ISSUE 38 • NOVEMBER 1990

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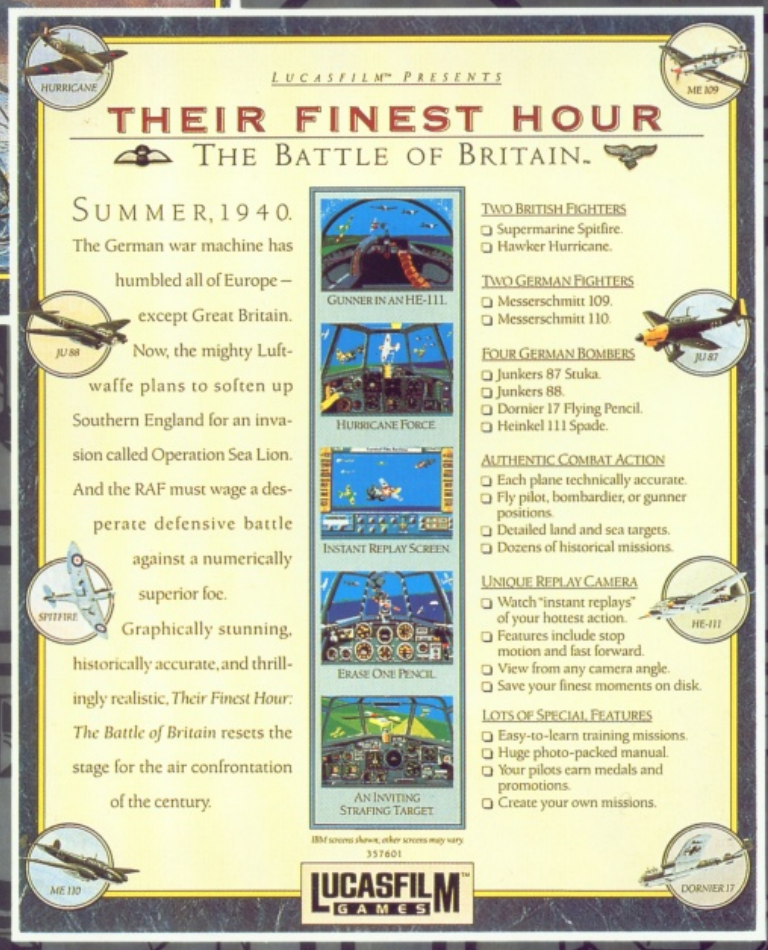

ATARI ST

OUT THIS WEEK!

AMIGA

PC & COMPATIBLES

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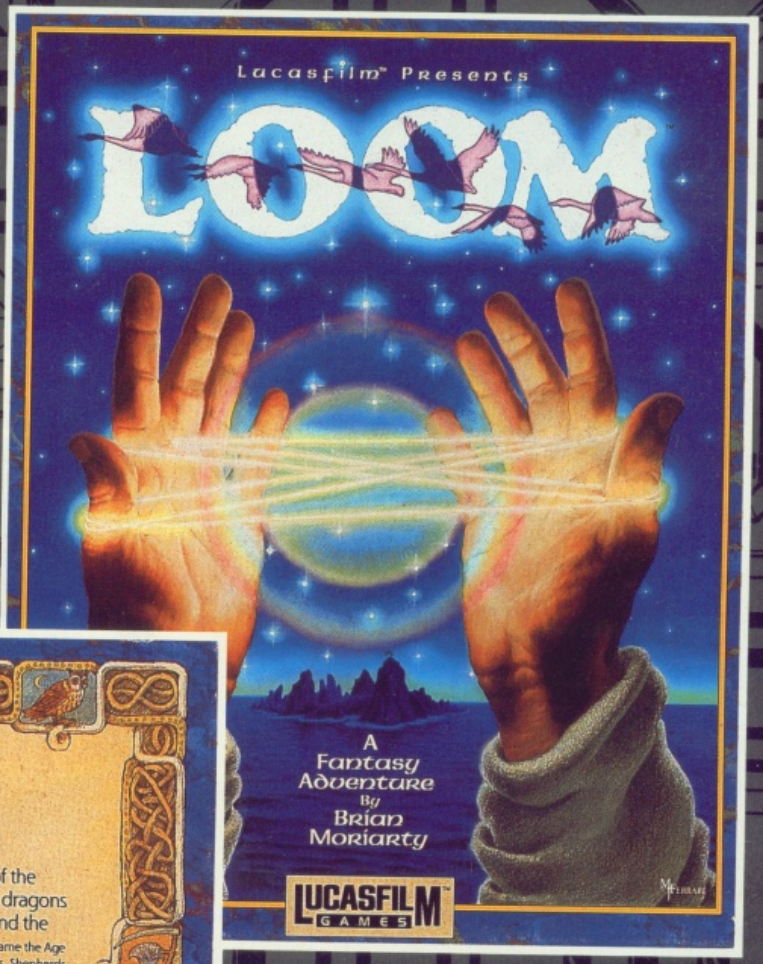

ong after the passing of the Second Shadow, when dragons ruled the twilight sky and the stars were bright and numerous, came the Age of the Great Guilds. ✧ Blacksmiths. Shepherds. Clerics. Each dedicated to the absolute control of secret knowledge. ✧ Another such Guild was the Weavers. Over the centuries, their craft transcended the limits of physical cloth, until they wove the very fabric of reality itself. ✧ Now, a strange power has swept the Weavers into oblivion, leaving behind one Weaver boy to unravel the mystery. Help young Bobbin rescue his Guild . . . and you just might save the universe from an unspeakable catastrophe.

An extraordinary adventure with an interface of magic . . .
✧ Stunning, high-resolution, 3D landscapes.
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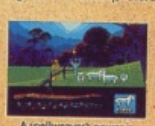
✧ Easy to enjoy for beginners, yet challenging enough for veteran adventure gamers.
"Enchanting . . . complex . . . captivating."—*Game Player's Guide*

Included inside . . . Loom: The Audio Drama—A 30-minute Dolby® Stereo cassette, produced at Lucasfilm's Academy Award-winning Sprocket Systems. Brings the characters and setting of the game vividly to life. ✧ The Book of Patterns—An illustrated textbook of spellweaving. Use it to identify, record, and cast magic spells.

Not all of the Guilds welcome strangers.


A spellweaver's power is not for the sheepish.

Use your magic skill to influence the gullible.

3575

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AMIGA OUT THIS WEEK!

PC & COMPATIBLES

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"Janet's heart was beating out a passionate rhythm of excitement as he moved towards her. She knew, yes, she KNEW he was going to kiss her! With a sigh of apparent surrender, she allowed herself to fall into his tentacles. 'Skkrublak...' he murmured tenderly, not noticing the laser behind her back.

It was set to MaxDestrukt...."

Emmanuel Strikneen, 'Janet Zxlw Suffers Total Recall' Hills and Moon 1830

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Outer space looks so inviting: check out *Supremacy* on page 59

reviews

Wing Leader **has the potential to be truly awesome;** ***Supremacy*** **is superlative; and** ***Populous*** **is just one of several Megadrive titles celebrating the UK launch of the Sega 16-bit machine at the recent CES show...**

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Ah-ban with Vietnam? Find out how Matthew Stibbe remembers the Saigon experience in Silicon on page 11

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93 **BOMBS AWAY!** *Jane's CDROM Yearbooks*

The ACE Conference schedule took in Microprose this month – you can find out what went down (and what took off) on pages 108/109.

The ACE Conferences are an important part of what we're trying to do with this magazine. We don't just want to give you something to read, we also want to give you the chance to speak out and be heard. Anything that brings our readers closer to the industry they support has to be a good thing. At least we think so...

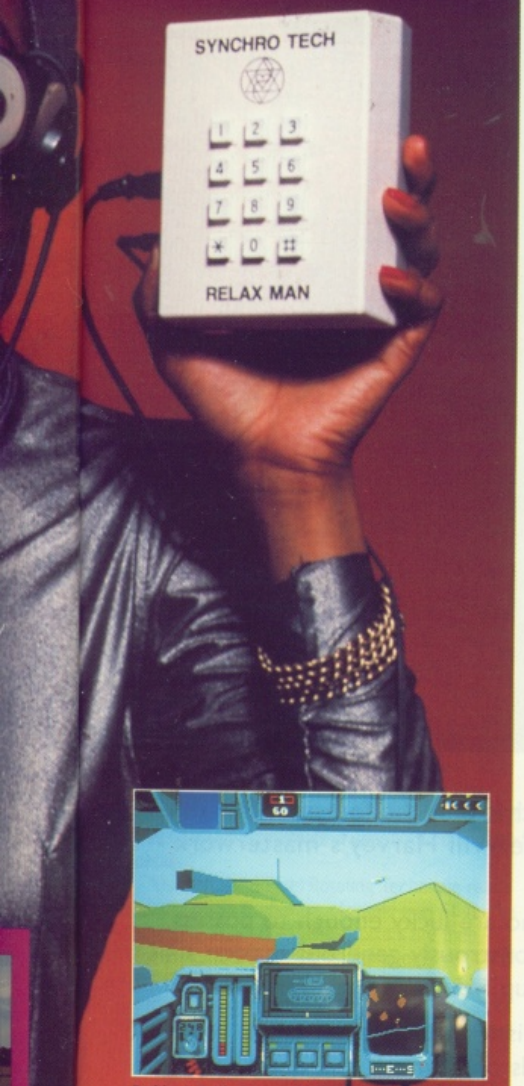
ACE readers prepare to take to the skies in the Microprose 'plane

Our other objectives should come across loud and clear from this issue: to give you more information for your money than any other magazine – and to ensure that that information is authoritative, impeccably researched, impartial, and attractively presented.

And above all, we want to give you the magazine you want. If you ever have any criticisms or suggestions, write to us at the Priory Court address in the panel on the left. And you can 'phone us during the Hotline hours of 5.00pm to 6.00pm each weekday (though please be patient if we have to ask you to call back because of monthly deadlines).

Wing Leader – can the team who brought you *Ultima VI* do it in deep space? Find out on page 52

FREE ISSUE! **Since everyone wins – at the very least – a £2 discount off some of today's top games, you could say that this issue has paid for itself as soon as you get it past the check-out counter. But there's a lot, lot more to ACE 38 than freebies. There's over 170 pages in this issue, covering everything from simulating 'Nam to the potential danger of matter over mind (see our Brain Burn article on page 24). This month's games include the long-awaited *Rick Dangerous 2*, a superb conversion of *Populous* onto the Megadrive, and *Loopz* – a *Tetris* challenger from Audiogenic that should give puzzlers a few sleepless nights. Plus state-of-the-art flight sim technology from Farnborough, Realtime's *Battle Command*, and much, much more!**



Forget printers, modems, and light pens. Next time you want to plug something in, make it your brain. Find out about the future of consciousness and computing on page 24

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MEET GAZZA!

Check out our exclusive review of the latest Gazza game from Entertainment International on page 29, plus details of how you could get to meet the man himself.

Realtime's *Battle Command* features excellent solid 3D effects and stars in an exclusive ACE Preplay feature on pages 41/3

ULTRA WAR!

Realtime reveal the secrets of their latest creation, *Battle Command* in this issue. The team who brought you *Carrier Command* are set to send you into a future alternate reality, dominated by the Ultra War – a war fought between low-profile, high-speed, hard hitting elite squadrons, armed to the teeth and operating behind enemy lines. In your Mauler tank, you're airlifted into the combat zone to do battle in solid 3D. 'Battlezone for people with brains,' they call it. Tank it up on pages 41/3.

ACE

NOVEMBER 1990

YOU'LL NEED IMAGINATION,

SKILL, DARING... AND ERR...

£100* FOR A 1Meg MACHINE.

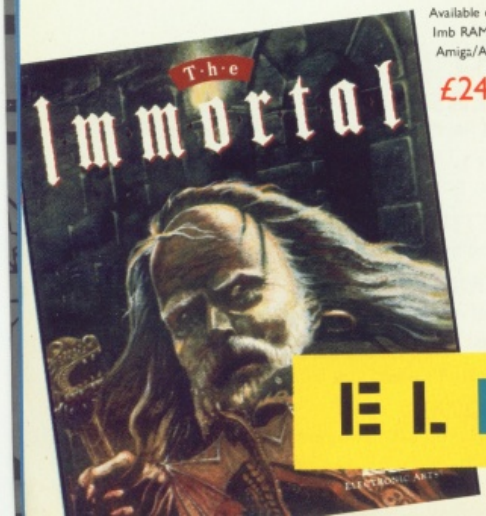
* £100 is the estimated cost to upgrade your Amiga or ST from 512k to 1mb.
If you already have a 1mb machine it won't cost you anything more but the price of the programme!

It's a sad fact of life that only the fortunate few will ever get to experience Will Harvey's masterwork - The Immortal.

Still, those of you who are lucky enough to possess 1mb equipment or a monstrously generous maiden aunt and a birthday coming up, you're in for a rare treat.

Using a uniquely realistic three quarter angle, you are lead through eight levels of labyrinth in a quest to find your long lost teacher Mordimar. In a world of intrigue and betrayal, mystery and blood curdling violence, you are pitted against the most ghoulishly lifelike opponents you'd never want to meet.

All in all, this is one dungeon challenge that no true enthusiast can afford to miss - no matter what the cost.



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ELECTRONIC ARTS

Electronic Arts, 11-49 Station Road, Langley, Nr. Slough, Berks SL3 8YN. Tel: (0753) 49442. Fax: (0753) 4667

KODAK DEVELOPS CD CAMERA

Kodak, the famous photography company, is developing a camera that transfers film images onto compact disc instead of the normal chemical-based film. These CD images can be displayed on any domestic television. Kodak announced its new system at press launches in Tokyo, London and New York last month.

You'll be able to hold up to 100 images on each photo CD. These discs are then inserted into a special CD player – developed by Dutch electronics giant Philips – connected to a normal TV. As the photo CD is digital, you can zoom, crop and edit every image stored on the disc using a simple remote-control unit. Kodak's revolutionary new system is due to be introduced in 1992. No price has yet been set for the camera, but the CD player will cost in the region of $500

RAINBOW ARTS GETS ROTATED

Rainbow Arts, the German software developer of *Denaris*, *Great Giana Sisters* and *X-Out*, is now working on a game which uses a similar system to US Gold's Rotorscape graphics routines found in its *Rotox* and *Operation Harrier* games.

The appropriately titled *Rotator* is a one- or two-player split-screen shoot'em-up with 16-colour real-time zoom and field rotating effects, 32 different levels, digital speech and six on-game soundtracks.

"*Rotator* is the first program that rotates coloured pictures in real-time," states Rainbow Arts. "This was an achievement previously only realised with vector orientated graphics that rotate objects consisting of only eight colours. It was impossible to create a variety of colours and details."

"Our Antialised Pixel Rotating Technique reads special pixels from a big playfield every time the screen is assembled. These pixels are then transformed and placed on the special region of the screen. Although the reading, rotating and setting of single pixels require high expenses of time, it was possible to reach a very high speed by using all the custom chips of the computer."

"The routines read, rotate and set 32768 single pixels each consisting of 16-colours from a 280K playfield in a tenth of a second. There are 256 single angles and 500 zoom phases that allow an unbroken enlargement and diminution. Both displayed zones of the screen are zoomable, rotatable and fully self-contained. If the grid is finished, the line connections are drawn and the other objects are rotated, the coordinates are computed and copied onto the screen. Finally the shadow that is to be drawn on the playfield is computed. Every pixel has to be read and converted into a darker colour. This calculation takes just 0.006 seconds on the Amiga." *Rotator* is due to be released for £19.99dk on Amiga, PC and ST this month.

Get ready for more 360° action courtesy of Rainbow Arts.

DARE YOU REFUSE?

US Gold is making an offer you can't refuse by developing computer and console games based around the cult series of *Godfather* mafia movies.

This Birmingham-based software company has secured the rights to the generic name 'The Godfather'. "In order to exploit the licence to it's maximum potential, our intention is to produce more than one game in a similar fashion to *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*," says US Gold. "There will be a high level interactive-adventure game and a more basic action-game to address both 8-bit and 16-bit markets and child and adult audiences."

The Godfather and *The Godfather Part II* starring Al Pacino and Marlon Brando were both awarded Oscars for Best Picture. The latest movie, *Godfather III*, will be released in March 1991. US Gold hopes to have the games ready for simultaneous release with the film.

MORE MEGADRIVE MANIA

Electronic Arts, the California-based company responsible for *Populous*, *Deluxe Paint* and *Skate or Die*, has announced worldwide publishing deals on the Sega Megadrive with Ocean, Cinemaware, Ubisoft, Three Sixty, Innerprise, Discovery and New World Computing.

Battle Squadron (Innerprise) and *Sword of Sodan* (Discovery) will be the first titles released under this agreement. Other titles have yet to be announced but an EA spokesperson told ACE that the following titles are likely to be converted over to the Megadrive: *F-29 Retaliator* and *Epic* (Ocean), *Unreal* and *Bat* (Ubisoft), *Harpoon* (Three Sixty), *It Came from the Desert* and *Wings* (Cinemaware).

All these software companies have chosen to be partners with Electronic Arts because of EA's Artist workstation – a custom-made game development system designed for quick conversion work. "The Artist allows us to easily port 68000 games across all machine formats," confirms EA.

The Sega Megadrive 16-bit console was officially launched into the UK at CES last month. EA hopes to start releasing Megadrive games over here before the end of the autumn. *Populous* will be the first EA Megadrive game available in the UK (turn to page 86 for the full ACE review).

BUILD YOUR OWN ALTERNATE REALITY

Domark and Incentive are currently developing a *3D Construction Kit* product utilising Incentive's Freescape software technology. "The *3D Construction Kit* is the first product to enable you to create, design and plan a real environment, and to then walk into that environment and interact with it as if you were actually there", says Domark.

Freescape, Incentive's innovative three-dimensional graphics system was first used in the *Driller*, *Dark Side*, *Total Eclipse* and *Castle Master* games. "Designed around Freescape2, *3D Construction Kit* is the ultimate tool for building an alternate reality. This awe-inspiring product is unique in that it can be utilised in both the leisure and educational spheres."

"Using the *Kit* is rather like building Lego blocks for adults with unlimited bricks! Stretch them, squash them, shrink yourself and enter your new creations. Interact with your surroundings, animate objects, get them moving to create an even more real effect. Using the 3D elements of the product you can create houses, streets, and maybe even small towns. Buildings and the rooms inside, underground scenes, vehicles and even space scenarios. In short, the limits are set only by your imagination," enthuses Domark.

"The potential uses for such a utility are enormous and include: the creation of 3D computer games (arcade, adventure and simulation), 3D modelling, visualisations and educational (design, modelling and urban studies). You will be able to select sound effects from the products internal library and to use ready-made stand alone environments in your designs."

Let's get virtual! *3D Construction Kit* will be available in April 1991 on Amiga, Spectrum, C64, ST, PC and Amstrad CPC. Prices are yet to be set. "3D Construction Kit encourages creativity within many different areas."

Mr Takeshita (left) and Luther de Gale (middle) hand the fabulous Neo-Geo machine to ACE winner Clive Blass (right)

HAVE YOU WON A NEO-GEO?

The lucky winner of the SNK Neo-Geo competition – featured back in ACE 34 – has been picked out of the thousands of hopeful entrants.

Luther De Gale and Mr Takeshita of SNK presented a brand new Neo-Geo to ACE Reader Clive Blass (from Middlesex) at the busy Computer Entertainment Show (CES) last month. Clive also won a Neo-Geo game of his choice.

SNK used CES to officially launch the Neo-Geo console into the UK. "This completely new futuristic game entertainment system actually exceeds the power of the average arcade game and blows the doors off any home system available in the world today," says SNK.

Neo-Geo was exclusively previewed in ACE32. The console itself costs £399.99 (no game supplied), Neo-Geo games are £199.99 each. There are currently eight games titles available, including *Nam-1975*, *Riding Hard*, *Top Player's Golf* and *Magician Lord*.

You can buy Neo-Geo gear at over 50 independent retailers throughout the UK. Active Consoles has been signed up as the exclusive UK distributor of SNK's Neo-Geo by De Gale Marketing (SNK's European agent). Robert Stallibrass of Active says, "One of the things that has put some of the public off buying the Neo-Geo has been the cost of the software at £200. We will be offering new and existing owners the opportunity to rent arcade quality titles for £25 a month. At last, people will be able to buy Neo-Geo hardware at the same price as a 16-bit computer, but play far superior games that cost no more than most ST and Amiga titles. There is an annual membership fee of £30. This will also include regular news of new releases and other product information coming from Japan". You can contact Active on 081 752 0260.

ACE has recently offered you exclusive chances to win a Neo-Geo, Fujitsu FM Towns 32-bit CD-ROM micro, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle goodies, four Nintendo Gameboys, Sega Megadrive, Atari Lynx, Sega Master System, Nintendo Entertainment System, Paris trip, holiday in Hollywood and an invite to a millionaire's Halloween party in Austin, Texas. Look out for even better competitions in future issues of ACE: the ultimate games magazine.

THE FUTURE IS NOW!

Intertainment '90 is the 3rd Annual Conference on Interactive Entertainment featuring in-depth discussions on Games, Artificial Reality, Interactive Television, Interactive Music, Optical Discs and the Future of Interactive Entertainment. "The 90's will become 'The Decade of Interactive Entertainment' and we would like you to join us and the speakers as we seek to understand The Future of Fun," says conference director Sally Chin.

Speakers at the conference include key personnel from Origin, Lucasfilm Games, Sierra On-Line, Cinemaware, Mediagenic (Activision), MTV, Magnetic Scrolls, American Interactive Media (Philips CD-I software development company), ABC, Time-Life, NECø, Mattel, Mitsubishi Electronics, Children's Television Workshop (Sesame Street), AT&T and Chris Crawford (programmer of Balance of Power). ACE will also be participating in the conference.

Topics to be covered include: **The New Gaming World** (examining major developments in the video game market including the emergence of new 16-bit game systems, portable game controllers and new kinds of video games), **Fantasy Role-Playing Games and Game Simulations: The Next Level** (focussing on new approaches to fantasy role-playing games and game simulations), **Pioneering CD-ROM Entertainment** (covering innovative approaches to the design and production of CD-ROM entertainment software), **CD-I Workshop** (providing a comprehensive overview of CD-I), **Artificial Reality 'Adventures in Cyberspace - New Frontiers for Virtual Reality'** (focussing on the development of a whole range of artificial reality applications for the consumer/public market including games), **Interactive Music** (focusing on new approaches to interactive music programming, including 'electronic album covers' and interactive music documentaries), **Maximising the Impact of Interactive Marketing** (covering floppy disk adverts, use of simulators in advertising, sponsorship of video games, online ads and interactive TV advertising), **Moving Towards Hyperfiction** (examining the creation of interactive stories on Macintosh and PC formats), **Interactivity in the New Home Entertainment/Information Centre** (focussing on how and where interactivity will fit in with such technologies as HDTV and digital TV in the new home entertainment centre) and **Integration of New Technologies in Interactive Entertainment** (focussing on new technologies that will significantly impact the development of future interactive entertainment products, including artificial intelligence and holography).

Intertainment '90 will be held at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in New York, USA from 29-31 October 1990. For registration or inquires contact Sally Chin on 0101 212 3823929 or fax 0101 212 3823964. A comprehensive on-the-spot conference report filled with exclusive news and interviews will appear in a near future issue of ACE.

ACCOLADE HITS OUT

Veteran American games developer, Accolade, has interrupted a quiet summer with the announcement of three exciting titles. *Test Drive III: The Passion, Elvira - Mistress of the Dark* and *Altered Destiny* are all to be released by the Californian company before Christmas '90.

Test Drive III: The Passion is the latest addition to the team of Accolade's successful racing simulations. "*Test Drive* products have sold more than one million units," states Accolade. "Not a fantasy, but a true driving simulation, *Test Drive III* takes you to new heights of passion in some of the world's most expensive and exclusive sports car prototypes in the world. Computer racers will be electrified by the 225mph Chevrolet CERV III, the 378-horsepower Pinnaferina Myhos and the $185000 Lamborghini Diablo. Each of these lightning-fast specialties can be driven or raced on a completely new collections of challenging roads for the most realistic, and most adventurous road racing experience ever," boasts Accolade.

"Designed by Tom Loghry, creator of *Steel Thunder* and *Gunboat*, *Test Drive III: The Passion* uses a combination of bitmapped and polygon-filled graphics with digitised vehicle interiors for an unprecedented sense of speed, road perspective and vehicle performance. Also new to *Test Drive III* are instant replay and a 360-degree chase car view with variable zoom, therefore enabling you to get the driver's view of crashing into a lake or get the witness view of a car's graceful arc as it dives into the water at speeds in excess of 100mph."

"You encounter lakes with boats, rivers and waterfalls, train crossings, bridges and buildings. *Test Drive III* also features day and night driving, fully functional headlights, rain and lighting, snow and fog and pretty damn useful windshield wipers."

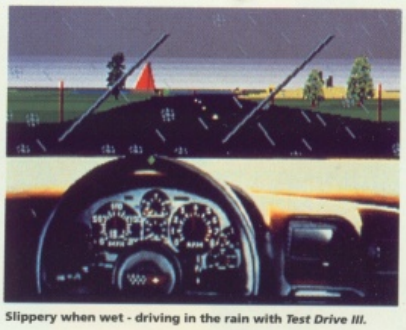
Test Drive III: The Passion will be available on PC this month for £29.99dk, other formats will follow later on. All Accolade PC games support EGA, MCGA, VGA and Tandy 16-colour graphics cards and Ad Lib, Roland, CMS and Tandy 3-voice sound boards. In typical fashion, Accolade will also be releasing a *Test Drive III* add-on disk featuring extra scenery and cars.

In a surprising move, Accolade will now publish and distribute Horrorsoft's newest computer game, *Elvira - Mistress of the Dark*. Elvira is a real-life American TV star who introduces late-night horror and Heavy Metal shows.

"Featuring the sultry Elvira, the world's most famous spokesperson for ghouls and goblins, the game leads players through a demon-filled, medieval castle," confirms Accolade. "Elvira's recent renovations to an ancient castle have aroused her long-dead relative, Queen Emelda, from the grave and opened a portal into the underworld, admitting hundreds of evil servants into the castle to prepare for her arrival. Calling on your ghostbusting expertise, Elvira informs you that Queen Emelda is in search of 'The Scroll of Spiritual Mastery' which will give her immortality and the power to control all the minions of Hades in her ambition to rule the world. Fortunately, the scroll will also provide a way to defeat the queen if Elvira can secure it first. Sealed in a chest bearing six different locks, the scroll is hidden somewhere on the castle grounds."

Waiter, waiter, there's a head in my soup!

Claw blimey! These guys look like they're a little tough! Can even *Elvira* charm these brutes?



Slippery when wet - driving in the rain with *Test Drive III*.

"*Elvira - Mistress of the Dark* combines exploration, combat and intriguing puzzles in a completely icon-driven game where nearly everything can be interacted with in some way. A graphic and animation intensive role-playing adventure, *Elvira - Mistress of the Dark* offers rich scenery with nearly 800 locations to explore in the castle rooms, dungeon, catacombs, courtyard, gardens, hedge maze and castle moat. The game also features hand-to-hand battles with more than 100 different monsters, dozens of magic spells and over 300 useable objects including: weapons, herbs and scrolls." *Elvira - Mistress of the Dark* will be released sometime this month at a rather extravagant price of £29.99dk on Amiga, ST and £39.99dk for the PC version.

Altered Destiny, the third release from Accolade, uses a new graphic adventure engine. "One minute you're just a guy eating nacho-flavoured popcorn. The next you're sucked through a television set into a fantastic alien world filled with exotic landscapes and mesmerizing lifeforms. Welcome to the surprising new destiny of PJ Barret. Follow PJ through a marvellous universe of acid pools and frags, quirls and fluboxes, floaters and wraiths. There's a deep mystery here which only he, with your help, can solve."

"*Altered Destiny* has been written and designed by Michael Berlyn, the creator of such classic Infocom games as *Infidel* and *Suspended*, and the author of four sci-fi novels including *The Eternal Enemy*. The game features over 90 animated screens, 25 songs and a super-intelligent parser that recognises more than 1500 words and allows you to communicate in full sentences."

Altered Destiny will be available on PC (£29.99dk) later this month, with an Amiga (£24.99dk) version due in November.

Just one of the 90 attractive screens from *Altered Destiny*.

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2000 AD FEATURING JUDGE DREDD

THE AMAZING SPIDERMAN

"Spiderman, Spiderman, does what ever a spider can. Can he swing, listen bud, he's got radioactive blood. Hey there, here comes the Spiderman." Entertainment International is releasing *The Amazing Spiderman* on Amiga, Spectrum, C64, ST, PC and CPC later this month. The story so far... "In a desperate search for revenge, Mysterio breaks into Peter Parker's apartment and kidnaps Parkers wife Mary Jane. Mysterio is unaware that Parker is in fact Spiderman. Returning from his regular nightly patrol, Spidey discovers that his apartment has been broken into. There is no sign of his wife, and lying on the table is a note which reads: 'If you ever hope to see Mary Jane again, get Spiderman to meet me at the old Rockwell Studios, tomorrow midnight.'" *The Amazing Spiderman* is an arcade platform game featuring old film sets from horror, science fiction, epic, outer space, western and urban adventure movies.

Yo dudes! Not a tiny mutton nifty tortoise in sight...

THE LAST STARSHIP

Impressions new 'mega-blast-em-up' features: "realistic three-plane parallax scrolling, ships which transform as you upgrade your weapons, wave after wave of innovative and cunning aliens, stirring in-game sound-track and FX, mean and merciless mother-ships." The Last Starship should be out later this month on Amiga and ST.

COWABUNGA!

WRATH OF THE DEMON

Get ready for the next release from Readysoft, the creators of *Dragon's Lair* and *Space Ace*. "*Wrath of the Demon* combines state-of-the-art multi-level parallax-scrolling with spectacular graphics, animation and playability. You're on a quest to rid the kingdom of an evil Demon and his minions, rescue the princess and restore honor to your king. Your quest will lead you through caves, swamps, temples and castles before reaching your ultimate challenge... the Demon himself." *Wrath of Demon* features: "over 550 screens of action, over 1200 frames of animation, more than 100 different monsters, over 100 colours on-screen, 60 frames/second, 15 level parallax scrolling, bi-directional smooth scrolling, state-of-the-art animation, breath taking backgrounds, 20 different movements, over 2Mb of graphics and large well-defined characters". Entertainment International will be releasing *Wrath of Demon* next month on Amiga, C64, ST and PC. Spectrum and Amstrad CPC versions are also under development.

RANX

Ubisoft is working on a game based around a famous French cartoon series. "*Ranx* is an explosive arcade adventure that should delight even the most blase of players. In this game you embody Ranx, an android with extraordinary strength – defender of the underdog. Fushia sickness and the psychoplague are ravaging one town after another. There are thousands of victims and no vaccine manages to stamp out the plague. You must move heaven and earth to save the world and discover the remedy. From Rome to New York, you'll have to take on the worst riffraff." *Ranx* is out soon on Amiga, ST and PC.

CRIME DOES NOT PAY

The latest adventure arcade from Titus is immoral. "The goal of the game is to become major of the city with the help of your criminal clan. At the beginning of the game you choose to be an Italian mafioso or a Chinese clan mastermind. Each clan is composed of three members: the Godfather, the Hitman and the pretty but dangerous girl. The acting character moves through the city and fights against cops, punks, the gipsy and members of adverse clans. You have to corrupt or neutralize the VIPs of the city so that they cannot prevent you from reaching your ultimate goal." *Crime Does Not Pay* will be launched later this month on Amiga, ST and PC.

PLAY 'THE BREED'...THEN FEAR THE NIGHT

Clive Barker's

NIGHTBREED

CABAL

THE INTERACTIVE MOVIE

BELIEVED TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR A SERIES OF MURDERS, AARON BOON
HEARS OF A PLACE CALLED **MIDIAN** WHERE A RACE OF SUPERNATURA
BEINGS LIVE, ISOLATED FROM THE INHUMANITIES OF MAN
IN A BID TO ESCAPE THE UNJUST WORLD, BOONE DISCOVERS THE
UNDERGROUND NECROPOLIS, HOPING TO BE ACCEPTED AS ONE OF THE
'BREED'. HOWEVER, THIS AMBITION BECOMES FULFILLED IN A NIGHTMARISH
FASHION, WHEN HE IS BITTEN BY **PELOQUIN**, A CANNIBALISTIC BREED
MEMBER, AND THUS UNDERGOES AN INCREDIBLE TRANSFORMATION.
UNWITTINGLY, BOONE LEADS THE POLICE DEPARTMENT TO MIDIAN
IN A CIVILIZATION WHERE EVERYTHING THAT IS DIFFERENT MUST BE
DESTROYED, THESE **'SONS OF THE FREE'** MOUNT AN ENORMOUS ATTACK
UPON THE UNDERGROUND CITY, AIDED BY **'THE MASK'** - THE TRUE SERIAL
KILLER FOR WHOM BOONE HAD BEEN MISTAKEN. HAS BOONE INICIATED
THE DOWNFALL OF THE NIGHTBREED, OR CAN HE BECOME THEIR SAVIOUR

A COMBINATION OF STRATEGY ELEMENTS AND
ARCADE-STYLE ACTION MAKES THIS A GAME
OF UNCOMPROMISING CHALLENGES,
VARYING EVERY TIME IT IS PLAYED.

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Combat Halls

ACE readers adopt the 'publish and be damned' attitude...and Russell Dodd brings us a vision of the games centres of the future...

A ROSE IS A ROSE

I'm sure you are aware of all the different names software houses go under. For instance, Sierra, Activision, and System 3 are all one and the same, and obviously Firebird is Rainbird. As I am an avid reader of your mag, I wonder if you could answer this for me.
Dan Morelle, London

Sierra, Activision, and System 3 are all completely different companies. It's just that Activision distribute (or used to distribute) the products of all three to the shops. Firebird and Rainbird, on the other hand, are two brand names used by the same company (Microprose). Companies use different brand names when they want to distinguish between different product ranges. The Firebird range, for example, concentrates on value-for-money action games, whereas Rainbird is known for premier price, complex games like Midwinter.

TOWNS TROUBLE

What is the difference between the CD-TV and a CD-I machine, for example the FM Towns? Will there be versions of Midwinter, Red Storm Rising, and F19 Stealth Fighter for the CDTV or will there just be games written specifically for it?
John Joseph Mercieca, Malta

Here we go again! CD-ROM is a standard for storing computer data on CD. You can buy CD-ROM drives for many machines, ranging from the PC Engine console to the IBM PC. CD-ROM is simply a read-only disk with lots of data storage space. The FM Towns has a CD-ROM drive built-in. CDTV is an Amiga with a CD-ROM drive that has what is known as CD+G capability. In other words, it can play CD music and display computer graphics at the same time. CD-I is yet another system, defined by Sony/Philips and not yet commercially available. It uses CD disks to handle video, audio, and computer data simultaneously. The CDTV will be compatible with almost all existing Amiga software, and some companies are bound to produce specific CDTV versions of their best-selling games if the machine ever establishes a large user base.

THE AWFUL TRUTH

I've had an idea for a computer that is able to convert a book into a film. The way it works is that you programme the book into the computer which the computer will then analyse. Then you program in the names of the actors and actresses you think will suit the roles. The computer should then store this in its memory banks which should only take a few seconds. Then the computer makes a cartoon film based on the book, thus eliminating irrelevant matter, leaving you with a basic structure to work on. If, however, the film produces in itself is as you would wish it to be, the computer then makes copies of it onto video or reel-to-reel tapes.
C. Letch, Blackpool

We were under the impression that most films were already made this way.

BUYERS GUIDE TO SALESMEN

Mike Wilks of Sheffield **has sent us a dictionary of sales phrases. We found the following particularly useful...**

The latest machine, using all new technology	***A Spectrum***
The ultimate programming language	***BASIC***
Soon you'll wonder how you lived without it	***Soon you'll wonder why you bought it***
A brilliant machine, but we've only got a few left because they're so popular	***A VIC 20***
The machine won't work with your old printer	***So why don't you buy a new one?***
All of the other shops don't give you a free monitor	***We don't either***
It's a misprint	***I hate mail order companies***
No, you'll have to buy a monitor	***What the hell's a modulator??***
I've got one at home	***I got conned too***
You've just saved a lot of money	***You've just wasted even more***

"TAKES YOUR BREATH AWAY"

OPERATION HARRIER

INTELLIGENCE INDICATES – MEMBERS OF ENEMY HI- COMMAND ON CRUISER NEAR NORTH ISLAND, MIDDLE EAST.

YOUR MISSION... SINK THE ENEMY CRUISER.

YOU WANT A REVOLUTION?...
...YOU'VE GOT IT ..!

ROTOSCAPE combines the colourful detail of large sprites with the complete freedom to move around a background of polygon constructed landscapes. Watch in amazement as this detailed background zooms, scrolls and rotates through 360° around you, giving an incredibly lifelike feel to the game.

Screen shots from Atari ST version

Screen shots from Amiga version

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ROTOSCAPE IT'S A REVOLUTION

Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computers specifications.

NO MORE ADS!

When I pay £1.60 for a magazine, I expect something that will keep me happy for quite a while after purchase, but with up to 30% or so of the magazine being adverts, ACE does not provide enough long term reading as you would expect from a 130 page magazine. To ask you to cut out adverts complete would be a stupid thing to do as they keep the reader aware of what games are about, but I'm sure a few less wouldn't hurt.
Stuart Russell, Harrogate

Ahem. Stuart, the ads actually pay for the production of the magazine, which costs far more money than is received from the readers who buy it. To give you some idea, the page you are looking at cost £700 to produce – and that doesn't even include the printing costs! That's because here at ACE we spend a lot of money on design and colour technology to ensure we can produce a really top class product. Finally, if you compare the number of pages you get to read in this issue of ACE with ANY other games magazine and then compare the price, you'll see that we give you far more pages for your money.

'I saw your photo of a screen from New Zealand Story while reading the article on cute and cuddly computer games. I liked the Kiwi so much that I drew one of my own – bigger and better!
Sarah Rutt (aged 14)

CONFERENCE QUERIES

Will all ACE Conferences be on Thursdays? Will there be a conference at Ocean in the near future?
Anon

No. Yes. See page 109 for details of how to get in on the Conference act.

I'd really like to attend of your ACE Conferences. Can't you hold some on the Continent?
Anne-Miriam Maczewska, W. Germany

That's an excellent idea and we'll try to arrange one as soon as possible. How about Rainbow Arts?

MEGADRIVE DELUSIONS

I question your ACE CHOICE conclusion about the Megadrive in your recent issue for several reasons.

First, price. It's really rather expensive when compared with, say, an ST and lacks a keyboard, so putting off the cautious British purchaser (eg an adult) who requires some educational justification for buying.

Second, performance. It's old technology really, as we all know, and it lacks a keyboard, so you can only play games.

Third, the games. Will the games be any better on 16-bit consoles. Are they that much of an advance? Will a £45 version of Populous be more enjoyable than a £16 version? No.

Fourth, software availability. A bit naughty really, because that which is presently available will not be compatible with the 'official' British machine. I don't know of anywhere in Scotland where you can buy this software, so no stars.

Fifth, software standards. From what I've seen, it looks very good, and so it should be at £30 a game. However, as with all machines, there will be some duff pieces as well - all at £30. It's unlikely that you will be able to swap it with your friends, though, and it can't be copied.

So, prospects. Despite the technological qualities and hype, I predict a one or two star future for the Sega Megadrive.
Douglas Inness, Prestwick

Well argued, Douglas. We have a few points to make. First, we only tipped the Megadrive as the CONSOLE most likely to succeed. We are not recommending it instead of a computer. On the contrary, we made it very clear in the article that the true games connoisseur needs both a console AND a computer. However, if you can't afford both, we reckon you should invest in a good 16-bit computer.

