about 30 minutes the power pack becomes very warm and the computer crashes when I am playing a game. I have to wait about half an hour for it to cool down. It tries to switch on too early, the screen stays blank and the red light on the keyboard stays very dim. Can you help?

Justin Reed
Eastbourne

Without wanting to state the obvious, Justin, it seems you've got a new power pack. Your current one appears to be broken and would be downright dangerous. Check out the Free Pages, and you should find a great deal. OK

LEAD AND CLEAN

I think I've finally worked out the quiet and noisy disk drive problem on the Amiga.

Just under the Amiga logo, you have a Commodore logo. All of the machines, with a green badge showing a C, will have a quiet disk drive and their keys, mouse legs and disk eject button, will all be different from the one without the Green Badge.

This only applies to Amiga 500s.
Kullander-Cul
Basingstoke



SENSELESS STUPIDITY

Love an Amiga ST and it's quite possible it is a good all rounder and very reasonable in price (£1000-1200). But I see no point in going out and buying an Amiga ST. The recent bombardment of criticisms, in my view is just senseless stupidity. Just because some other people's tastes do not measure up to their standard, some people start to get abusive. In almost every issue there is some half wit who thinks it's clever to criticize a particular machine. The Spectator seems to be the usual punching bag for these "experts", and while I am not familiar with the Spectator, it seems to be a competent enough unit, despite its age. Just remember, the Spectrum was all the go before these bigger computers.

I also think the critics are forgetting the fundamentals of owning a computer - after all isn't a computer for enjoyment? I say to you "experts", forget the party squabbling, grow up and keep your traps shut otherwise you will all look like Pommie Whingers.

Grant Jones
New South Wales, Australia

Errolly

SIMPLE AUSTRALIAN

Recently here in Queensland (I'm not sure about the rest of Australia) legislation has taken place to legalize the copying of music cassettes and records as long as the copies are not sold to anyone. However, the same legislation has placed a sales tax on blank cassettes. This extra levy is paid to the record companies.

It is my belief that such a law within the software industry imposed internationally would reduce losses by software houses by software houses out of pricing. All the companies would lose revenue from blank disks, they will be able to reduce the price of software, thus allowing more people to buy software. Wouldn't it be great to see games for less than the price of a blank disk? This could be achieved by providing software companies with cheaper disks than the retail market.

Alan Bonville
Queensland, Australia

Sounds simple, but you haven't thought things through. What about the people who buy blank disks to store data - do they have to buy the thing? And just who is going to supply software companies with cheaper disks than the retail market?

It may be always going to put the price of software up, no matter how it is to be copied. If software houses make fewer sales as a result of unauthorised copying, then they are going to have to cover their costs and make a profit on fewer actual sales, which means higher prices in the shops. Unless, of course, all software is sold mail-order, direct from the software houses but then you wouldn't have all the convenience of popping over to your local software supplier to choose a game. OK

PC PRAISE

I have an IBM and would like to say it is about time the IBM got some recognition by a British gaming magazine. It isn't just a machine for Accountants and Business... CGA really does something for games, but sometimes, CGA... and

There are really heaps of games that use CGA too, like *Pirates*, *Rampage*, *Beach for the Blind*, *Flight Simulator II*, to name but a few. Some of them even support VGA (even better).

And what about sales over IBM games, reviewed please (with pictures) but only if they are VGA - certainly all these Amiga owners but the only ones with big heads.

James Peis
South Australia

Strange you should say that in the only issue Andy Wilson mentions the PC's potential as an entertainment machine, and we receive a box of PC games OK

There's nothing wrong with a little creative assistance in playing games (cheating, to use the full technical term). If a game proves almost impossible to complete, scan these pages for a little help, advice and general chicanery-pokery to help you on the way. And if you've mastered the gameplay on a particular release, or know a sneaky sequence of keypresses that make the joystick-wielder's life easier, pass your inside knowledge on. Maps and POKEs are welcome in this section, too—remember, we're offering six of the best to the top tipster. Six of the best releases for his or her machine, that is...

CYBERNOID II

Is Mr Casco's sequel proving too tough for you? This tip gives you infinite lives on the Spectrum.

When you come to re-define the keys, enter the keys:



Easy isn't it when you're lost?

Ian and Paul Hayes, Bridgewater.

ELIMINATOR

John Phillips' latest ST classic is a tough game to crack. It's not so tough if you know the level codes through.

STAGE PASSWORDS

01	ANGRA
02	BLOOP
03	CHERO
04	DONOK
05	DRIGAN
07	FUPME
09	GEESSE
09	HANDEL
10	ICOLE
11	JIMMAN
12	SPORD
13	LAPDOO
14	MIRADO

Press the HELP key once the game has loaded and type in the above passwords to progress to your chosen levels.

GENERAL TIPS

- On some levels, jumping onto the roof and flying upside down can actually be the best way to beat the level.
- When firing at aliens, always move left and right to avoid their fire. Standing in one place is usually fatal.
- Always keep an eye on your ammo levels because when you come to collect an extra weapon or more ammo, you must decide which you really need.
- Once the game has been completed, the rate at which ammo depletes is almost double, so focus your targets carefully. Try to dodge the incoming aliens instead of shooting them, as you'll need to save your shots for the bosses.