The performance of the Megadrive is very good for a console and it's 16-bit architecture is hardly 'old technology', particularly where consoles are concerned. We absolutely agree about the price and the software availability, but we hope that the former will fall eventually and the latter will increase – especially now the machine has been officially launched. However, remember that there will be some games on the Megadrive that will not be available on any computer. And as far as duff software is concerned, check the games first in ACE and you'll be OK!

Hmmm...We have to agree. Paying £60 for software like *Moonwalker* on the Megadrive is not a pleasant or rewarding experience

REACTION TO THE FAST AD

"This smacks of thought control..."
J. Brown, Blackpool

I have just seen the latest batch of adverts from the Federation against Software Theft. The ad with the two boys turning in their maths teacher. I'm sure I can't be by myself in thinking these ads a little sinister.
J. Brown, Blackpool

To me this ad seemed the story of two schoolkids who discovered a method of getting rid of an annoying maths teacher!
Dirk Jumpertz, Harelbeke

OUTRAGED

I just want to say 'Why don't b**y software houses use the same keys and joystick conventions on all games and across all formats?'. It's confusing and time-wasting to look for and then memorise all the different keys. What about 'M' for music only, 'S' for sound effects, 'P' for pause, and so on.**
Dave

Hear, hear.

A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP

In response to International Business Week's comments about UK gamesters being years behind the US...

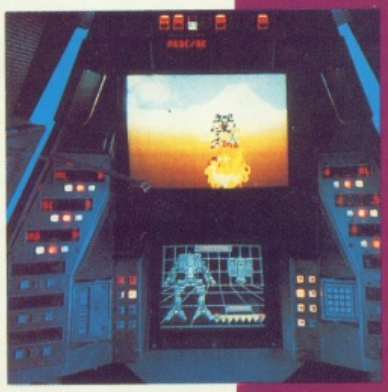
Back when I was wearing a suit to work and trying my best to become an executoid, our office subscribed to IBW, Forbes Inc, and the Wall Street Journal. Due to their inaccuracies and obvious slanting of news stories, we cancelled. We didn't find them reliable, totally accurate, or unbiased, so we didn't take them seriously and you shouldn't either.

I receive and read ACE, The One, Zero, CU, and Amiga Format. From your articles and letters to the Editor, I think you take games much more seriously and have a better understanding of them than most Americans.

However, you do seem to have a shortage of licensed consoles, brought on by the manufacturers wanting to saturate the US before moving on to Europe. This strategy seems flawed, as it cuts off half the world market.
Nicholas Peters, Wichita, Kansas, USA
PS In the movies dept: watch for 'Darkman'...Excellent!

Yay! Who said the special relationship between our countries was no more!?

One of the US Battletech centres in operation. With luck, similar ventures will soon be set up in the UK...



CES SEND UP

Congratulations on your recent Computer Entertainment Show at Earls Court. I managed to get there early on the Saturday and avoid the queues and enjoyed myself so much I went back again on Sunday – but that time I wasn't so lucky and had to wait for hours. Is there anything that can be done about this for next year?

While I'm on the subject, I thought the idea of getting the Turtles and Betty Boo to perform was great. Who have you got lined up for 1991?
James Simpson, London

Our apologies to all readers who suffered from the queues at the show. Unfortunately, the control of entry to the show is to some extent outside our control. We cannot be absolutely certain how many people will attend, and the number of people allowed into any venue at one time is regulated by law. The police and fire officers (quite rightly) will hold up queues (or even close shows completely) if they believe there is a danger to public safety.

Next year, we're almost certain to hold the Show at a different, larger venue. And I'm sure that there will be even more celebrities on tap for you...

MULTI PLAYER PROMISE

For those who don't know, the key direction over the coming years MUST be multiplayer games. When reading game reviews nowadays, I always look for multiplayer capability. Being lucky enough to own two ST's, I am always disappointed when games are not equipped for this facility. One of the most enjoyable games I ever played is Bloodwych with a friend. This game and the expansion disk have given us many hours of enjoyment – but this could have been better if we couldn't see what the other person was doing all the time. Stunt Car Racer is another prime example of the added fun multiplayer brings to a game. the most promising game appeared to be Dominion, advertised at the beginning of the year, but that appears to have sunk without trace.

As a programmer, I have been playing around with multiplayer games inside my head for years, but a lack of finished products would mean most software houses would not be interested in my ideas. What the computer role-playing game scene needs is someone willing to bring multi-player games like Shades to the general public. If someone like Richard Branson were to set up multiplayer 'halls' where, say, one hundred terminals were linked to a mini, each terminal being a dedicated cockpit for playing the game, then people could come in off the street and book up a session without having the hassle of buying all the hardware first. They'd pay as they played, and play for as little or as long as they could afford. Your character could be saved from session to session and there would be a couple of DM's to take control of the game world, to expand it and keep it in balance.
Russell Dodd, Bristol

The multi-player hall has already been tried to a very limited extent in the US with Battletech Centres. It's a tremendous idea, Russell, however – and you could store your personal ID and status on a smart card (see our article on pages 19-21). Go for it, R. Branson...

SUBS ATTACK

I've been a subscriber now for several months but have still not received my copy of InterfAce. Even worse, my copy of the Neo Geo issue (34) arrived withouth a postcard entry form. I know these are small niggles, and I still think the magazine is excellent value for money, but can you make sure that this situation is rectified and that in future we get our entry cards?
Janet Wilson, Bathampton

Sorry, Janet. There have been problems with the subscription service. The service is being relaunched next month, with bonus editions of InterfAce to make up for the delay.

Tournament Golf™

SEGA™

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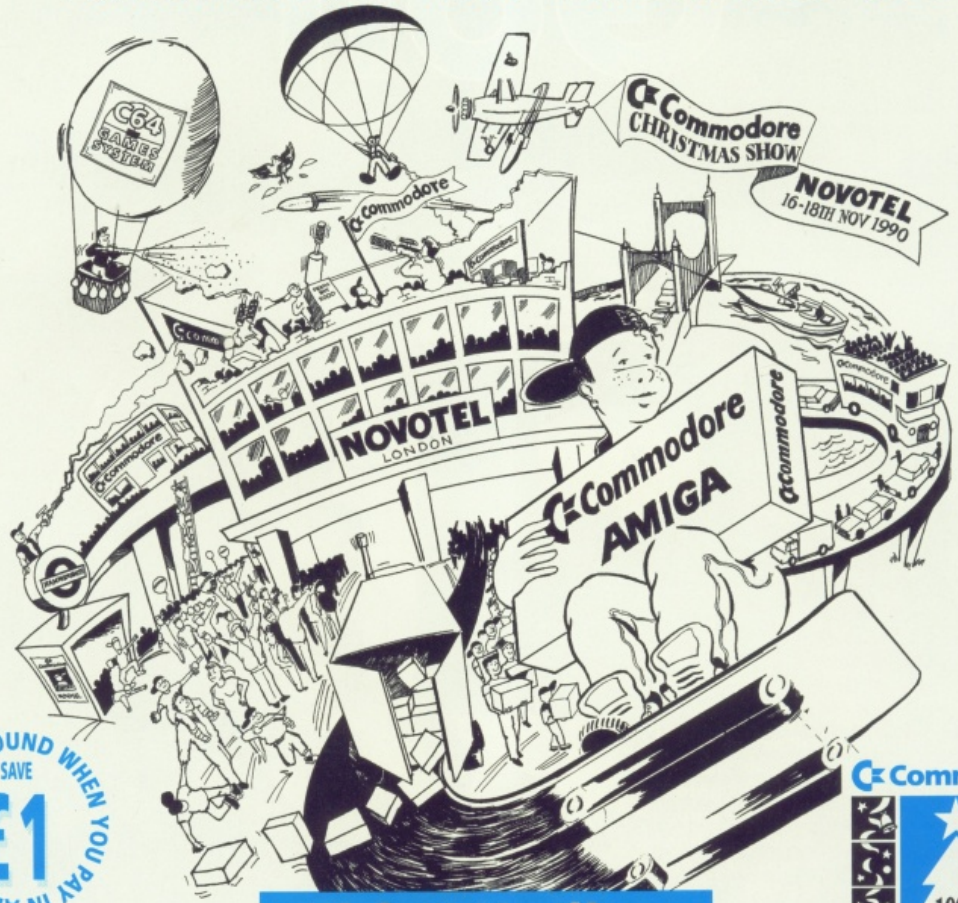

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Commodore 1990

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Beyond CES

Eager visitors queue (literally) around the block for entry to the Show. At one point the queue was an incredible 2 miles long!

Our on-the-spot report from last month's Computer Entertainment Show highlights several promising trends for the future...

Well, it's all over for another year. The Computer Entertainment Show, held at Earls Court from 13-16th September, has been and gone, leaving behind only happy memories and a huge pile of litter! The general opinion of the Show was that it had been a huge success, the only complaint being that Earls Court was a little shabby looking and not really a suitable venue.

The order of the day seemed to be huge video walls and cars. Mirrorsoft and Ocean were blasting out sound and vision in a serious way, and US Gold had a Lamborghini, Gremlin a Lotus Esprit and Mindscape a NASCAR stockracer on their stands.

Of course, those Turtles were there. Crowds of youngsters surged towards the stage area whenever the opening thuds of "Turtle Power" blasted across Earls Court, trampling all before them in their efforts to see two men dressed in green suits. If any doubted the force of Turtlemania sweeping the country, then those doubts were blown away. Even Mirrorsoft claimed to have underestimated how popular anything Turtle would be!

The Show wasn't without incident. On the Ocean stand a Special Criminal Investigation coin-op caught fire, but fortunately the speedy action of the stand staff extinguished it without injury. On a lighter note, the mighty Robocop tripped on the edge of a carpet and the Turtles were seen racing against each other on Lotus Esprit Challenge.

WHITHER THE HOME COMPUTER?

Most of the software companies felt that this year saw the dying gasps of the 8-bit market, although all acknowledged that there is still a strong core group of 8-bit owners wanting software. It appears that most people who would've bought an 8-bit machine are now turning to the cheaper consoles for their fun. The state of the 16-bit market is still strong, with a lot of confidence in the Amiga remaining buoyant for quite a few years yet. How the 16-bit consoles affect that market waits to be seen.

CONSOLE YOURSELF

The console boom continues, with Nintendo, Sega and the Neo Geo all featuring very strongly. Nintendo were exhibiting the NES and previewing the Gameboy, Virgin/Mastertronic continued their strong support for the Sega Master System and Megadrive, Commodore and Amstrad took the opportunity of the show to launch their new systems and nearly every major software house was working on launches for the consoles.

The Neo Geo stand attracted a lot of interest, but incredulity was expressed by most at the price of the system and particularly the game cartridges. Admittedly the games look gorgeous, but no matter how good they are you will tire of them eventually, and then you're left with a lump of silicon that cost you around £250. Active Sales, who are marketing the SNK console in the UK, claim that people who buy from them will become members of a Neo Geo club, where software can be rented for £25 pounds a month. This still seems a little steep, but only time will tell if the public feel the same.

Scream! It's the Turtles! Our cameraman braves the crush of the teeming throng to bring you this shot of Raphael and Donatello.

CES WEIRD FACTS DEPT 1
Over fifty thousand business cards changed hands in four days...

Are Ocean trying to bombard the audience with subliminal messages about their opinion on public reaction to the Turtles? Ocean win the ACE award for the most stylish stand.

ENDORSE THAT GAME!

An interesting indicator at CES of possible future trends was that of brand name endorsement. One of the most popular stands at the show was Gremlin's, who were exhibiting Lotus Esprit Challenge and Team Suzuki. These endorsements are cheaper (at the moment!) to obtain, but retain the high profile of a recognised name. That means there's more money to spend on the game itself, which can only be a good thing. Furthermore, because the gameplay doesn't have to follow a storyline, the programmers have more freedom in actual game design (see the review of Challenge on page 60).

Finally, there's a less obvious aspect to endorsement. When you license a game based on a movie, the value of the license tends to be rather short-lived, whereas a product endorsed by a company is liable to benefit from the relationship on a more long term basis.

Of course, endorsement doesn't guarantee a better game by any means, but it is one way of borrowing marketing power from other industries without paying too high a price.

Gremlin had one of the most popular stands at the show, partly thanks to the presence of a Lotus Esprit.

IMME POWER

The Interactive Multi-Media Engine attracted a lot of interest, with huge queues around the stand as eager show visitors waited to take their turn sampling its mysteries. The Engine, developed by Jack W. Lampl III and Washington R. da Silva (shown here), founders of California-based Subjective Technology, Inc., is basically a square black lighttight room containing four video screens and loudspeakers in each corner with a line of motion sensors at waist height around the walls.

Washington R. da Silva (left) and Jack W. Lampl III, creators of the IMME, standing before the hardware that drives their incredible brainchild.

A complex computer interprets any motion and triggers laserdisc output to the room. The room at the Show was quite crude in the sense that it can only detect motion in 2-D (i.e. peoples position on the floor of the room). The full model has sensors all over so that motion anywhere can be detected. Software events can then be more precisely controlled and localised to, say, head movements.

The Engine should ideally be used by one person. Unfortunately, due to the numbers of people wanting to see it in action up to twelve had to be admitted at one time. This made the function of the room a little confusing for some - you may have been standing still, but because others were moving events were still occurring. This, and the high level of noise in the venue, diminished the impact of the room slightly, but hopefully most got a least some inkling of the Engine's capabilities.

The Engine was originally designed as a performance tool for artists, but obviously the potential for other uses, and games in particular, is incredible. Imagine IK+, for example, with your own kicks and punches reproduced on-screen - it'd be great fun, and a fantastic workout as well!

You'd play Neo Geo games at the stand, but would you buy them?

A LICENCE TO SELL

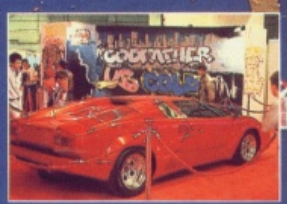
As to be expected, there were a lot of titles tied into to film licences, such as *Back to the Future 2 & 3* and *Predator 2* from Mirrorsoft, *Total Recall*, *Robocop 2*, *Nightbreed* and *Firebirds* from Ocean, *Days of Thunder* from Mindscape, *Dick Tracy* from the newly launched Disney Software, *The Godfather* from US Gold and *The Spy Who Loved Me* from Domark. There were also several games based on comic characters, such as *Judge Dredd* from Virgin/Mastertronic, *Rogue Trooper* from Core and the controversial *RanXerox* from UbiSoft.

A ROOM WITH A VIEW – OF THE FUTURE!

ACE's stand at the Show was the Living Room of the Future, and we were staggered by the huge response from the public and particularly the interest in the centrepiece of the exhibit, the Interactive MultiMedia Engine. Thanks to all the readers who visited the stand and said "Hello" - we hope you found it interesting!

But we know that you couldn't all be there to see what was on display, so join us as ACE gives you a glimpse elsewhere in this feature of the sort of technology you can expect to take for granted in the future...And finally, don't forget – see you next year, and keep your fingers crossed that we get Olympia next time so that you can all fit in!

The smallest console? The Nintendo Gameboy generated a lot of interest when it was previewed at the CES.



Gonna make you an offer you can't refuse - and who would refuse a Lamborghini?

GET SMART!

Smart cards are small creditcard-sized pieces of silicon capable of storing large amounts of information. The Sega My Card employs standard IC technology (as used in Sega cartridges) and can store up to 250K. However, this is small potatoes compared to the LaserCard - it can hold up to 2 Megabytes!

And there are cards even smarter than this. Some use transponder technology to transmit and receive information from various devices. For example, the COTAG can read/transmit from 2cm, whereas the ELIS card (shown as both a card and a watch-sized chip) has a range of 50cm. Particularly interesting is the MELCARD - it has an 8-bit CPU plus 8K storage, so the card can actually be programmed.

The smart cards. From bottom left moving clockwise: Lasercard, COTAG, MELCARD, ELIS and Sega My Card. The large black disc in the foreground is the other version of the ELIS card.

Such cards could be used in a huge variety of ways including, of course, leisure. For example, you could have one loaded with a prepaid number of credits at your local arcade, and your favourite machine will get ready for play as you approach, reading in your highest score to date and allowing you to carry on from the highest level reached. As you play, credits will be deducted and information on how well you're doing updated instantly.

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

Is size important? In the world of technology, yes - and the smaller the better! Shown is the Canon Ion Camera, which can store up to 50 video pictures on tiny 2-inch floppy discs. The shots can then be replayed straight from the camera onto a normal TV. The tiny size of the discs means that they can used as a compact portable visual database. And the size of the camera? Little bigger than a large format paperback!

The compaction of technology means that what would have been several items joined by cables can be integrated into one much smaller device. On display was the Hitachi Lapwatch, a portable VHS video player with a built-in 5-inch LCD TV screen that was no larger than a small shoe box. It can display several TV standards, such as PAL and NTSC, so tapes from just about anywhere around the world can be viewed.

The Canon Ion camera. No larger than a paperback, it stores up to 50 pictures on a 2-inch disc, also shown.

Of great interest was the Canon S2000, an IBM compatible PC, FAX machine, telephone and answering machine, all in a casing with a footprint no larger than that of a 'normal' PC. The screen is touch sensitive, and icons can be activated by simple touching them! When the 'phone receiver is picked up. a list of up to 300 stored names and numbers appears on screen, and pressing a name dials the number automatically.

On average, the worker in London spends about 1.5 hours getting to and from work - that's almost 10 wasted working weeks a year in tiring travel. The dream of an integrated home workstation, with the increases in productivity and efficiency that would bring, is now viable.

ACE's very own cyberman! Wearing one of the latest Angel Biotek creations, he's kitted up with gear from the Mind Gymnasium (see feature on page 25).

Kids, can you guess what title Mirrorsoft were heavily promoting at the Show?

Hey, that's our stand - the ACE Living Room of the Future teeming with people!

INTERACTIVE CD - STILL A DREAM?

As an example of CD-ROM, we were able to get our hands on an FM Towns for exhibition. Running the *Galaxy Force* clone *Evolution*, it got a lot of visitors very excited, but their passion was cooled on learning it would cost around £1500 pounds to buy on import. There are no plans by Fujitsu to launch the machine in the UK, partly due to its disappointing sales in Japan.

The possibilities of CD-I were indicated by a video, kindly loaned by Philips. The problem with the software for the CD-I machines is that, as usual, it is in the classic "chicken and the egg" situation. The Japanese software developers are more market driven, and await the machine before starting writing. Thus the CD-I developers are depending on the enthusiasm of the US and European software houses to write programs ready for launch.

Commodore's CD-TV, safe and sound from prying fingers behind a large glass screen.

However the launch of the CD-I machine still seems to be some way away, with as late as 1992 being mooted. This leaves the way wide open for the CD-TV, which was on display behind the safety of a glass wall on Commodore's stand. Although the power light was on and the front clock was working, no other demonstrations of the CD-TV's capabilities, apart from a video presentation, was given. Although this raises the suspicion that the machine on show was no more than an empty box, Commodore assured us that it could work if they wanted it to. The official launch date for the CD-TV is still shrouded in mystery. Let's hope they don't keep us waiting too long.

BEYOND THE FINAL FRONTIER

From the creators of Beast and Beast II comes this awe-inspiring combination of shoot-'em-up action and trading stratagems. Featuring innovative hyperspace sections, full-screen aliens and a whole galaxy to explore: AWESOME will take you beyond the final frontier.

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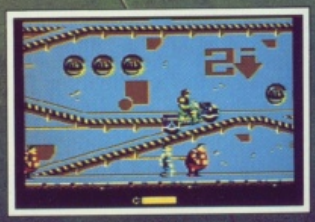

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Virgin GAMES

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Brain Burn!

Forget that joystick. Plug in your brain instead. ACE investigates the Mind Gymnasium...

Biofeedback machines have been around for nearly thirty years now. The principle is simple and well established: train the brain by allowing it to see how certain mental stimuli affect its performance. For example, your grey matter emits electromagnetic waves at various frequencies and those frequencies are associated with different mental states. When you're very relaxed, the frequency lowers; when you're alert it rises. If you can witness those changes in frequency, the theory goes, you can learn to some extent how to influence them.

In the cultural world of cyberpunk, brain machines are undergoing an unholy marriage with computer technology and getting onto the street. The Mind Gymnasium is the first of what could be a wave of cyberpunk temples opening in Europe that may soon be offering you the chance to 'turn on, tune in, and drop out' in a way that '60's hippies could never have envisaged, even on their wildest trips.

Based in a London club called, appropriately, The Brain, it's a collaboration between cyberspace entrepreneur Mark Healey, a lively end-of-level sprite called Xtron, and Angel Biotek. The three of them are creating a walk-in cyberstore that is due to open in mid-October in Wardour Street, the heart of Soho. You'll be able to get anything there from a CDTV demonstration to a Japanese Pizza to a Barcode Jumpsuit to a session with a Syntech Minds Eye Plus.

NEURAL COFFEE BREAKS

The Syntech is typical of a new generation of mind machines that use computing power to expand their functionality. 'The system comes with the facility for ROM updates and customised software,' says Mark, 'You can add a PC interface and then use the computer to directly customise the operating software of the unit. For example, you can program it to stimulate alpha waves (see Brain Waves panel) which are normally associated with creativity. Other programs might be tailored to induce deep relaxation, meditation, or just a quick neural coffee break.'

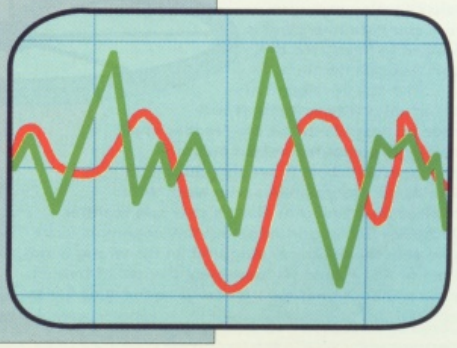
Costing around £1000, the Syntech uses a small processing/control unit attached to a pair of glasses that feature five LED lights positioned around each eye. It generates natural sound and light patterns that can help induce

"Feed your head."
Jefferson Airplane

The cybergang: (l/r): Mark Healey, Angel Biotek, and (below) Xtron

BRAIN WAVES

Your brain typically generates waves in the frequency range 0 to 16Khz. Different frequency waves have different names, drawn from the Greek alphabet. Beta waves lie in the range 12-16Hz and are associated with lively, alert mental states. Alpha waves range from 8-12Hz; Delta waves, usually seen during sleep, go from 4-8Hz. Finally, Theta waves cover the spectrum 0-4Hz and are associated with meditation and relaxation and occasionally with very deep sleep.



varying states of mental relaxation. Mark demonstrated the unit at the Living Room of the Future and visitors to the stand were impressed. 'It's really nice,' said one gent, 'suddenly I'm in the middle of a chaotic show and feel as if I've just spent two hours relaxing on the beach.' He'd been on the system for about ten minutes. Neural coffee breaks, it seems, must have something to them after all.

INFO ANXIETY

The Mind Gymnasium is only half the story at the Wardour Street venue. Xtron and Biotek are helping Mark create a whole cyber-environment that includes clothes, food, and computer demonstrations. You'll be able to relax with your Ganz Field Effect Generator (see Cortex Trickery panel), dressed in your Circuit Board Camouflage Suit (designed so that you can lurk unseen inside a Cray Mk. VI), sipping Amazake (fermented rice yoghurt), and watching an Amiga demonstration supplied by the Fractal Factory.

'We share a common philosophy,' says Angel, 'it's shaped by consumer fetishism, info-anxiety, and techno-paganism.' Angel designs clothes – a Kentucky Fried Tracksuit, for example – that mirror the consumer society we live in. Both Angel and Xtron are fascinated by computer games and when we met them at the Computer Entertainment Show they were busy trying to persuade Super Mario to attend the grand opening. Clothes featuring the Italian Bros and other game heroes could materialise very soon.

The Syntech Minds Eye Plus

Amidst this slightly alarming avant-garde environment, it's probably just as well that Mark's there with his brain machines. Where info-anxiety abounds, cyberpeace prospers.

CORTEX TRICKERY

Close your eyes and stare ahead. Even if you do this in an entirely darkened room, your brain soon starts generating whorls of colour and form that grab your attention. Creating the visual equivalent of total silence would be a great aid to relaxation, but it's not as easy as it sounds.

Enter the Ganz Field Effect Generator. This little baby produces a field of diffuse light using a pair of special goggles. Your eye muscles are unable to focus on any aspect of this unvarying display and therefore relax. Unlike darkness, the display fools the visual cortex into thinking it's seeing something and prevents it from generating spurious colours and forms. Result: total relaxation for the visual sensory system.

GAMEWAVES!

OK, now for the nitty-gritty. Could these brain gizmos make you a better gamesplayer? Could you plug into the Syntech and run up 10 million on *Xenon 2*?

'The brain machine philosophy is really opposed to most current computer games.' says Mark Healey. 'Aggressive games are exciting for the very same reason that brain machines are relaxing.'

'However, there are some games that could benefit from the alertness that comes from increased relaxation. Take *Tetris*, for example. You would be a better *Tetris* player if your brain hemispheres were perfectly synchronised and generating lots of alpha wave activity. You see, your hemispheres are responsible for different mental functions, one being connected more with creative thinking and the other with analysis. A good *Tetris* player needs both the logical solution to build a line and the creative inspiration to find new tactics. If you can co-ordinate your hemispheres, you get 'whole brain' thinking which is much more efficient.'

Another real benefit this technology can offer gamesters uses the Ganz Field Effect Generator (see panel). By reducing eye-strain, it can refresh your visual cortex and get your brain into gear for tackling the opposition.

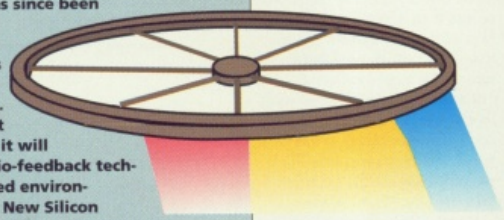
Turn on, tune in, drop out, and grab those high scores.

ANCIENT ART OF BRAIN TRAINING

It all started with Ptolemy. This ancient cyber-pioneer was unable to locate a working PC, so constructed a simple brain machine using a cartwheel. Lying on the ground under the wheel, he placed it between himself and the sun; spinning the wheel created a stroboscopic effect as the spokes alternately blanked and revealed the sun, thus relieving Ptolemy from the effects of info-anxiety and techno-paganism.

In more recent times, a lady called Meg Patterson devised an instrument called the 'Black Box' after her work on electro-acupuncture at Hong Kong's general hospital. Electro-acupuncture is now used all fore the Far East and Meg's unit has since been used successfully in drug rehabilitation programs – rock star Pete Townsend is alleged to have used the unit to kick a heroin habit.

With the development of virtual reality systems, it will soon be possible to link bio-feedback technology to computer created environments, establishing Brave New Silicon Worlds for cyberpioneers who want to explore their brains as well as alternate realities. Although fine in principle, such developments leave one with the uneasy feeling that, in the wrong hands, they could become disorientation devices of tremendous power. No daylight, it seems, without darkness...



THE MIND GYMNASIUM

Situated at 11 Wardour Street, London, W1 and opening mid-October. Demonstrations by Commodore, Nintendo, and others on show. Food, clothing, and altered states for sale.

The Nu-Star combines modern technology with traditional Chinese acupuncture techniques. By applying electrical waveforms to acupuncture points, it stimulates the body to produce endorphins which aid relaxation and a sense of well-being. The currents used are minuscule and generate a slight tingling sensation that soon disappears as the operator reduces the current to the minimum effective level. Modern circuitry enables the Nu-Star to improve on traditional electro-acupuncture by generating highly complex waveforms.

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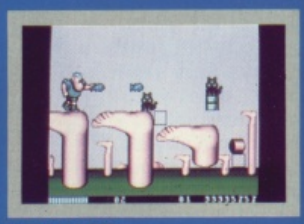
"One of the tastiest slices of alternative arcade action since Venezuelan Beaver Cheese". *The One 85%*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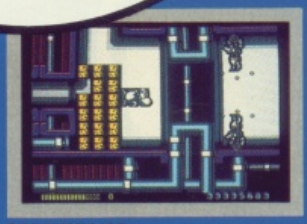
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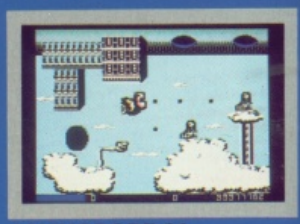
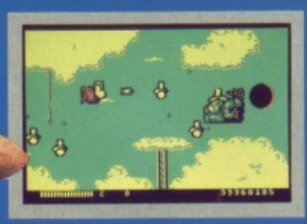

COMMODORE 64


IBM PC

AMSTRAD

Virgin GAMES

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The Entertainment International stable is about to launch a *'Kick Off* killer'. ACE took a seat in the manager's box...

TEARS OF A CLOWN

Going on to the attack – it may look like other games, but the display reaches a few pixels that the competition never refreshes...

Let's take the roll-call. Gary Lineker, Peter Beardsley, Saint and Greavsie, Peter Shilton, Maradona, and Brian Clough. Just a few of the well-known names who've put their names to silicon soccer. If only the games had played as well as the stars, we'd all be in footy heaven. The truth, alas, was rather different...

Gazza has already appeared in support of Empire and now he's trotting onto the pitch for a second time. Someone in the programming cellar must be pretty damned chuffed about the product to (a) have another go and (b) have another go when there have already been so many footy releases this World Cup year. Our first impressions of the game suggest that they may have good reason to be quietly confident about this latest, er, kick off.

That's no bad thing. The 'Clown Prince' – golden boy Paul Gascoigne, recently applauded by millions for his dazzling World Cup performance – may not be riding high for ever. To have a game that can stand, run, and score on its own two feet can't be bad.

THE GAME

Gazza's Eurosports Soccer (provisional title) itself is essentially in two parts – strategy and pure arcade – played either in combination or individually.

The first, strategy, part effectively allows the player to act out the role of a football manager, viewing and modifying a huge range of parameters from basic team choice to fixtures, finance and the transfer market! From an initial menu of five options, you may then select from a further seven more specific options and from these yet more information may be gleaned. Such a huge range of strategic options in a football game would appear to signal doom and gloom for the arcade fanatic. Not so!

That's because of the second element of the game is most definitely of the arcade persuasion (although each player's thirteen attributes are accessable for viewing) and to this end Active Minds have included a practise option whereby you may select either a single or two player game, penalties or passing. Once competent, you get to play Gazza for real!

The game itself is displayed in the much favoured top-down view although Active Minds were quick to point out that any similarities to those other successful footy games end there. Multi-directional scrolling is the order of the day, with true 3-D representation of the players (ie increasing in size when jumping) and information such as time, scores, weather, commentary and player currently in possession of the ball, displayed in a panel at the bottom of the screen.

The range of controls via intelligent joystick movement looks to be very impressive and includes various degrees of kick, from chipping and lobbing, to three shot strengths! The number of players allowed when playing a "real" game varies from between one to eight, (where the single player may choose to play as the entire team or in a specific posi-

Working out your team tactics.

tion). the latter number allowing up to eight players to take part, choosing different teams.

There can be no doubting the huge potential behind *Gazza's Eurosports Soccer*. Never before has a development team attempted quite such a comprehensive style of game. Let's just hope the action can live up to the endorsement!

DRY HIS EYES!

What better, while waiting for the game, to sharpen up a few of your own silky skills in the company of the man himself? Entertainment International have generously agreed to arrange for one lucky ACE reader to meet golden boy Gazza in the flesh. And whilst he gives you tips on ball control, you can give Gazza tips on sprite control in the new *Eurosports Soccer* game! The competition will be run in two parts and it couldn't be easier. Here's what you have to do...

- First, can you identify the two screenshots to the right and below, which are taken from two games published by the Entertainment International stable? If you can, then you're half way to grabbing yourself a real chance of meeting Gazza.

- Second, simply make sure you get next month's copy of ACE and you'll find the full entry details and the second part of the competition. Don't miss it!

This is Screenshot A (you'll need to remember that for the second part of the competition next month). If you can identify it and the game in Screenshot B below, then you're well on the way to a meeting with Gazza. Don't miss next month's final compo instalment...

◄ guess the game?

. Can you

E.I. ADDIO

Entertainment International (and their Empire Label) are rapidly becoming a major force in the UK software industry, especially in recent weeks following their affiliation with the European Disney Software operation. They've consistently provided us with original products, specialising in innovative programming techniques (*Let Sleeping Gods Lie*, for example, which was one of the first attempts to combine vectors and sprite technology in one game) and more traditional, but excellently implemented scenarios like *Team Yankee* (reviewed in this issue on page 58).

PROGRAMMER PEDIGREE

The team behind the Gazza game, are part of relative newcomers Active Minds and collectively display some pretty impressive credentials!

Designer Dave Collier (spokesman) was incredibly helpful in divulging information about his team mates, but kept himself shrouded in mystery. So what about the others?

- **The active mind responsible for art direction, is none other than Simon Butler, who has been involved in *Shadowfire*, *Miami Vice*, *Matchday* and (more recently) *Robocop*.**
- **Chris Pink: Responsible for the ST and Amiga versions, Chris was last involved with the epic *Midwinter* from Maelstrom, with whom he worked for some time.**
- **John Pickford: Working on the Spectrum, Amstrad and GX4000 versions, John's experience is gleaned from many years of programming, through which he has benn involved in the classic isometric *Glider Rider*, *Amaurote*, *Cosmic Pirate* and the licenced *Max Headroom*.**
- **The third member of the programming team is Paul Clansey, who is working on the C64. Paul worked for many years for the Imagine label and has been involved with the *Miami Vice* and *Give My Regards To Broad Street* licences.**

Three Active Minds behind Gazza's *Eurosports Soccer*.

THE FIRE *NEXT* TIME

Please accept our apologies. Our cover went to press several days before our encounter with Gazza's Eurosports Soccer, at which point we were informed that the game was not yet ready for the rigorous ACE treatment we were planning to give it. We've therefore decided to split our coverage of the game, and the competition into two parts. Don't miss part 2 next month...

GAZZA FACTS

Born in Gateshead on the 27th May 1967, Gazza trained with Ipswich Town at 13 years of age and went on to join Newcastle United as an associate schoolboy at 14. His league debut was for Newcastle on the 13th April 1985 against Southampton.

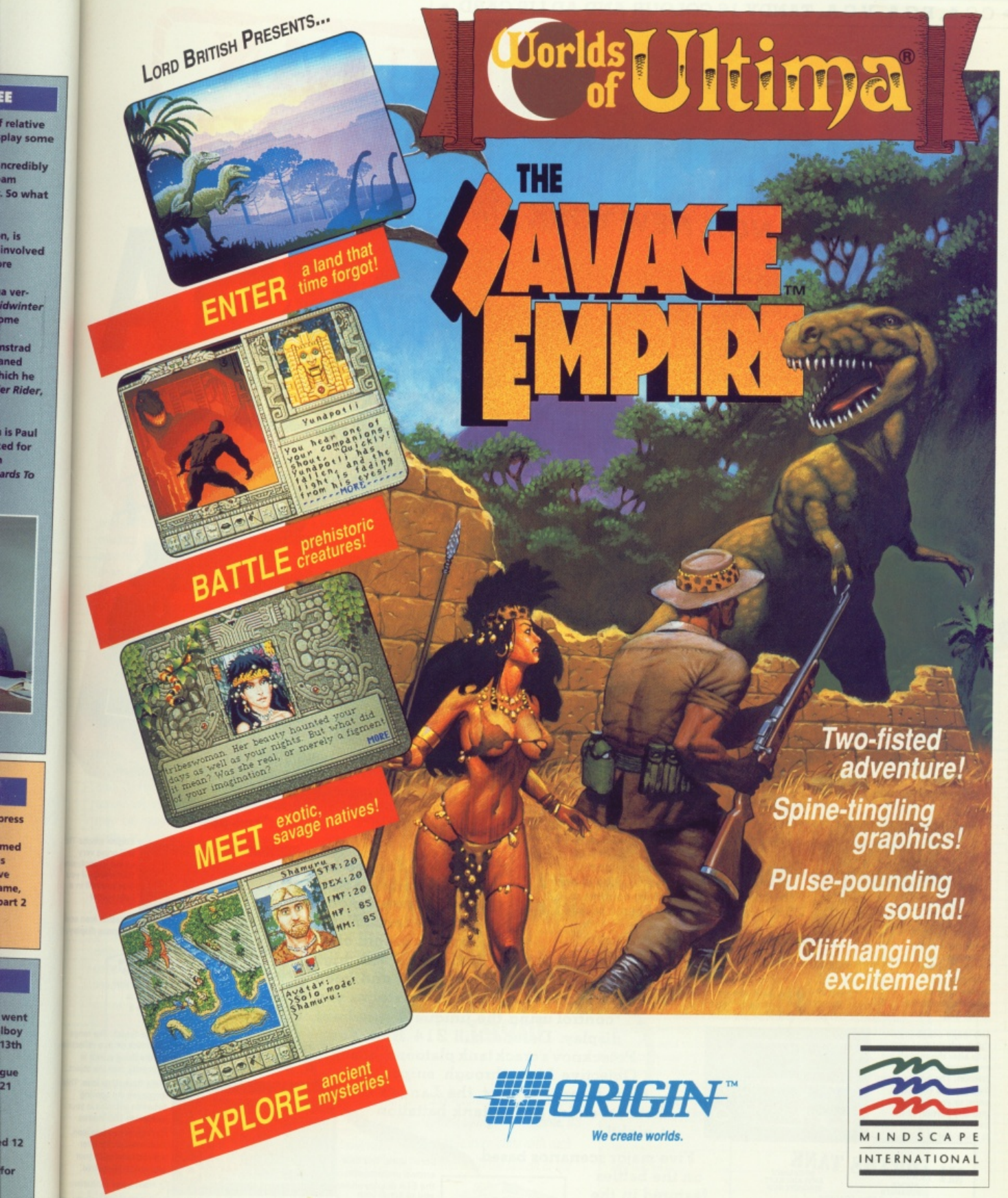
Playing for Newcastle from 1984-1988, his league appearances total 92 in which time he has scored 21 goals.

In 1988, Tottenham Hotspur manager Terry Venables paid £2 million for Gazza's talents, since which time he has made 66 appearances and scored 12 goals.

Gazza debuted Internationally as a substitute for England in the September 1988 match against Denmark.

He has been awarded 15 caps.

Fans, who tease Gazza about his weight, often throw Mars Bars at him on pitch!



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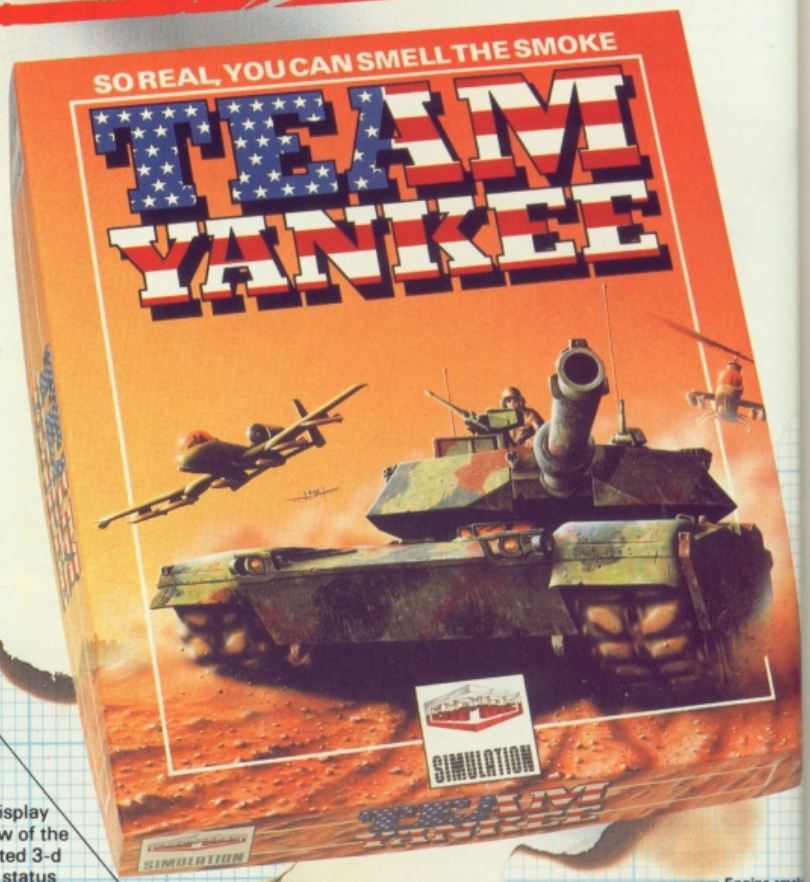
THE NO.1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

"ROMEO 25 - THIS IS MIKE 77 - SPOT REPORT - 5 T72 TANKS MOVING WEST - GRID 190852 - CONTINUING OVER"

Capt. Sean Bannon snapped his head to the left. There was only one place where the Russians could be, and that was on the hill 2200 metres away. All the training, planning and preparations were over. Team Yankee was about to learn if the team's seventy nine men and twenty five million dollars worth of equipment could do what they were supposed to do.