■ J. White, Huddersfield.



MORPHEUS

For infinite energy on the C64 version just type in the listing and RUN it.

- 16 PRINT CHR\$(147);REM MORPHEUS CHEAT
- 15 FOR A=1024 TO 1080 READ B\$FOR
- A\$=C\$+B\$MOD
- 20 IF C=0\$ THEN PRINT CHR\$(147); "OKA
- B\$FOR. CHECK AND CORRECT END
- 25 PRINT CHR\$(171); CHR\$(171);"MORPHEUS
- MORPHEUS TAPE";
- 30 POKE 157,100
- 35 END
- 40 DATA 32,80,240,160,32,140
- 45 DATA 16,7,3,160,21,141,110,3,100,4
- 50 DATA 141,110,3,76,107,3,100,20,141
- 55 DATA 140,8,100,4,141,144,0
- 60 DATA 170,8,100,40,141,94,0
- 65 DATA 100,4,141,82,8,70,155,100,0
- 70 DATA 141,40,15,100,170,141,100,0,100
- 80 DATA 20,141,210,70,70,64

■ B. Thompson, Oswestry.

MEHACE

The Phylaxos game may be proving tough, this Amiga cheat gives you all the weapons and infinite energy.

All you have to do is type in the following once the level has started: **DEATHBONNETURBAGSARD**

Now press keys 1-4 on the keypad for the levels. Press **HELP** key to replenish weapons. Press **RETURN** key to go to the end of level/quarters.

■ Phil Lubman, Liverpool.



STARGLIDER II

■ Rainbird's High Flyer may have some of you ST and Amiga owners confused, but never fear - TTT's here.

To build the reaction bomb you will have to find new things and take them to Team. He is found in the tunnel network on Apples. The closest entrance to the start is right behind you. The nice things and how to get them are as follows:

CRATE OF CATERPILARS First get a jetted tree from Eric and take it to the depot on Caseron. You will automatically get the Caterpillars.

VICTIM WINE Fly over to Vets - the wine is trodden all over the surface.

FLAT DIAMOND On Meta, have a good look round. Somewhere you'll find a hole in the ground spitting out flat diamonds. Tuck-a-ink of them.

CLUSTER OF HOOPLES These can be found on the surface of Dante.

ASTEROID Pick up one of these in the asteroid belt between Milkyway and Apples.

EGGON MINI-ROCKET This is found on Aooo. It takes a bit of a search, but it's definitely there.

NUCLEAR FUEL This can be found lying about on Miles.

BOOB These lying on O-Beta.

PROFESSOR TAYMAR He is driving an Ezzo 2 on Broadway. These Ezzos are VERY difficult to get in your master teams. Don't dare Caterpillars when you pick up Taymar!

Once Team has Taymar, work on the bomb again. When you have delivered everything to the depot, the bomb will soon be finished. When it is, pick it up and fly over to one of the Meems of Milkyway. Drop a bouncing bomb on a station there and head into a tunnel. Pick up four missiles and head off towards O Beta. Just next to O-Beta is a hologram. Fly into it and you'll find a special station and-eggs mini-continents. Blow up four of them with the missiles and fly back to Apples to relax.

Fly to another moon of Milkyway and pick up four more missiles. Drop another bouncing bomb on a station and go through the hologram. After destroying the remaining four continents, head up the nuclear beam and go above the station. Put down so you're facing the space station and drop the bomb. It should hit the station and you'll have completed the game!

■ Charley Wilson, Speech.

POWERPLAY

■ If you're feeling really silly, just remove disk 2 from your ST whilst playing the game and insert a blank disk. Now the same question will keep coming up!

■ Jonathan Barber, Luten.

CALLING ALL TIPSTERS!

Every month we give away literally hundreds of pounds worth of software. How can you grab a slice of that action? It's easy really, just get your thinking cap on and come up with some nifty tips and games for some of the latest games. Don't bother sending in tricks and tactics for games that are years old - everybody knows those tips already, get to work on the games that have been reviewed in the last couple of issues of ACE. You KNOW it makes sense. Send your contributions to the following address:

**TRICKS 'N' TACTICS
ACE MAGAZINE
4 GREEN ST
BATH
BA1 1EJ**

VINDICATOR

■ The password for access to the second level on the CS4 is:

ENOLAGY

(008 008 008)

■ S. Flipper, Osm.

WHIRLIGIG

■ Want to get to the Perleospaces quickly on the ST? Head on.

SECTOR	RESOURCES	SECTOR	RESOURCES
0	---	698	FM
1	FMG	800	---
2	---	801	FG
4	M	802	M
5	F	803	F
6	G	804	---
13	---	805	FM
15	FM	806	G
14	---	807	F
16	M	808	M
20	F	1010	G
1	FMG	2002	M
2	---	4056	---
3	F	5128	M
5	F	5129	F
27	F	751	FGT
81	FG	752	---
82	M	753	FM
184	---	78	---
185	F	334	---
495	F	335	FM
496	MG	83	F
497	F	84	---
498	---	85	---

Continue from Egnospace 182 to Egnospace 181 in consecutive steps (183, 182, 184...). Fuel dumps occur every other space. Missile dumps occur every third and Cheat dumps every fifth space. From Egnospace 181 the rule continues...