Team Yankee is designed to test your leadership and tactical skills to the quick. You can display in either **"quadrant mode"** where all four platoons may be controlled at once.

or

Full-screen Mode where the display homes in on just one platoon.

You have the flexibility to display either an overhead map view of the surrounding area, a simulated 3-d view of the battlefield, or a status screen showing the performance of all vehicles in a platoon. Irrespective of which screen mode you choose during battle, there is a constant column of information to the right of the screen.

To the right of the compasses are five icons which represent the various types of **weaponry** available to the unit.

- **MACHINE GUN** - which is always available to the player and has an 'infinite' number of rounds.
- **SMOKE** - a smoke grenade which allows enemy vision to be obscured.
- **HEAT** - a high explosive anti-tank round
- **SABOT** - an armor-piercing tungsten shell
- **TOW** - a high-range anti-tank missile

The major capability on the quadrant map screen is to alter the movement and formation of any platoon. The whole of the map may be viewed at once, or you may zoom into any portion of the battlefield using the icons to the right of the map.

Team Yankee is the definitive action simulation of modern tank warfare. Watch scenarios unfold on 3D battlefields with high definition graphics and keep track of the four tank platoons you control using the unique 4 quadrant display. Defend Hill 214 from Yuri Potecknov's crack tank platoons, attack Objective Link through sniper fire from forests, protect the Langen Gap from an entire Soviet tank battalion at night!

Engine smoke will prove very useful in confusing your enemy if you find yourself in a tight corner.

Rotation icons/compass display

Infra red (or thermal) **imaging** This feature is very useful for identifying vehicles camouflaged on the edge of forests. Contary to popular belief the thermal image is green and not red.

Zoom. When this icon is accessed the central portion of the screen is magnified by a factor of 10.

Laser range finder. The range finder will lock on to a reflective target if the firing cursor is placed directly over the object.

Wide formation icon. This increases the spacing between vehicles in your platoon to 100 metres.

Narrow formation icon. This reduces the inter-vehicle spacing in your platoon to 50 metres.

Vee. a vee formation

Echelon left - places vehicles on a right to left diagonal relative to your direction.

Wedge - places your vehicles in a wedge formation.

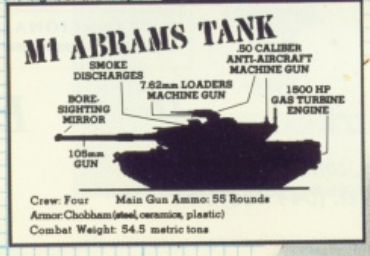
Scroll icon: The four arrows underneath the ETA display allow you to scroll your map in any of the four directions.

Dead Stop icon. This red icon, causes your platoon to come to a dead halt when clicked.

In line - places your vehicles in a line abreast relative to your direction.

Column - places your vehicles in a line ahead relative to your direction.

Echelon right - places your vehicles on a left to right diagonal relative to your direction.



Five major scenarios based on the battles featured in the New York Times No. 1 best seller Team Yankee.

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Unfair Advantage!

OK, we admit it. We had to postpone this month's coverage of Chris 'Balance of Power' Crawford and the Los Angeles cyber-show because of schedule changes due to the CES Show. But oh boy, are we going to make it up to you with the next issue!

First, we're going to give you the biggest Christmas present we've ever handed out to our readers. We're not giving anything away yet (excuse the pun) but we can guarantee that the festive season will go down just a little bit better because of it. There's bound to be a big run on copies, so make sure you use the coupon on this page to reserve yours at your newsagent.

GAMES GALORE

Then there's a tremendous Screen Test section to watch out for next month as well, featuring many of this Christmas' biggest titles on review and preview. We hope to be able to grab the final versions of *Powermonger*, *Battle Command*, and *Epic* (a 3D combat game originally destined to be Goldrunner 3, but now under new management).

If you've been wondering whether or not to splash out on a Gameboy for your stocking, our Gameboy software survey will help you make up your mind. It may be small, it may be monochrome, but it's mean and sexy when it comes to gameplay. Find out more next month...

CHRISTMAS IN THE PINKS

For those of you who just want to head for the shops and grab the best games around, we'll be featuring one of our occasional mammoth buyers' guides, detailing dozens of great games together with mini-reviews and purchase details in the Pinks. And, of course, if you're after a new computer the Pink Hardware section will tell you all you need to know.

MYSTERY BONUS!

...and here's your very unfair advantage. Because you were clever enough to get your hands on this copy of ACE, we're offering you a Mystery Bonus voucher (printed below) that will enable you to get a SPECIAL BONUS OFFER using next month's superb cover mounted gift.

All you have to do is this. Cut out and keep the voucher below. Purchase next month's issue (making sure the cover mounted gift has not been accidentally removed prior to purchase). Then stick the Voucher in the space indicated...Easy eh? And Happy Pre-Christmas bonus to you, too!

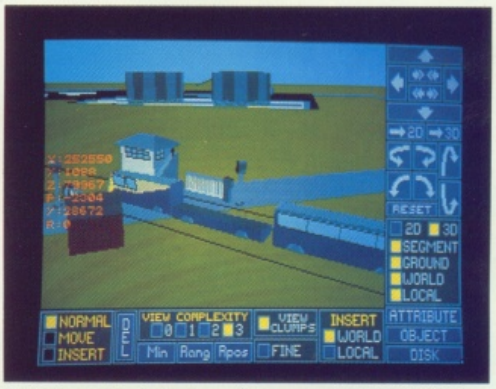
MYSTERY BONUS VOUCHER

Next month's ACE promises to be the hottest issue yet. And what's more, we're giving you a special voucher on this page that will qualify you for a special bonus...

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE THURSDAY 4TH OCTOBER 1990!

"The future is not just one lonely nerd against the machine, it's people interacting with each other AND the system at the same time."

Jack Lampl, Subjective Technologies (Don't miss next month's Ultra Game feature, Jack...)



***Battle Command*: we're keeping our fingers crossed for the full finished version for next month's issue...**

THE ULTRA GAME

You're sitting in a vast domed concourse in 1995. You're playing The Ultra Game. Around the stadium are ranked 500 other players, each wired into their console. The outcome is life...or death.

Next issue ACE presents a major feature on the ultimate games experience. Designed entirely using existing technology, ACE 39 will take you into the future of games in a way that has never been done before. Don't miss it, whatever happens....

RESERVE YOUR COPY NOW!

Use this form to reserve yourself a copy of next month's ACE...

DEAR NEWSAGENT,
As a sophisticated user of highly complex electronic equipment for entertainment purposes, I do hereby request and require you to ensure that I get my copy of ACE Issue 39 – the December issue of Advanced Computer Entertainment, due out on Thursday October 4th 1990. I need you to reserve a copy because the superb cover-mounted gift is vital to my long-term games future...

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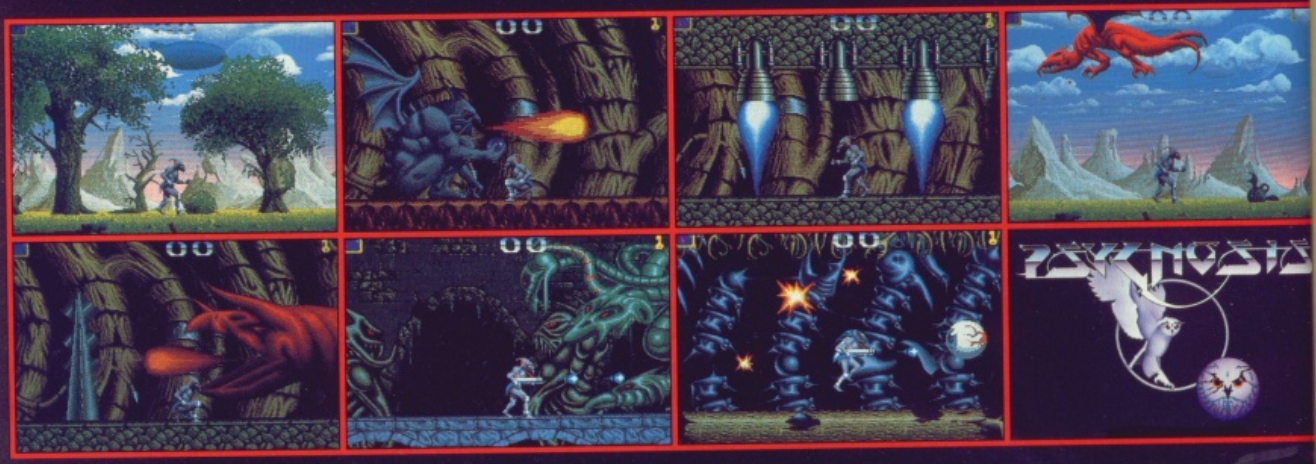

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16 bit: mega drive

awesome...

and then some!

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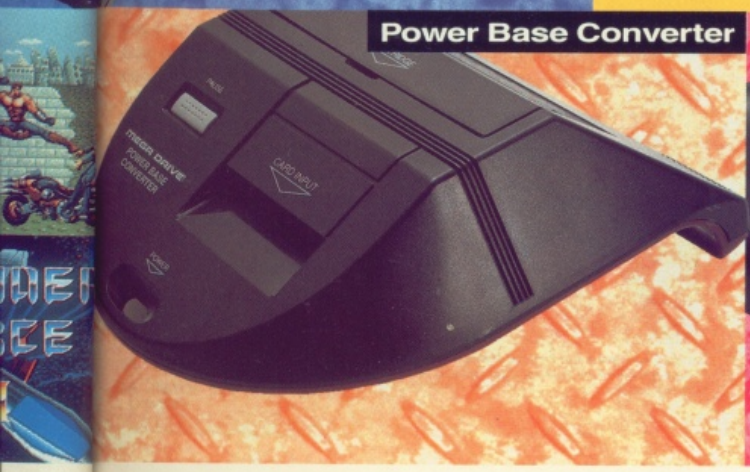


ACE OF ACES

Will you be playing flight-simulators of this calibre in ten years time? Rik Haynes looks at the latest in military simulation

Military personnel have all the fun – while you're playing Ocean's *F-29 Retaliator* or Microprose's *F-19 Stealth Fighter*, American airforce jocks are flying the most realistic flight simulators in the world. Evans & Sutherland, a leading manufacturer of simulation systems, uses the latest in visual generation technology to create superlative artificial realities. With an Evans & Sutherland simulator you can pilot a helicopter gunship in Eastern Europe, go on stealth missions in the Middle East, or fly down the Vallis Marinaris on Mars!

Applications for this type of simulator include: combat mission rehearsal, situational awareness training and nap-of-earth flight.

"High performance image generators are used where high scene density and realism, and complex threat models are required. Applications include low-level and nap-of-earth flight, combat mission rehearsal, weapons tactics, situational awareness training, and full mission simulation," explains Evans & Sutherland.

Based at the University of Utah Research Park in Salt Lake City, Evans & Sutherland was founded in 1968 to design and manufacture special purpose machines to compute and display visual representations of digital models. In flight simulation, Evans & Sutherland decks are used to generate out-of-the-window scenes and sensor imagery, representing the environment in which the aircraft operates. The company has sold over 500 visual simulators to customers all over the world including: the U.S. Army Research Institute Simulator Complexity Test Bed, NASA Johnson Space Centre Shuttle Engineering Simulator, U.S. Navy Landing Craft Air Cushion, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Fuji Heavy Industries, German Air Force Tornado and McDonnell Douglas Helicopter Company. Co-founder Professor IE Sutherland is also the father of Virtual Reality (see ACE 34 for further details).

High performance image generators provide realism, scene density, and a dense threat environment for nap-of-earth operations. Evans & Sutherland has been selected for Marine Corps AH-1W and Army Research Institute Simulator Complexity Test Bed programs.

COVERING ALL THE BASES

As image generators have grown more powerful, the databases which fuel them have become increasingly complex. Evans & Sutherland has developed modelling tools to generate databases more effectively. These tools can automatically generate terrain from Digital Terrain Elevation Data of the Defense Mapping Agency (DMA). They also automatically place natural and cultural features from an extensive model library correlated to DMA Digital Feature Analysis Data. The model library provides hundreds of generic cultural features and basis set representations of forest, desert, rural farmland, urban, industrial and other terrain attributes. In addition, you can produce new models using a three-dimensional graphic editor.

One of the most powerful database features is the ability to automatically reconstruct terrain from satellite or aerial stereo imagery. Texture maps are generated from photographic sources by photodigitization and sophisticated image processing. This technology facilitates rapid generation of real-world databases which is particularly useful for mission rehearsal operations. A highly complex and detailed simulation database can be created in under 48 hours.

You can even simulate full mission operations with an Evans & Sutherland multi-million dollar deck.

Military customers use Evans & Sutherland computer image generator systems for pilot training and military operations.

The Evans & Sutherland ESIG-4000 is a revolutionary new approach to computer image generation. It establishes a new system architecture which separates the processing of terrain and features in both hardware and modelling tools. "These advancements offer for the first time in one machine unparalleled photo-realistic visual fidelity and rapid database generation, making it the ideal choice for mission rehearsal as well as low altitude, high-speed, fixed wing and helicopter nap-of-the-earth pilot training, and vehicle engineering simulation," states Evans & Sutherland.

One of the most time-consuming aspects with current database generation procedures is the complex interaction between skin and the 3D features which are to be placed upon that terrain. An

Eat your heart out Microprose, this is what I call a real Gunship simulation!

ESIG-4000 ATMOSPHERIC EFFECTS

- Clouds
- Fog
- Ground Fog
- Patchy Fog
- Glare
- Haze
- Lightning
- Scud
- Horizon Glow
- Precipitation and Thunderstorm Cell
- Wet Runway and Snow Covered Runway

The U.S. Air Force selected Evans & Sutherland SPX-500 systems for the F-16 simulators. More than 100 SPX-series image generators have been sold since their introduction two years ago.

ESIG-4000 'database' actually consists of several separate databases, each independently created and stored. After being created with modelling tools, the terrain and feature databases are processed and combined in the image generator hardware.

Very realistic effects can be placed onto the ESIG-4000 datascape including mountains protuding through clouds, snow covered runways and ground fog. The ESIG-4000 hardware also features texture motion for the animation of clouds, water and smoke. So will the sophisticated multi-million dollar technology of the ESIG-4000 ever hit your living room? ACE certainly hopes so!

Evans & Sutherland simulated the F-15 Eagle for U.S. Air Force pilots.

A U.S. Navy F-14 Tomcat is shown on final approach at Grunman Corporation's Calverton airport on Long Island, New York.

ESIG-4000 SURFACE EFFECTS

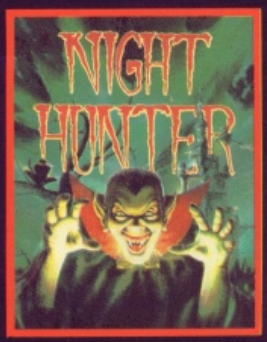
- Flat Shading
- Smooth Shading
- Fixed Shading
- Colour Blending
- Transparency and Self Luminous Surfaces

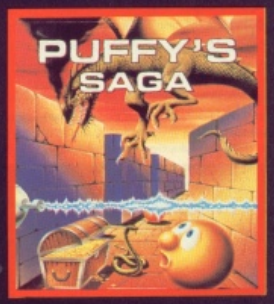
The terrain elevation and photo texture in this ESIG-1000 Salt Lake City database were derived from satellite and aerial stereo imagery.

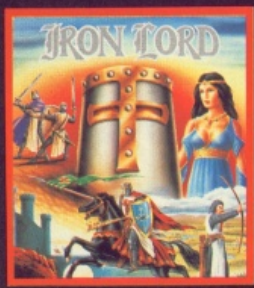
ESIG-4000 SPECIAL EFFECTS

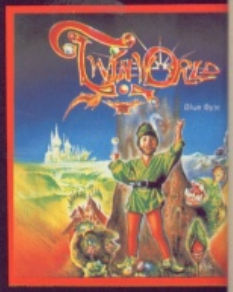
- Mountains Protruding Through Clouds
- Multiple Moving Targets
- Fire and Smoke
- Weapons Effects
- Dynamic Flares (illuminating the terrain and features)

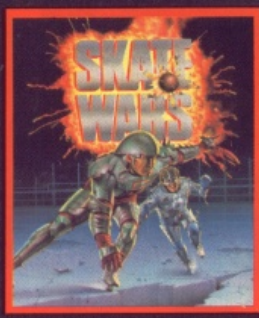
TAKE 5











SKATEWARS

A fast, violent and addictive SPORTS SIMULATION which will test your joystick and your nerves to the limit. The only way to win : aggressive tactics and strategic moves !

- ST
- C64 D + K7
- CPC D + K7
- SP D + K7

IRON LO

Set in a mass and colou medieval wo there's STRATE ADVENTURE, ARCA and much, mu more here. T work of art surely keep occupied for we on e

- AG
- ST
- C64 D (K7 to come)
- CPC D
- SP D + K7
- PC to come

PUFFY'S SAGA

Bright and colourful graphics as well as digitized sounds make this MAZE GAME extremely polished. In a word Puffy's Saga is an entertaining game that requires ARCADE skill as well as STRATEGY.

- AG
- ST
- CPC D + K7
- SP D + K7
- C64 D (K7 to come)

NIGHT HUNTER

In this addictive horror-fantasy epic, you're Dracula, the blood-sucking Count. No doubt you'll get excited by this classy game whose sound, graphics and playability are equally impressive.

- AG
- ST
- CPC D
- SP D + K7
- PC to come

TWINWORLD

Twinworld is a great combination of PLATFORM and ARCADE AVENTURE action. You'll get lots of fun wandering through the beautiful graphics of its 23 levels.

- AG
- ST
- C64 D (K7 to come)
- SP D + K7
- CPC D + K7
- PC to come

UBI SOFT

Entertainment Software

BATTLE COMMAND

Realtime and Ocean are working on a 1990's version of *Battlezone*. Rik Haynes test drives their new tank game...

Realtime Games Software is no stranger to *Battlezone*, the classic Atari arcade game where you blasted three-dimensional tanks in a wireframe world. In the early 80's this Leeds-based software development team produced a version of *Battlezone* on the humble Spectrum. Now the company who also brought you *Carrier Command* is working on a solid polygon tank trip for the 90's.

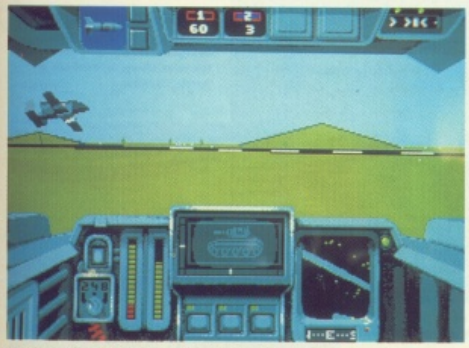
"Set in a near future alternate reality, *Battle Command* is an arcade strategy game with you commanding a single Mauler assault tank in a series of scenarios (missions). The Ultra War is being fought between two dominant races in the New World. Full scale attacks are suicidal because of the defensive capabilities of each side, so any offensive moves are, by necessity, small 'behind the lines' actions performed by elite troops in specially designed vehicles. Your Mauler is the latest such machine – an armoured fighting machine armed with the most advanced weaponry science can devise – capable of being lifted in and out of hostile territory by a fast stealth chopper."

"The action in *Battle Command* is split up into 16 separate missions – each with a different objective. These are outlined in the mission briefing at the beginning of each encounter. The nature of the missions vary from requiring straightforward arcade skills (such as the Blast-em Mission) to those of a more complex nature (like hunting for a satellite or hijacking a train), where you will be expected to use reasoning and deductive skills, in addition to a quick and accurate trigger finger. While there is no set order in which to attempt the missions, some require equipment to be fitted to your Mauler which are unavailable until you've completed certain missions."

Battle Command's **Attack Helicopter is a 150+ polygon futuristic version of the American AH-64 Apache Helicopter.**

"The game is played at 24 times real time, one day of play time is one hour of real time, and there is a day night cycle lasting one hour. Missions can take place at any time of the day or night. You could finish one mission at dawn and start the next at midnight."

"After making your mission selection and reading the briefing, you equip your Mauler and start the mission. You're delivered to the vicinity of the mission objective and retrieved from a prearranged pick-up point by the Helicarrier, a fast stealth helicopter with a large payload capacity. To complete the mission successfully you must achieve your mission objective and then rendezvous with the Helicarrier at the map co-ordinates shown on the mission briefing. After being picked-up you're shown a report on the mission which also displays your score."



The Mauler is equipped with standard cockpit gear like radar and scanners.

TANKA TOYS

"Your Mauler tank is designed primarily for flexibility. In addition to its standard equipment, the Mauler has secondary equipment slots that enable specialist devices to be fitted to the tank when needed – these are automatically fitted by the maintenance crew before a mission starts. However, the weapons systems are totally undedicated."

"Four weapon modules allow the Mauler to carry any selection of weapon payloads, limited only by its payload capacity. The Mauler can therefore be configured to meet almost any mission requirement. Only one of the Weapon Pods can be active at any one time. You don't have access to all weapon types on every mission. You're also limited to how much you can put on-board your Mauler by weight and weapon design constraints. All weapons have a magazine size, which is the number of rounds that weapon system carries. The success of each mission depends on your weapon selection as much as tank skills. The mission briefing will give you clues to which weapons to choose."

A polygon train stops at a polygon railway signal box in a polygon world. *Battle Command* has polygon power!

"Battle Command is Battlezone for people with brains."
Realtime Games Software

It is very difficult to destroy enemy aircraft using wire-guided missiles... but it is possible!

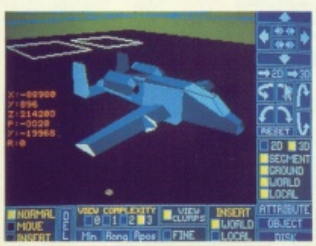
Your enemy can get a little too close for comfort. *Battle Command* has many types of tank including laser and missile armed monsters.

"The standard weapon for the Mauler, the Pulveriser 120mm Battle Cannon, fires shells directly forward. The shells are unaffected by gravity, but they travel quite slowly, so you have to aim for where the target is going to be when the shell arrives. You can carry 60 Pulveriser shells. The Mauler has three types of missile guidance system: infrared, radar and wire guided. Heat seeking missiles will only lock onto targets that produce a lot of IR radiation such as aircraft or vehicles. Radar guided missiles will lock onto all targets. Heat seeking missiles have a much simpler guidance and targeting system than radar guided ones, as a consequence they are smaller and lighter and can fit more in a magazine. Wire guided missiles are manually manoeuvred to the target."

"The Banshee surface to surface missile locks onto the closest target in a cone directly in front of the Mauler. The missile will follow the target until it hits it or runs out of fuel and explodes. A Phoenix surface to air missile is similar to the Banshee, but it has a more complex targeting system and the player has limited control of the elevation and yaw of the launcher. When you launch a Dragon wire guided missile, a view from just behind the missile appears in the aux. monitor or main display in your Mauler cockpit. You then control the movement of the missile rather than the Mauler. Dragon missiles have a limited range and can only fly for two minutes."

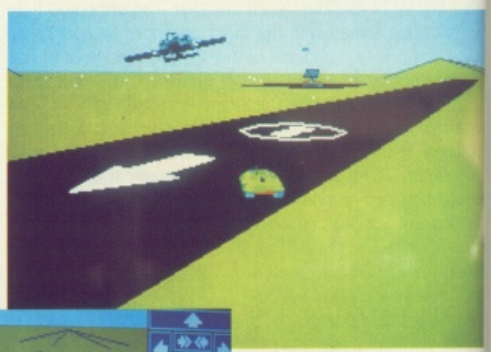
"The K-40 Mortar throws a shell forwards and upwards travelling in a ballistic arc. The mortar allows you to fire at targets behind other objects or targets sunk into the ground – a very useful feature needed in one of the later missions. A time delay bomb can also be dropped from the Mauler. The Sleeper Time Bomb has a large blast area and does massive damage to everything in the vicinity. It is intended for use in destroying large installations such as supply dumps or airfields. The K-90 Cluster Bomb is a parachute sub-munition for wide area attack."

"Your Mauler also includes defensive weaponry. Spectre IR decoy flares are used to fool heat seeking missiles and the Phantasm chaff dispenser launches a cloud of chaff to confuse radar guided weapons. The Skeet anti-armour system launches a skeet from the rear of the Mauler. This frisbee then flies across the battlefield. If it passes above another object it detonates and fires a shell downwards at that object. The skeet stays in the air for approximately 30 seconds. For total defence, the SLAM Laser sits on top of the Mauler. It locks onto any incoming missile and shoots it down with laser fire. SLAM is chemically powered and has a limited number of shots, its magazine holds enough reactant for about 80 shots and the laser normally takes several shots to down a missile."



A Fighter Bomber waits on the runway. This fighter of the future appears to be based around the U.S. Forces tank-busting plane.

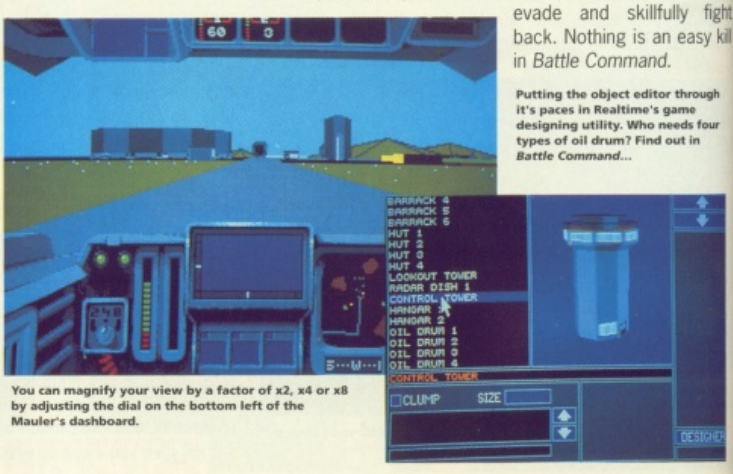
Realtime's new game designer is a very useful piece of kit. You can design whole new worlds and populate them with individual intelligent objects.



Battle Command even includes three types of runway, three types of bush and nine types of tree. This shot shows one of the external views.

TANK BUSTING

Your enemy is also well 'ard, armed and armoured. They aren't just sitting ducks – these babies actually think, evade and skillfully fight back. Nothing is an easy kill in *Battle Command*.



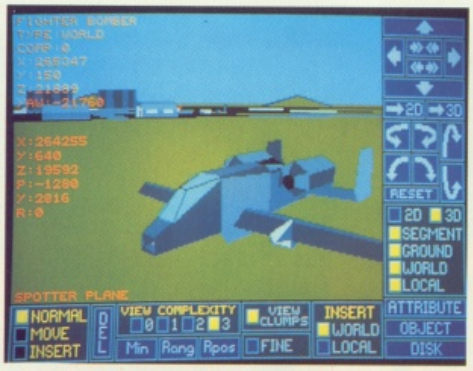
You can magnify your view by a factor of x2, x4 or x8 by adjusting the dial on the bottom left of the Mauler's dashboard.

Putting the object editor through it's paces in Realtime's game designing utility. Who needs four types of oil drum? Find out in *Battle Command*...

ACE PREPLAY

- Fast, detailed and attractive three-dimensional graphics.
- Large complement of vehicles, aircraft and ground objects.
- Good mix of missions.
- Can be played as an arcade strategy game or straightforward shoot'em-up.
- Landscape looks drab, it needs desert or polar regions.
- Enemy craft are too intelligent and difficult to kill, more cannon fodder is required.

The enemy fields an impressive array of ground vehicles and aircraft. "The weedy tank is slow, stupid and easy to kill. Realtime wanted cannon fodder to satisfy people's blood lust. The shell tank is heavily armed and armoured, and very smart. Radio tanks use evasive tactics and track you on behalf of other tanks. It can also call for fire support. You can be trundling happily along, when suddenly a barrage of missiles blast all around you with unnerving accuracy. The scout car is very fast and weaves around trying to avoid you. Trucks just follow roads, you have to protect a convoy of trucks in one of the missions. Helicopters hide behind hills, pop up, fire and then retreat behind the hill or just stand in mid-air strafing you till their out of missiles. Other *Battle Command* craft include laser tanks, personnel carries, mobile missile launchers, spotter planes and scout helicopters, and fighter bombers."

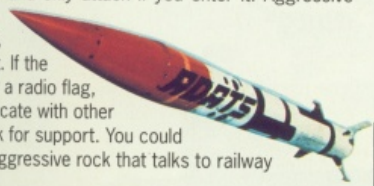


Battle Command **incorporates a wide variety of vehicles and aircraft. This Fighter Bomber is one the best examples.**

COMPUTER LEGO

The world of *Battle Command* is depicted in solid three-dimensional graphics. The realistic landscape is populated by hills, trees and buildings, crisscrossed by rivers, roads, railway tracks and electricity pylons. There is a multitude of ground objects to see and destroy including: oil drums, railway signals, signal boxes, buffers, look-out towers, train engines and carriages, radio masts, huts, barracks, runways, suspension bridges, and so on. This digital world even incorporates nine different types of hill and tree, and three different bush types.

Realtime is using a state-of-the-art designer to create the missions in *Battle Command*. With this designer, Realtime can choose any object and place it anywhere on the map. Each individual object has a range of tactics, you can also set attributes for objects. Defensive objects scan their local area and only attack if you enter it. Aggressive objects patrol their local area, hunting you out. If the object also has a radio flag, it can communicate with other objects and ask for support. You could even have an aggressive rock that talks to railway buffers!



TOUGH TANKING

You have to use some strategy in *Battle Command*, but there's nothing to worry about – you don't have to be a cross between Rommel and Einstein. *Battle Command* will initially be available on Amiga, ST and PC in late October – eight-bit versions are also under developmentincluding an impressive Spectrum implementation. John Dunn at Ocean is supplying the music, Realtime hopes the Amiga version will use sampled sound effects. All the PC graphics and sound boards are fully supported. Realtime will also be developing add-on *Battle Command* mission disks in the future. These extra disks will contain new missions, vehicles, aircraft and ground objects.

"I will be disappointed if people don't get at least 100 hours of playing time out of *Battle Command*," says Ian Oliver of Realtime Games Software. Look out for a full review of *Battle Command* in the next issue of ACE.

FIRE AND FORGET

Longbow is an integrated fire control radar and missile system under development by a Martin Marietta and Westinghouse joint venture for the U.S. Army's Aviation Applied Technology Directorate (AATD), with responsibility transitioning to the Army Aviation Systems command (AVSCOM) and the Army Missile Command (MICOM). Consisting of a millimetre wave radar fire control system mounted on the main rotor mast, and a 'fire-and-forget' millimetre wave Hellfire missile, Longbow is designed to provide all-weather capabilities and long-range anti-armour targeting ability for Army helicopters. The Army intends to equip 227 AH-64 Apaches and one-third of its LH helicopters with this fast-reaction, low-exposure, highly accurate system. Longbow is designed to maintain its effectiveness in poor weather and battlefield obscurants, and significantly increase the combat effectiveness and survivability of the aircraft. Deployment of the Martin Marietta/ Westinghouse system is scheduled for 1996. Martin Marietta also provides the Target Acquisition Designation Sight/Pilot Night Vision sensor (TADS/PNVS) mounted on the nose of the Apache.

An Apache equipped with the Longbow emerges from behind a mountain at the Yuma Proving Ground in Arizona, USA.

THREE TIMES THE SPEED OF SOUND

The ADATS Mobile Air Defense System is a dual-purpose missile system designed to protect front-line forces from attack by advanced rotary and fixed-wing aircraft. The system has been selected by the U.S. Army to serve as a central component of the multi-weapon Forward Area Air Defense system (FAADs). ADATS carries eight laser-beam-riding missiles that travel at more than three times the speed of sound with a range in excess of 8km. Target acquisition and tracking is handled by a volume-search radar and the electro-optic module, which consists of a passive target acquisition and tracking system, laser guidance beam assembly and laser range finder. The radar can track up to 10 prioritised targets simultaneously. Long-range passive tracking is performed by a TV sensor during clear, daytime conditions and a Forward Looking Infrared Radar for use at night and in adverse weather conditions. The U.S. version is mounted on the M3A2 Bradley fighting vehicle. The system is highly resistant to countermeasures. Passive acquisition and tracking cannot be detected by enemy aircraft. The laser-beam-riding missiles 'look back' to the electro-optic module for guidance information, making it virtually impossible to jam. ADATS was developed by Martin Marietta under contract to Oerlikon Buehrle in Switzerland.

ADATS carries eight laser-beam-riding missiles that travel more than three times the speed of sound.

The Definitive Simulation of Armoured Land Combat

M1 TANK PLATOON

Available for IBM PC Compatibles and coming soon for
Atari ST and Commodore Amiga

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Four M1 Abrams Tanks. Four soldiers in each. That's Four Tanks, Sixteen Men. And you control the whole shooting match.

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▪ **Leadership.** Each of the 16 men in your tank platoon has his own battlefield skills and abilities. Improving with experience, promotion and decorations, your chances of success increase as your platoon become battle hardened.

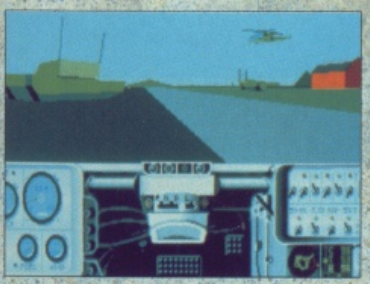
▪ **Strategic and tactical command.** Plan your winning strategies, giving orders to your platoon of tanks, calling in airstrikes and artillery. At any moment you can 'jump' into the thick of the action, taking over direct control, as commander, gunner or driver of any tank.

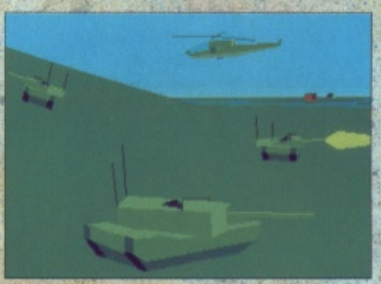
▪ **Realistic Battlefield terrain.** Make use of natural cover, such as hills, ridges and buildings to hide your tanks, across the huge 16,000 acre 3-D battle zone, just like a real tank commander.

▪ **High-tech war.** Laser rangefinders, depleted uranium penetrators, wire-guided missiles, reactive armour, air support and artillery make M1 Tank Platoon the most comprehensive, up-to-date simulation of armoured land warfare available for your home computer.

▪ **Endless variety.** Fight during the day, at night, in snow, mud, rain or clear weather. With thousands of battlefields and millions of situations and you get endless enjoyment. Decide between single battles or an entire campaign.

IBM SCREEN SHOTS SHOWN. ACTUAL SHOTS MAY VARY





M1 Tank Platoon was released for IBM PC compatible machines in October 1989.

"MicroProse has surely excelled on this one: it's all there, from superb playability through great attention to detail to one of the best manuals I've seen in a long time. The competition should watch out, as this one's going to take some beating." *** PC Leisure Spring '90**

"I can't really fault M1 Tank Platoon as it's definitely MicroProse's most comprehensive simulation yet." 87% C&VG Nov '89

"The most frighteningly accurate tank sim we've seen." 926 Ace Dec '89

It's true!

Enter a complete lunatic, dressed in khaki and carrying a riding crop...

LUNATIC: By Gad, sir, these ACE chappies must be a few cards short of a full deck, eh what? I was trotting down the high street the other day to grab a game when I realised that by expending a trifling £1.60 on a superlative Maggie Smith that I would have bought anyway, I could immediately save £5 off my software purchase. Seems like an unbeatable bargain to me, Sir...And what's more, I could win a whopping great prize. Apparently, to find out what I've won, all I have to do is give a tinkley-poo to the 0898 feller whose number is printed under the scratch panel. Couldn't be easier, eh, chaps?

So if you're short of ackers, this issue could be just the tickety-boo. I've already bought a copy and got a £5 discount, but of course you, Sir (dash it) may have been a Roger Spotty luckier than yours truly. Your 0898 number may have told you that you're one of 200 winners of a COMPLETELY FREE GAME – which you can choose from ANY of the four lists on these pages. Or even...Bless my brass buttons... £5000 worth of free software. In fact, I think I'll pop in and blag another copy to raise my chances. ***(ENTERS SHOP AND TAKES MAG OFF SHELF)*** Now let's see what I've won this time! ***(PAYS CASHIER AND USES CHANGE TO SCRATCH OFF PANEL)*** A free game!!!! I say, I say, I.... ***(COLLAPSES AND DIES FROM HEART ATTACK...)***

Never to be contd....

...Your cover mounted card could have already won you a fabulous first prize of £5000 worth of software from Ocean, US Gold, Microprose, and Mirrorsoft. If you miss the big one, there are still an incredible 200 prizes of a game for your machine ABSOLUTELY FREE. And even if you're still striking unlucky, we'll *guarantee* you a special ACE Discount of up to £5 on some of today's hottest games – just in time for the festive season.

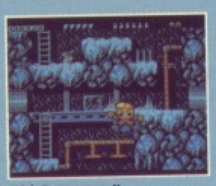
All you have to do is follow the instructions in the HELP! box...

MICROPROSE GAMES

Great games from the Sim Kings of the games world...

- ***Gunship***
  ST, Amiga £24.95; PC £34.95;C64 £14.95cs/ 19.95dk; Spec £9.95/14.95; CPC £14.95/19.95
- ***Microprose Soccer***
  ST, Amiga £24.95; PC £24.95; C64 £14.95cs/19.95dk Spec £9.95/14.95; CPC £14.95/19.95
- ***Midwinter***
  ST, Amiga £29.99; PC £34.99
- ***Oriental Games***
  ST, Amiga £24.99; C64 £14.99cs/19.99dk Spec £9.99/14.99; CPC £14.99/19.99
- ***Rick Dangerous II***
  ST, Amiga £24.99; C64 £9.99cs/14.99dk; Spec £9.99/14.99; CPC £9.99/14.99; CPC £14.95/19.95

Discount winners should post their vouchers to:
Microprose ACE Offer,
Unit 1
Hampton Road Ind Estate
Tetbury
Gloucester
GL8 8JA



Rick Dangerous II

MIRRORSOFT GAMES

A fabulous five from the people who brought you *Falcon*...