30761	FMG	30804	M
30762	---	108448	---
30763	F	208896	MG
30764	M	418332	---
60028	---	838764	M
121026	MG	1677168	---
242112	---	3354336	MG

(Fuel) Missiles (Cheat)

■ Judson Smith, St Neets.



ELITE

■ One of the greatest computer games ever written may be causing you ST owners a few problems. These tips may help you.

TRADING Trade in food and slaves until you can afford to start trading in medical supplies/computers and fun (medical supplies are a new feature, the poor agricultural world will pay lots for). The quickest way to build up some money is to shuttle between two safe planets that have opposite economic structures (a few medical supplies/computers from a rich industrial high tech world is a poor agricultural world), and food up with fun for the return trip.

EQUIPMENT All of it's useful, but the first thing you'll want to buy is a large cargo bay, then one that'll increase your profits (increase that much faster and it's not long before you'll be able to afford a docking computer, best most essential item is the energy unit, followed by an ECM system. Fuel scoops can be handy for picking up free space cargo, but remember - you run the risk of picking up ambaloids. Pests rockets are an expensive luxury if you're in that much trouble during a fight, water is dropping an energy beam.

DOCKING By the time you've earned enough to buy a docking computer, you'll have docked often enough to be proficient at it anyway. But it's still worth buying one, as it takes all of the worry out of docking. Note - if you're flying towards a station with the docking computer on, and you've got some pirates or Therapids on your tail, they can still destroy you before you dock.

LASERS Obviously the Military laser's the thing to have mounted on the front as soon as you can afford it. A mining laser's useful if you want to spend your time digging bits of asteroid around the Cosmos, but for combat forget it.

ENEMIES Some are easier to kill than others, and it won't take long for you to recognize the tough ones (always I.D. a target before attacking). Once you get a condition set on screen, stop and line up on the enemy. Keep firing until they're either destroyed or start firing back, and then apply some speed and start dashing and dashing until you get on their tail (always remember to switch your scanner to 3D mode). Note one of the easiest ways to get into WhiteSpace is to put your power up to max before entering hyperspace. This doesn't always work, but pirates and you'll soon find yourself in amongst a whole bunch of Therapids.

IRANI WARRIORS

■ Suffering on the Amigo? Help's at hand.

Quality for the high score table and enter your name as **FREEDIE**. You'll now be able to play a line in the player game with complete immobility!

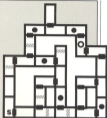
■ Steve Bellak, Leonard-on-a-see.

BARBARIAN II

■ Lost in the wilderness? This map will show the way (all you have to do is survive).

■ John Foster, Beesbooms.

- S Shield
- P Poison
- K Key
- A Axe
- Pitfalls
- Pitfalls monsters
- Improved resistance to harm
- ☼ Slime
- Open door
- ◻ Locked door
- ◆ Diamond



Level 1



Level 2



Level 3

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WHAT A REAL
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GAME
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FIREBIRD

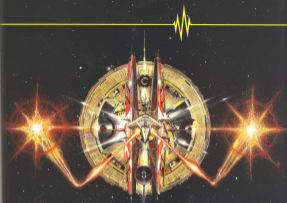


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S O F T

FEDERATION OF FREE TRADERS



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Joan of Arc



Joan of Arc with her army



Joan of Arc

Joan of Arc

Joan of Arc

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SPACEBALLS

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 CDM £41.26 cassette £2.99
 disk £14.99

Rainbow Arts

BUBBLE BOBBLE

■ Having trouble with the Amstrad version of this wonderful game? For infinite lives, simply type in the following listing.

```
10 DATA #5,6,8,0,6,6,6,6
20 DATA 76,9,0,0,28,0,6,1
30 DATA #1,2,1,2,0,0,0,0,0,0
40 DATA 26,5,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
50 DATA 21,84,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
60 DATA 18,6,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
70 DATA 39,30,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
80 DATA 21,80,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
90 DATA 8,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
100 DATA 40,2,1,8,0,0,0,0,0,1
110 DATA 5,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,1,0
120 DATA #7,30,29,60,30,60
130 DATA 60,0,0
140 MEMORY & 3000: Y=0
150 FOR S=450 TO 600
160 READ AS, A, #VAL (TR,ASE)
170 POKE (X,A), Y+Y-A, #VAL S
180 IF Y=600 THEN TRM 2 TO
190 LOAD "BUBBLE.B"
200 GOTO 470
210 PRINT "DATA ERROR"
```

■ Every beam, 4000000.

WANNA WIN SOME SOFTWARE?

Don't tell anyone, but we at ACE give away copies of software every month to red-hot readers who get their maps, tips and posters printed in the magazine. There's nothing to stop you joining in the fun either, just make sure it's your own original work you send in and you too could win loads of software!