- ***Flight of the Intruder***
  ST, Amiga £29.99; PC £34.99

Back to the Future II

- ***Cadaver***
  ST, Amiga £24.99
- **Flip-it and Magnose**
  ST, Amiga £24.99
- **Champion of the Raj**
  ST, Amiga £24.99
- **Back to the Future II**
  ST, Amiga, PC £24.99
  Spec, C64, CPC £10.99cs • £14.99dk

Discount winners should post their vouchers to:
Department A
Mirrorsoft
118 Southwark Street
London SE1

OCEAN GAMES

Ride the Ocean wave with any one of the following:

- *Battle Command*
ST, Amiga £24.99 PC £29.99
- *Epic*
ST, Amiga £24.99
- *Narc*
ST, Amiga £24.99 Spec, C64, CPC £10.99cs/£15.99
- *Puzznick*
ST, Amiga £24.99 Spec, C64, CPC £10.99cs/£15.99
- *Total Recall*
ST, Amiga £24.99 Spec, C64, CPC £10.99cs/£15.99

Discount winners should send their voucher card to:
Ocean ACE Offer
6 Central Street
MANCHESTER
M2 5NS

Battle Command

0898 NUMBERS

0898 numbers cost 33p a minute cheap rate and 44p a minute at all other times. The contents of the 0898 numbers will be published in the next issue, due on sale on the first Thursday in November and therefore still in time for the competition.

US GOLD GAMES

Choose from these five golden hits...

- *E-Motion*
PC, Amiga £24.99; ST £19.99; CPC, C64 £10.99cs/£14.99dk; Spec £10.99
- *Rotox*
PC, Amiga £24.99; ST £19.99
- *Crackdown*
Amiga £24.99; ST £19.99; CPC, C64 £10.99cs/£14.99dk; Spec £10.99
- *Murder*
PC £29.99; Amiga £24.99; ST £19.99; C64 £17.99dk
- *Gold of the Aztecs*
Amiga £24.99; ST £19.99; PC £29.99

Discount winners should send their voucher cards to:
ACE Offer
US Gold
Units 2-3
Holford Way
Holford
Birmingham
B6 7AX

Rotox

THE RULES

This competition is not open to employees of EMAP Images or any company involved in the production and distribution of ACE Magazine. Discount and free game offers are valid until 30th November 1990. All prize winning entries must be returned to the relevant software companies by that date to qualify. Proof of posting will not be accepted as proof of delivery. Please allow 28 days for delivery of prizes. No responsibility can be taken for cash payments sent by post – use cheques or postal orders made payable to the appropriate software houses.

HELP!

Your copy of this issue carries a cover-mounted card with three scratch panels on one side and an application form on the other.

TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU'VE WON

1 Simply scratch off the panel coverings to reveal the messages underneath.

2 If any of the panels reveals an 0898 telephone number, phone that number...

3 The recorded message will tell you that you have won one of the following:

- £5000 worth of free software;
- a free game, to be chosen from any of the lists printed on this page;
- a discount worth £5 on a game costing over £12 or £2 on a game costing under £12. The recorded message will tell you which software house's games you can choose from. The lists are also printed on this page for your convenience. Remember you can only use your card for a discount with the software house specified in the recorded message.

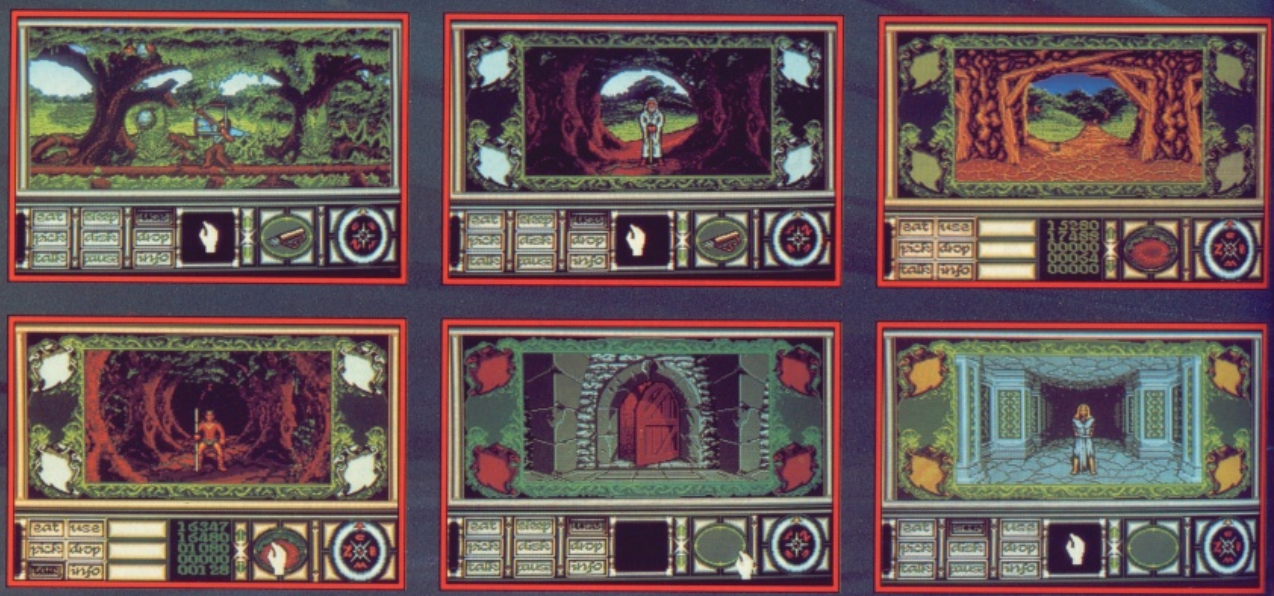
4 If the 0898 number tells you you have won a free game, then choose the game from ANY of the lists on this page. Then enter the name of the game and the software house in the space provided on the card. DON'T FORGET to specify your machine format and to include your name and address. A telephone number is helpful in case of queries. Finally, place the completed card in an envelope and address it to: ACE Free Game, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU. Please allow a maximum of 28 days for delivery.

5 If the 0898 message tells you that you have won a discount, then you can use your card as a voucher to save you £5 off any game costing over £12 or £2 off any game costing under £12. The phone message will tell you which software house's games you can choose from. The games for that software house are listed on these pages. Enter the name of the game you want to buy and the software house in the space provided on the card. Include your cheque made payable to the software house for the complete sum less either £2 or £5 as appropriate. DON'T FORGET to specify your machine format and to include your name and address. A telephone number is helpful in case of queries. Finally, place the completed card in an envelope and address it to the software house's address which is printed with the list of games. Please allow a maximum of 28 days for delivery.

6 If your card has ★ ★ £5000! ★ printed on it, you have won the FIRST PRIZE of £5000 of free software. Telephone the Editor, Steve Cooke, at ACE Magazine on 071 251 6222. Guard your card VERY CAREFULLY. You will need to present it to claim your prize. The prize will be awarded at a special ceremony later this year.

DON'T FORGET! ALL PRIZES AND DISCOUNTS MUST BE CLAIMED BY NOVEMBER 30TH 1990. CLAIMS RECEIVED AFTER THAT DATE WILL NOT BE VALID. SEE THE RULES BOX ON THIS PAGE FOR FULL DETAILS OF CONDITIONS OF ENTRY...

OBITUS



YOUR OWN WORST NIGHTMARE . . .

From Psygnosis, Impelling RPG with more than a dash of hack-'n'-slash.

You're in the depths of your own worst nightmare . . . but this time there's no waking up.

Lost and alone in a dangerous and alien world you must discover where you are, how you got here . . . and how you're going to get out!

In a frantic search of the unfamiliar land you explore aMAZEing forests, mines and underground complexes collecting objects and interacting with indigenous creatures.

Re-emerging in to daylight you race along perfect parallax action scenes, dispatching enemies as you battle ever deeper into the unknown.

Amiga Screen Shots

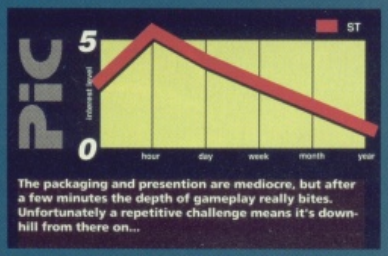
PSYGNOSIS

ACE REVIEWS GO 3D

DIFFERENT! Unlike many magazines, ACE ONLY rates finished games. The rating you see is the one to put your money on. We won't let you down by rating half finished versions and demos. Instead we give you accurate reports on games and make the stage of development perfectly clear. To find out more, check out the 'What You'll Find Inside' panel opposite.

DEFINITIVE! Every game has been extensively tested. If we come across bugs or other deficiencies, we check immediately with the company concerned. Then we give you the whole story. Whenever possible, we'll give you more than just the review – analysis, comparison, and technical information is all included wherever possible.

DEPENDABLE! All ratings are carefully calculated. You can rely on them to make your buying decisions. Not only do we insist on reviewing finished versions (see above), but we also make sure that all ratings are checked by the ACE reviewing staff. We GRILL those games!



The packaging and presention are mediocre, but after a few minutes the depth of gameplay really bites. Unfortunately a repetitive challenge means it's downhill from there on...

PIC POWER!

The PIC – *Predicted Interest Curve* – is the most sophisticated reviewing tool around.

We on ACE know you don't just play a game – you experience it. The Predicted Interest Curve is the only review system that takes this all-important factor into account.

The curve is divided into six sections, indicating the player's adrenalin level after one minute, one hour, one day, one week, one month, and one year. And this can tell you a lot more about a game than just the interest levels...

For example, a high one minute rating means that the game must look fantastic and get you all excited from the word go. That means it's probably a good game to show off to the neighbours – who probably aren't going to pay attention for much more than a minute anyway.

The minute, hour, and day ratings can tell you a lot too. If there's a dip here, followed by a rise, you've got a game that may take a bit of getting into. Alternatively, the graphics may put you off for a while until the gameplay starts to grip. Check out the PIC comment for more details.

Finally, you've got the month and year ratings. The better a game holds up here the more deserving it is of your hard earned cash.

SCREEN

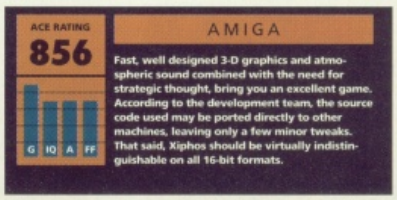
Welcome to the ULTIMATE GAMES GUIDE

ACE is the only magazine with regular review sections for computers, consoles, and CDs, giving you complete coverage of games today – and tomorrow. But our reviews section isn't just comprehensive. It's got other hidden strengths too...

- **We don't waste space. We use it to tell you very clearly what the game is about, how it's played, and what sort of experience it provides. You get all the information you need to make up your mind.**
- **We distinguish very carefully between products that are exactly as they appear in the shops and those that are incomplete. The panel at the bottom of the opposite page tells you how we do this.**
- **We're selective. We don't bombard you with pointless reviews of mindless rubbish. If a game's in ACE, it deserves your attention. The rating will tell you whether it also deserves your money.**

ACE RATED!

Question: Is this game really going to grab me? And for how long?
Answer: the PIC curve – the heart of the **ACE Rating System.**



Each review carries a PIC Curve (see Pic Power panel) and special 'Version Boxes' that give you details of the game's implementation on a specific machine. These boxes include ratings out of ten for...

GRAPHICS
All aspects of the game's graphics – with the limitations of each machine taken into account.

AUDIO
The music and sound effects are rated here. A high rating is possible on even limited machines like the Spectrum and PC if the computer's shortcomings are cleverly sidestepped.

IQ FACTOR
The Brain Strain rating. Note that ACE readers are generally reckoned to be more intelligent than other human beings, so the ratings may be lower than you expect...

FUN FACTOR
Basically a measure of mindless addictiveness. Games like *Arkanoid* and *Flying Shark* require virtually zero brain power but are still remarkably addictive. Most coin-ops score well here because they are designed for instant satisfaction. Games don't have to be either fun or intelligent – they can be both.

ACE RATING
To get a really high rating a game will not only have to be very addictive but stand the test of time as well. Here' a general guide to what the ratings mean:

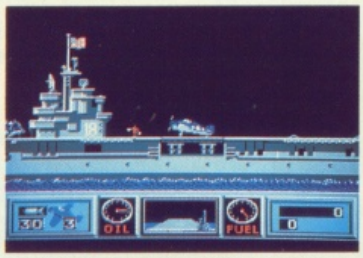
900+ A classic game, recommended without reservation.
800-899 A superb game, but perhaps lacking the long-term depth to last into the month and year categories.
700-799 Still recommended, but probably has a couple of aspects to the gameplay that take the edge off it.
600-699 The 'fair' zone, where it tends to be OK 'if you like that sort of thing'.
500-599 Not recommended. The game clearly has some noticeable problems.
400-499 Problems with gameplay and programming make this an inferior product.
300-399 Not only is the gameplay bad but the design is also seriously flawed. Very avoidable.
200-299 Things are getting really heavy now...Might be funny if you weren't expected to pay for it
100-199 Inferior ZX81 games running on an Amiga.
Under 100 An essential purchase due to rarity value and unparalleled degrees of awfulness.

VERSION BOXES
These cover version-specific information on graphics, audio, loading problems etc. If there's no box for your machine but a version is planned, it'll be covered as an update in a later issue.

TEST

ABSENT FRIENDS...

Not every game makes it into Screentest each month. Naturally we have to pick and choose, making sure that we bring you the widest possible selection. Sometimes this causes us a good deal of grief, particularly when we feel that for reasons of space we have to leave out a game that deserves more exposure. Usually – as in the case of *UMS2* below – this is because we have given the program an extensive pre-production playtest in a recent issue, and the final version differs so slightly from the previous one that there's nothing more to add except the final seal of approval (or disapproval) in the form of an ACE rating. And sometimes we leave them out because we just can't bear to put them in!



WINGS OF FURY – Broderbund's combat flight sim has more combat than sim as it puts you in charge of a US Navy F6F Hellcat. Dogfights, search-and-destroy missions, and air-sea combat are all featured in this 16-bit title for the Amiga and PC, distributed by Domark. Most of the activity centres around your aircraft carrier, which you not only have to defend, but learn how to land on! Not the easiest of tasks...

HOYLES BOOK OF GAMES – Sierra have produced an unusual title here that will doubtless appeal to many inveterate card sharpers. For the ST, Amiga, and PC, *Hoyles Book of Games* is planned to be part of a series: this is volume one and offers you Cribbage, Crazy 8's, Gin Rummy, Hearts, Klondike Solitaire, and Old Maid. You get eighteen opponents to choose from, of varying ability.

WHAT YOU'LL FIND INSIDE

We give you complete coverage of games at all stages of development in our reviews section. That means you not only know what's hot today, but what's warming up for tomorrow.

To do this, we offer you three ways of looking at games. The first is the ACE Preview. When a member of the ACE reviewing team visits a software house, he's often shown products at an early stage of development that are not ready for review. These games are brought to you in the magazine as Previews – check out the results of our visit to Millenium on page 70, for example. Preview games do not get rated in any way.

Then there are the Preplays. Every month, we receive games for review that are not, in our opinion, totally representative of the finished product. If we have reason to believe that the gameplay is going to be substantially affected by further development, we do not mislead you by giving the game a rating. Instead, we use the Preplay Panel (see the example below) to tell you what we liked/disliked about the program and what we think needs to be changed. Unlike other magazines, we're not going to send you down to the shops on the basis of an unfinished game.

Finally, of course, you get the reviews. These are games that are either in production versions or are so nearly complete that any further development (e.g. inserting a title screen or adding an extra tune) will not significantly affect the gameplay. These games get ratings, after we've played them extensively and debated their merits and demerits amongst ourselves.

At ACE we don't kid you around with haphazard reviews of unfinished games – when it's on these pages you get the low-down, not a send-up.

ACE AWARDS

ACE always awards seals of approval for outstanding software performance. If a game really breaks the boundaries in sound, graphics, or originality you'll see the appropriate ACE Award flash on the review. Unless it's truly dire – in which case it'll get the ACE Turkey award. Software houses: you have been warned!

ACE only awards this one to games of outstanding quality. A 900+ game is a classic title, recommended without hesitation.

Originality counts for a lot these days, and any games that have it deserve a special mention. This ACE award is reserved specifically for these rare games.

One of the first things to grab you in a game is its graphics. Games that redefine the state-of-the-art get this seal of approval from ACE.

Sound is the 'forgotten' aspect of games – but can make or break them. ACE only awards this one to brilliant use of audio in a game.

THE LINE-UP

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68 **PANG!** *Ocean*
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85 **TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES** *Gameboy*

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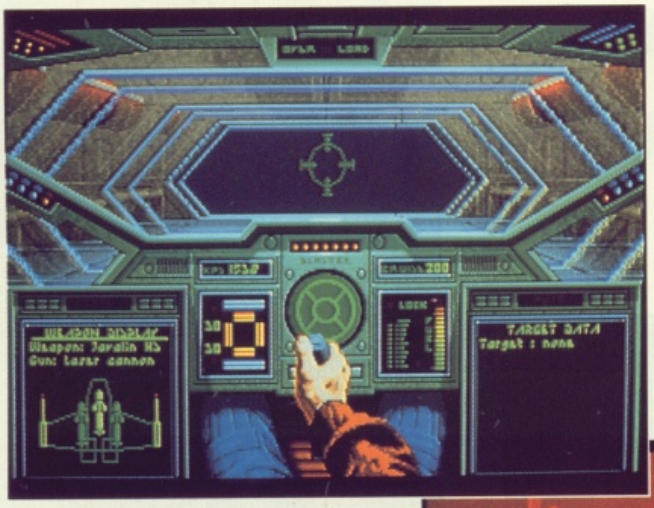


WING

Battle beyond the stars with this cinematic space-sim from ORIGIN and MINDSCAPE...

Could this be the game of the year? Exclusively revealed in ACE35, *Wing Commander* (then called *Wingleader*) certainly impressed us with its "Groundbreaking 3D graphics, spatially realistic stereo sound and cinematic game experience". Now we've had a chance to play a beta-test of the game, we're even more impressed. With its combination of revolutionary new graphics techniques and film-like presentation and audio, *Wing Commander* is one of the most exciting games ever released.

Instead of being just a fancy 3D shoot'em-up in outer space, *Wing Commander* is a complete futuristic flight simulation with four different spacecraft to fly and over 35 missions to complete. Every spacecraft is equipped with tasty sci-fi gadgets and weapons, from a useful communication system to mass driver cannon. As a Wing Commander you not only have to fly your own bird on a mission, you must also lead your fellow pilots to victory and the next roll-call.

"Your actions in every mission affects the way the game swings," says Phil Harrison, Mindscape's product development manager. Missions vary from escorting convoys to suppressing intensive alien attacks.You'll perform both offensive and defensive missions depending on your performance.

Wing Commander uses one of the most advanced and ingenious graphics systems ever devised for a computer game. It's the first time this type of three-dimensional graphics have been seen outside of the arcades. Everything about *Wing Commander* makes you think you're playing a movie. Ray-traced bitmapped images provide the most realistic graphics yet seen in a micro-based release. Fighters zoom out of the distance till they fill your entire cockpit window – these are just waiting to be blasted to bits in a multi-coloured cloud of space junk. The ensuing action can be viewed through the cockpit windows or outside using a multitude of pseudo-camera positions.

Attractive animated in-between screens provide an interesting respite from the action and help create the cinematic feel of the game. The attention to detail is very impressive. Pictures of naked girls hang on the lockers in the barracks as a bucket soaks up the water leaking from a broken pipe.

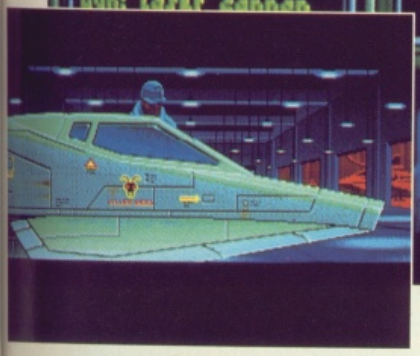
Professionally composed soundtracks alter with the pace of the game, adding another dimension to the gameplay instead of detracting from your enjoyment like the forgettable Europop efforts found in most games. *Wing Commander* even includes 13 different dogfight soundtracks (including missile tracking you, severely damaged, intense combat and ally killed), eight flying songs (such as strike type mission and triumphantly returning to the carrier) and rescued or lost in space ejection sequence music.

It's very easy to end up writing cliches when describing this latest release from the Texas-based creators of Ultima. *Wing Commander* breaks so many new grounds in computer gaming, that Origin has probably just invented a com-

SEE FOR YOURSELF

Origin, Mindscape and ACE are offering you the exclusive chance to see *Wing Commander* for yourself. We're giving away a limited edition demo disk of *Wing Commander*. If you're interested and own a PC (with a high-density disk drive) write to: ACE WING COMMANDER DEMO, MINDSCAPE, PO BOX 1019, LEWES, EAST SUSSEX BN8 4DW, ENGLAND. Don't forget to include your name, full address and PC machine type (12MHz 286 CPU, 1Mb RAM, 3.5" disk drive, hard disk, VGA graphics card, soundboard, etc).

G COMMANDER



pletely new genre of game. It really is like playing a movie! In fact, Origin is promising more games using the *Wing Commander* mix of movie graphics, gameplay, sound and presentation.

We were expecting to be able to bring you a complete review of *Wing Commander* in this issue, but it turned out that the version we received was still at beta test stage and as such wasn't quite ready for a definitive ACE rating. There's no doubt, however, that this is a definite candidate for Game of the Year and we've been promised the full reviewable version for next month.

● Rik Haynes

TAME THE GAME

We know no boundaries on ACE, next month we'll not only give you the definitive review of *Wing Commander*, but you'll also get exclusive playing tips on the game. That's right, Trade Secrets is back with a vengence! Chris Roberts, the programmer of *Wing Commander*, will reveal the best way to tame his game. Stay ahead of the game in the next issue of ACE.

ACE PREPLAY

- Superlative graphics.
- Stirring soundtracks.
- Smart gameplay.
- A game in a class of its own.

- Needs a well equipped PC (at least 12MHz 286, VGA graphics card, Ad -Lib or Roland sound board, joy stick and hard disk).

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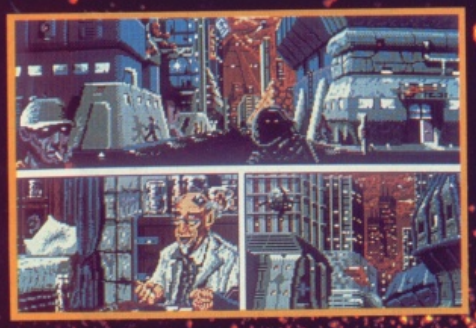
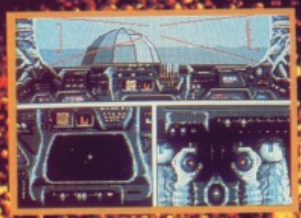
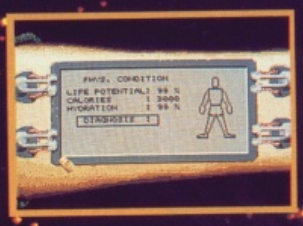


Player interaction gives you the chance not only to participate in the lives of other characters, but to be plunged into the actual city of Terrapolis.



Pilot the DRAG, a genuine flight simulator shown in 3D.



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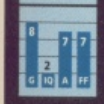
As with any good arcade game, the action is instant, and St Dragon is no exception. It's a little tough at times, but avoids the frustration trap that many arcade games fall into. The game continues to be exciting right up to the point you complete it, which shouldn't take anyone more than a week. After that, you'll still return to it as it's fun to play.

ACE RATING
820



AMIGA

We played the final version, with full instructions but no packaging. Using the narrowed screen display, the visuals are only marred by the rather small sprites. The sound is arcade perfect. Technically it's very good, though occasionally the scrolling jerks slightly and the sprites flicker when there's lots on screen. An enjoyable game, and a challenge well worth accepting.

RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£24.99	Late October
AMIGA	£24.99	Late October
AMSTRAD CPC	£9.99cs/£14.99dk	Late October
SPECTRUM	£9.99 cs/£14.99dk	Late October
C64	£9.99cs/£14.99dk	TBA

No other versions planned

Sales Curve fly an arcade firebreather

SAINT DRAGON

Random Access, The Sales Curve's in-house programming team, are making quite a name for themselves when it comes to top-notch arcade conversions. First Silkworm, then Ninja Warriors and now Saint Dragon, a game that carries on their proud tradition.

The Giant Dragon, who happens to be your mother, has been kidnapped and sentenced to death by the evil tyrant cyborgs that dominate your once free homeland. Part robot, part creature, you decide that you are the only one that can free her, and set off on your most perilous adventure yet. Succeed, and the freedom of your mother and your race is guaranteed. Fail, and all fail with you.

SCROLL ON!

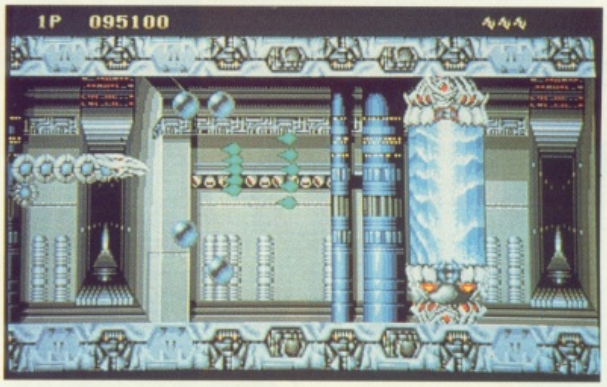
Saint Dragon is the latest Random Access program to use the Dynamic Loading System (DLS). Basically, the DLS gets on with loading the graphics, sound FX, etc, while the multitasking System runs the game. While the new data loads, the System looks after memory management, discarding unwanted data to make room.

Created by Ronald Pieret Weserick, it was first used on the Amiga version of Silkworm to load the end game sequence in order to get around a program design fault. This very limited system could only scroll the background while loading.

Next came Ninja Warriors, written by John Croudy (ST) and Ronald Pieret Weserick (Amiga), which used real multitasking and dynamic loading of sprites and backgrounds. The scrolling sometimes stopped due to a bug, although the sprites continued to move around the screen as normal.

The fault was corrected for St Dragon and the forthcoming SWIV, the first Sales Curve products to be launched on the Storm label. SWIV is the first game to fully exploit the DLS. It only one giant level that takes over 40 minutes to play through. The backgrounds are more realistic, because they slowly blend from one landscape type to another, unlike St Dragon which jumps between background styles on each level.

Gamewise, St Dragon is a totally standard shoot-'em-up. Fly from left to right through five horizontally scrolling levels set in several exotic alien locations, such as a tropical forest and a barren rocky planet surface. As you progress, airborne and land-based robot aliens appear and shoot missiles at you. Occasionally pods will float on screen, and when collected will grant you bonuses of extra, more powerful weaponry, points or extra lives.



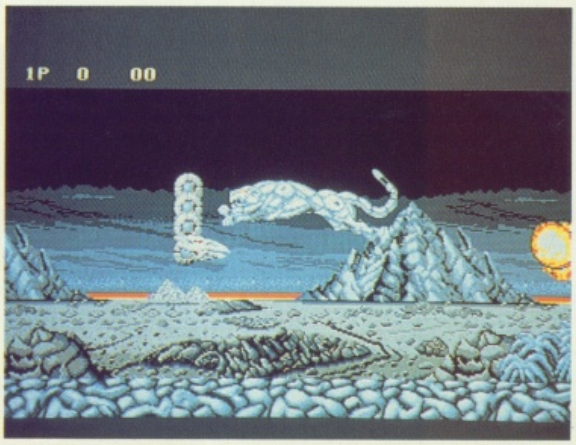
What the blummin' heck's that? One thing's for sure, flying into that blue beam isn't going to do you any good.

The game utilises Random Access' now very-nearly legendary DLS (Dynamic Loading System) that allows constant loading of sprites and backdrops from disc without halting the game. In effect, this means that the only thing in the memory at a given time is the game logic code and the currently displayed sprites and backgrounds, allowing all the animation frames and scenery of the arcade machine to be reproduced perfectly.

You begin the game as a simple little dragon with a simple little gun. The only part of your body that can be hurt is your head, the rest of your body being made up of a long armoured tail that you can use as a shield and weapon. As you work through the game, you can collect five way firing plasma bolts, a high powered laser and even bouncing bombs, all of which can be bolted-on together and are ideal for taking out ground- and ceiling-based gun turrets.

Playing St Dragon is something that should be second nature to any arcade goer. Shoot everything on sight and avoid the enemy and their bullets. What could be simpler? As you may have gathered, St Dragon doesn't offer anything new whatsoever. However, as a straightforward blaster, it's easily one of the most playable in its field. Even though it has only five levels, each is long and tough enough to tax even the most experienced player. It'll never be regarded as a classic game, but the amazing loading system will definitely go down in history.

• Tony Dillon



It'll take more than a collision with your indestructible tail to kill this metallic muvva!

TERRAN ENVOY

Stratagem play Cluedo in Space

Terran Envoy is the first product from Strategem, the Australia-based industrial computer systems contractors. For the past five years they've dealt primarily in business computer systems, servicing the needs of international giant, but have now turned their rather successful hands to the home computer games market.

The game is aimed at that small niche in the market comprising gamesplayers who want a game with a little depth, but don't have the time for a full RPG or adventure. What you get is basically a scaled down space-bound adventure game that has to be solved inside two hours. Each time you play, the scenario is slightly different, allowing for thousands of game varieties. The story so far...

For years the mysterious but benevolent Ubbermenscha has ruled the universe peacefully, creating harmony between the various telepathic races and humans. His final plan for ultimate harmony is to help human's achieve telepathy, but is being opposed by the equally mysterious Usurper.

Another product from down under...

Your job, as Terran Envoy, is to find out who or what the Usurper is and destroy him/her/it. As you travel through the many star systems of the Universe, you can mine telepathic crystals which the you can use to buy information regarding relationships between races from aliens. Nobody will actually tell you who the Ubbermenscha or the Usurper is, but they will tell you who is friendly with them. By a process of elimination, you can pinpoint who the Usurper is.

You begin with a view of the Universe, showing all star systems and the location of your ship. You essentially have to visit every planet, each of which can be in any of three states - Empty, Mineable or Occupied. The Mineable ones contain a small amount of one of the five crystal types, and when mined turn to Empty.

On Occupied planets you meet aliens, who are a funny lot. Each has two ratings, honesty and friendliness, and these determine the amount and validity of the information they supply. It helps to make notes of everything everyone tells you, and only start the detective work when you've built up a solid picture of those telling the truth and those leading you right up the galactic garden path.

Getting information also requires a little detective work. With each alien, three of the crystal types are harmful, one is acceptable, and one is treasured. Give an alien a harmful crystal and they won't tell you anything. Give an acceptable crystal and you'll get one piece of info, while the treasured ones gets you two.

The crystals also serve another purpose. On board your ship you have a huge laser, called the rather pleasant Ray Of Justice. This is powered by a combination of three crystals, ideally the three harmful to the alien you're attacking (hopefully the Usurper). Get the combination wrong, or attack the wrong person, and it's Game Over. You only get one crack at it, so check your facts before firing.

The game is controlled through either on-screen icons using a mouse, or letters on the keyboard ('M' to mine planet, 'A' to contact alien, etc). This system works well enough, except in situations where windows with selection boxes appear. On a mouse these are simple to use, just a case of moving the pointer over a box and clicking. However, there is no way of moving the cursor with the keyboard, and every key pressed either has no effect or closes the window.

The problem with the game is that it soon becomes very repetitive, and because it's been designed for short play, it isn't very taxing or involving. Lose those two elements, and surely you lose the key to a good strategy game. What should be a fun accessible product become substandard, but still accessible, waste of money.

• Tony Dillon

...I think I'd rather watch a triple bill of The Young Doctors, A Country Practice and The Flying Doctors!

Launches You Into The Ultimate Deepspace Dogfight!

- Starships so real you'll duck when they pass!
- Intense starfighter action pushes you to the limit!
- Earth-shattering stereo sound surrounds you with realism!
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- Cinematic launch and docking sequences hurl you into the action!

WING COMMANDER

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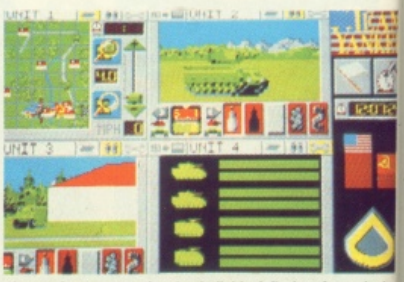
TEAM YANKEE

Take on the Reds head to head with EMPIRE's team tactics tank sim



The quadrant screen, showing individual displays for each platoon of four tanks.

Billed by Empire as the 'definitive action simulation of modern tank warfare', *Team Yankee* puts you in control of four tank platoons, defending key posts from the onslaught of Russian attack. Whilst perhaps a little dated in its cold-war scenario, the implementation of *Team Yankee* is superb.

Set over 25 different battles, the object is to progress through five ranks from private to captain, proving your mettle in combat along the way.

Once the game has loaded, you are presented with an options screen from which you may choose a commander (there is only one default in the first instance), commence play, alter the game language, practice a scenario or quit. Before commencing play proper, it is recommended that you practice a scenario to familiarise yourself with control of the tank.

A platoon of bit-mapped tanks – good detail and high speed graphics, but if you zoomed in on this you'd lose detail...

Although in control of a total of sixteen tanks, Oxford Digital Enterprises (the development team) have managed to make the game very easy to get into. It helps that, in practice mode, any encounters will have only one outcome, as none of the enemy vehicles return your fire! The control method may help to set *Team Yankee* apart from the ever increasing crowd of tank sims, as it involves simple icon manipulation via the mouse buttons.

The initial game screen displays a "quadrant view", where the main play area is split into four sections directly related to each platoon. This is where *Team Yankee* offers something more in the way of gameplay, as each platoon may be viewed and manipulated independently from its own quadrant via a series of icons.

Each game screen may be displayed in either quadrant or full-screen mode. The icons above each quadrant allow access to each of the three screens, (maps, status and 3D) and include the ability to expand the view of each platoon (although not all of the action will remain visible). To the right of each quadrant there are further icons allowing you to pause and quit and displaying the time, your rank and relative strengths of both yours and the Russian platoons. This latter cluster of icons are displayed throughout the game.

One of the most vital screens of the game displays a grid map view of the entire play area from where you may plan your course and general tactics. This shows all terrain features and both yours and the enemy platoons. Icons to the right of the grid allow full map manipulation, (such as magnify, de-magnify and full scroll) and alteration of speed and platoon formation.

Although constant reference to the map is essential, the main action is displayed in glorious 3D and it is from this screen, that you may engage in head to head combat against the Great Bear. The tanks under your command (you also have at your disposal a number of TOW and armoured personnel vehicles) are armed with three types of ammunition and have the ability to emit a smoke screen to provide temporary cover. You also have a laser range-finder and thermal imaging to assist at night and when under cover. Movement of the main body and turret of each tank may be controlled from here and, once the enemy is in sight, firing is achieved by placing your cursor over the target and letting rip with the mouse button.

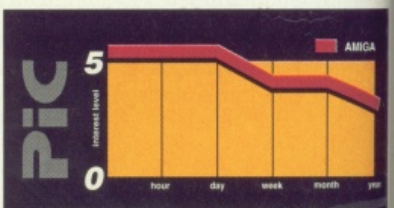
Finally, there's a screen giving status info about your vehicles. When in quadrant mode, the display shows each vehicle with two bars indicating morale and overall efficiency. Full screen status, however, also shows the number of rounds of each weapon left.

Rather than opt for a strategist's dream Oxford Digital Enterprises have emphasised the arcade element, although this by no means indicates a lack of tactical gameplay. The blend of thought and reflexes required to play *Team Yankee* with any degree of success is exactly right and the gentle progression through the ranks ensures that you are never faced with anything totally beyond your capabilities. Having said that, some of the later scenarios seem incomprehensibly difficult!

Graphically, *Team Yankee* works very well. The decision to use bitmapped sprites for 3D rather than polygons may seem unusual, but allows for both speed and the graphic detail required in such a game. The design of the vehicles themselves was assisted by a military expert and as such, authenticity is fully vouched for. One minor niggle I have about using bitmaps however, is the loss of detail when using the zoom, but this has no effect on gameplay and graphics are generally good. Sound is fairly statutory, with in game FX limited to a low rumbling and the obligatory fire and explosion noises.

Team Yankee is an excellent effort to bring the limited appeal of a tank sim to a wider audience. Involved gameplay, original implementation and gradually increasing difficulty ensure that once you are initially hooked, you will remain so for some considerable time.

● **Alex Ruranski**



Immediately accessible due to excellent control method and presentation. Plenty of missions will keep you involved for some time although once familiar with each mission you may find yourself less inclined to return to the game and although interest will be fairly long term, every game has its limitations.

ACE RATING **893**

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AMIGA

Unusual choice of bitmaps works very well and although not pushing the Amiga to its limits, I would argue that there has yet to be a game that does. Sound is far from what the Amiga is capable of, but then again, you would expect nothing more from any battle sim. Fans of both strategy and pure arcade would be well advised to try *Team Yankee*, as its accessibility and possible complexity will engage all but the purest of purists.

RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£29.99	OUT NOW
AMIGA	£29.99	OUT NOW
AMIGA	£34.99	OUT NOW

No other versions planned

SUPREMACY

Power is an aphrodisiac, and MELBOURNE HOUSE offer you the chance to be the sexiest thing in the Universe!

Virgin/Mastertronic are relaunching the famous Melbourne House name with this game. If future releases are as strong, the label that once gave us *The Hobbit* has a bright future.

It all starts with trouble at t' research labs. The techies have discovered four new dimensions while working on new hyperspace drives. Each dimension contains many new worlds just ready for you, Ruler of the Universe no less, to expand your empire into.

The problem is that four alien races have also made the discovery, and some of them are particularly powerful and ruthless. The gates are now permanent, leaving you wide open to possible attack. There's only one thing to do - get in and kick their butts before they kick yours!

The game loads up with an attractive intro, followed by a screen detailing the four alien species you will face. Each resides in one of the dimensions, and acts as a difficulty level. The aliens range in increasing difficulty and, if they aren't tough enough, the number of planets to conquer also increases.

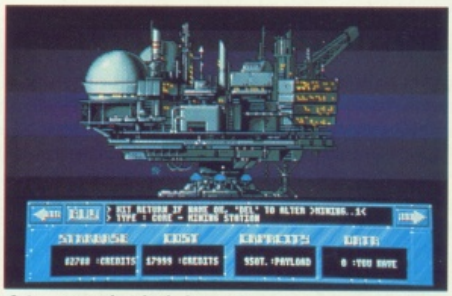
Once you select an opponent, you are presented with the main control screen. Most of the action is controlled by the mouse, and clicking on the right button returns you straight here. The dominant feature of this screen is a large round window shows the planetary system in the dimension, with your home planet (Starbase) at one end of the system and the enemy's at the other. In between are lifeless planets, ripe for conquer.

Choosing suits and weaponry for your platoon

Arrow icons beside the window allow you to click between the different planets.

In the top right corner is a small animated graphics illustration of the currently selected planet. If you've selected an enemy held planet then a "Classified" logo will be displayed. Below that is a message window (while on other screens you will be informed that new information has come in by a digitised voice and a flashing sign). Finally, in the bottom right corner, are the ten control icons. From here you can access all the information screens and functions. As a shortcut, some of these icons are reproduced on other screens so that you don't have to keep returning to the main one.

The basic aim of the game is to capture the enemy's home base. Naturally, this isn't going to be easy. For a start, you begin with a tiny population, no resource generators, no spaceships and no army! No-one said being despotic ruler of the Universe was going to be easy! You will have to make decisions about how to tax the populace to raise revenue, then you have to buy Horticultural and Mining Stations to produce food and raw materials, as well as Solar Satellites to beam down power for them.


Outer space engineering in *Supremacy*

Only once you have a stable(ish) community on Starbase can you even pause to think about expanding to other planets. To do this you must buy an Atmosphere Processor (very expensive) to send out to the barren worlds in the void and terraform them. After some time a new colonisable world is formed, each with ready made inhabitants just waiting to be taxed, fed and drafted! There are four world types, each with different benefits: volcanic (Mining Stations give a higher yield); desert (Solar Satellites generate more power); tropical (Horticultural Stations produce more food); and metropolis (taxation produces higher revenue). A Cargo Cruiser can then truck resources between planets as needed.

KICKING INTERSTELLAR ASS

Eventually you'll want to start getting violent. You can generate 24 platoons, each containing up to 200 troops and the best equipment you can afford. Battle Cruisers can ferry up to 4 platoons between planets and into battle. When battle's engaged, the combat control screen shows two bars - green (you) and red (them). Their relative heights indicate, at a glance, the strength of one side to the other, so you can quickly decide whether to pull "your boys" out.

Random events occur that may help or hinder you, such as your scientists developing a high yield crop, or a solar storm shutting down resource stations. You have to stay alert and flexible enough to conquer chance as well as the enemy.

I really liked *Supremacy*. The attractive graphics encourage you to explore the screens and the icon system makes it very easy to get around and manipulate data (although a few icon functions aren't quite as easily identifiable from their design as they might be). The sound effects are far better than you usually get in this type of game, and quite amusing in places. The manual is well thought out and guides you step by step through some early game play examples.

Where the game scores over, say, *Imperium* is that it's *fun*. While there aren't as many variables to manipulate in *Supremacy*, it's just as taxing intellectually but from a more tactical point of view - it's not just a question of juggling figures. The four alien species are all tough foes, but the difficulty level means the player can pick the one best suited to their abilities.

Admittedly, there's not really anything in *Supremacy* that hasn't been done long before, but it's never been done quite so attractively or with so much thought devoted to user friendliness. Like *Populous*, it opens up this style of game to those who perhaps wouldn't normally consider it, and offers lots of long lasting entertainment into the bargain.

● David Upchurch

There's the Esprit interior, in silicon...

LOTUS TURBO ESPRIT CHALLENGE

Unleash a Lotus with GREMLIN's hot new license

No member of the software buying public could have failed to notice last year's barrage of driving titles, released to do battle for sales and (in some cases) milk the punter for all his/her worth. The start of what could become this year's onslaught is heralded by Gremlin's new licensing deal with Lotus, under which the company have the exclusive rights to market software endorsed by the company and carrying the official Lotus badge.

All very impressive, but endorsed software doesn't always live up to the expectations aroused by the label. Is this yet another piece of sub-standard software with an expensive price tag?

The most obvious difference between *Lotus Turbo Esprit* and the previous batch of arcade licences is that it makes use of the horizontal split-screen effect, first seen in the age-old classic, *Pit Stop II*. So you've got simultaneous two-player action, the kind on which the original *Pit Stop* thrived, as well as a thrash-out between you and the computer.

There are 32 tracks, set over 3 difficulty levels, (each level contains an increasing number of tracks) in which you race either solo or against a "friend" in a field of 20. Once running, you are presented with a well implemented attract mode, showing various representations of the Lotus with accurate spec charts and a demo of the game itself. Underway, you are presented with an options screen from which you may select the difficulty level, number of players and mode of control. Of the former, each level requires completion of an increasing number of tracks, although you may select at which level you begin.

Each track increases in difficulty, adding hazards such as water, oil, roadworks and landslides. There are three control options: the first utilises joystick up/down for accelerate/decelerate and the button to change through the gears. The second mode effectively reverses the first, using the button to accelerate and joystick to change gear. Lastly, Gremlin will include a mouse option which had yet to be implemented on the review copy.

...and here it is in walnut and leather!

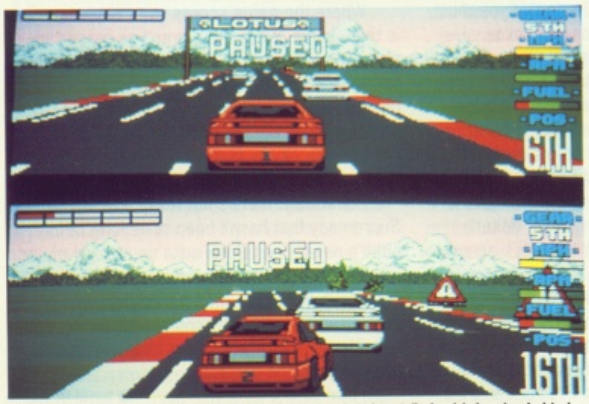
In addition to choice of physical control, each player may select either manual or computer controlled (i.e automatic) gears. Information as to selected gear, speed, revs, fuel and overall position is displayed to the right of the play area, whilst a bar indicator to the top left displays each lap completed. Further similarity to *Pit Stop II* may be drawn from the fact that you must inevitably enter the pits at some stage, to replenish fuel and re-tune your overworked engine.

Graphically, *LTE* is excellently implemented. Convincing 3-D moves rapidly and smoothly, as do the various horizons and roadside objects and although the main sprites are viewed from the statutory rear angle, colour has been well used to create a feel of arcade quality software. Sonically, the review copy was incomplete, in that no in-game FX were present, although as has been mentioned, a selection of five rockin' in game tunes are available for your delectation.

Overall speed has to be seen to be appreciated (even when the screen becomes crammed with sprites the game does not slow), and although enjoyable as a single player game, *Lotus Turbo Esprit* enters another class altogether when played against a "friend". The addictive frustration experienced when an attempt to overtake is thwarted by either a drone or a purposeful opponent is immense. The frustration level for beginners is also reduced (at the expense of realism) in that collision with other vehicles does not cause damage to your car, but merely slows you down.

A substantial range of different tracks and the unavoidable mounting determination to achieve first place ensure that *Lotus Turbo Esprit* will, whilst perhaps not achieving the classic cult status of *Pit Stop II*, nevertheless revive pleasant memories for some and ignite new flames of enthusiasm in many others. Over-endorsed and over-priced? Most definitely not – and a big slap on the back to Gremlin for proving that endorsement needn't be associated with second-rate software.

● Alex Ruranski



Two player mode (and yes, it's paused for the camera). Driver 2 (below) is lagging behind and has just had an argument with another driver. In one player mode the lower half of the display is taken up by an attractive graphic display of the Esprit

There's a rather strong sense of deja vu about *LTEC* when you get started. It's difficult to get excited about a racing game these days. But once you're into the game, the slick introduction, quick learning curve, and long-lasting challenge begin to bite. Definitely one of the better tarmac burners currently on the market and destined for a long life on your shelf

ACE RATING **875**

AMIGA

Our version was complete except for the mouse control option and the sound effects, the inclusion of which could only increase the already excellent rating this game deserves. Whilst hardly stretching the potential of the Amiga, *Lotus Turbo Esprit* is a good example of what a slickly programmed arcade game can be. Highly recommended.

RELEASE DETAILS

16-BIT VERSIONS	£24.99	IMMINENT
8-BIT VERSIONS	£10.99	IMMINENT

Versions for all major formats to be released

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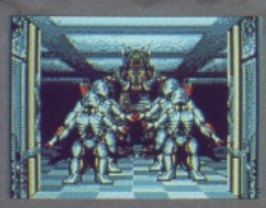

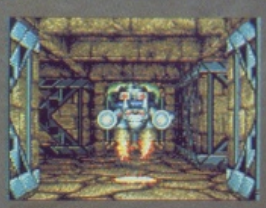

Actual screen shots

M I N D S C A P E

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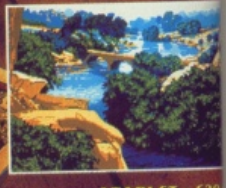


ATARI ST • £29

ATARI ST • £29

SHADOW OF THE BEAST 2

A wall drops, trapping our hero on a rectangle drawbridge with an abyss below! Who can save him now? As ypu can see, the graphics are excellent, but will you ever get to them?

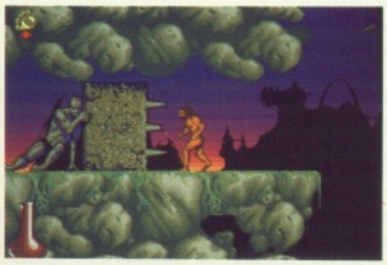
PSYGNOSIS serve up another helping of the Beast – warmed up left-overs or cordon bleu meal?

Oh dear. Zelek, Beast Mage, wasn't too pleased at being defeated in *Beast 1* and now seeks revenge. Like all bullies he picks on the weak and kidnaps your baby sister, with the intention of turning her into a warrior messenger for the Beast Lord Maletoth (I suppose because they're cheaper than recorded delivery mail). You, of course, were once thus cursed and rather than see your sister suffer as you did, you travel to Kara-Moon, home of the Beast, to save her.

Shadow of the Beast was the most popular Amiga title of 1989 and probably the first to show what that machine was truly capable of technically. Sadly it was somewhat lacking in the game department but now here's the sequel, boasting enhanced gameplay as well as the visuals and sonics so applauded before.

The game opens with the best intro sequence I have ever seen. It's almost cinematic in quality, and I bet a lot of people will reach for their wallets as soon as they see it. I advise them to wait until the game is fully loaded.

In the game you control a Neanderthal looking figure who you can make run left or right, jump or duck. Pressing fire activates the weapon or object you are carrying (you start with just a mace). In the bottom left hand corner of the screen is a red flask which empties as you get hit - when it's dry, you're dead. At the bottom of the screen is a small window for messages.



Not the most subtle way to encourage you to leave - a beefy monster is pushing a large spiked block in your way!

Your ape man strides purposefully through gorgeous scenery, which scrolls in two layer parallax in all directions. Of course, this is no Sunday stroll in the park – there are chasms to leap, waterfalls to cross, ropes to climb and a wide variety of people and monsters hell-bent on stopping you saving your sister.

As you explore Kara-Moon you may find chests containing gold, which can be used to buy food or weapons in some locations. Occasionally chests or slain monsters will reveal weapons or useful items. You can carry four things at a time, switching between them with function keys 1-4. Some items have limited use, so choose carefully!

The programmers, Reflections, have tried to build on the basic gameplay of the first *Beast* by adding a small graphic adventure element with the option of trying to engage those you meet in conversation (after a fashion). Pressing 'A' allows you to type in a word that you want to enquire about. For example, early on you meet an old man who, you are told, is mourning a loss. Input "LOSS", and he'll tell you that his ring was stolen by Goblins. It doesn't take a PhD to work out that, if you find and return it, he may be useful.

BEASTLY?

All this sounds hunky-dory but, quite frankly, I wasn't impressed with *Beast 2*. The scenery graphics are great and scroll incredibly smoothly but the monster graphics, although well designed and animated, lack colour and appear flat compared to the original. The worst instance of this is with the player's character – which looks as if it had escaped from a C64 game. I appreciate that this was done to save memory for use elsewhere, but the player has to look at this sprite all the way through the game and I think that it would've been memory well spent.

The adventure element is a nice addition and adds a little spice to the pot, but it isn't particularly taxing. The sound effects are run of the mill and the backing music is somewhat dreary. But the real nails in the *Beast 2* coffin are its toughness and its user unfriendliness.

I consider myself a reasonable gameplayer, but, after slogging away for days at this frakkin' game, I've only just got onto the second load. If I didn't know the cheat mode I'd be in a straitjacket by now. The monsters deplete your energy so quickly and move so fast that your life is over before you know it - and that's all you get, just one measly life! When I died on the second load I thought maybe I'd restart from there, but no - back to the beginning I go!

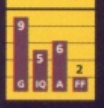
Furthermore, you can't skip the intro and get on with loading the game. It's enjoyable the first couple of times, but after that... Also, at the end of the game you get a piccy and a sampled guitar riff. It's good but from dying to restarting a new game takes nearly two minutes! You can turn this sequence off – reducing the time to a speedy (ha!) 47 seconds. That's a heck of a lot of time between games!

In the final analysis it has to be said that the faults of *Beast 2* severely outweigh its good points. It's a complete mystery to me why it's been so highly praised elsewhere. Either the game was reviewed on the basis of someone playing it for them or with the aid of a cheat. Or maybe they just like impossible challenges. I don't. I admire the technical achievement this program represents, but I would have admired a good game even more.

● David Upchurch

You'll drool when the game starts but become dry mouthed by the difficulty setting when you play. Gritting your teeth, you'll carry on for a while, thinking that maybe you'll improve with practice, but no. Frustration sets in all too soon and the gameplay is too unrewarding to encourage perserverance. The game is relegated to the back of the cupboard, only being dusted off when you want to show Speccy owners the intro.

ACE RATING
605



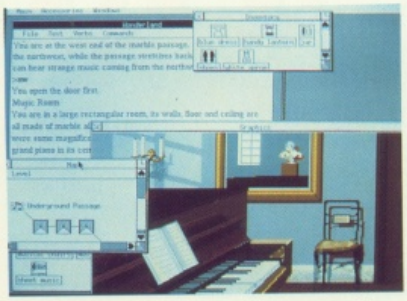
AMIGA

Like *Beast 1*, it's a marvellous demo of what the Amiga can do. The intro sequence is truly stunning, and everything is as slickly presented as any arcade game. However, some of the creature graphics, while well designed, are a little flat to look at, and the music and effects are unimpressive. Beautiful, technically accomplished, and far too difficult.

RELEASE DETAILS

AMIGA £34.95 (inc T-shirt) OUT NOW

No other versions currently planned



An adventure with windows is something else, as any Mac user will tell you. Now PC, Amiga, and ST owners can get in on the act

Magnetic Scrolls have always been regarded as one of the fore-runners of the adventure field, standing alongside Infocom for producing the most entertaining and involving adventures around. Back in 1987, they stunned the world with *The Pawn*, a game that featured excellent location pictures and the most intelligent parser yet seen.

MS have kept a low profile since the demise of Telecomsoft, who used to publish their games under the Rainbird label. Now they have returned with what must be one of the most informative and user friendly game systems ever devised.

Basing an adventure game around such a classic book as Alice in Wonderland is always going to create problems. After all, the story is pretty set and adding any more has to be planned carefully so as not to lose the feel of the book.

Playing through a large part of the game, I have to say that MS have done extremely well. The story is essentially the same, only far more detailed, allowing for a lot of freedom and plenty of room for some typically logical, yet difficult, puzzles.

The key selling point behind this game is not that it's a brilliant adventure and one of the best in its class, which it is, but the new operating system, namely Magnetic Windows. At first glance, you'd think the game was running on an Apple Macintosh. In fact, if you didn't know any better, several further glances would tell you the same. Welcome to MW, the future of adventure games.

Within any adventure scenario, there are a number of commands used over and over again that are used purely for information, rather than any form of problem solving, such as INVENTORY or EXITS. MW allows you to call up a series of pre-designed windows that give you an instant pictorial guide to these plus a list of objects in the current location. There's also a self-building map option that allows you to travel instantly to any location you've already visited by simply double clicking on the destination. A lot less frustrating than typing in a series of directions, I can tell you.

All the windows can be moved and scaled, and if you find yourself creating a bit of a mess on screen, you can use the TIDY command, whereby the computer will relay and rescale all the windows in a way that all can be displayed at once with no overlaps and no loss of information.

As I've said, the game story follows that of the book, but that's not to say you can have any idea as to what's around the next corner. Situations have been played around with to the point that even simple tasks, like straightening a clothes hanger become comparable to any and all of the twelve tasks of Hercules (or even Asterix come to that). However, all the puzzles are logical and can be quite easily thought out. For example, going back to the clothes hanger, you find a situation where you have to use some straight wire. Upon trying to unbend the hanger, you are told you need to find something to grip it securely. Wasn't that a vice you saw in the garden shed?

If you get really stuck, however, there is a help command that brings up a hint dictionary, which effectively contains the entire solution in clue form. Each hint is split into four or more parts; the more you reveal, the more obvious the clue becomes, until it finally tells you exactly how to win over your specific problem.

The parser is true MS, containing a wide variety of synonyms for each act and object and includes a full editing system, where you can recall previous commands and alter them – handy for repeating long sentences or correcting mistakes.

Can this really be the end of frustrating adventures? A colleague of mine, whose initials are Keith Campbell, wanted to give this game 100%. After playing it, I can't say I blame him. Scrolls plan to use the Magnetic Windows system indefinitely, to create more advanced and involving software. All adventure fans kneel and praise.

● Tony Dillon

Mag Scrolls have a great way with pics – superb draftsmanship combines with a strong use of colour to achieve a very attractive effect

As with any adventure, it takes a short while to get your bearings and start making some headway, though *Wonderland* starts with a bang and once you begin to find your way, nothing can stop you. Of course, sooner or later you'll complete it, at which point interest goes out the window...and you sit and wait for the next Magnetic Windows title.

ACE RATING 910

IBM PC

In terms of visuals, MS have always led the pack, but *Wonderland* is really something else. The clear display and good use of windows make the game pleasant to look at, and the location graphics are easily on a par with their earlier products. The only real glitch is on a PC with no mouse – the keyboard operation of the pointer is far too slow, both to respond and in actual speed across the screen. And why no sound?

RELEASE DETAILS

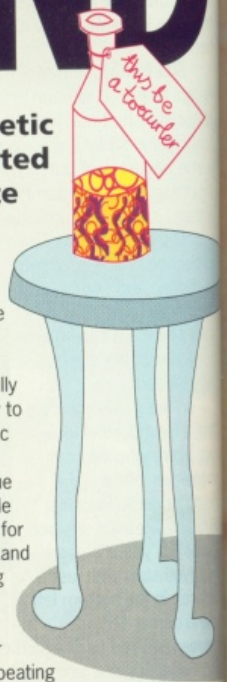
ATARI ST	£29.99	IMMINENT
AMIGA	£29.99	IMMINENT
IBM PC	£34.99	OUT NOW

No other versions planned

WONDERLAND

ACE RATED

Have Magnetic Scrolls created the ultimate adventure system?



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Screen Shots from Atari ST version

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BETRAYAL

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Quite possibly the best news you've had for some time!

Betrayal.

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RAINBIRD

MASTERS OF STRATEGY

LOOPZ

AUDIOGENIC's puzzler has been grabbed by Mindscape for the Gameboy and Capcom for the arcades. But should you grab it for yourself?

When you find yourself shrieking with excitement on the Tube because you've just beaten your *Tetris* high score, you know it's time to either (a) chuck the Gameboy in the Thames and see a psychiatrist or (b) try just one more time to see what happens if you adopt a more aggressive strategy on Level 9.

There is a third alternative. Just as heroin users can sometimes be weaned away from the evil drug with methadone, so *Tetris* victims can be dragged away from those tumbling blocks by other puzzle games. Some people have found new life after discovering *Klax*. Others swear by *Pipemania*. As a hardened *Tetris* user, however, I didn't get a rush from either of these, so you can imagine the effect on my pulse rate when I played *Loopz* and saw, for the first time, the possibility of freedom from Gulag Tetris. Suddenly a whole new world of addiction opened up, and not a tumbling block in sight.

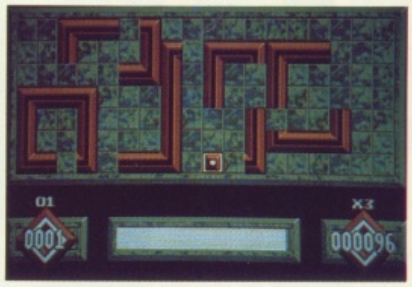
ELEMENTARY?

Loopz is, of course, very simple. A rectangular gridded playing area confronts you, over which you can move a cursor using the mouse or joystick. The cursor assumes one of several distinct shapes, each of which is an open-ended line with one or two right angles and of varying size. One, for example, is a straight line of three squares' length. Another is a right angle with two sides of a single square's length. Other single right angled lines create L shapes, and some lines zig-zag through two right angles.

You drop these lines onto the grid by first moving them where you choose and then clicking the mouse/joystick button. A line cannot have either end continuing immediately to the boundary of the grid. Your objective is to place these lines so that they join onto each other and form 'loops', which are simply polygons that enclose an area of the grid. Once you complete a loop, it flashes and disappears and your score goes up. The more complex the loop, the higher your score.

Naturally you can't determine in which order the shapes will come, so sooner or later you have redundant shapes on your grid that you can't join or, worse, are stopping you from completing other loops. Occasionally (VERY occasionally) you get a special shape, which – when dropped on any line or pattern of joined lines – wipes them out and frees some space.

You have three lives and lose one when either you cannot place a shape anywhere on the grid because you can't find a space for it, or you fail to place the shape within the time limit (as indicated by a sliding bar at the bottom of the screen). The time limit provides a simple way of increasing the difficulty – the higher levels (which, like *Tetris*, you can access from the starting screen) are just the same but simply leave you less time to place each piece. You get an extra life for every 25 loops you complete.



Lots of potential loops here, but the grid soon clogs up and you lose a life

Loopz has three game modes. In Game A, the level remains constant. In Game B it rises with your score (as in *Tetris*). Game B includes two bonus sequences – the first simply has you madly creating loops and doesn't remove them when you've finished. The second is similar to Game C. The latter is quite different – a complex completed loop is shown on-screen and then sections are removed. You have to replace them and rebuild the loop. This is essentially a memory and logic exercise.

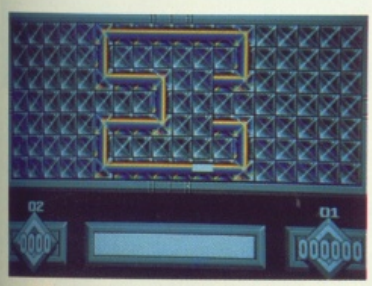
Loopz is an excellent puzzle, but this evening I was back playing *Tetris* on the Tube. That's because there's one feature of Audiogenic's puzzler that stops it from replacing that 'other game' in my affections.

Yes, I admit it. I just can't hack it. The game (and I'm not the only one here who had this problem) is too difficult for you to leap into it and get instant gratification. The shapes of the lines in *Loopz* make the strategy very complex. *Tetris* allows simple incorporation of any block into either single or multiple lines. In *Loopz*, some shapes cannot be incorporated into the more simple loops – the zig-zag, for example, can never be part of a simple rectangle. These shapes demand that you reserve some of your grid for the particular shapes they require and at higher levels this becomes very difficult indeed.

Unfortunately, you can't pause the game to plan ahead because the pause option blanks the playing area. The programmers probably did this deliberately, but they did themselves an injustice because the attraction of *Loopz* is that the strategy *is* so much more interesting than *Tetris*. That was what attracted me when I first played it – and what frustrated me when I realised how difficult it was.

Audiogenic assure me that there are many people who've mastered *Loopz*. That may be true, but you should be prepared for a much longer learning curve – which means that you'll only really want to tackle *Loopz* when you've got the time and patience for a challenge. *Tetris*, on the other hand, is completely brainless – and that's its main attraction.

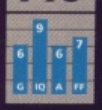
● Steve Cooke



Now you see them, now you don't. In this mode, sections of the displayed shape are erased. You must then put each one back in its correct place within the time limit

The initial excitement generated by this product is very high. The game is simple to play and very quick to get into. After a few goes, you reckon you could REALLY get expert at building shapes. But that expertise takes quite a while to develop and frustration can arise. However, *Loopz* does have good staying power – it's not impossible and the challenge will tempt you back in the long term.

ACE RATING **795**



ATARI ST

Three sound options give you rather subdued music that tries to be hypnotic and eventually succeeds by sending you to sleep. The graphics are attractive for a puzzle game, but then the scenario doesn't demand much in the way of sprites. It would have been nice to see some more detailed screen borders, for example. Control is by keyboard, joystick, or mouse and is instinctive and quick to pick up.

RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£19.99	IMMINENT
AMIGA	£19.99	IMMINENT
IBM PC	£24.99	IMMINENT
C64/128	£10.99cs £14.99dk	OCT 90
SPECTRUM	£10.99cs £14.99dk	OCT 90
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Also coming on MSX, BBC, SAM Coupe, and PCW

LOOP HIS LOOPS

***Loops* also has a two-player mode which suffers slightly because it demands two joysticks and the joystick control is not as precise as the mouse. The neat touch here, however, is that while you're opponent may be waiting for a particular shape to complete a loop, you may get there first and pinch the honour (and the score). Otherwise, it shares all the attractions and drawbacks of the single player game.**

Icy Leningrad - burst those bubbles, Boris! By the way, the players have'nt been covered in snow, they've both just picked up temporary shield icons.

Level 43 - you're nearing Easter Island. Maya the Force be with you!

OCEAN burst a few bubbles with a highly addictive romp around the world

PANG

PANG PLAYERS GUIDE

The best general advice is to be methodical. When a new screen starts, quickly see where the smallest of the balloons on offer is, head for it, and start breaking it down. Try to mop up as many of the tinier balloons as possible before moving on to the other balloons. If you don't you'll just end up swamped.

There are four main weapons: the harpoon, the grapple hook, a double shot laser and dynamite.

● The harpoon (which you start with) shoots up, dragging a cable behind it. If it hits a balloon, an animal, a platform or the ceiling it disappears. Be warned - you can't fire more than one at a time (unless you pick up the double icon). The harpoon is, funnily enough, the best weapon to have, especially when you can fire two. Best way to use it is to fire and move to the side, using the cable as a shield and allowing the balloons to crash into it.

● The grapple hook behaves exactly the same as a harpoon, except that if it hits a platform or the ceiling it sticks, leaving a barrier of taut cable trailing behind. This weapon is a bit of a double edged sword - while it's great for using as protection in low corridors, it can be a pain if it gets stuck somewhere away from the action, leaving you weaponless.

● The laser is great for breaking up the big balloons, but is too dangerous to use when there are lots of the small balloons because you have to get right underneath them - far too risky!

● The dynamite is best avoided at all times. It splits all balloons into the smallest size and can cause real headaches if used too early on.

Use platforms as shields as much as possible - shoot between gaps in them whenever possible.

There are many screens containing ladders which you may be tempted to climb - DON'T! Your chances of survival are much higher with the freedom of the floor to roam, rather than teetering on some tiny ledge. Only go platform pounding when you're mopping up or you absolutely have to.

Try to shoot birds and snails as soon as possible. Don't kill the crab - he's totally harmless and will destroy some of the balloons.

Screens in far northern and southern countries feature icy platforms, which cause you to skid slightly when you change direction. Be careful, and leave a bigger margin for error.

Imagine, if you can, the unholy spawn of the coupling of *Space Invaders* with *Asteroids* and you will begin to get some idea what this game is all about.

You control a little fellow whose task it is to travel around the world, making your way through 50 screens of action set in 17 locations. You start in Japan (guess where the coin-op was written) and end up on Easter Island in the Pacific Ocean. Each screen is made up of several platforms, barriers and ladders. Your character can walk left or right, climb up or down ladders, or drop off the edge of platforms (you can't die by falling).

Bouncing around are a number of balloons, which you can shoot with your harpoon-like gun. Be warned - your gun only fires up! Each time a balloon is shot, or it hits the cable trailing behind the harpoon, it splits into two smaller balloons. The smaller the balloon the lower they bounce - at their smallest the balloons barely clear your head. Hit these smallest balloons and they disappear. Clear a screen of all the balloons and you can move onto the next. If one of the balloons hits you or the time limit is used up, you lose one of your lives and have to start the screen again.

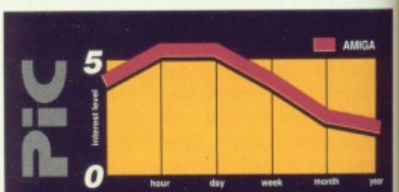
And that, basically, is *Pang*! There are several extra bells and whistles that elaborate on this basic scenario; some platforms can be destroyed by shooting, occasionally shot balloons drop bonuses (such as double harpoons or a handy pump action laser) and snails or birds will sometimes wander on screen which, if they touch you, stop your weapon working for a limited time.

Pang may not look much from the screen shots, or sound like much from the description, but just wait until you play it - the game positively oozes addictiveness! The first few screens are fairly simple affairs, but as more devious platform arrangements appear and more balloons start bouncing about, things can get pretty hectic and the game really starts to get its hooks into you! Although fundamentally a simple fun game, some screens require thought and strategy to complete. There's also a two player option, where both take part at the same time, which is great fun. The old adage about cooperating to survive is truer here than just about any other two person game I can think of.

Pang has been superbly converted from the Mitchell arcade game by Ocean France. The graphics are identical to the original, even down to the attract sequence between games. Each country is represented by an attractive picture which acts as a backdrop to the on-screen action. The animation is good, and everything moves very smoothly. Sound is also well implemented. The spot effects are pretty standard bangs and pops, but there are a large number of enjoyable tunes and jingles throughout the game.

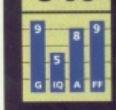
This is a marvellous game. Okay, so you're not exactly stretched to the limits of your intellectual capacity, but the game does require more brains than your average arcade bash. If you hanker for the days when games were fun and simple, buy *Pang* - you won't regret it!

● David Upchurch



Instant accessibility and pleasing aesthetics hook you and addictive gameplay will keep you going for quite some time. After a while you'll develop tactics and discover that the game isn't quite as impossible to complete as first assumed. Interest will fade as the challenge diminishes, though you'll still come back occasionally just for the fun of it.

ACE RATING **840**



AMIGA

We reviewed the release version, but without final documentation and packaging. Colourful smooth, cutesy sprites, beautiful backdrops and enjoyable jingles – a true arcade perfect copy. Fortunately, aesthetics aren't the only thing accurately ported over - the addiction comes through strongly as well. If you liked the arcade game, you'll love this conversion.

RELEASE DETAILS

ST, AMIGA, PC, SPECTRUM	£TBA	NOV 90
C64/AMSTRAD CARTRIDGE	£TBA	TBA

No other versions planned

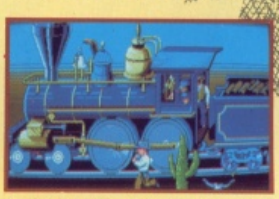
BILLY The KID

ATARI ST

... A HERO?

CBM AMIGA

ocean



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HIGH NOON

What do you get when you shut four programmers in a small room in North London? Rik Haynes meets the men at Millennium

The men at Millennium: Paul Carruthers (left), Steve Grand, Pete Hickinson and Chris Sorrell.

Born out of the Logotron education software specialist, Millennium is a young, small and independent software publisher dedicated to producing original games on the C64, Amiga, PC and ST. So far this year, Millennium has released the critically-acclaimed *Resolution 101*, *Kid Gloves* and *Thunderstrike*. ACE went to Millennium's London office in Highbury to ask five of its programmers one simple – but very important – question. Four of the programmers turned up, the other one missed his train.

HOW DO YOU RATE THE CURRENT STATE OF GAMEPLAY FOUND IN GAMES?

STEVE GRAND (programmer of *Outlands*): I think it's more artificial stupidity rather than artificial intelligence.

CHRIS SORRELL (programmer of *James Pond*): By building intelligence around the situations and characters involved in the game. There's much more intelligence in today's games for moving and controlling enemies.

PETE HICKINSON (programmer of *Chase HQ*, *Hill Billy Moonshine Racers*): Characters have to interact more with each other in games. You have to think up a whole lot of programming routines to emulate stuff.

PAUL CARRUTHERS (programmer of *Archipelagos*, *Resolution 101* and *Stormball*): There aren't that many complicated things in life, it's just lots of little simple things which combine with each other to make something that is – or looks – complicated. Instead of structured intelligence, we need intelligence that is created during the game.

STEVE: I don't think the level of intelligence found in games has increased a great deal – perhaps stupidity has increased. You get more complex algorithms controlling the behaviour of people in games, but there's no real intelligence – not like you'd call a real mouse intelligent. No sensitivity, it's all preprogrammed hard-wired stuff. Graphic adventures don't seem to have come very far at all in the level of intellect involved. They are just puzzles, it's just you against the programmer. None of the people inside the games do anything intelligent themselves. I think graphic adventures have got a great future, but they need to have a lot more intelligence. You need to be able to walk into a world and make it work your way. The moment you walk into a programmers or game designers world you have to solve their puzzles their way. The worlds in games have to operate autonomously – so you can step into them and play along with the plot if you feel like it, or perhaps play it in you own way. There's no sign of that yet. As far as I can see, games are exceedingly thick.

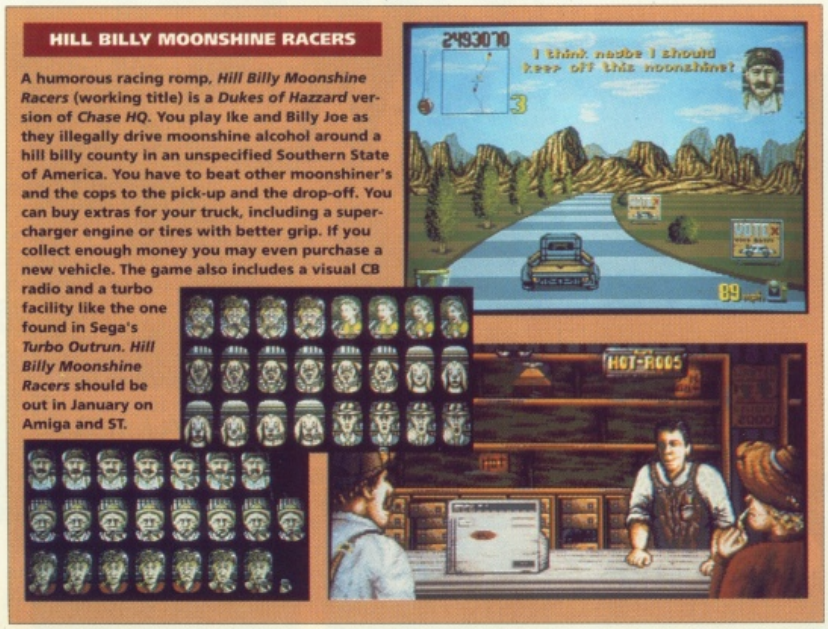
> ***"Compact Disc projects will involve a lot more money which we will have to find from outside our own resources – joint-venture work or co-publishing or venture capital. It can be an expensive proposition. We are keen to get involved, but we need to know which will be the main format before we start developing games."***
> **Ian Saunter, Millennium**

CHRIS: There's a lot going on in the background of today's games. You've got to play a part in what's going on. Enemies in games have to possess more of a purpose. We have to link in more directly with what the player does.

STEVE: You have to treat the objects in computer games as autonomous bodies – building them, programming them, thinking about them in isolation, then letting them meet together and see what happens – this can lead to intelligence. When you think of the plot first, you make everything fit around it. Complex systems are more than the sum of their parts. When you pile on all

HILL BILLY MOONSHINE RACERS

A humorous racing romp, *Hill Billy Moonshine Racers* (working title) is a *Dukes of Hazzard* version of *Chase HQ*. You play Ike and Billy Joe as they illegally drive moonshine alcohol around a hill billy county in an unspecified Southern State of America. You have to beat other moonshiner's and the cops to the pick-up and the drop-off. You can buy extras for your truck, including a supercharger engine or tires with better grip. If you collect enough money you may even purchase a new vehicle. The game also includes a visual CB radio and a turbo facility like the one found in Sega's *Turbo Outrun*. *Hill Billy Moonshine Racers* should be out in January on Amiga and ST.



TENTACLE

Eldritch the Cat, the strangely named software development team most recently responsible for *Projectile* by Electronic Arts, is currently working on Tentacle for Millennium. This *Shadow of the Beast*-type game will feature full-screen parallax scrolling and massive sprites. Controlling a mobile pod which moves around the screen using four springs, you're up against dinosaurs, insects and Japanese transformer robots. *Tentacle* is being written by the same guy who converted *Shadow of the Beast* over to the ST. Mark McCubbin of Eldritch the Cat says, "I'm going all out to beat *Shadow of the Beast III*, which will probably be released at the same time as *Tentacle*". *Tentacle* is scheduled for release on Amiga and ST in February 1991.

IN HIGHBURY

HORROR ZOMBIES is a big horror spoof currently under developed at Astral 'Resolution 101' Software. This arcade adventure incorporates all the 'B' movie monsters you've come to know and love such as Dracula, Frankenstein, Werewolves, Mummies, Headless Henry VIII Corpses and, of course, plain old Zombies. Horror Zombies is being written by Stuart Gregg, an ex-Core Design coder who previously wrote Rick Dangerous for Microprose. Astral is also working on Stormball, a futuristic sports-sim which uses some of the 3D graphics code from Archipelagos. Horror Zombies will be launched in November on ST and Amiga, Stormball will follow on the same machines in April 1991.

the simple entities together they become complex. What we need to do in terms of technique is find new data structures, new methods of representing things inside the machine, not algorithmic data structures like you tend to use in games. We require a more intelligent, sensitive, networking kind of structure. You have to create people inside your games and then teach them, rather than tell them how they are to behave. First you have to make them exist, then you have to train them to behave the way you want them to be in the game. There has got to be some learning in the game, I don't think intelligence can exist without learning.

CHRIS: Gameplay hasn't really improved over the years. Sometimes you can go overboard trying to add too many elements to the gameplay. Maybe too much intelligence even. Three dimensional graphics have come on a long way, but I think they can sometimes hinder gameplay.

PETE: Games require a lot more thought in the planning stages these days. You set down a general storyboard and add to it during the game's development.

PAUL: Half of it is to do with what's wanted in the market place, you have to do more now in a game otherwise it's ignored. If you write a game it has to have something that is really special – either in terms of humour, gameplay, graphics, music, technical expertise or whatever. Every game has to have something that really stands out. Five years ago it was enough to have a game that had a bit of everything in it. Three years ago I actually did everything in a game – I'd write all the code, design the game, do all the graphics and the sound. Now you would hardly ever do that, because there's such a hell of a lot of work. Producing games is more of a corporate activity than it was then. Having said that, a lot of good games have been programmed by the individual who has had a nice idea and stuck with it. I'm not really a techie, I just wish everybody had the same machine – then you could explore the limits of that machine. You haven't really seen the ST and Amiga stretched to the same degree as the ZX81 was. You can do anything you want on a PC386 with VGA graphics. If you've got too much in the machine, people expect a lot more of the programmer – and development time goes up again.

CHRIS: Generally, I don't like arcade conversions and licensed games. The name sells the game.

PAUL: It doesn't make any difference if it's an original, license or coin-op conversion – that's all external to what's in the game. Unfortunately, what happens on the whole is that things like coin-ops and film stuff tend to be hurried out. A lot more effort is put into the marketing of the game. I don't think it's fair to say all license games are rubbish. Things are moving so far that way that it's very difficult to do something original and actually make lots of cash out of it.

PETE: Original games tend to be more finely tuned and better prepared before they're released.

STEVE: What's an arcade conversion?

"Everything I do is state of my art, but I'm damn sure it isn't state of anybody else's."

Steve Grand

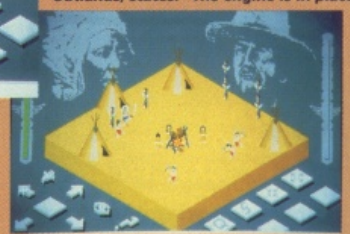
OUTLANDS

Set in a American Gold Rush town during the late 1800's, *Outlands* (working title) places you in the role of an ancient Indian spirit out to defeat the evil town major. This corrupt official has reduced your noble people to cattle rustlers. As you're a ghost, you can only influence things by haunting people, moving from one person to another, trying to get them to do what you want. You can haunt anybody in the game, but every 'host' drains your energy level by a varying amount. You gain more energy by being worshipped.

***Outlands* uses *Populous*-style presentation and control, supplemented by a full text parser. You use this to talk to the character who you are haunting. You can even haunt and talk to a cow or horse, but they don't understand that much English! The horse is useful to reach places hard to get to.**

Everything you'd expect to find in the world of the Wild West is included: cowboys and Indians, sheriff, camp fire, stage coach, jail, saloon, totem pole, general store, bank, hotel, wagon train, and so on. *Outlands* even has a gold mine complete with 'old timer' prospector. You win the game by getting lots of money and power. For example, you might influence the town's folk to gamble for money in the saloon. Alternatively, you could get someone to rob a bank or ambush a stage coach. But beware, it's game over if your host dies.