This month's Tip of the Month prize goes to Johny Smith, who wins himself copies of *Eliminator*, *Starblazer*, *Rite*, *Powerdrome*, *Joan of Arc* and *Rebels for his ST*. Pretty good huh? Other winners are John Fowler and B. Thompson who both win *Bombard* for their C64s, Charley Allen also wins *Bombard* for his Amiga and A. White collects *Powerdrome* for his ST. Last, but by no means least, the Young brothers win themselves a copy of *Operation Wolf* to fight over.

Send your contributions to:

TNT, ACE,
4 QUEEN ST, BATH,
BA1 1BJ

LASER SQUAD

■ Here are some handy tips for this great skirmish wargame.

QUICK TIPS

1. Always leave your men an opportunity to fire.
2. The Mantic auto-gun is the best all-round weapon.
3. If a door remains open it means that there's a man (an operative) lurking there.
4. On Level Three (The Mines), examine all the dead operatives when you kill them. You will find that one of them is carrying a 'Video Ray'. Take this to the room with the video console and insert it into the 'VID' screen - it activates the video camera in the mine and allows you to see the operatives when you select scanner mode.
5. On the lower skill levels buy the Rocket Launcher.

GENERAL TIPS

1. The price of weapons on each level does not vary, so calculate how many credits to spend on armour making sure you have enough left over for weapons!
2. Don't go on a spending spree if you have money left over. Carrying too much equipment reduces the available action points.
3. Weapon choice (rated by cost)
 - Heavy Laser** - powerful with loads of ammo, but heavy and burdens your men, reducing their action points.
 - Mantic Auto-gun** - best all-round weapon, powerful and accurate.
 - Mantic Auto-gun** - best budget gun, but lacks the accuracy of the Mantic.
 - LSR Leo-gun** - not very powerful or accurate.
 - Sniper Rifle** - looks useful, but is cheap, powerful and the most accurate.
 - Mantic Pistol** - nice, useful but lacks power.
 - Dagger** - excellent for using in close combat.
 - AP10 Grenade** - good for blasting up operatives who are waiting around a corner. CAUTION! get out of its blast range and ALWAYS remember to prime it before throwing it!
 - Rocket Launcher** - a luxury for the early levels; its power is awesome but it lacks ammunition and has a really habit-forming up the side if it is too close.

4. Take your time, you have plenty of time. Explore the area carefully and ALWAYS leave your men an opportunity to fire.
5. Use a couple of men to guard the rear of your squad.
6. On higher levels always scanning the dead operatives for weapons and ammunition.

THE SCENARIO

1. THE ASSASSIN

On the first skill level you can equip your men with rocket launchers and blow up the house

(and Stenec Regis) without even entering the building! On the later levels (later progress can be made if you split your squad into two parts, one at each end), and explore the building carefully. You will find that the troops usually keep some sort of pattern, but that's not always the case. When you find Stenec, concentrate your fire on him because once he's dead the game is over.



2. MOONBASE ASSAULT

The bottom left is probably the best place to deploy your men. Split your squad into two for the best results. Move your men toward the control area where most of the Saboteurs and Analysts are. Gas cylinders and oil drums can be blown up causing large explosions (and even chain reactions). Watch an operative (don't shoot a cylinder or drain near you!



3. RESCUE FROM THE MINES

Before you use the explosives (which you need to blow up the prison doors) move the prisoner away from the door so he doesn't get caught in the blast. Remember to prime the explosives before dropping it and get clear of the blast. Go for the Video Ray.



■ Colin and Gavin Young, Glasgow.

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Our thanks go to Steve Rowden of London for his superb Nigel from Nigel cartoon strip.

NIGEL FROM **RIGEL**
By Steve Rowden



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★ The Git in the Machine is at it again and things are getting messier. Meanwhile, in the ACE offices the only dirt being spilled is some cold facts about new boys Grueso Kid and Koolha Co. Plus more juicy lists.

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SENTINEL
Platform Spectrum £3.95 - C&A £7.95 - £16.95
- Amiga £3.95 - £7.95 - £16.95 - Amiga £16.95

Brace your outwitting strategy game played over the dreary surface of a planet
swarmed by the Invader. Fundamentally you have to shoot enough while trying to
top the Sentinel from shooting yours. A close battle and fast finger fingers are both
necessary in this very original and large - 10,000 position 16Bit colour - game.



SKULDUGGERY
Carcass undebated

Bravest of them all that computer battles the original on this partic-
ular machine. Again like Skulduggery, above you're stepping for diamonds in caverns
over 100 different caverns - with a time limit for each level. Skulduggery's variety of
playable caverns allows to begin with and a choice of varying weapons and its outstand-
ing two-player option.



SPORE
Building - C&A £7.95 - Amiga £7.95 - Spectrum £7.95

The winning combination of strategy, tactical thinking and pixel graphics
make Spore a worthy full price release - with a bargain price for able to put it up for
£1.95



TETRIS
Amstrad Spectrum £3.95 - £7.95 - C&A £3.95 - £16.95
- Amiga £3.95 - £7.95 - £16.95 - Amiga £16.95
- Amiga PC £16.95

A fascinating geometrical ally, the Russian puzzle turns the obscure mathematical
task of packing into a cut game. One of 1,600 shapes (or thousands if you're a tetrapole-
or dipping) into Tetris - how you place them just as you will they rise to the top of the
screen your task is to push them down and push them to right so that doesn't happen.
Different variations like puzzle to the other variants in their simple aspects, but the
intriguing simple idea behind them means they're well worth a look whatever your
tastes.



THINK!
Amstrad Spectrum £7.95 - £16.95 - Amiga £7.95 - £16.95

Originally released by Amstrad, it has now been available for a free-
tion of the form. Think! is a family friendly game played on a ball grid - where
you are a player - in which you attempt to control four counters horizontally vertically
or diagonally. A compelling puzzle which incorporates many additional features and
well suits.



XOR
Spectrum Spectrum £7.95 - Amiga £3.95 - £14.95
- Amiga £3.95 - £14.95

Extremely tricky maze game involving the player controlling two aliens, and collect-
ing bricks, though it means, which increases in complexity as you progress. This is
the maze, full and obstacles to be well, when thinking the maze and just writing
50,000 of you and bring your quest to a spectacular and later with the full and disks
are the best of your series as heeds, incorporates and falls into 30 to control
game play. Strong control, simple graphics, this one requires planning to see
game's complexity.

BRAIN GAMES

Fed up with mindless blasting? Meet a game that offers you an
opponent who's worthy of your skills? This is your section.



CHESS MASTER 2000
Spectrum Amiga £14.95 - £16.95 - £16.95 - Amiga £16.95
- Amiga £16.95 - £16.95 - Amiga £16.95

Strongest chess game on the Amiga, with excellent graphics, C&A &
Amstrad, it tests of difficulty and all the playing options you could want for this
game built into superb software.

RECOMMENDED GAMES



COLOSSUS CHESS 4

CD32 • Spectrum CD32 Mod • CD32 Mod CD32 Mod
 • Amstrad CD3264 CD3264

Best ever to 32-bit resolution screens, with choice of 3D or 2D view, complete levels of AI bots, and myriad options which enable you to play, watch, work out chess problems, etc against the computer opponent.



COLOSSUS MAH JONG

CD32 • CD32 Mod CD32 Mod • Amstrad CD3264 CD3264

Runny like the original game of strategy and chance. A later program and game manual make this an easy to use and highly entertaining pack of software for all ages and machine alike.



INFOGAMES' BRIDGE

Programs • Amstrad CD3264 CD3264 • MS-DOS CD3264

Digitally revised 21st-century bridge simulation, with large playing cards depicted against a lovely green fern background. Plays a good game for a computer, which also allows an element of the imagination and fun department, and also runs a wide range of options and bidding conventions which you can toggle on and off according to your style.



POWERPLAY

Prose • Amstrad CD3264 CD3264 • CD32 Mod CD32 Mod
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SCRABBLE

Lecture Games • Spectrum CD32 Mod • CD32 Mod CD32 Mod
 • Amstrad CD3264 CD3264 • MS-DOS CD3264

The hugely popular word game translated very successfully onto the screen. Fast, excellent graphics, and a surprisingly large vocabulary (over 11,000 words) make this an excellent word processing... *Scrabble*'s graphics are very fun and represent a high level of play.

SPECIALS

Original works that are simply unclassifiable feature in this section.



ATP

Digital Integration • CD32 CD3264 CD3264 • Spectrum CD32 Mod CD32 Mod
 • Amstrad CD3264 CD3264

Excellent combat flight simulator that's a bit of a change for Digital Integration, for simulation specialists. The emphasis is on solid action, the result being a sure to hit.



DARK SIDE

Incentive • CD32 CD3264 CD3264 • Spectrum CD32 Mod CD32 Mod
 • Amstrad CD3264 CD3264

The second game using the ProMessage programming system, which sets more of an arcade challenge. The 3-D graphics are again superb as are the looks and pace.



DRILLER

Incentive • CD32 CD3264 CD3264 • Spectrum CD32 Mod CD32 Mod
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This three-dimensional masterpiece of exploration and adventure takes you to depths, for the wall you search it. A whole world was crammed into 32k memory to give the player such a feeling of being there it's amazing. It's bold, beautifully original and very playable. A masterpiece in computer entertainment.

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121
SUN
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ELITE

Freight • Spectrum £14.95 • Amiga £14.95/£17.95
• Amstrad £12.95/£14.95
• BBC £13.95/£14.95 (available from Superior Software)

Get the best space trading game. It's set a standard for other companies to follow. One of the best space games to use vector graphics, it's a shooting and trading effort on across several galaxies, with plenty of variety in the gameplay. You can trade legal goods in intergalactic safe systems, or run the gauntlet of pirates in the galactic border zone with your load full of contraband. Either way there's a helluva time in some 3D dogfighting, and as big a task as you'll find anywhere.

122
SUN
11

MAGNETRON

Freight • Spectrum £1.95 • Amiga £2.95/£3.95

Produce and sustain three Turner style, Save the world's disappearing eight satellites. Send parts from the earth (DOD) to replace your own (DOD), and hopefully make your job a little easier. The ideal game for all Spectrum fans looking for a serious, new challenge.