***Outlands* is the result of ten years work. Steve Grand, the programmer of *Outlands*, states: "The engine is in place,**

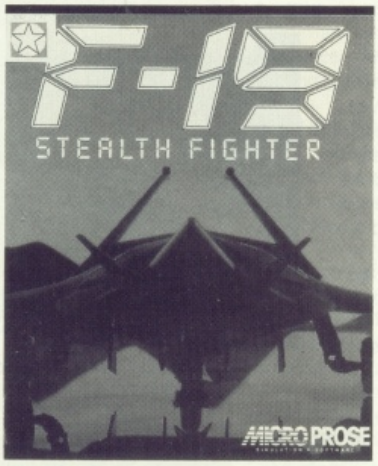


but there's no plot to the game yet. I don't know how it's going to turn out". Grand's 'world simulation' engine started life as a 1K program on a Nascom 1 computer back in 1980. It was originally intended as a computer language for educational use. "I like making worlds in the machine," confirms Grand. *Outlands* is due for release on Amiga, PC and ST in March 1991.

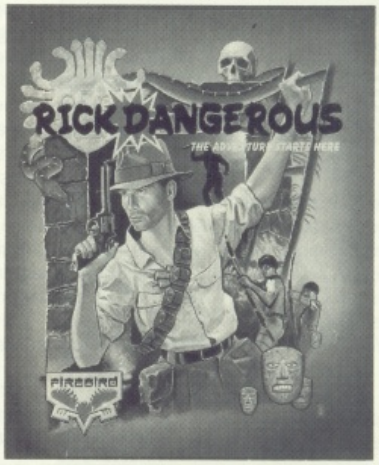
ARE GAMES THICK?

Do you think games are 'exceedingly thick'? What new gameplay features would you like to see included in the games you buy? Tell ACE your views and we'll reward the most original idea with a special software prize worth £25. Write to: Are Games Thick?, ACE Letters, EMAP Images, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. **Alternatively** fax **us on** 071 490 1094. **Don't forget to include your name, full address and machine format.**

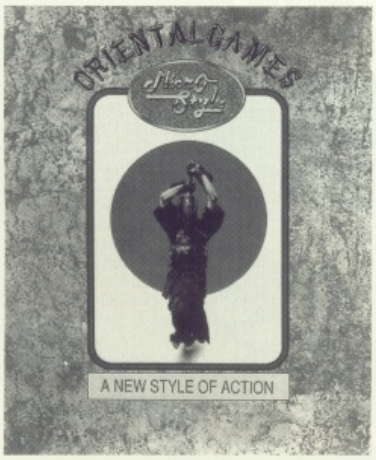
You're not even safe in your own home these days.



ST £29.99



C64(c) £9.99
SPEC £9.99



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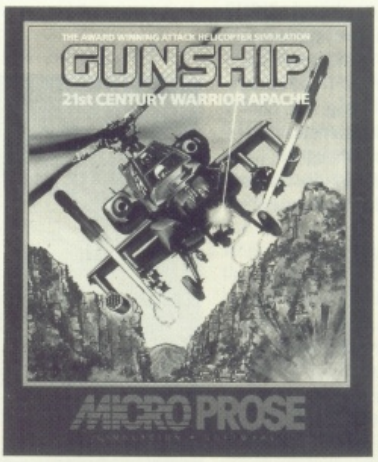


ST £24.95
AMIGA £24.95
C64(c) £14.95
SPEC £9.95

Free pocket calculator with each of these games.

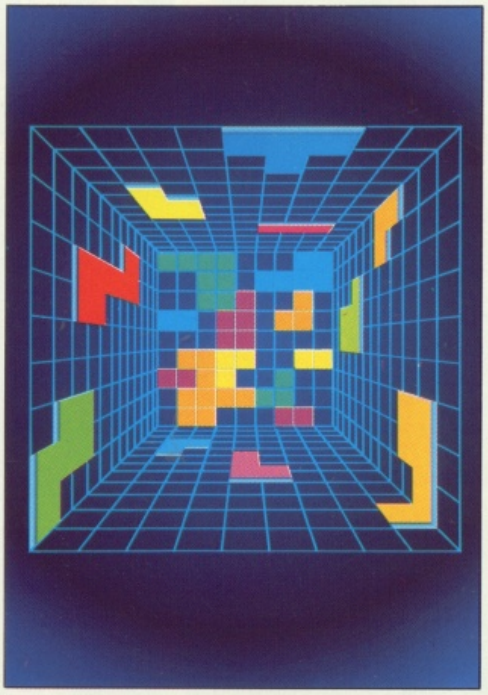
All items subject to availability

WOOLWORTHS

IN CRYSTAL COLLECTION INFOGRAMES PRESENTS

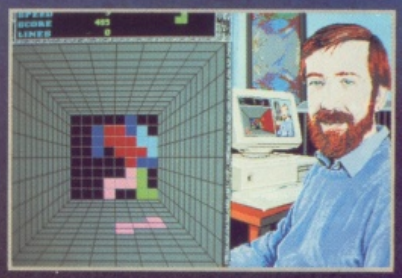
Welltris

Maîtrise, pathway of silence, profondeur irréelle, supervision, absolute skyline, contrôle, anticipation, miroir immobile, équation, horizon, opalescence,



abstraction, magic square, multiple surfaces, colours, miroir du vide, unreal abyss, espace, lightness, reflection, purity, transparence minérale, étoiles...

« Master the colours, rule space »



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Available on AMIGA, PC & compatibles, and soon on ATARI ST-STE, AMSTRAD CPC

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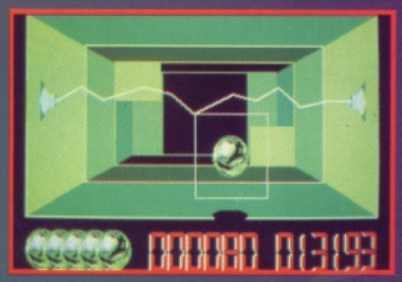
INFOGRAMES

IN CRYSTAL COLLECTION INFOGRAMES PRESENTS

The light corridor

Available on ATARI ST-STE, AMIGA, PC & compatibles

« The echo of lights on the walls of silence »



Travel at light speed, capture the colours rays and reach the ultimate challenge : illuminate the stars again in a newborn universe !

- ▲ UNIVERSE IN 3D
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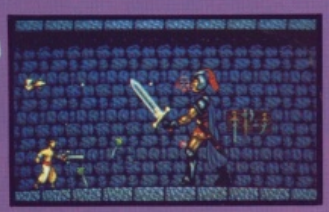
- ▲ 50 STAGES
- ▲ SCREEN EDITOR
- ▲ 1 OR 2 PLAYERS
- ▲ UNIQUE GAME PLAY
- ▲ 100 % DIZZINESS

INFOGRAMES

DeathTrap



A trap so deadly that it has remained inviolate for five centuries, so ingenious that it gently lures an intruder to a certain death, a trap worthy of Shankriya, the magician king, a tyrant and absolute ruler of vast lands.
The trap is set in a multi level labyrinth deep in the bowles of the earth and populted by creatures vile, vicious and venomous. Within it lay hidden the magic scrolls, source of Shankriya's power.
Only a very brave man, dexterous, with exquisite sense of timing, versed in martial arts and a flair for mixing potent magic potions, can ever hope to survive the infamous DEATH TRAP.

AMIGA & ST £24.99

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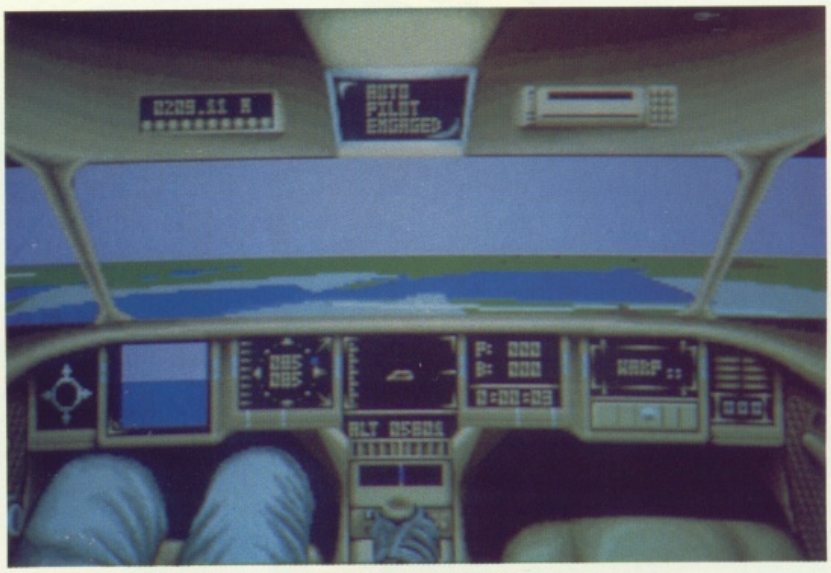
ANCO

Access Software could claim a lot of responsibility for putting US Gold on the map. *Leaderboard*, *Raid Over Moscow*, and *Beach Head* were all Access products programmed by the Carver team. Now the same boys have come up with a series of 'interactive detective dramas' featuring Real Sound® and Motion Graphics®. Let's face it, the games are going to have to be pretty hot stuff to live up to those trademarks, eh?

Mean Streets is the first of the new wave and pushes you into the not-too-distant future as a private dick, called upon to investigate the apparent suicide of noted scientist Professor Carl Linsky. It's a multi-scenario display game with four basic gameplay modes: flying from one location to another in your hovercar; sideways-on shooting sequences; interrogation of suspects and searching locations.

After an atmospheric intro sequence, it becomes immediately apparent that investigating Linsky's death is going to be no picnic. The legwork involved in collating firm evidence is considerable, involving searching numerous buildings and interacting with many characters.



Fly-high P.I. Travel between vital locations in your hovercar.....

MEAN STREETS

Travel between locations invokes a crude vector graphic display with an overlaid control panel as you pilot your 'Lotus speeder'. Although manual control is possible, flight is best left to the autopilot and navigation computer - simply enter the co-ordinates of your destination and presto! While aboard, you may access your videophone through which you can talk to either Vanessa (your secretary) or your informant Lee Chin. Both are valuable sources of information.

Upon landing, you will be faced with one of three basic situations - the interrogation of a character, searching a room/building, or shooting it out with the opposition. Interrogation displays one of over 25 digitised characters, whom you may question, resorting to bribery or violence when necessary. This is the most graphically accomplished section of the game and what could have been laborious is perfectly implemented. Each digitised character has been well chosen, displaying highly individual personalities and offering any number of reactions when faced with a probing private dick.

Searching a room or building is achieved via a new 'tree search system' devised by Access which requires no typing, but presents a variable menu with options for all possible actions and appropriate items for the current location. Devious puzzles abound – many of the locations contain traps (some rather obvious), a few of which may end your days as a private eye. If you come across a battle-sequence, you have to shoot it out against large numbers of hoods, viewed from a side-on perspective.

Your inventory enables you to examine or sell anything you may have picked up. Selling items gets you cash for bribery and ammunition. You can also raise money by engaging in a spot of bounty hunting in the seedier parts of town.

THE VERDICT

Access must have spent a lot of time developing this system. The complexity of the plot and the interaction demonstrates the thought that has gone into the programming and the four basic sections, although very different, gel together very well.

The hovercar's frustrating – the distances you have to travel are often long and can take ages. In addition to this, yours appears to be the only vehicle in the whole of the San Francisco area. It would have been nice to have had some suspects to pursue, or hoods to evade.

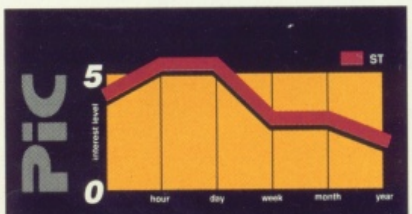
The gunfighting is undoubtedly the weakest section of the game – it quickly becomes repetitive and is at times far too difficult. The onslaught of hoods refuses to let up, even when reaching the end of the screen, and death can come frustratingly quickly.

Overall, however, *Mean Streets* has a very competent feel to it. Graphics for each section have been well designed (especially the interviewees) and Access claim that the sound represents a technical breakthrough because the program outputs high quality digitized effects without adding extra hardware.

The only real criticism I have is the considerable disk-access required (2 disks on the ST) which becomes wearing after a while. Perseverance, however, will reap its own rewards.

● **Alex Ruranski**

US GOLD/ACCESS put you in charge of a murder investigation on the West Coast...



This hybrid of arcade/stratgey game is highly reminiscent of classics such as the King's Quest and Police Quest series' and as such, its complexity excellently utilises the ST's facilities. Even sound (below par on many ST products) is used to the full - the development of the "realsound" technique ensures that ST users will not be disappointed and increasing involvement ensures that interest is sustained throughout..

ACE RATING **837**

G 7 IQ 7 A 6 FF 6

ATARI ST

Graphically excellent. Varied scenes and characters create a suitably sleazy 21st century atmosphere, coupled with sound that, whilst occasionally a little grating, demonstrates the ability of the ST well enough and befits the game well. Disk access, however, is a major problem. Despite reservations, worth checking out for fans of any genre.

RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£24.99	XXXXXXX
AMIGA	£24.99	XXXXXXX
IBM PC	£24.99	XXXXXXX

No other versions planned

Rick Dangerous II.

The Man in the Hat is Back..

IN A FLASH !

THE LIGHT CORRIDOR

"The echo of light on the walls of silence" – thus saith INFOGRAMES about their highly original scrolling ball game, tested here in an early pre-production version

The Galaxy is in darkness... and the latest offering from Infogrames gives you the gargantuan task of restoring all light, offering you in the process an originality that few titles can compete with. Imagine playing the computer equivalent of squash in a moving 3-D tunnel and you may be able to imagine *The Light Corridor*.

The game is played by shooting a sphere along a moving corridor, filled with obstructions in the form of walls (themselves either stationary or active) with the aim of reaching the end of the tunnel. Inevitably, the sphere will, when hitting an obstacle, return to the player, who is able to redirect it via control of a translucent square racket.

The game contains 2 series of 7 parts, each composed of four sections of tunnel. Each of the 7 parts corresponds to one of the colours of the rainbow. On completion of each fourth section of tunnel, the player will encounter a challenge. Success brings you a fragment of light to help illuminate the Galaxy.

Scattered throughout the tunnels are tokens - collect these, and various bonuses will be bestowed, ranging from an extra life (lost if you miss a rebounding sphere) to a double racket (reminiscent of those bonuses awarded in Arkanoid).

In addition to the basic game, Infogrames say that a screen editor will be included in the final version, allowing restructuring or creation of designer tunnels.

Initial impressions are that the originality of this game runs rather close to the merely quirky. However, the gameplay feels promising and the implementation is smooth and promising. The 3-D effect of the tunnel is especially convincing, with the author managing to show an impressive turn of speed.

ACE PREPLAY

- Smooth, fluid, convincing 3-D movement
- Highly original gameplay
- Excellent atmosphere enhanced by good use of colour

- Sound needs to be improved
- Speed may deter some - (it's pretty fast!)
- Could become ultimately repetitive

RELEASE DETAILS

AMIGA	£24.99	September
ST	£24.99	September
PC	£24.99	September

Sound at this stage is functional, if not exactly blistering, but this could yet be improved upon. Looking as though it has the potential to be an excellent end product, *Light Corridor* will be reviewed in full as soon as possible.

● Alex Ruranski

3D INT'L GOLF

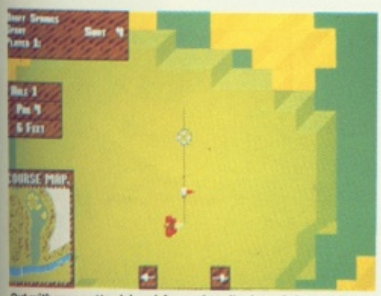
CRL indulge in 3D 'Fore!' play

Golf has been one of the last game genres to benefit from 16-bit technology. Recent months have seen both Gremlin's Ultimate Golf and the superlative FM Towns title from Japan. Now CRL are joining the club with another simulation, which we were able to 'preplay' at an early stage of development.

Extensive options cover everything from control configuration, number of players (1 to 4) and number of holes played, to the actual state of play (pro, amateur, novice and choice of match, stroke or driving range). Other facilities such as loading or saving entire games (or just specific information) and viewing previous records are also available.

The graphics are pretty impressive too, viewed from the familiar Leaderboard perspective (i.e. just behind the player) and boast similarly smooth animation. Added to this, a novel and excellently implemented 3-D map is displayed both before a hole is played, and during the action replay following a shot.

FORE! Although the main action screen, a huge range of options are accessable from here to assist your state of play.



Out with your putter (ahem) for a plan display of the green, showing every undulation between you and that elusive hole.

Once you're on the green, putting is viewed from above with the green displayed as a bas-relief plan to show undulations. Control is simple, and involves a pointer to change shot direction, with repeated mouse-clicks to influence shot strength and slice.

As the game stands at the moment, (lacking in any hindering elements such as wind and with only one of the four possible courses installed) it is far from complete and is to be witheld for a couple of months yet. From what we have played however, "very impressive" fits the bill.

● Alex Ruranski

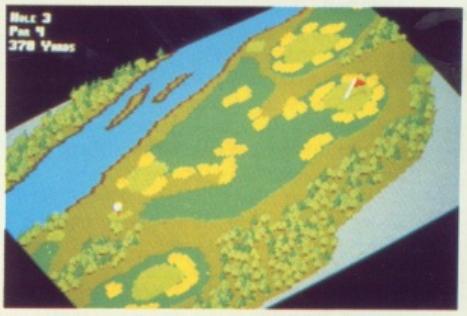
ACE PREPLAY

- Excellent presentation with multiple options.
- Innovative 3-D display.
- Choice of four completely different courses all on one disk!

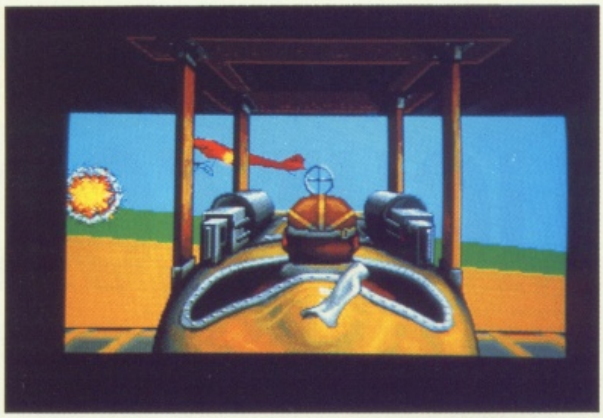
- The 3-D display is compulsory both before and after shots, and can become repetitive.
- Although 3-D Golf comes a fair while after Leaderboard, there's nothing really new other than some aspects of presentation.

RELEASE DETAILS

AMIGA	£24.99	October 1990
ST	£24.99	December 1990
PC	£24.99	1991



A superbly implemented 3-D view of each hole is displayed before a shot, while after, an action replay retraces your play in all its.... er glory.



Dagga, dagga, dagga! Take that sausage sucker! (And other xenophobic phrases.)

Biggles flies undone with Mirrorsoft/ Cinemaware's new WW1 flight game

WINGS

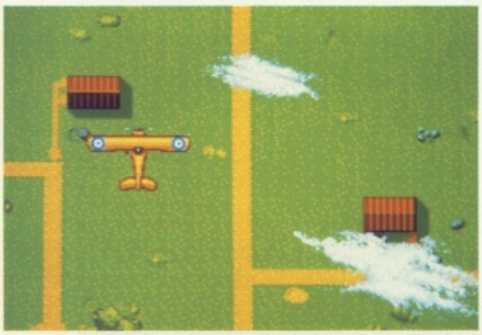
At last! With so many flight simulators on the market it's amazing that no-one has thought to write one about flying a First World War 'kite'. And now, all of a sudden, comes news of not one but three games based in this setting – *Knights of the Sky* from sim experts Microprose, *Fokker* by Glyn Williams (writer of Warhead) and, first out of the hangar by quite a few months, *Wings* from Cinemaware.

Wings starts with Flight School and presents you with an options screen where you can generate your own pilot character and let him earn his wings (making him eligible to join a frontline squadron). There is a pregenerated pilot (Waldo P. Barnstormer – where do they get these names from?) ready and itching to fly if you're impatient.

Pilots are characterised by four skills: Flying Ability, Shooting Ability, Mechanical Aptitude and Stamina. Flying Ability affects your plane's speed and manoeuvrability. The higher your Shooting Ability the fewer hits you need to down the enemy. Mechanical Aptitude affects how well you hold your 'plane together when hit. Stamina determines how likely you are to survive crashes (quite important this!).

New pilots have 40 points to spread between the four skills. During the game you can return to this screen to see how your successful missions are affecting your skills, how many German planes you've downed and review any medals you may have won!

Earning your wings involves a practice mission (mission types are described later). If you're successful then you can join a flight squadron as a 2nd Lieutenant. If not then it's back to school until you are!



Bomb the b*st*rds! You've missed one target, now try and save face by hitting the other.

ACTION!

Once you've got your wings, you're briefed by your commanding officer and put in charge of updating the company journal. This acts as your diary of the war and appears between each mission, providing interesting, amusing and sometimes important information on the state of the squadron and the Allies' success in the War.

Missions come in three types. Aerial Combat are the most common and the most dangerous, involving a variety of tasks: escorting reconnaissance 'planes, protecting the base from enemy bombers, or straight engagement of German Fokkers. The action is depicted in solid vector 3D with an unusual cockpit view – just behind your head! As you roll, dive and turn, your head turns to follow enemy aircraft, acting as a primitive sort of radar.

The air is chock full of enemy and friendly craft, and you have to be careful to avoid mid-air collisions or shooting comrades. Injury or collision may give you, depending on your luck, the chance to ditch the plane and just lose face, rather than your life. The mission is over when all the enemy are downed or you are!

The other two mission types, Strafing and Bombing are more arcade-like than the Aerial Combat Missions. Both are preceded by a briefing where you are informed of primary targets that must be destroyed, although there are lots of secondary enemy targets to hit. You can't be killed, but get shot down or miss your primary targets and you've failed the mission.

Strafing Missions are viewed from a three-quarters angle, with a road scrolling along at a fixed rate below your plane. Bombing Missions are viewed from overhead with the countryside slowly scrolling vertically down below your plane. Careful timing is needed to estimate the delay between bomb release and hitting the ground and the bomb supply is very limited.

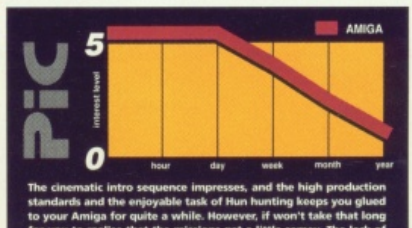
If you fail at five consecutive missions you get thrown out of the squadron. Behaviour unbecoming to an officer, such as shooting down your own 'planes or Red Cross property, can get you out as well. Should this happen, or your pilot gets killed, you can generate a new one who takes up the company journal where the last one left off. Thus, in a sense, you can't strictly win or lose in *Wings*, although ideally you should survive until VE Day.

Wings is a slight departure from the usual Cinemaware style in that there is no 'plot' as such, like in *Rocket Ranger* or *It Came from the Desert*. Events occur and you take part in them, but the end goal can seem a little nebulous at times. However the presentation, graphics, music, and effects are consistently excellent and the period atmosphere generated is marvellous.

The main problem is that *Wings* is trying to be all things to all people. The Aerial Combat Missions are too unrealistic to satisfy flight sim fans – you can't alter flying speed, for example, and there is no taking off or landing – and the Bombing and Strafing Missions are too simplistic for arcade freaks. However, the missions get pretty tough, especially later on in the War.

For all its shortcomings, *Wings* is fun to play and fairly varied. If you want a flying game (and not a flight sim) where you can see the white of the enemies' eyes, then *Wings* is for you.

● David Upchurch



The cinematic intro sequence impresses, and the high production standards and the enjoyable task of Hun hunting keeps you glued to your Amiga for quite a while. However, if won't take that long for you to realise that the missions get a little samey. The lack of real depth to the gameplay and of a definite aim dilutes the incentive to keep playing, but while it lasts it's great fun and a worthy purchase.

ACE RATING **825**

G	IQ	A	FF
9	5	9	8

AMIGA

We reviewed the final version, with full documentation but no packaging. Presention is very slick and graphics, whether still or moving, are excellent. 3D vectors are reasonably fast and detailed but nothing special. Sound effects are good the music is excellent. Not an in-depth WW1 flight sim but an enjoyable, atmospheric, WW1 interactive story.

RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£24.99	EARLY '91
AMIGA	£29.99	OUT NOW
IBM PC	£29.99	XMAS '90

No other versions planned

The gas lorry explodes in flames - it's nobody's fuel now!

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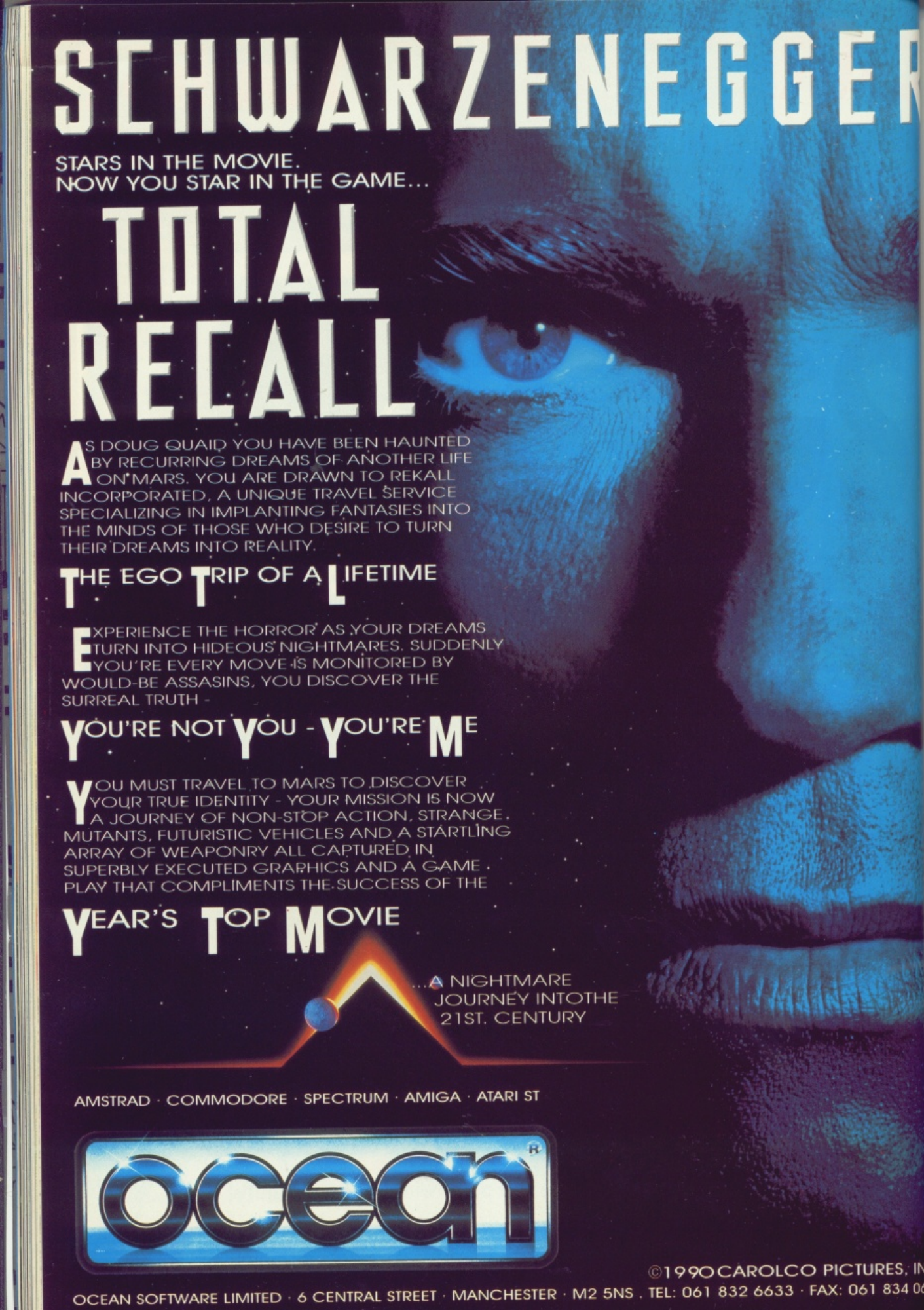
SCHWARZENEGGER
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EXPERIENCE THE HORROR AS YOUR DREAMS TURN INTO HIDEOUS NIGHTMARES. SUDDENLY YOU'RE EVERY MOVE IS MONITORED BY WOULD-BE ASSASINS, YOU DISCOVER THE SURREAL TRUTH -
YOU'RE NOT YOU - YOU'RE ME
YOU MUST TRAVEL TO MARS TO DISCOVER YOUR TRUE IDENTITY - YOUR MISSION IS NOW A JOURNEY OF NON-STOP ACTION, STRANGE MUTANTS, FUTURISTIC VEHICLES AND A STARTLING ARRAY OF WEAPONRY ALL CAPTURED IN SUPERBLY EXECUTED GRAPHICS AND A GAME PLAY THAT COMPLIMENTS THE SUCCESS OF THE
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This murderous hulk is about to dissolve in a screenfull of fireballs. Good riddance, and another level completed...

NEVRYON

Just what can the fastest home micro deliver when it comes to alien destruction? The 4th Dimension's latest release has the answer...

Stunning graphics and multi-channel stereo soundtrack ensure that *Nevryon* will be a big hit with Archimedes owners.

The action takes place just after the First Great Space War of 2100, when reserves of Titanium, vital for ship construction, began to dwindle throughout the Universe. Nevryon is a small planet, colonized by humans, which has large reserves of Titanium ore buried beneath the surface. Unfortunately, a rather nasty breed of alien has overthrown the humans to obtain this valuable material. Naturally, you seize upon this intolerable provocation as the perfect excuse to kill everything that moves.

The battle plan consists of four vital missions, each with two hectic levels of alien blasting. The raw processing power of the Archimedes is fully exploited to provide a superb, flicker-free scrolling backdrop which includes large sprites, 256 colours and six levels of parallax scrolling. As any fule kno, but may not have seen on the Archie before, parallax scrolling adds to the realism by scrolling the surroundings at differing speeds, providing an enhanced feeling of depth.

Hoards of aliens swarm about as the scenery scrolls horizontally past your small ship. Initially armed only with a rather feeble laser cannon, you can progressively customize your ship by collecting bonus pods which are released as you destroy more enemy forces. These add extra shields, fire-power or secondary weapons to your ship. The more annihilation you cause, the more pods are released. A good pilot can soon collect a huge array of extra armaments, some of which are vital for survival at higher levels.

Two useful power-ups are a small gun droid which floats alongside your ship, firing simultaneously with your main laser. This effectively doubles fire power and is highly recommended. A remote shield can also be collected which floats just above or below your ship. Acting as an armoured battering ram it can protect the vulnerable sides of your ship from pieces of wreckage and side attacks.

Six levels of parallax help the scenery fly past

Your first mission is to fly into the alien spacecraft and includes rockets spurting flames at you, force fields and robot ships in addition to formations of alien ships. Many obstacles are two-fold in that to fly through a force field you must first destroy the force generators at the base, to deplete it's energy supply.

Each level is concluded by defeating an increasingly ferocious alien beast. Along with a suitably atmospheric stereo soundtrack for each mission the graphics seem to improve as you progress into the game. Mission two, for example, is a flight through a particularly nasty asteroid belt. Asteroids drift across the screen from all directions, whilst swarms of alien bats weave in and out of them. The occasional falling stalactite will ensure that you don't doze off....

By the time you reach the third mission (the planet surface), however, the graphics are quite spectacular. Mountains, bushes, trees and clouds all form a smooth scrolling backdrop to some of the fastest action yet seen on the Archimedes. Coupled with background music, explosions and over sixty on screen sprites excitement is guaranteed all the way.

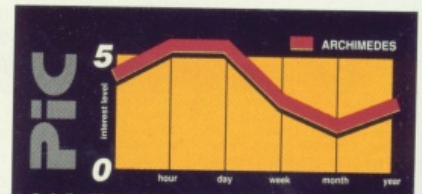
In the forth and final mission you actually come face to face (or rather claw) with the 'mother beast'. Large claws grab up and down which will drain your ships energy banks almost instantaneously, requiring agile key movements.

The only minor drawback to the game is that sometimes there are literally so many sprites and explosions on screen at once, it can be quite hard to see where you're going, resulting in loss of energy colliding with cavern walls and buildings.

Two disks means swapping when you die on higher levels - even if starting on the same level again. This only really becomes annoying if you die fequently but does prevent you from quickly restarting from later levels.

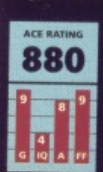
Nevryon is the strongest pureblooded shoot-em-up currently available and should encourage all Archimedes owners toreach for their joysticks. The 4th Dimension look set for another classic.

● Paul Vigay



Basically a blast everything that moves game. Fast reflexes and a good amount of keyboard battering are what's required here, rather than exercising the grey matter. Initial reactions of "Wow, lets have a go", won't last for months into the future though, but trigger happy games players will have an enjoyable, quality game to go back to when wanting something to zap.

ACE RATING **880**



ACORN ARCHIMEDES

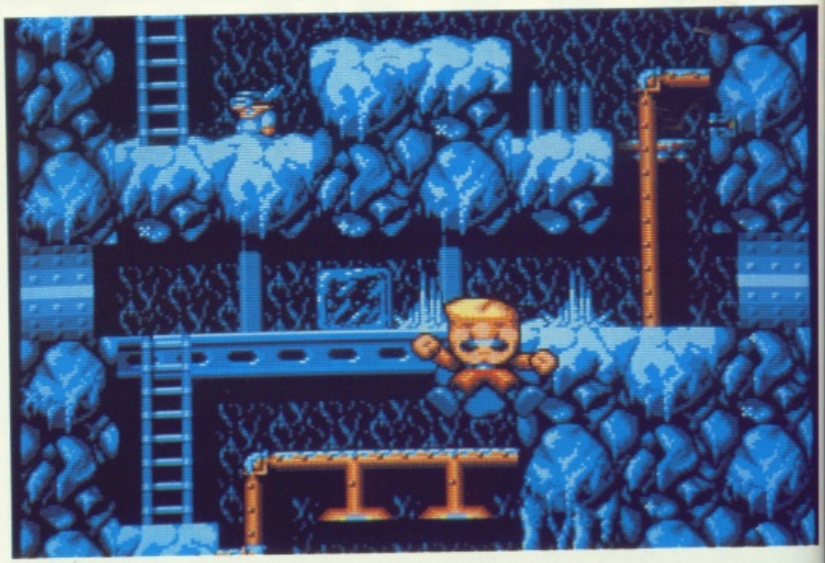
Totally lacking in originality, the implementation of *Nevryon* makes good use of the Archies features and shows that the machine is perfectly capable, in the right hands, of delivering mainstream computer entertainment. Unfortunately, it's going to need more than shoot-em-ups to open up a larger market for this machine, however good they may be.

RELEASE DETAILS

ARCHI 310/400	£19.95	OUT NOW
BBC A 3000	£19.95	OUT NOW

No other versions planned

Running, jumping mayhem from MICROSTYLE as Rick mounts the platforms for another curtain call...



Rick meets a chilly end in Freezia.

RICK DANGEROUS II

The original *Rick Dangerous* was something of a revival for the somewhat dated platform genre, due to its devious puzzles and superb presentation. Now, some 11 months later, Rick dons leotard, cape and boots and takes to the skies in a bid to save mankind from invading alien forces lead by his arch enemy, the Fat Man!

The game begins by offering the player a choice of four of the five available levels through which you must run, crawl, jump, shoot and bomb your way.

The overall feel of *RDII*, as with *RD1*, is superb. Each level follows a very different theme and the game boasts a wide variety of excellent graphics, all of which have been designed with tongue very firmly in cheek. The cartoon sequences preceding play are both humorous and well implemented and give the player the impression that although not breaking through any boundaries, Core have gone out of their way to produce a game with genuine style.

Muddy colours – but then you're in the Mud Mines, so it's hardly surprising

Obviously, no hero can be expected to do his job properly if he is unarmed. To this end, Rick is equipped with a laser gun and a number of bombs although, as with the prequel, both are in limited supply and must be used with caution for best effect. Dotted around however, are numerous bonuses, some of which replenish your dimished stocks. In addition to these more physical defences, you are presented (in true platform style) with 6 lives with which to further your cause.

Playing the game, you will immediately realise that it is not only arcade reflexes that are required. Whilst the game is indeed fast and furious, attempting to speed through will inevitably lead you to blunder into a devious trap, of which there are many. Certain obstacles are seemingly insurmountable and require specific actions to be performed before they can be overcome.

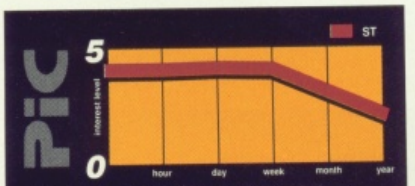
This by no means infers, however, that *RDII* is lacking in any arcade elements. The speed at which some of the marauding nasties come at you push all hopes of a strategic withdrawal firmly to the back of your mind, at which point panic may easily set in as the limited defences you are allowed disappear in a frenzy of blasting.

Graphically, *Rick Dangerous II* is superb. You cannot fail to laugh at the expressions of the characters as they maraud haphazardly into your line of fire, only to taste exactly what it is that heros are made of! Robots, woodsmen, jut-jawed rock men, bespectacled moles and searing lasers all display an individuality that delights the eye. This is in itself an incentive to play on into the game, just to see what Rick will die from next!

Rick himself is a typical hero - with white teeth and a gleam in his eye - and he struts about with all the confidence of someone who knows a good product when he sees it. Colour is also used to full effect and both are complemented by slick and varied animation.

As far as sound is concerned, Core have opted to go for the appropriate, rather than the technical approach. Certainly there is nothing that will have you reeling in awe at the new found sonic capabilities of the ST, but each sound that there is has been well thought out and fits perfectly. Front-end and level-start tunes are definitely of the cartoon persuasion and round off what is, although dated in concept, a product that proves the continuing feasability of one of the original game genres. There's just one problem: when you've cracked it (and you will – it's not that difficult) you're unlikely to want to return to it. Time then, perhaps, for *RDIII*...

● Alex Ruranski



Initial interest will be held by the attractive cartoon-quality graphics and overall slick presentation. Once into the game, the relative ease with which it may be picked up maintains that interest and the level of frustration ensures that players will be determined to complete it. Once achieved however, incentive to return to the game will wane.

ACE RATING **870**

ATARI ST

Well designed, coloured and implemented graphics certainly do no harm to the credibility of the ST, and prove that ground-breaking techniques do not necessarily always have the edge. Sound perfectly complements gameplay, whilst promising nothing that it cannot deliver.

RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£24.99	TBA
AMIGA	£24.99	TBA
IBM PC	£24.99	TBA
CPC	£9.99cs • £14.99dk	TBA
SPECTRUM	£9.99cs • £14.99dk	TBA
C64/128	£9.99cs • £14.99dk	TBA

No other versions planned

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Race against the computer or friends.

Pop in the shop to enhance or repair your machine.

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Screen Shots from the Amiga version

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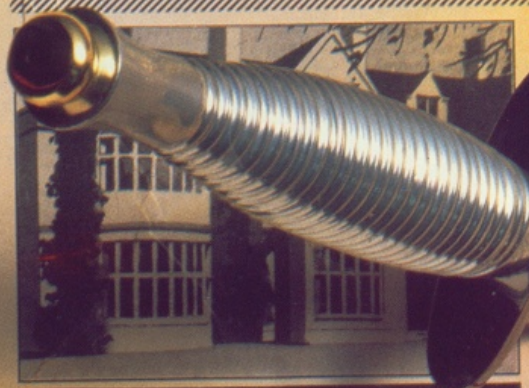
19TH JUNE 1941



'GHASTLEY MANOR' THE LOCATION OF HORRIFYING HOMICIDE

Police have today been informed of the murder of Mr Charles Innes, aged 46, an attorney from Barrington, W. Sussex.
It is believed Mr Innes was stabbed to death at the home of Mrs Audrey Broom-Hall, actress & widower of the famous film ...cer Sebastian Broom-Hall; who was holding a cocktail party for the rich & famous.
As one of the guests Lord Alfred Andrews has taken it upon himself to keep order at Ghastley Manor, he is ques...ing Mr Larry Glover, t... ...rominent political fi... g... ...& Dr Victor Jones: N... ...Scotland Yard have y... ...reach the scene of the c..., but they are esti... ...d to arrive at approx. 1... – 2 hours after the cr... was discovered.