123
SUN
11

MATCH DAY 2

Coast • Spectrum £1.95/£1.95 • Amiga £3.95/£3.95
• Amstrad £3.95/£3.95

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124
SUN
11

QUDEX

Talman • £24.95/£24.95

In this impressively challenging game you must steer a meteoroid through the different sectors of space. Minerals and obstacles, all enter a real time race. The simple game concept has a host of sub-activities to make it particularly pleasing; you can carry over unused time in the next sector, for example, and take to the different sectors or planets in any order you wish. Excellent graphics and superb soundings plus.

125
SUN
11

SPINDIZZY

Galaxy Dreams • Spectrum £1.95 • Amiga £2.95/£3.95
• Amstrad £1.95/£1.95

Testosterone stuff: steer your spinning top over tough obstacles and coded vents, against a random time limit. The game landscape is a real system of obstacles, traps, lasers, and computers surrounded by lethal traps - and HD safety rails. Your switches activate life and bridge gaps, but tripping them in the right order can be further than it looks. It has fast play and a lot of nice touches, but the explanation is the thing.

126
SUN
11

STARGLIDER II

Freight • Amiga £1.95/£2.95 • Amiga £2.95

Amiga RISC/PC ST

One of the finest examples of space using vector graphics to their full advantage, get the solid 3D movement and come-out making every bit a winner. You've got everything to remember and there's plenty of options to make, making this combination of shooting and exploration a game that stands head and shoulders above the competition.

127
SUN
11

TAU CETI ACADEMY

CRJ • Spectrum £3.95 • Amiga £4.95/£4.95
• Amstrad £14.95 • Amiga £7.95/£8.95 • Amiga £14.95

Right environment set-up and to enjoy which are both beautiful smooth and well put together. The attention to detail is impressive as you set off on four exciting missions to a space-cadet. In Academy you get to design your own space station with an aim.

128
SUN
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HARDWARE UPGRADE GUIDE

	ACORN ARCHIMEDES	APPLE MACINTOSH
THE RANGE	The 286 and 386 are both available, while the enhanced 486 is only available in Macintosh versions.	The Mac II comes in a wide range of configurations, while both the SE and the SE/30 are available in both desktop and laptop models. Both have separate keyboard and mouse.
MEMORY & CHIPS	The 286 has 1024 of memory while the 386 has 1MB, but both use Acorn's own type 68030 68450 for their central processor.	Though both machines have 640 of memory, the SE only has a 68000 68010 chip (compared to the 4 with the built-in 68010), but slowly added 68010.
PRICES	Recommended retail prices start at \$500 for the 286 and 600 for the 386, but an upgrade is a second-hand market at yet.	Recommended retail prices start at \$229 for the SE and \$429 for the SE/30. Many are finding that value still, as second-hand are consistently cheap. Can you believe new ones are offered, before disappearing can be personally report the from the store (i.e. try to buy them top of the morning trade off you).
GRAPHICS	Screen resolution is variable, typical modes include 640x480 or 640x350 (with 320x200) or 640x350 or 640x350 or 640x350 (with 320x200). There are hardware options—the 286 or 386, but with 68450 for the 386, the 68450 is the best thing to do in software.	The Macintosh IIx has a screen resolution of 640x480, while the Mac IIx has a 1024x768 screen in 14 colors. 640x480 is a good thing to do in software.
MONITORS	Most computers also offer—RGB + color, no TV (RGB) or TV.	As well as the Macintosh IIx or the Macintosh IIx II, Apple also, there are plenty of third party monitors offering different colors and sizes. Like the Macintosh IIx, they get very good.
SOUND	The Archimedes built-in speakers, 8 channels (in 8 channels) and a separate system, fitted through a post-purchase internal option.	The Macintosh shared sound chip can produce extremely good stereo sound—just on the Mac II—has your own stereo system (8000 generation) or a separate system.
DRIVES, MICE & JOYSTICKS	The built-in disk is a good one, and a 3.5" floppy disk is available. The built-in disk is a 3.5" floppy disk, but the 3.5" floppy disk is available.	The built-in disk is a good one, and a 3.5" floppy disk is available. The built-in disk is a 3.5" floppy disk, but the 3.5" floppy disk is available.
SOFTWARE	Some of the built-in software (Superior and Grand Slam) are built-in, but the 386 version is available. Some of the built-in software (Superior and Grand Slam) are built-in, but the 386 version is available. Some of the built-in software (Superior and Grand Slam) are built-in, but the 386 version is available.	Some software is not readily available on the Macintosh, but many software is available. Some of the built-in software (Superior and Grand Slam) are built-in, but the 386 version is available. Some of the built-in software (Superior and Grand Slam) are built-in, but the 386 version is available.
PROSPECTS	The Archimedes software package makes it a good one, but the 386 version is available. Some of the built-in software (Superior and Grand Slam) are built-in, but the 386 version is available. Some of the built-in software (Superior and Grand Slam) are built-in, but the 386 version is available.	The Macintosh software package makes it a good one, but the 386 version is available. Some of the built-in software (Superior and Grand Slam) are built-in, but the 386 version is available. Some of the built-in software (Superior and Grand Slam) are built-in, but the 386 version is available.
OVERALL	The Archimedes is a good one, but the 386 version is available. Some of the built-in software (Superior and Grand Slam) are built-in, but the 386 version is available. Some of the built-in software (Superior and Grand Slam) are built-in, but the 386 version is available.	The Macintosh is a good one, but the 386 version is available. Some of the built-in software (Superior and Grand Slam) are built-in, but the 386 version is available. Some of the built-in software (Superior and Grand Slam) are built-in, but the 386 version is available.

RATINGS

Graphics
Sound
SOFTWARE
Range
Quality
Prospects

5
4
4
4
4
4



Graphics (SE)
Sound
SOFTWARE
Range
Quality
Prospects

4
4
4
4
4
4



RANDOM ACCESS

WGar Thramboke plunges the world ever deeper into the mire but could be facing big trouble in the form of an avenging virus. Another batch of ACE odd facts and a couple of TPLs (Totally Pointless Lists). Not forgetting the brain-twisting puzzle and crossword.

Horace Claghamle stared at his solar mountifully. How by four the water level in the basin was rising. His world rightlanders were taking low-level board that one day a meteoroid might take corner of Zentrophysopalein Municipal Drainage Capital Park and reverse the polarity of the pumping meters, and here it was actually happening. Heaver knows the number of times he'd written to Mr. Tord, the fish plant superintendent, outlining the danger. There was no excuse, of course, for those replies, and there was some suspicion in the Horace Claghamle mind that his insistence on the problem might have helped lead, in some way to his confinement at the Zentrophysopalein Lunatic Asylum.

He measured the level in his solar toilet once more, then stepped across to the door in his great-jump and banged it with his elbow. He one paid much attention, though - fairly surprised seeing that the door was aglittered with three inches of Acme Schlossman Luxury Insulative Padding. Heard him he heard the faint slopping of water on the floor as the water in the toilet touched the rim.

Mr. Gar Thramboke was lively. The flood of specks coming in indicated that his plans to bring the world to its knees were progressing well, but the problem was that there was no-one to worship or applaud his greatness. He'd gone through the Storage Deposit Plants data banks many times, but the only other speck he'd encountered were the ones that sat in the corner of the Flow Rate Indicator Diagrams on the main pumping station's terminals. There were slugs, really, about existing humans who were far more interested in fossacium collection and methane oxides than prostrating themselves before superior intellects. The best he could do by tinkering with their tactile sensation subroutines was to make them shout twice as fast every time he made a speech, which was somewhat water-wasting.

Eventually, the water level in Horace Claghamle's cell reached the light fitting. Horace Claghamle was beginning to think he and was right. By pushing his face down the neck of the stratagoloid and blowing hot/managed-inflated and keep himself afloat, but if the water didn't get him next, the noxious gas would. Several hours' worth of material had built up in the seaward beneath the skylight since the pumping meters had been repaired, and since Horace Claghamle's room was in the cellar, it was at coming out of his face.

Then the light faded. A jagged spark flashed blue in the sudden darkness, stream different types of

THE ACE SERIAL

The Git In The Machine: Part 4

gas, each more noxious than the last, gusted simultaneously, and the resulting explosion blew the door off its sill. Horace Claghamle was swept out of the door and along the corridor on a flaming tide of effluvia, and straight past the office of Doctor Summer, the asylum-director.

Doctor Summer, who has to listen to me - the world's in mortal danger! shouted Horace Claghamle as he roared past in his unidentified stragoloid.

Doctor Summer stopped writing, got down his pencil and checked his paper.

It was the gentleman who truly apprehended young Claghamle, who'd been left high and not really at all dry on his cerebral 'leap to the subatomic level. Thinking he'd discovered some kind of mutated albino marmoset, the gentleman had pinned the object with his position, and had then nooded wisely when

he didn't vegetable someone and inflated explosively, unconcerning the compressed gasp three times before coming to rest amidst the debris.

'You must be mad!' said Doctor Summer as Horace Claghamle tottered his there.

'But it's true, Doctor Summer. It's happened at last. The I always said it would.'

'We let you looked up in that room too long!' said Doctor Summer, thinking more of the huge quantity of effluvia that had been disgorged with young Claghamle rather than any effect the confinement might have had on his mental condition.

'There's only one way to stop him,' said Horace Claghamle, 'and for that I need to use your Amocata.'

'Well I'm not sure I can let you use my own personal computer,' said Doctor Summer, doubtfully, brushing shoochie abouts abouts off his formal dress and putting down his spectacles. 'Just what is it you need to do?'

'In going to write a virus!' said Horace Claghamle with a grin in his eye.

'Oh dear,' said Doctor Summer, who'd only just recovered from a nasty yolk.

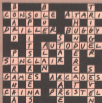
'Oh dear,' said the pencil on his shoulder.

'Oh dear,' said Mr. Gar Thramboke, who'd been monitoring the conversation via Doctor Summer's receptors...

SOLUTION TO PRIZE CROSSWORD NO7

The first correct entry out of the bag was Patrick Stanley of Clapton, who wins £25 worth of software for his mirth.

This is what the completed crossword should have looked like...





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THE ACE PUZZLE NO9

Set by Archie-Medes

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After paying for these items some blank discs caught his eye. These cost one quarter of the money that he had paid for the software. Finally a pocket cost him as much of the amount remaining.