THE SCENE OF THE HORRENDOUS CRIME!

DISTINGUISHED PEER HAS 2 HOURS TO FIND THE KILLER...!

Lord Alfred Andrews has only 2 hours to try and solve the murder of Mr Charles Innes who was attending a cocktail party at 'Ghastley Manor'.
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Investigations continue.

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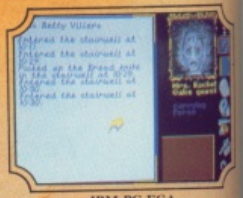
Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computer's specifications.

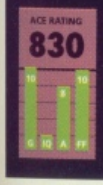


IBM PC EGA

Amiga

GAMEBOY $39.95ct Out Now

Despite the over-hyped nature of the Turtles, this Konami game is one of the most playable Gameboy titles on the market. Turtle fans will not be disappointed, their idols have been perfectly captured in silicon. Gameboy *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* is a handheld interactive cartoon. The game is simple but immense fun to play. Even when you've completed the game you'll still go back for an occasional play.. Go kick some shell.



Japanese software developers are starting to produce unbelievably good audio-visuals on the Gameboy. *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* has been crafted by the best in the biz. Everything from the cartoon series is here. Graphics are detailed and accurate, with well animated 'lifelike' sprites and smooth parallax-scrolling backdrops. Catchy turtle tunes blast out in stereo.

TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

KONAMI gets totally turtled on the Gameboy

"Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, heroes in a half-shell, Turtle Power! They're the world's most fearsome fighting team. They're heroes in a half-shell and they're green. When the evil Shredder attacks, these turtle boys don't cut a no slack. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles,Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, heroes in a half-shell, Turtle Power!"

Sculpt this out. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles are now on Nintendo's mutant mono Gameboy. Ace reporter April O' Neil has kidnapped by the evil Shredder and his Foot Clan cronies. Taking the role of the four half-shell heroes you must rescue April. *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* is a five level parallax-scrolling martial arts arcade adventure. Every level contains three separate stages with a tough end-of-level Foot Clan boss-sprite like Be Bop or Rock Steady. You even go one on one with the Shred head himself.

Each turtle is armed with their own fave weapon and an unlimited supply of Shuriken throwing stars. Leonardo (sword) leads, Donatello (bo stick) does machines, Raphael (sais) is cool but crude, Michaelangelo (nunchuks) is a party dude. Teenage Turtles have all the moves. Your character can turn, jump, kick, crouch, throw ninja stars and strike forward with your sword, bo stick, sais or nunchuks. The longer you hold down on the jump button, the higher you go. You can also change direction in mid-air.

Get shreddy with the best in turtle power!

The game is played out in big city locations like down town slums, sewers, freeways, piranha-infested rivers and the huge underground Technodrome fortress.

Yo, weird looking dudes. Your Foot Clan enemies are a mixed-up band of punks, including Foot Soldiers, Mouser (a mechanical dodo bird with two legs and no wings), Road-Kill Rodney (mono-cycled droid with electric whip), Tubular Transport (a flying bee-like bread box), Be Bop (mutant boar), Rock Steady (mutant rhino) and Baxter Stockman (part fly, part mad inventor). Saved by the shell. You also have to avoid dangerous and deadly obstacles such as blocks that drop on your head, rolling boulders, piranhas, bats and bolts of electricity.

You start out with eight hit points – every time your turtle is hit you lose a point. Your turtle is captured when the points reach zero. It's then up to the next turtle to save the day. Power-up on the pizza. You gain extra life points by eating pizza slices or pies.

It's radical. *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* has three bonus games. You activate these secret stages by walking into certain parts of the scenery. For instance, in bonus game three you use a cross-hair sight to shoot spheres that zoom around the screen. If you hit six spheres you are given a full complement of hit points.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles is like mondo beyondo. Don't deny your destiny. Make turtle tracks to your local dealer. Cowabunga.

● Rik Haynes

LICENSED TO THRILL

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Populous has been an enormous success on home computers. But how does a game like this transfer to console?

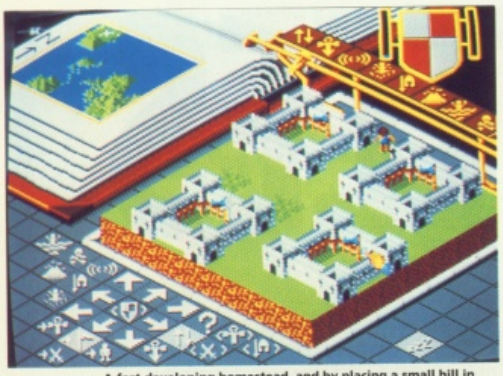
The scenario is simply divine, dahling. There are a huge number of populated worlds in the universe, most of which live in perfect peace and harmony. However, 500 of the better known planets have been invaded by Evil, causing wars, corruption and hideous taxes on beer and cigarettes. On each world you have a small gathering of devout followers and, through the power of faith, you have to build your church, eventually creating a huge army and waging a holy crusade against the growing forces of Evil.

This grand scenario translates remarkably well onto your monitor. In the top-left corner is a large scale map showing the number of buildings and people of each side. This is used, basically, for judging army sizes and also for picking prime spots to plant volcanoes and swamps in enemy territory to do maximum damage. The top right corner shows two bars, showing the current energy levels of both good and evil gods.

The leader of your followers, as denoted by the ankh, otherwise known as the Papal Magnet. To make him stronger, you can order your followers to meet and join with him.

EA plays God, Megadrive style.

POPULOUS



A fast developing homestead, and by placing a small hill in the centre, you can uproot a small number, who will move and develop elsewhere, spreading the good word.

Immediately below the energy bars is a sliding scale, measured not in numbers, but in abilities. As your power grows the slider moves higher up the scale, allowing you to do more. When the pointer reaches the top, you can call armageddon, whereby every man, woman and child race to the centre of the map to partake in a huge battle to decide once and for all whether peace or chaos will reign.

The centre of the screen is taken up with an isometric close-up view of a small part of the map. This is where all the work is done. By scrolling around the map, either through the scroll arrows at the bottom left of the screen, or by holding down button B and using the joypad, you can select areas of land to flatten and choose where to place your fabulous disasters, as well as just surveying the land.

Finally the bottom left of the screen contains all the system icons. These control map scrolling and selection of all those delightful disasters that prompt comments along the lines of "What sort of a god would let that happen?". The icons also control your subject orders, where you can command your people to build, become knights or just go to battle.

DIVINE POLICY

At the start of each world, or level, you are presented with a pretty sparse map. At the top are some small islands and your tiny following, and at the bottom are some more islands and those too, too awful Evil worshippers. Between is a vast expanse of water. The key is to develop the land while growing your army, eventually connecting the two land areas for The Final Battle.

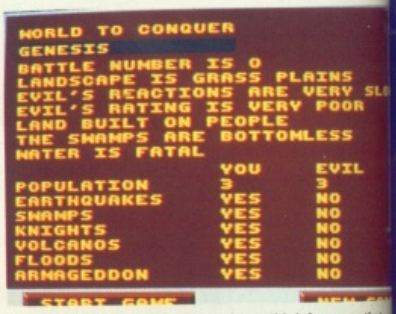
The easiest way to make your armies grow is to flatten the land, encouraging them to build large houses. Building size is governed by the flatness of the terrain – if the land is very irregular, only small huts will be built, whereas flatlands soon sprout castles. Later, raising land close - by decreases the size of the house and forces one or two inhabitants out to build elsewhere.

As you continue encouraging your minions to go forth and multiply, you'll find your tiny island expanding to encompass new towns and colonies. Evil, of course, is up to the same tricks and when the two meet all hell breaks loose as warriors cross into enemy territory, fighting and destroying buildings as they go.

Of course, being a deity, there is a fair bit you can do to slow the advance of Evil. As your following grows, so does your power and before long you have a whole range of natural disasters and catastrophes to toy with. Earthquakes and floods, for example, wreak delightful havoc amongst the opposition. A lot of the time you'll find the computer trying to emulate your strategy – for example if you are flattening a lot of land the computer will begin to do the same and there's nothing funnier than flooding his lowlands and wiping out all his buildings and followers.

Populous is not an easy game, not by a long shot. It will take some time before you can fully understand the game-world and start to piece together strategies. Believe me, however, when I say that it's worth every effort. Three cheers for one of the most involving things since live role playing.

● Tony Dillon



At the start of each level, you are shown this infro screen that gives you a summarised rundown of what you're up against

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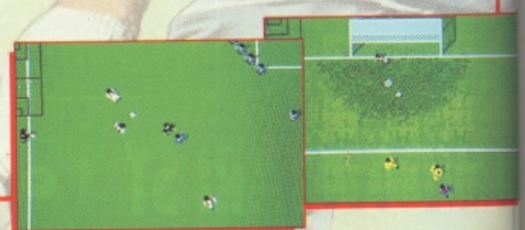

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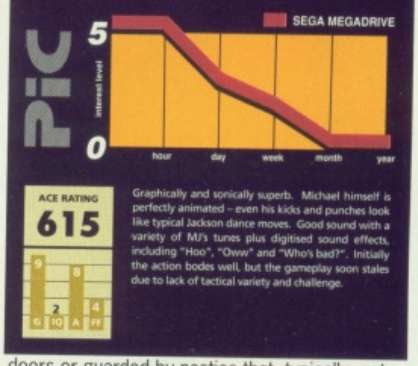

ACE RATING 615

Graphically and sonically superb. Michael himself is perfectly animated – even his kicks and punches look like typical Jackson dance moves. Good sound with a variety of MJ's tunes plus digitised sound effects, including "Hoo", "Oww" and "Who's bad?". Initially the action bodes well, but the gameplay soon stales due to lack of tactical variety and challenge.

Michael can be as bad as he likes in real life, but his game, alas, can only aspire to the second-rate. The game features you as MJ in 'Smooth Criminal' attire, fighting (yes, fighting!) your way through five scenes from the movie *Moonwalker*. You start in a bar, work through some haunted woods and heavily armed enemy fortresses and end up in a 3D space battle with 'Mr Big'. Each section is distinguished only by different back-drops, the action and challenge remain the same – and somewhat limited at that.

Michael laumches his exploding hat at one of the tougher enemy. After all, whose got time for fun and games when there's children to be saved?

Michael faces an eight-way scrolling world with nothing more than a dancer's agility (neatly done – he pirouettes and jives during combat) and a quota of magic (energy to you and me). He also has a hat that acts as a smart bomb. The opposition, on the other hand, stick to tried and tested technology and emerge to blast away with guns whenever possible. You can either use the hat (and a good deal of energy in the process) to get rid of them, kick them (in true dancer style) or you can dodge their fire by jumping. The strength of your attack is marked by your magic energy meter at the bottom of the screen. The more hits MJ takes, the more the magic decreases, until it reaches rock bottom and Mike loses a life.

The reason Michael has left the sanctity of his air bubble in the first place is that Mr Big has kidnapped almost all of our hero's friends – approximately ten dozen identical little girls. The boys, it seems, don't get a look in.

On each level, the children are hidden behind doors or guarded by nasties that, typically, get tougher as the game goes on. Collect all the children on the current level and you progress to the end-of-level challenge, a la *Shinobi*, which can be anything from a single toughie to a whole army of meatballs. And if you're worried about the blood and guts, it should be stressed that although Michael can punch and kick any crooks he meets into obliteration, he doesn't actually hurt them. We don't want to promote violence, do we, Bubbles?

Rescue the kids, beat Mr Big and go 'Hoo' a lot. Are you bad enough? The game certainly is...

● Tony Dillon

BUDOKAN

ELECTRONIC ARTS with a multitude of martial arts

The Budokan is to martial arts experts what Hammersmith Odeon is to budding rock bands. Each year the ultimate fighting tournament takes place and warriors from all over come to compete with all manner of weapons. Formerly an above-average streetfighter, you have been taken from your downtown home to a fully equipped dojo, where you will train in four of the most popular arts (karate, kendo, bo and nunchaku). You must then head off to the Budokan to win fame, fortune and the title 'The Most Dangerous Dude in the World'.

At the beginning you find yourself standing in the middle of the dojo courtyard. Surrounding you are the four huts that house the classes and a practise mat where you can spar against opponents with different weapons, to help you create winning techniques when faced with better armed opponents.

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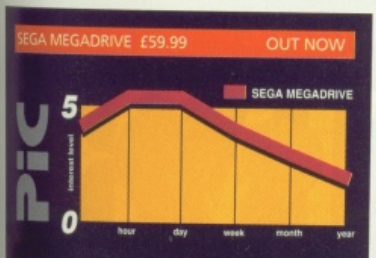
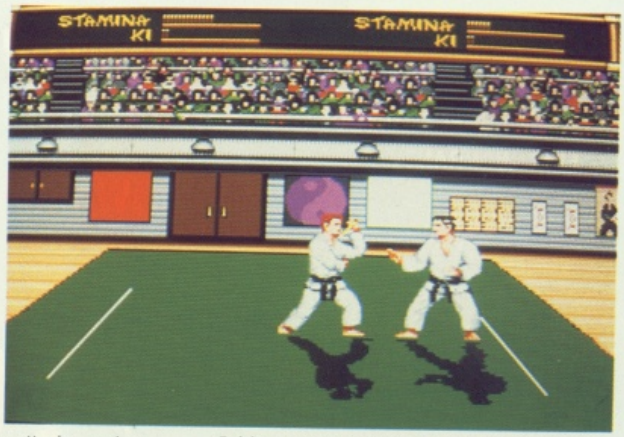


ACE RATING 770

Initially very difficult to master due to the amount of complicated moves. Interest soon surges, however, as you master the controls. Doesn't push the Megadrive to its limits. The graphics, though well designed, aren't particularly smoothly animated, but when coupled with violent sound effects, the overall effect is quite convincing.



Training over, now you face the first of the twelve fighters of the Budokan. You're facing him with Karate, the fastest art, but also one of the hardest to master.

Learning the different arts takes a lot more time than most other martial sims, simply because there are far more moves than before. Rather than just use the straight eight-way controls, each style also uses combinations to create new and deadlier attacks, such as pushing up-right diagonal on the pad, then pressing a button and pulling hard left makes your on-screen karate expert perform a jumping spin kick, if you get the timing right.

At the Budokan, when you feel you are ready to face it, you have to face a dozen different opponents, using all manner of styles and weapons, many of which you won't have seen before, such as Tonfun. To say that the opponents are tough is an understatement and a half. Only through hours of practise are you ever going to have a hope of winning the tournament. Good Luck.

● Tony Dillon

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SUPER MONACO GRAND PRIX

Take a high powered spin with SEGA

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Simple controls and instant appeal make this a game you can dive straight into. However, one race is all you need to see that this is nothing special. The graphics are well translated from the original, though the huge roadside objects are conspicuous in their absence. Overlaid text and information windows in the main playing area clutter the display. Sound is below par for a Megadrive, with a few sparse FX and some fuzzy sampled speech.

Just to jog the memories of those that need it, *Super Monaco Grand Prix* was the first coin-op motor racing game to offer a 'true' driving experience. Taking corners was no longer a case of leisurely turning the wheel to the required degree. It took real physical force to hold the wheels through the curves, as the steering wheel fought to oversteer. The sad fact is that the impressive cabinet and controls only served to mask what was generally regarded as a pretty average race game.

In *SMGP*, you get two race games for the price of one. The first and most challenging is the grand prix itself. Set on a single track, the aim is to progress through a series of heats, each consisting of three laps against all sorts of conditions, such as rain and fog. Placed around the track are three checkpoints that, when passed, give you information on lap times and positions. One interesting twist is that to progress, you have to have a higher position than a set limit that gradually decreases. Fall below this, and you're out of the game.

The other game is a straight world championship, the style of which - even the tracks - is more than familiar. Race against a dozen computer cars around ten of the world's most famous tracks, such as Brand's Hatch and Hockenheim. Crash, or get too low a placing, and you're out of the game.

As well as the two games, you are given a choice of three cars to race, ranging from automatic transmission, for novice drivers, to a seven-gear monster – great for speed, but not so easy on the bends.

It's a sad fact, but *GP* has absolutely nothing new to offer whatsoever. OK, the race genre is a proven one, but there isn't a single gameplay element here that you won't find duplicated several times already in any half-decent games collection. An uninspired conversion of the coin-op that will cost you over fifty pounds, not just 50p.

● Tony Dillon

Tearing into the first bend at just under 260 M.P.H., a cursory glance over the information overlays tells you you're driving an automatic, your in 7th place and if you fall behind the 15th place driver, you're out of the game.

DR MARIO

NINTENDO continues the Bros saga

The Mario Brothers have matured a bit since the good old days, where they could find nothing better to do than run around smashing their brains out on any large piece of masonry they could find. In the lapse between their famed head banging sessions and now, they have been working overtime at evening classes and become polished scientists, working in one of the most high-tech labs in the world. But life in a white coat is not all fun and games, as demonstrated in this, a pretty poor follow up to one of the most playable games ever devised

Bugs have invaded the labs, and - no surprises - it's down to you to destroy them by bombarding them with specific pills.

Describing how the game works is best done by taking *Tetris*, adding Connect 4 and throwing in Dominoes. Each level begins with a predominantly empty play area with the exception of a small smattering of bugs scattered about. Just like Tetris, pills fall slowly from the top of the screen one at a time, can be rotated and finally dropped into position. Unlike *Tetris*, the pills only come in one size. They are split into two halves, each being one of the three shades in the game (White, grey and black). Pills can be cleared by lining up four of one shade, but you don't get any points for this. The aim is to create a line of four of one colour, incorporating a bug in place of a pill. When you've wiped out all the bugs on one level, you move on to the next, with more bugs and the pills falling slightly faster.

It's a simple game idea, and not one that works particularly well, I hasten to add. What you have here is Nintendo's favourite game characters playing Nintendo's favourite game, and sadly it just doesn't come close to either.

● Tony Dillon

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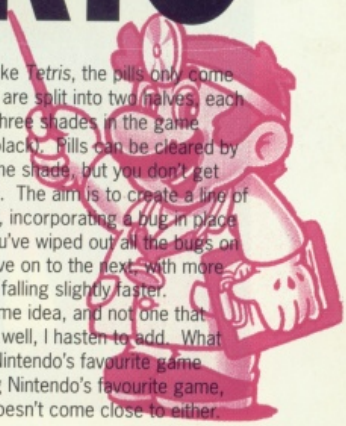
To begin with, the familiar gameplay and the fresh challenge spur you on, but the appeal diminishes rapidly due to repetitive play. Visually uninspiring even for a Gameboy title, with simplistic graphics and one backdrop. As a game, it reeks of plagiarism, which wouldn't be so bad if only it was better than the original games it's modelled on. As it stands, it falls rather more than flat.



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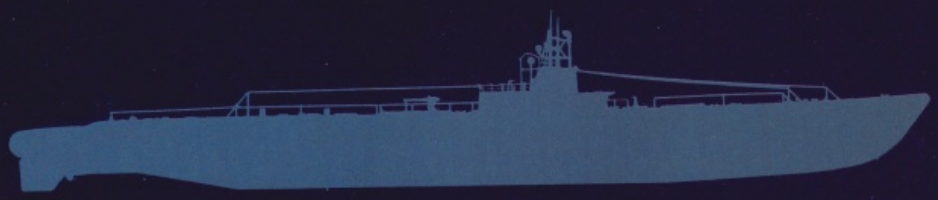

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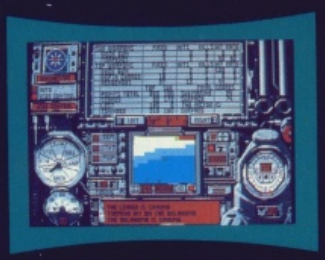

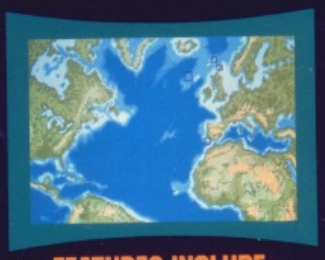

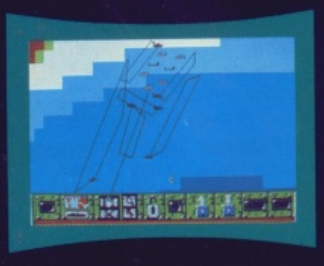

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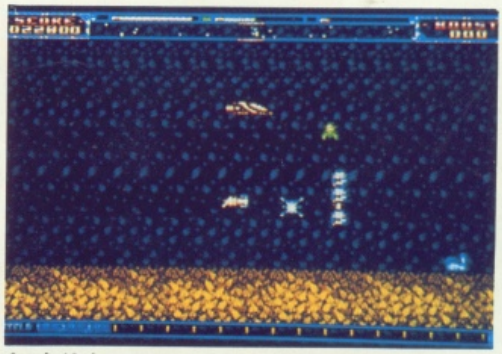
Recent conversions for Amiga, PC, and ST in the last of our current Updates series. See the box for details of next month's column

AMIGA



Anarchy / Amiga

ANARCHY
Psyclapse £19.99; Atari ST version reviewed Issue 36; ACE rating 625

Insofar as imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, Anarchy would appear to be full of praise for the age-old and much cloned Williams classic, defender and whilst clones are not necessarily a bad thing, this depends very much on the implementation. Psyclapse's own interpretation of this mindless blast works quite well. The original Defender relied heavily on speed to provide frenetic blasting action and although Anarchy contains both this, and all the graphic and sonic advancement expected of a 16-bit machine, you may wonder if another version is really needed. The answer is... perhaps. As it stands, Anarchy has managed to retain all the ingredients of the original (pods to protect, numerous aliens to slaughter and the deep-space level signalled by the loss of all the pods) but whilst having been aesthetically embellished, (4 level parallax, 48 colours, sampled sound) may appeal to blast-fans only. Recommended to try before purchase.

AMIGA RATING: 650

Time Machine/ ST

ATARI ST

TIME MACHINE
Activision £24.99; Amiga version reviewed Issue 37; ACE rating 800

Time travel... Oh to be hurled through the space-time continuum in millions of tiny particles... What joy!
Vivid Image's puzzler, featuring the manipulation of time by a certain Professor Potts, has made it to the ST in all its glory. Not only have the graphics retained their crisp, cartoon quality, but the sound also appears to have lost little in the transition. Inevitably, the puzzles are identical, making Time Machine on the ST the addictive arcade puzzler it is on the Amiga. (Yay Vivid Image!)

AMIGA RATING: 800

IBM PC

WELLTRIS
Infogrames £24.99; Amiga version reviewed Issue 36; ACE rating 901

Reviewed in the September issue on the Amiga, this "follow up" to the classic Tetris has made it across to the PC in all its glory. Gameplay is identical and all the ususal PC options (CGA/EGA and additional soundboards) are catered for. As with the Amiga version, Welltris does not exactly stretch the machine to its limits, but similarly to Tetris, its addictivity relies on its simplicity. An essential puzzler for PC owners.

AMIGA RATING: 911

Welltris / PC

UPDATES REVIVAL!

Our Updates section is being completely relaunched next month to give you the best possible coverage of new conversions. We regret that as a result the section this month has had to be reduced to a single page while we change over to the new system. Next month will make it all worth it, so don't miss it!

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MASTERS OF STRATEGY

SIM CITY

Cash and 'quakes from Infogrames/Maxis bestseller

At last! T'N'T has a new editor... Newcomer Alex Ruranski is now putting together the section that gets you out of trouble – and this month he's got tips for Sim City, Last Ninja II, Space Quest III, Xenomorph and many more.

First a quick tip for the ST version of this Megalomaniac's dream, from Mr. P.R. Booth of Doncaster. Hold SHIFT and type in MONEY to credit your bank balance with an instant $10,000. This may be repeated to a maximum of $89,999. Occasionally this may trigger an earthquake, although Mr. Booth says that if the cheat is employed in January, the risk of a quake seems to be lessened. If an earthquake does occur, it's best to maximise your cash as you'll spend a fair wad on resurrecting the city!

The second of the Sim City tips is for the Amiga and comes from David Ewing of Belfast, Northern Ireland, who says that (unlike the cheat printed in issue 36) it may be used by those who have already started to build a city. Apparently if the cheat is repeated every year, vast quantities of cash are at the players disposal. It works in the following way:

1. Turn OFF auto-budget and select fastest speed setting.
2. When December comes around, call up the budget for that year and increase the tax rate to 20%.
3. Wait until some more sand has run from the timer choose "Go with these figures".
4. The budget for the following year is automatically displayed.
5. Reduce the tax rate to 0% (resulting in maximum growth) and choose "Go with these figures".

The outcome of this is that 20% taxes have been collected from the Sims without them realising - taxes will also disappear from the problems section of the city evaluation.

Welcome to the new T'N'T. I'll be giving you more tips, more solutions, and more hints than ever before over the coming months. Most importantly for some of you, I'll be sorting out the problems relating to our serialised solutions, whose appearance has been somewhat irregular pending a new TNT editor.

Next issue will see the return of Console Corner, Jon with his cheats, (unfortunately omitted this month due to T'n'T changing hands), and the continuation of *Xenomorph*, *Drakkhen* and some major hints for *Chaos Strikes Back*. Any hints you may have would be very gratefully accepted. In particular we're looking for tips for *Captive*, *Xiphos*, *Operation Stealth* and *Shadow of the Beast II* – and any short, quick hints on popular games would be well appreciated.

SPACE QUEST 3

Solve your problems with the universe in Sierra's famous graphic adventure

Thanks to Tim and Matthew Whitby for this. Deep breath.... here goes.

ESCAPING FROM PLANET 1

Get the wire in the tunnel and go to the conveyor belt. Climb on to the conveyor and jump. Travel left until you reach the u-turn and climb down into the mobile-chair. Go around the u-turn and two-thirds of the way into the next screen. Collect the motivator. Travel right and stop just after the second u-turn. Place the motivator in position. Travel left until you reach a chute. Examine the wall and then the hole. Take the reactor. Climb the ladder and take it.

Make your way to the robot's head and.... after you've been mugged by the rat, go back down the chute and retrieve the wire and reactor from where the reactor was first found.

Use the ladder, climb it and get it again. Go back to the robot's head (no rats this time! and get as near to the broken eye as possible. Climb. Use the ladder on the side of the ship and climb again. Open the hatch. Use the reactor and the wire. Sit in the pilot's seat and examine the screen. Switch the radar and the engines on and Whoosh! Having stopped, press '8' to instigate weapons. Turn on the shields and fire. ☞

PLEEBHUT

Travel to Pleebhut at light speed and once arrived, go to the 'World of Wonders'. Show that you have the gem (?). Say "no" twice and then "yes" at 425 Buckazoids. Now for a shopping spree. What to buy:

- 'Orat on a stick'
- 'Heat-proof underwear'
- 'Astro-chicken flight-hat'.

Matthew and Tim advise that you should SAVE the game at this point as it gets rather tricky.

Return to your ship. Enter the screen via the X on the map. Travel left and once you see the 'Terminator' footprints, walk around the killer-pods, leaving the nasty to walk under them and perish! DO NOT ATTEMPT TO PICK UP THE INVISIBILITY BELT. Stand to the left of the belt and use Orat. Return to your ship.

TIME FOR A SNACK....

Travel to 'Monolith Burgers'. Walk to the arcade and insert Buckazoid. Play the arcade game until your score stops increasing (298/738). Order a fun-meal from the counter. Sit down to eat your meal and you should find a decoder-ring. Enter the tunnel and climb-down.

OFF TO THE HOT ONE!!

Once entered the ship, wear the underwear. Fly to Ortega and when you arrive, go to the other ship. Travel to the scientists and wait behind the rock until they leave. Take the detonator and the pole. Go to the screen on the right, then walk two screens up. Walk down the steps and one screen to the right. Climb the ladder and walk to the edge of the hole. Drop the detonator and climb down. Return to the ship and at the point where the unstable rock have disappeared, use the pole. Enter the ship..

MEAN STREETS

Further to the comprehensive tips printed in issue 36, here's how to get the final two missing cards. The GREEN card is held by John Klaus, who is a reasonable guy and will give both the card and the password (GREEN - pawn) without a fight. The RED passcard is indeed in the fishtank. Find the fishfood by moving the lamp nearby, after which you have only to take the card. (J. Karlsson, FINLAND)

LET'S GO TO SCUMSOFT!!

When you've arrived at Scumsoft, any direction will lead to the bushes. Wear and use the belt. Enter Scumsoft and go down the steps. Press the button and walk forward. Enter the first door on the left. Look, and then examine the closet. Take the coveralls (all objects carried will be dropped but don't fret) and leave. Walk forward and enter the door on your right (without the keycard monitor).

SAVE the game at this point.

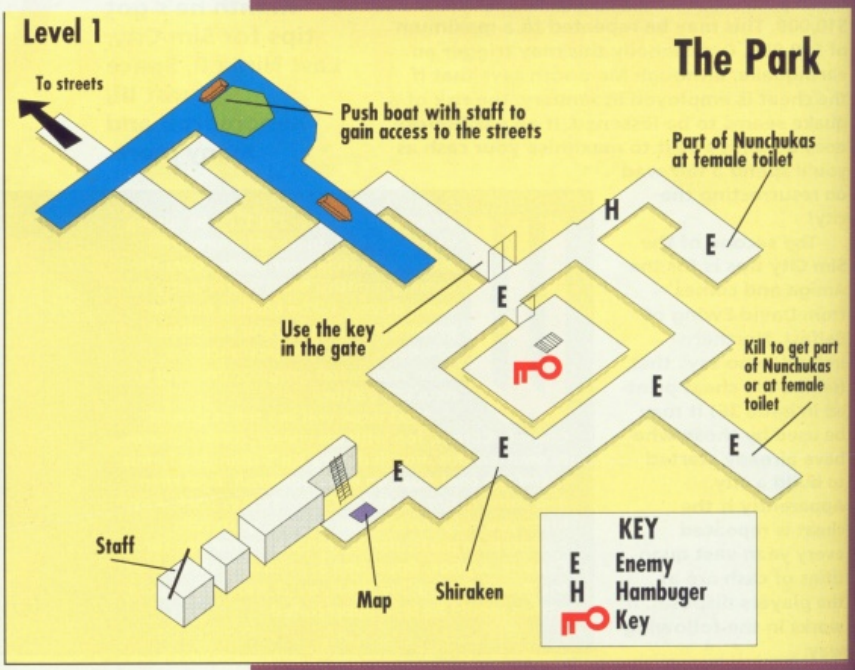
Work your way tot the top of the screen. You should come across a picture of the boss - take it. Copy the picture with the nearby photocopier and replace the original. Once in the bosses office, empty the bin with the vaporiser. Exit the screen to the right and then return, by which time the boss should have left the office. Take the keycard and go back to the corridor. Find the correct door and use the keycard. Use photocopy and press the button. Stand right next to one of the men and use the vaporiser.

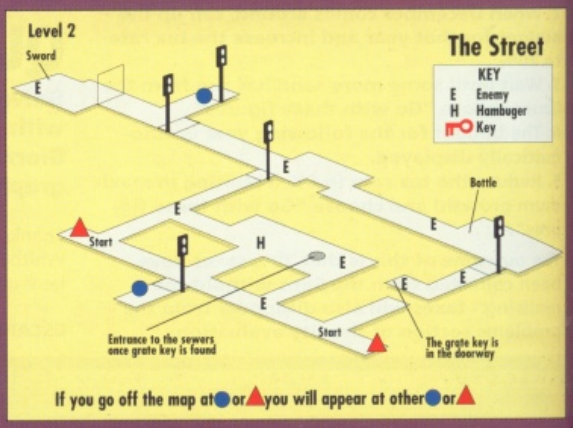
SAVE the game.

You should suddenly find yourself in a giant robot about to fight the big bossman. Continue

LAST NINJA II

Another serialisation for your delectation - this time the first three of the seven levels of System 3's oriental extravaganza...





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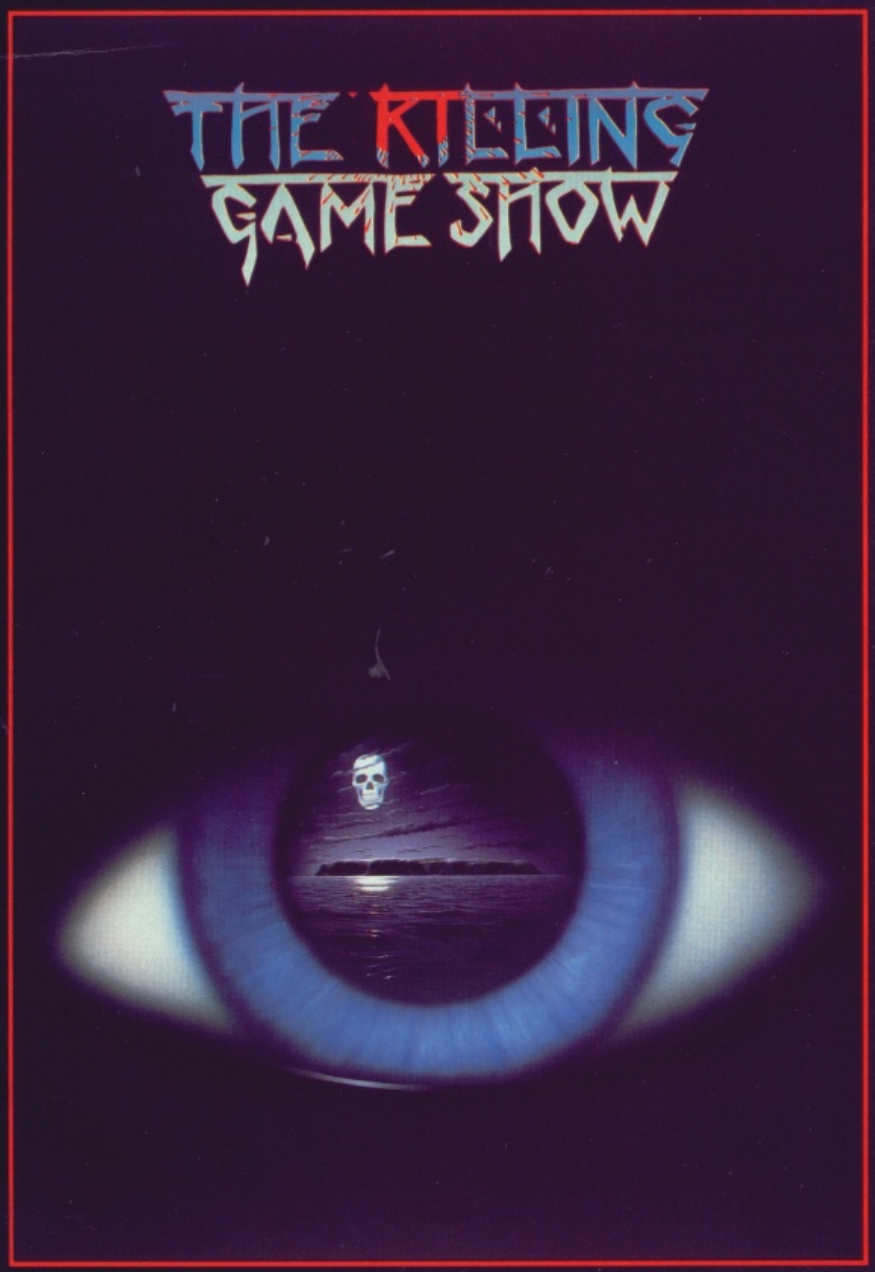
BINGHAM

THE KILLING GAME SHOW



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Screen Shots from the Amiga version

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walking forward and punching repeatedly until the boss topples... You now find yourself back at the ship.

SAVE the game yet again to prevent any personal bloodshed!

Press '8' to use your weapons. Repeatedly alternate the shield between front and back (when the shield is not needed, you MUST turn it off) and when you have destroyed five ships.... PRESTO!

Return to the cockpit view to watch the end of game sequence.

Well, that, you will be relieved to know, is it, although Matthew and Tim say that whilst the game is now complete, the final score is still some points short. Anyone know where they are...?

XENOMORPH

The complete\ solution...

To accompany Alan Coates' ongoing series of *Xenomorph* maps, we can now reveal the complete (serialised) solution courtesy of Harry Guy, in addition to some general tips to assist your quest.

GENERAL TIPS

In addition to the food dispensers located throughout, food may also be found lying around to be picked up for free.

When shooting aliens, ensure that you do so via the inventory window, as they take less shots to kill and are virtually impossible to miss.

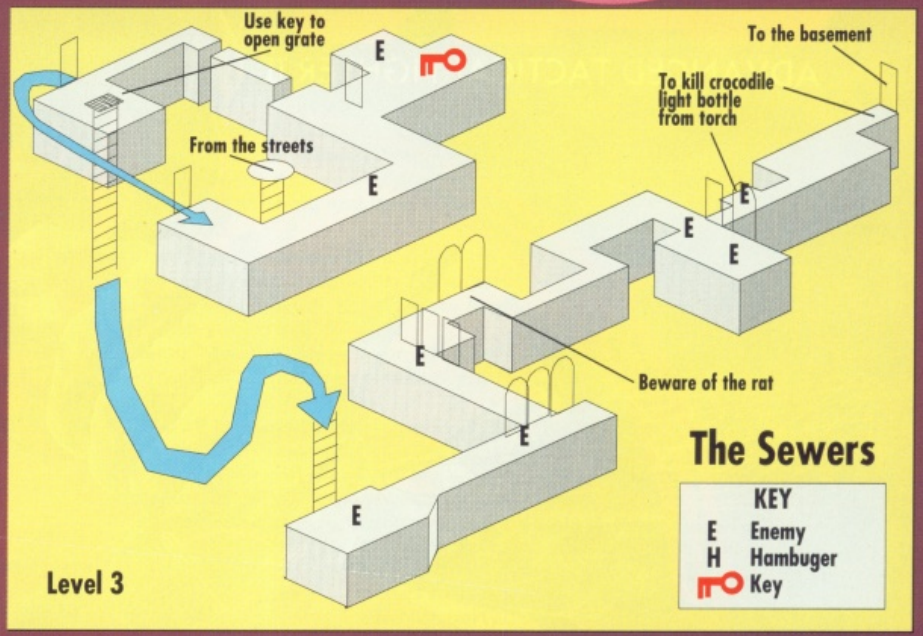
NEVER leave a card in an automat.

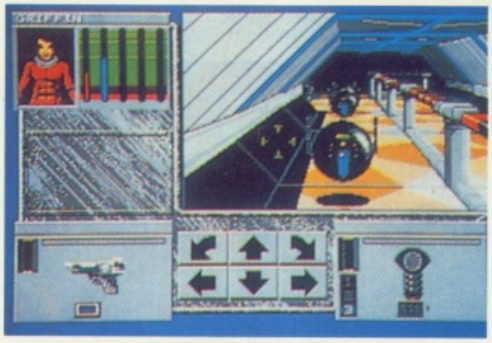
LEVEL 1

At the start, take all the chip-cards, remembering the order in which they appear and how many of each you require.

- LEFT ... A2 - 4/ CP8 - 2/ ABT 113 - 1/ OMO-Z - 3/CNS 5
- RIGHT ... NAV - 2

LAST NINJA II





This total of 17 will fit on three cards. Take all the cards and go down one level. Place all of the faulty chips apart from all of the functional chips and take three empty boards, leaving the rest behind. Move to area 1. The AGU (Anti Grav Unit) contains a card - take it. Wear the suit and move to area 2. Take from a the AGU, a helmet, one laser, a pair of boots, all food and all batteries. Exit to level 2.