On leaving the shop with his purchases, he realised he'd forgotten the most important thing of all - as he had exactly £11.50 left, he slipped back into the shop and soon emerged with a photograph of his face and the latest copy of ACE under his arm!

Can you say how much money he started the day with?
Instead of working the puzzle out with pencil and paper, why not have a single listing that will solve your mind to make life fun?

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

COMPUTER OWNED _____

SEND YOUR ANSWERS TO: PUZZLE NO9, 4, QUEEN STREET, BATH BA1 1EL. CLOSING DATE DECEMBER 31st.

SOLUTION TO THE ACE PUZZLE NO7

The first correct entry out of the postbag was Bob Whitaker of Cambridge who wins £25 worth of software.

There are 116 different multiples of seven in the grid. These are shown below.

7	14	21	28	35	42	49	56
63	77	91	97	98	112	126	140
105	119	133	140	147	161	175	189
196	210	224	231	238	252	266	280
294	308	322	329	336	350	364	378
392	406	420	427	434	448	462	476
494	508	522	529	536	550	564	578
602	616	630	637	644	658	672	686
694	708	722	729	736	750	764	778
794	808	822	829	836	850	864	878
894	908	922	929	936	950	964	978
994	1008	1022	1029	1036	1050	1064	1078
1094	1108	1122	1129	1136	1150	1164	1178
1194	1208	1222	1229	1236	1250	1264	1278
1294	1308	1322	1329	1336	1350	1364	1378
1394	1408	1422	1429	1436	1450	1464	1478
1494	1508	1522	1529	1536	1550	1564	1578
1594	1608	1622	1629	1636	1650	1664	1678
1694	1708	1722	1729	1736	1750	1764	1778
1794	1808	1822	1829	1836	1850	1864	1878
1894	1908	1922	1929	1936	1950	1964	1978

A six by six grid can be dissected into 116 component numbers. For example, a line of six digits also holds two five-digit numbers, three four-digit numbers, four three-digit numbers, five two-digit numbers, and six single digits.

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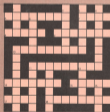
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The ACE crossword is cryptic. The answer might be an anagram, or formed from the end of one word and the beginning of another, or simply hinted at by the clue. Most - but not quite all - of the answers are computer-related.

ACROSS

1. Saw Fey ripped in game - its maddest (6)
7. Summery by dancing mad characters (4)
8. Warm up in preliminary race (5)
9. See 6 down.
10. Last Zaxxon playing game that never was from Phoenix (4,3)
11. Friends returning to real game (5)
14. 'Dude' must resemble for software house (7)
15. See 13 down.
17. Field from seed, say (4)
18. 8 bit. Now, playing Ocean game (5)

DOWN

1. Set your teeth into, say, some data (4)
2. Best game from Hirocraft (6)
3. Point to computer language fundamentals (5)
4. Put the foot in, say at beginning of Microsoft game (5)
- 6 & 8 an. Same looking a complete MadOut (5,7)
10. Grindler's strong man (5)
11. Double becoming unappier (6)
12. Rank of the year (5)
- 13 & 15 an. Great Pans - turning around blackheads Imagine game (5,5)
16. Be up to no good (4)

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THIS MONTH'S LISTS...

The ACE team have been bursting with list ideas again but these were the only three that were printable.

TOP 10 FUNNY ANIMALS

1. Opos (Blaine County, The Guardian)
2. Cacahu Eel (Ecstasy)
3. The Three Bears (The Beaver)
4. John the Monkey (E... The Guardian)
5. Lamond the Buffalo (Badger)
6. The Penguin (E...)
7. Bill the Cat (Blaine County)
8. Fider (I have stopped our minds what hole is)
9. Bullwinkle J. Moose (Robby and Bullwinkle)
10. SPQ the Hamster (The Young Ones)

TOP 10 SUMMER DANCE HITS

1. Sex Machine - James Brown
2. Somebody to Love - The Blue Brothers
3. Saturday Night - Sweet
4. The Theme from S-Express - S-Express

5. Tiger Feet - Mudi
6. ABC - The Jackson Five
7. Ready Teddy - Little Richard
8. River - King Trigger
9. Pump up the Volume - MARRKOV
10. Rhythm Stick - Ian Dury and the Blockheads

TOP 10 PROGRAMMES FROM THE 50'S AND 60'S

- Top 10 TV Programmes from the 50's and 60's
1. Mission Impossible
 2. Marine Day
 3. Johnny Staccato
 4. Lost in Space
 5. Hawaii Five-O
 6. Wildcats
 7. Dream of Jeannie
 8. The Addams Family
 9. Genghis
 10. Moon Eel

ACE ODD FACTS

Revealing information also collected about the ACE team. This month highlighting winners, Gwyneth Paltrow (Miss) and River City (L...),
 CE had a letter published in the Radio Times when he was 11. KC once paid a magazine contributor in pence. CE left as old as Steve Cook. BC is nicknamed Eggery. SK has a three legged cat called Boopy. RC used to pack for Kati. Amy Wilson made great dolls. Amy Smith had a pet monkey called Charlie. Bob Peck's favourite football team are Preston and the Miami Dolphins.



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