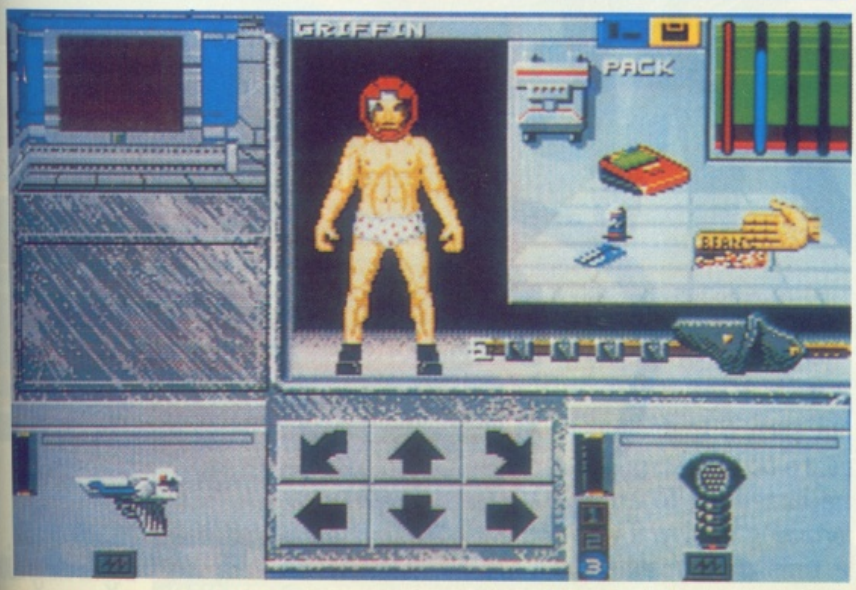
LEVEL 2

Make your way to the gun and charge. Collect both and set them for use. Pick up the (only) battery and the ammo for the RL (rocket launcher). Get to ladder 'G' and go down one level

N.B: To set the gun for use, the charge must be placed inside. Remember the shooting tip for any aliens you come across.

LEVEL 3

Travel to area 3, kill the alien and take all the chips you need. (There is a recharger unit here that you may want to return to later on.) Go to area 4 (watch out for the alien) and take the card from the AGU. Go to area 5 and pick up the battery and the RL ammo, (the latter close to area 6). Collect the tracker and charge it with a battery, (not forgetting to turn the tracker on!). Move to area 7 and massacre all the aliens. Go to ladder 'H' and SAVE your position before progressing to level 4....



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CHAMPIONS OF KRYNN.

Corporal D.A.Morgan of RAF Honington in Suffolk flies in with a couple of unusual and very useful tips

CLONING A CHARACTER

Yup, you heard it right, genetic engineering the Dragonlance way! This comes in very handy if you happen to have a character of mind-boggling attributes that you've spent simply ages establishing and love like your own mum.

1. Firstly you need two discs. One with saved games and another for characters.
2. Load a saved game, then replace the disc with your character disc.
3. Remove any character from the party, then load the same character back into the party.
4. Give all the best items (weapons, jewels etc) to this character, and remove it from the party once more.
5. The program will ask if you wish to write over this previously saved character, to which you answer "NO".
6. Enter a new name for the character and save it. You should find that both the new and old characters have been saved to disc, leaving space for two more characters to be loaded into the party.
7. Load the new, improved cloned character and re-clone to double the weapons and suchlike.

In this way, you can build up a 'death-squad' of virtually indestructible characters.

The second of Corporal Morgan's tips involves the mind-bending phenomenon of time-travel.

1. Save your party to the character disc.
2. Remove the disc and insert your saved-game disc.
3. Load the period from which you wish to start.
4. Drop the characters you don't want.
5. Replace the disc with the new character disc.
6. Add your new characters to the game and begin maiming and killing.

Next issue will hopefully see the return of Jon with his cheats, (unfortunately omitted this month due to T'n'T changing hands), as well as the continuation of Xenomorph, Drakkhen (hopefully) and some major hints for Chaos Strikes Back. As you may have noticed, T'n'T has in fact grown an extra page, so any hints you may have would be very gratefully accepted. In particular tips for Captive, Xiphos and Shadow of the Beast II, and any short quick hints would be well appreciated. until next time....

LATE EDITION TO T'n'T SHOCK!!

Good news for all those struggling over Delphine's excellent OPERATION STEALTH... The complete solution in two parts, comin' atcha live! (And thanks to all who sent solutions in.)

THE AIRPORT

Go to the newspaper machine and EXAMINE the coin return slot.
Place the coin gained in the slot - presto... a newspaper.
EXAMINE the paper and note down the country mentioned.
Enter the toilets and enter the empty cubicle.
OPEN the briefcase and OPERATE the calculator.
TAKE the passport and EXAMINE it.
USE the passport on the opening in the calculator - falsify your passport.
USE verification key on falsifier.
Re-enter the starting screen and USE the passport on the customs official.
SPEAK to the hostess at the welcome desk - she will give you a telegram.
Walk left.
GIVE the plane ticket to the guard.
EXAMINE the telegram - it should read Mr. Martinez.
Go to the baggage collection.
EXAMINE all the baggage - TAKE the baggage belonging to Mr. Martinez.
Re-enter the toilets and OPERATE the baggage.
TAKE the watch.
TAKE and OPERATE the electric razor - you should now have a cable.
USE the cable in the electric socket in the toilets.
Exit the toilets and go to the second official.
GIVE him the false passport and exit left.
Leave the airport and catch a taxi.
When reaching the screen with the florist, exit left.
OPERATE briefcase.
TAKE the pen and the American passport.
EXAMINE the passport and TAKE the notes you should find.
OPERATE the passport to close it.
Enter the bank.

USE the notes on the Clerk, who should give you some coins.
Exit the bank and go to the florist.
USE the coins on the florist and TAKE the red carnations.
Exit the screen at the top left.
USE the red carnation on yourself.
Walk to the top left of the bank screen - you should be in a garden.
Go to the bench and sit on it.
An operative should appear and... er get shot.
TAKE the card with the key attached.
AS SOON AS YOU TAKE THE CARD EXIT TO THE RIGHT.
Enter the bank and change the remaining notes.
OPERATE the card and key to seperate them.
USE the card on the Clerk.
Walk down the stairs at the bottom of the screen.
EXAMINE each safe until you find the one reading 2475.
USE the key on the safe.
You should find a briefcase and open it automatically.
TAKE the small box.
OPERATE the envelope.

THE ESCAPE

OPERATE the ground - you should find a piece of sharp metal.
USE the metal on the ropes.
OPERATE the ground - you should find a pickaxe.
OPERATE the pickaxe (repeatedly) at the right of the screen, just above the rock you were tied up against.
Exit through the hole.

CONTINUED NEXT MONTH

NEW ALLCOPY-SYSTEM
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WARNING: Because ACS copies all Amiga software it's use to copy and distribute commercial software is illegal.

The utility program set following ACS is usable even without an extra diskdrive. The set includes several functions which make the copyprocess and it's surveillance easier. One function different from other copy programs is being able to see from screen what kind of error was made and in which diskdrive, on which diskside and on which sector. This is possible whether you used your Amiga's own diskdrive or 3 extra diskdrives. ACS is at least as necessary investment as buying an extra RAM memory or an extra diskdrive.

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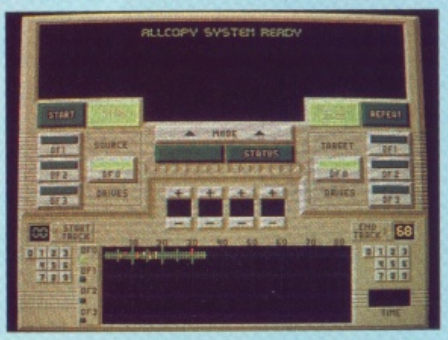

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New Zealand Story	£24.95
Interceptor	£24.95
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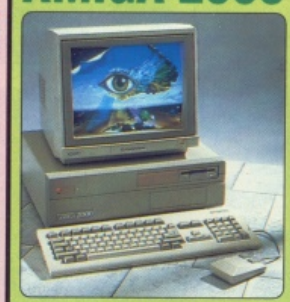
AMIGA 2000



For the more serious or professional applications user, Commodore have a selection of systems based around the expandable Amiga 2000, at prices from £1295+VAT. The A2000 features a full 1Mb RAM (expandable to 9Mb), 9 system expansion slots, plus IBM compatibility with the use of PC-XT or PC-AT bridgeboards. Complete and return the coupon, putting a tick in the A2000 box, for details of A2000 computer systems.

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F29 Retaliator	£24.95
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Sims City

In the latest ACE Conference, readers visited the UK home of the world's best-known simulation publishers: Microprose

It's never easy coming down to earth after an ACE Conference. The food, the freebies, the freewheeling...we've grown used to people leaving with their heads in the clouds. But this time it happened for real!

On a boiling hot summer's day, ten ACE readers gathered in Tetbury for six hours of non-stop involvement at the cutting edge of games technology. Welcomed by UK 'Prose's head honcho, Peter Jones, we took a tour of the company's new headquarters and then settled down in the conference room to find out what the company who brought us *Gunship* are up to.

AMIGA TANK

M1 Tank Platoon **remains one of the best tank sims around, giving you command of not one but four vehicles (plus air support) as you negotiate an undulating 3D landscape on a wide variety of missions. Well received on the initial PC version, *Tank* is out soon on the Amiga (see this month's updates) and will follow early next year on the Atari ST**

This was no sim, this was real! Four intrepid ACE readers after their hair-raising flight in the Microprose aircraft (l/r Steve Leadbeater, Pete Austin, Andrew Austin, and Nicholas Cooke)

First onto the stage was Steve Turner, one of the bigger stars in the programming firmament whose exploits hark back to the days of *3D Seiddab Attack* and *Avalon*. After his work for Hewson, he joined up with Andy '*Uridium*' Braybrook to form Grafgold and they've recently finished *Simulcra* for Microprose (ACE rated 936 last issue). Steve recounted a nightmare story of how the original programmer abandoned the project and he had to pick up the pieces. 'The most difficult thing', he recalled painfully, 'was rewriting someone else's code. I was working 24 hours a day to get it finished.'

From then on it was games galore as Microprose showed us *International Soccer Challenge* and *Silent Service II*, before moving on to news of forthcoming blockbusters including *Wildfire* (the follow-up to *Midwinter*), *Knights of the Sky*, *Covert Action*, and *Lightspeed*. You can find out more about these elsewhere in this article.

Once the gaming was over, it was off to the airfield for a flight in the Microprose 'plane. They don't just fly simulators, these chappies – flying is deeply inbred amongst 'Prose employees and many combine business with flying lessons to get them into the sky for real.

Unfortunately, because of train and travel deadlines, some of the ACE contingent had to leave before getting

LIGHTSPEED

Microprose are best known for their terrestrial combat simulations – so it makes a change to discover that the company are now planning a 'deep space' scenario. *Lightspeed*, currently under development, features several different playmodes, including interaction with aliens (a lot of which, we discovered, features a certain dry humour), solid 3D space combat sequences, and strategy elements. The scenario involves seeking a new home for the human race, exploring planet systems and fighting your way out of difficult situations as you go. 'It's part RPG, part adventure, part action, part strategy' claims 'Prose's Julia Coombes. Watch out for it in the New Year.

***Lightspeed*: Typical. You travel across the galaxy, encounter a horde of well-meaning aliens, and not one of them speaks English**

Your engine room in *Lightspeed*

ACE CONFERENCE ROLL-CALL

They came, they saw, they conquered...These are the lads who braved British Rail and country roads to join the ACE Microprose Conference. Will YOUR mug be on these pages next time?

Steve Leadbeater **got stranded at the airport while his Dad was waiting for him at Tetbury! We hope he's out of hospital by now!**

Mark Turner: **'The only quibble I've got with *Midwinter* are the bombs – you shoot them and they're back in ten seconds...**

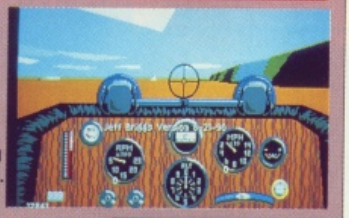
Theo Clarke **reckoned *Simulcra* would join his collection if he had an Amiga**

Neil Rodway **terrified his fellow passengers when he took control of the 'plane – while it was in the air!**

Andrew Morley **braved the skies with Neil. He doesn't look as if he's suffered too much from the experience**

KNIGHTS OF THE SKY

There's been a fad for World War I flight games recently, (see Cinemaware's *Wings*, for example). Microprose are entering the arena with *Knights of the Sky* – a combat flight sim that aims to recreate as far as possible the experience of flying a low-technology aircraft over Northern France. The dogfighting scenario pits you against various opponents until finally you encounter the infamous Red Baron. Flight controls on the pre-prod version we tested were simple but effective, with great multiple views. *KOTS* looks great fun – we'll bring you more details in a forthcoming issue.



Knights of the Sky – flying this plane couldn't be easier, but finding your way home again is a different matter!

into the air. Neil Ellett wasn't too disappointed – he's in the RAF and flies for his breakfast. Neil Rodway and Andrew Morley, on the other hand, had the time of their lives – and put the fear of God into their fellow passengers when they took control whilst airborne.

Joining Microprose was a privilege and a pleasure for all of us. Many thanks to all who made the day possible.

MICROPROSE

Founded in 1982 by Bill Stealey and Sid Meier, Microprose have established a reputation for producing some of the most impressive simulation-based games on the market. *Gunship, F15 Strike Eagle, M1 Tank Platoon,* and *Red Storm Rising* are amongst the hits published by the company under Sid's creative direction and 'Wild Bill's' stormy leadership.

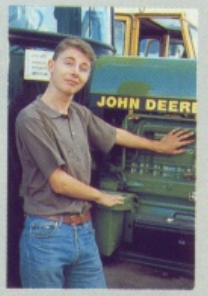
Microprose set up in the UK in 1986. Later they purchased the Telecomsoft labels. The company is based in Tetbury, Gloucestershire.

Peter Austin was looking forward to *F19* on the Amiga, having played it on his trusty C64

Andrew Austin: the youngest ACE reader yet to hit an ACE conference, he kept everyone very much on their toes

Nicholas Cooke: horrified the assembled company by calmly announcing that he'd finished *Midwinter* in 6.5 hours! Microprose are going to be offering him a job in five years' time...

Neil Ellett liked the look of *Silent Service II*, but though it was a shame you needed such a powerful PC to get the best out of modern games...



Ben Newman: Likes sims where the missions take place in a war scenario '..so that your victories are significant in the long term...'

Microprose's Martin Moth tells the audience how he modelled for some of the sprites in *Rick Dangerous 2*

"We had a fantastic time and really enjoyed seeing the other side of the software industry."

Peter Austin, ACE reader and conference member

Peter Jones gets into a sticky situation with *Betrayal*

WHY DON'T *YOU* COME NEXT TIME?

Each month, we'll let you know about forthcoming conferences around the country. If you think you might be interested in attending one, all you have to do is send us a postcard with your name and address clearly written, together with a daytime telephone number if at all possible. You also need to tell us:

- Which conference you would like to attend. If you're applying for more than one, put them in order of preference. If no conference is listed for the software house you'd like to visit, put the software house's name down and we'll put you on the list for that conference when (and if) it is organised in the future.
- The machine you own, so that we can make sure you get some juicy free gifts for your micro!
- Your age, so that we can ensure a good spread of age groups at each conference.
- If you are a subscriber, send your application in an envelope together with the address panel from the last issue of ACE that you were sent.

Obviously we have to limit the number of people attending each conference to a maximum of 15. In addition, we have to make a nominal charge of £5.00 to help cover costs. All places are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Subscribers, however, get priority allocations for the first five places in each conference, and they may also attend free of charge. You can find out how to become a subscriber on page 35.

A couple of weeks before each conference, we'll select the lucky readers from those who have applied and inform them of the relevant details. If anyone can't attend, they'll be shortlisted for a future conference and another selection will be made for someone who can take their place.

FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES

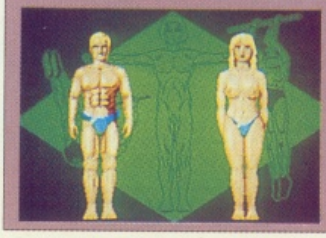
US GOLD 12.30pm Thursday 11 October 1990 in Birmingham

The big one. USG are planning a tremendous welcome for ACE readers, including hands-on testing of the latest Lucasfilm and Delphine products, and coin-ops galore. You'll also get a rare opportunity to meet console developers, following USG's Sega versions of *Paperboy, Gauntlet* and others.

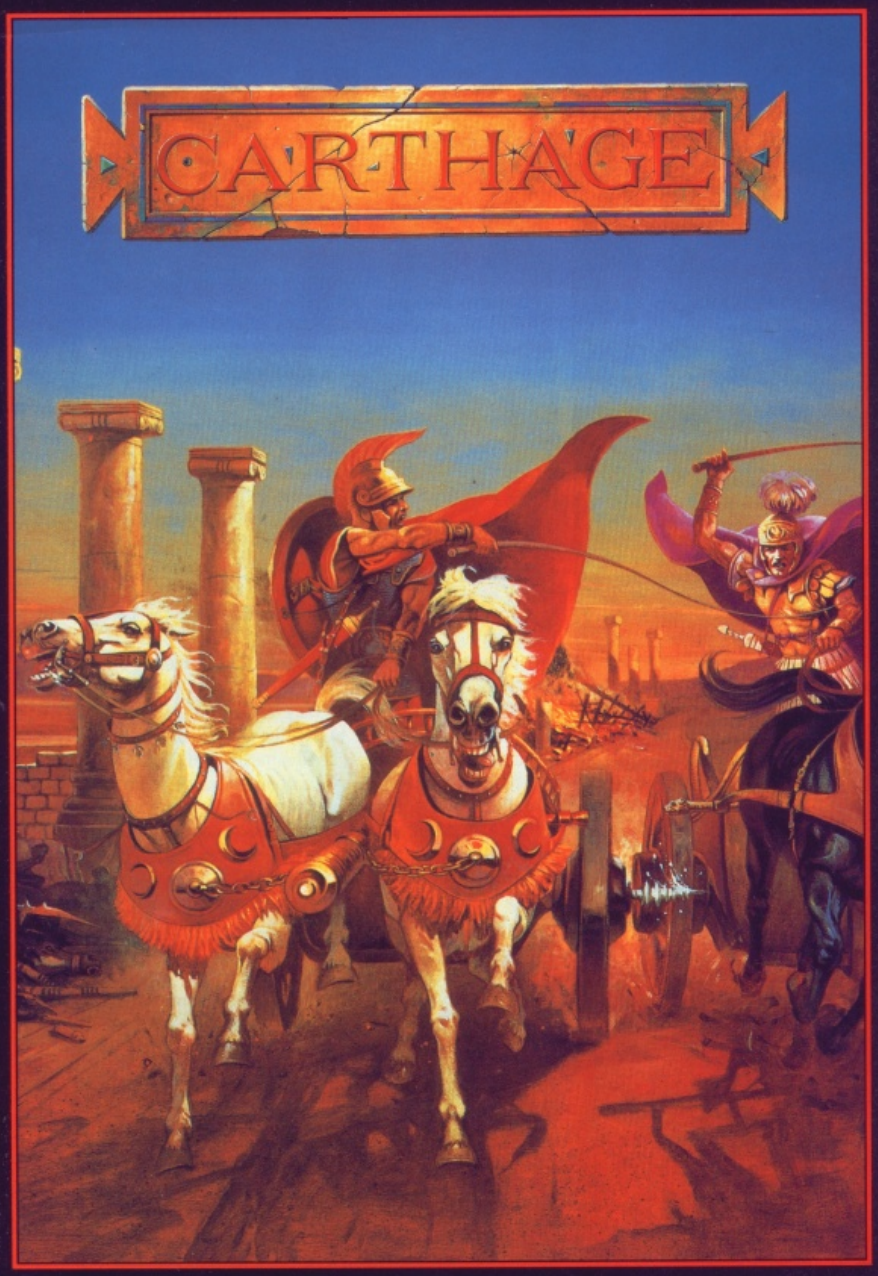
Coming soon: Ocean, currently riding very high on the software scene. Dates and details next month...

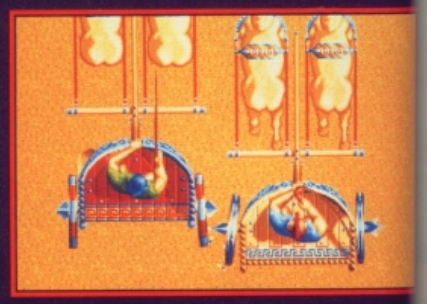
5 MILLION WORLDS!

We all know Mike Singleton is renowned for his vast scenarios. Ever since he brought us the superlative *Lords of Midnight*, Mike has been creating games with that little bit extra – like the 5 million worlds he's packing into *Star Lord*, due out in 1991. The game features 16-player capability and you can exchange data between ST, Amiga, and PC by mail or by modem.



Midwinter 2 – about to hit the shelves from Mike on the Rainbird label. If you like your games BIG this is one to watch out for





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Screen shots from the Amiga

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Ant Attack

Nerve-wracking nostalgia as Hall Of Fame curator John Minson discovers he's got ants in his pants!

The real buzz about being a reviewer in the early days of the Spectrum was that every time a doom-and-gloom merchant wailed that the boundaries of Uncle Clive's micro had been reached, somebody proved them wrong and breached them yet again.

Among the publishers pushing the capabilities of the humble Z80 chip machine, with its primitive, single-channel sound and absence of sprite graphics, was the Quicksilva label. And 1983 saw Quicksilva obsessed with insects.

There was a colourful platform game, *Bugaboo The Flea*, one of the first Spanish programs to reach these shores. But our Hall Of Fame inductee came from closer to home. Scottish artist Sandy White invented a system called Softsolid 3D which allowed him to generate a desert city... and inhabit it with ants!

"Today's production line programming needs free thinkers like the creator of Ant Attack*."*
John Minson

SENSATIONALLY SOFTSOLID

There's a clue to White's inspiration in the name of his bug-infested metropolis; Antescher. Take one part MC Escher, the artist whose mathematically precise drawings of impossible architecture reached cult status in the seventies, and one part fifties sci-fi movies like Them. Introduce the oversized hymenoptera into the blocky city. Then set the player the task of rescuing their mate from the maze.

If it all sounds a trifle dated today... well, it is. The plot has been re-used a hundred times since. But seven years ago the isometric 3D and vast playing area caused a considerable stir. Instead of tackling a series of consecutive screens, *Ant Attack* presented the player with a world inside their micro.

MULTIPLE VIEWS
The multiple viewpoints in *Ant Attack* proved to be enormously influential and the same technique can be seen today in many 3D games. Titles like *Driller* and *Resolution 101* owe a huge debt to the monochrome walls and plazas of Antescher.

There were even rumours that if, at the start, you wandered off into the desert you would eventually discover another city. Then again in the mid-eighties, rumours such as this spread faster than a virus on a pirate disk. Does anyone remember the space rocket that was supposed to take *Jet Set Willy* to the moon or the trailer in *Luna Jet-Pac?*

Sensibly ignoring the tittle-tattle of letters page tipsters, most players clambered into the city over the low wall that kept the ants in. Now to find your mate with only the help of a direction indicator. You were on your own but not for long as the insects would seek you out with their uncanny sixth sense - and a neat piece of pseudo artificial intelligence. This was where your flesh began to creep.

Antescher may have been merely a series of shaded blocks against a yellow background, but what else could you expect of the desert - not to mention the Spectrum with its notorious attribute clash? The two colour graphics didn't detract from the ants. Small, solid, black scuttling shapes, they crowded in from the sides of the screen or from behind walls and buildings. Forget phobias, anyone with sense would scarper from those gnashing mandibles.

The best defence was usually to climb the Lego walls of the city, leaving the insects at ground level. You could then wait until a small crowd had gathered and let rip with your one weapon, grenades. Hitting one of four keys determined the range and a good shot could kill a few of the critters. Strategic planning and patience were essential though as armaments were limited.

As you ran behind objects you'd sometimes vanish, so Sandy White provided four viewing angles. Playing television director and switching from camera to camera also let you look out for advancing ants. Once you'd discovered your partner, hidden increasingly deeply in the labyrinth, it was a question of remembering the way out as there was never time to map properly.

Despite the fact it was much imitated, there's one aspect of *Ant Attack* not yet mentioned that really does make it almost unique. It comes right at the start where you choose to be a man rescuing a woman or vice versa. No stereotyping in Antescher. But then again, in those innocent days, program authors actually paused to consider that women might play their games.

HALL OF FAME

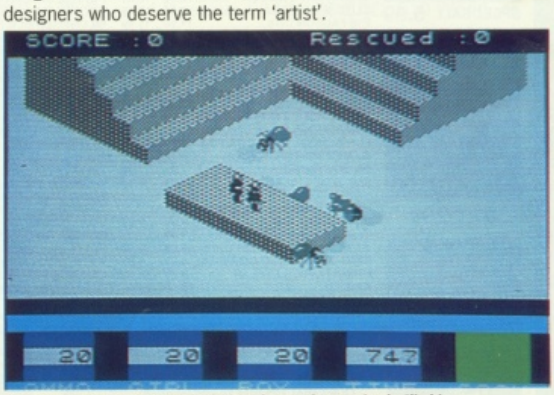
How does a game qualify for the Hall of Fame? It may have been a best seller in its day or overlooked and underrated. But one thing's for certain, it led the field, either creatively or technically. Clones don't qualify, however competent. And it's got lasting appeal. It's the program you still want to play after years - not weeks. So if you've got any suggestions, drop us a line.

AFTER THE ANTS

Like many of these early games, *Ant Attack* is long deleted, which is a pity as it's still an enjoyable diversion today.

Sandy White went on to develop a second program, for the newly launched Electric Dreams label, *I Of The Mask*. A surreal labyrinth chase set in the tunnels behind a vast stone visage it again took the Spectrum into new realms technically. But many reviewers found the gameplay lacking.

Since then Sandy has been strangely silent, though rumours abound that he's been working on a massive new game and that the fruits of his labours are about to see the light. It's to be hoped so. Today's production line programming needs free thinkers like the creator of *Ant Attack*; designers who deserve the term 'artist'.



As welcome as termites at a barbecue, the ants have arrived. Climbing onto a ledge and lobbing a grenade was Rentokill's recommended approach.

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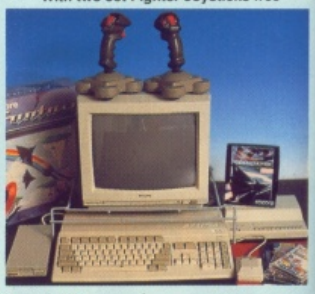

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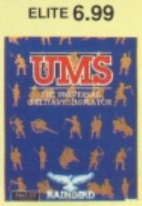

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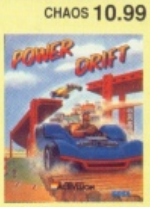

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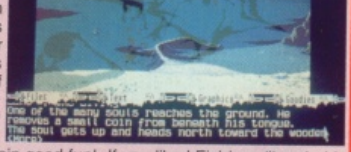

Amiga Format said: "An excellent adventure... witty, cunning and just plain good fun! If you liked Fish! you'll probably like this, because they're very similar in style: you may even prefer Myth, it's that good!"

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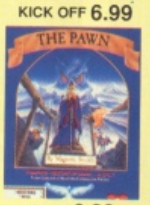

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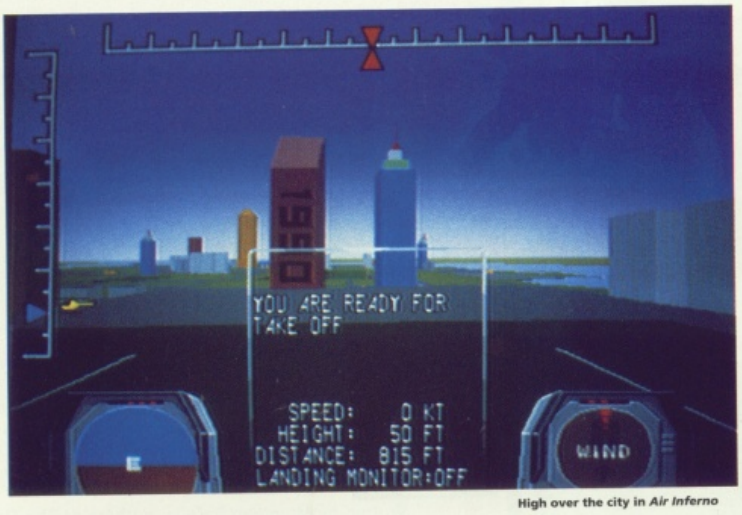
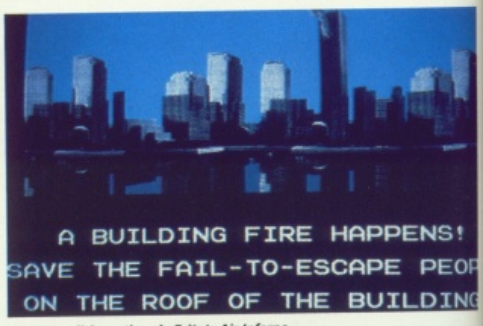


High over the city in *Air Inferno*



Crazy Jap-lish captions in Taito's *Air Inferno*

John Cook welcomes a new age of solid 3D and dives into the latest coin-op releases

It began with *Lunar Lander* in Sept 1979, then followed up with *Asteroids* later that year. The craze for vector-style graphics launched a new era of game displays and, for as long as sprites remained four-coloured, there were a whole bunch of titles using these techniques that were very popular.

The first mega successful 3D game using line drawn vectors was arguably *Battlezone* and a couple of years later came *Star Wars* but, by this time, sprite engines had started to pull away from vectors in both number and popularity. That was partly due to increased colour – sprites could provide more dazzle, higher resolution and greater "realism" than 3D techniques.

This is simply a question of computing power. Moving sprites around the screen is, at the end of the day, a question of sophisticated memory management that's relatively easy to program and doesn't need wild amounts of processing time. Creating a true 3D model, let alone scanning, sorting and redrawing the whole of the screen every frame, requires more brute force plus some pretty fancy mathematics.

Sprites stayed way ahead until computing processing power became high enough to produce filled polygon technology with real class – *Winning Run* from Namco, for example, and Atari Games' *Hard Drivin'* and *S.T.U.N. Runner*. The late eighties, however, has seen a revival of 3D in a new and exciting form – and this is just the beginning.

That's because sprite technology has now gone about as far as it can – examine *G-Loc* to see what several hundred engineers working for a few years can come up with. It's fast, furious, very colourful – but state-of-the-art 'though it is, doesn't look or feel "real". Although we all suspend our belief for the duration of the game, that's exactly what it feels like – a game.

Now compare that with something like Winning Run, which is the best 3D racing game to date. Particularly in the sit-in version, there are times when you do actually feel like you are driving a car. Fast filled 3D can create a better illusion than sprites can, even in a restricted world format like a racing circuit.

Now imagine you wanted to play a tag game. The player has complete freedom of movement around an area, say a maze. You need to be able to see from every angle. Hide behind things, crouch down. The player should have an almost infinite number of viewpoints. This, sprites just can't handle – not unless you can access Gigabytes of data instantaneously – although Sega had a good try with *Last Survivor*.

The kind of sophisticated arcade game that starts down the road to Virtual Reality – the kind of game that the arcades will have to deliver to keep ahead of the home machines – can only be done in filled vector 3D. And if that means the end of the beat-em-up clones and the vertical scrolling shoot-em-up, I'll vote for that!

"The kind of sophisticated arcade game that starts down the road to Virtual Reality – the kind of game that the arcades will have to deliver to keep ahead of the home machines – can only be done in 3D."

INTO THE INFERNO

Taito has been pushing what is possibly the most tedious 3D arcade game in the world – *Top Landing* – for a long time now. It has you piloting a commercial jet plane into a

MEGA TWINS FROM CAPCOM

I suppose Capcom is pretty smug over the continued success of *Final Fight* and who can blame them – it's proved to be a long term money spinner in the lucrative beat-em-up market. But I luv 'em better when they come up with stuff like this.

Cute beyond all doubt, this is a fairly standard jumpy-jumpy with a smattering of shooty-shooty thrown in for good measure. But the graphic style is pleasing to the eye, the touches of humour bring a smile to the lips – and there are of course little secret things hidden in the game that you can discover, allowing you to feel superior to any gameplaying friends yet to find them out.

The fact that after playing *Mega Twins*, rather than wanting to beat the hell out a real human being in frustration, you actually feel more like you've just drunk a mug of Chocolate Ovaltine says something about it. 'Though I'm not sure exactly what.

Freedom

city, late at night. The 3D is nicely done, although a bit slow, as you read the instruments and get the glide path right. As you might gather, I think it's a bit dull – but there are those that claim the game has a certain fascination in it's pace. So does Snail Racing.

Still, Taito has been successful enough with it to come up with an action follow-up called *Air Inferno*. This has you piloting a helicopter in certain set piece rescue situations and is excellent. The 3D has been rendered in 256 colours (at least) and, although not as technically efficient as Microprose's 3D coin-op technology, the hardware is adequate for the job, delivering 10 frames per second or so, for most of the game.

More interestingly, Taito have linked the 3D in with a realistic helicopter control system. Power on the left hand (up/down), joystick to move forward/backwards and pitch left/right – but to rotate left/right you have to use foot pedals. Interesting, huh? Takes quite some getting used to for sure – but it makes a challenging learning curve.

The game itself has practice or rescue options – all against a fairly stiff time limit. Rescue 1 has you fighting a tanker fire, then landing on the deck. No probs. The second, you are fighting a skyscraper fire and then you land on the roof (try not to emulate the chopper pilot's boo-boo in Towering Inferno, will you?) Not too difficult when you get the hang of it.

The third? Rescuing people from a volcanic eruption. Not easy, as the volcano is lobbing out the rocks and blowing a force ten across the helipad. OK, so I haven't made it yet – but judging by the high scores (mine) neither has anyone else!

On test currently in the most excellent Funland (in the Trocadero, Piccadilly Circus, probably the best arcade in the country at this time). Check it out there, or await its arrival to coastal arcades real soon.

Stunning backdrops but snail pace action in *Top Landing*

GOODGE STREET ARCADE

Electrocoin – who used to have a very fine arcade in Central London, until the lease ran out, have now opened a new facility just south of Goodge St Station. A little smaller than before, it is none the worse for that, as it still has the very latest games on show. Both are worth a visit if you are in London – although you'll need to be over 18 to get into Electrocoin.

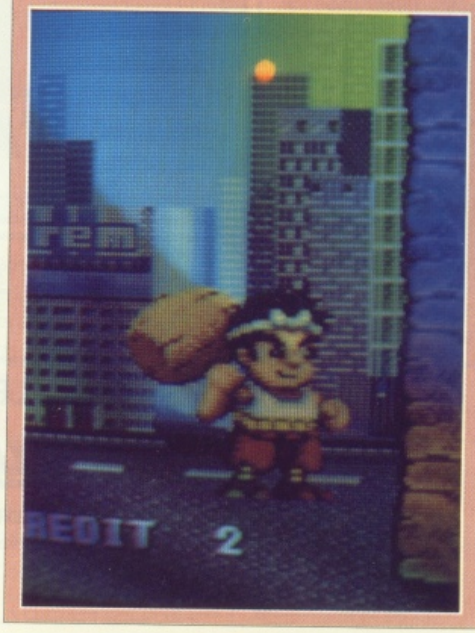
MAGIC SWORD

Another Capcom title – and it looks like they might have finally got over the artistic hiccup they had early this year, when releasing stuff like *UN Squadron*. *Magic Sword* is a mystic quest job that has you jumping and hacking through many, many levels of some evil castle. Seeing as it's using the Capcom CP System board – it's a very colourful and detailed castle, too.

"Bring on the Power-ups," I hear you cry – and sure, they are here – but in the shape of different sorts of prisoner that you liberate (once you've got the right keys). These guys tag along behind you adding some sort of extra firepower to your elbow – giving the game a little refreshing originality. Worth the investment for all you pixie-bashers out there.

HAMMERING HARRY

This one is a real joy to get to grips with. Pure Japanese gameplay, from the graphic style to the bowl of noodles that gets thrown over your character if you tarry too long by the take-away. Highly playable, great fun – you'll either run a mile, or be glued to the joystick.



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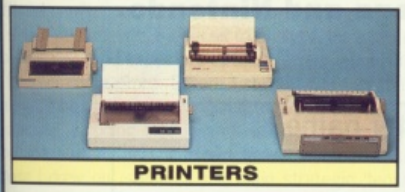
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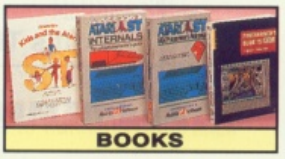
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Writing 'Nam

Domark are about to launch a new military simulator that gives the player total involvement in Vietnam. Game designer/programmer Matthew Stibbe describes how he went to war...and came back with the source code

This story comes in two parts. First, I'll tell you how I 'went to war' and came back with a game design. Next month, I'll show how the design was translated into code and graphics, as well as making some points about game designing and research in general. Along the way, I'll fill you in on some Vietnamese history and provide a glossary of terms often used in connection with the conflict.

The Vietnam war is difficult to analyse, let alone difficult to simulate – and especially difficult for someone who wasn't personally involved. Before I started work on the actual design, I had to immerse myself totally in the conflict – in particular watching videos and reading very widely about the war – both personal and historical accounts. From these I drew out some of the main strategic 'tensions' in Vietnam. These were:

- the balance between political and military commitment to the war and domestic support for the war
- the tension between high technology, expensive methods of war, and guerilla warfare
- questions of supply - for the Americans by sea and air, for the Communists across internal lines of supply from Russia and China via N.Vietnam and the Ho Chi Minh trail
- the tension between military and 'hearts and minds' operations and the effect of both on South Vietnamese politics,

TEAM YANKEE

For reasons of simplicity (and my own interest) I decided to confine the player to taking the American side. I then had to find a role or 'metaphor' for the player that would translate the issues mentioned above into specific game rules and routines.

The original version of the design called for a windowing system as the game's user interface. This, however, does not give any sense of 'being there', in the way that a flight simulator does. It soon became clear that, in the game, the player should 'become' the president, and that his or her decisions would therefore be taken at rarefied strategic levels. Therefore, to achieve what theatre people call 'a willing suspension of disbelief' I settled on the metaphor of a presidential report.

This would allow the player to look at information in a natural and intuitive form. Once this decision had been reached windows were redundant. To use windows would be to destroy the metaphor - every action would remind the player that he was using a computer.

The military aspects of the game are presented by the use of maps within the report. The player can look at a strategic map of South East Asia, and then zoom in to particular parts of South Vietnam. These maps show the dispositions of the various allied and known enemy units, much as a commander-in-chief would see them.

The next major factor was how to reflect the passing of time. Many games, like *Balance of Power* or most wargames, use discrete turns. You make your decisions, then press 'next turn' to see the results of these decisions unfold. Others operate continuously, using real or accelerated time. *Harpoon* and *Sim City* are both like this. Tradition suggested the use of discrete turns, but instead I chose a continuous model.

Vietnam forced this decision on me – the combat on the ground and its political consequences are simply not amenable to a game design based on discrete monthly turns. For example, two major communist campaigns - Tet and in 1975 - were conducted within 30 days as were nearly all US operations. On the other hand, discrete daily turns would be too laborious. In the end, I chose a continuous model, with one day as the smallest step.

Using this system, while you think, things happen. This is as it really was. The use of accelerated real time (1 year can take 10-20 minutes) gives a certain urgency to the game, which I felt was necessary and realistic in a political and military simulation. A pause option was added later at the request of beta testers.

REWRITING HISTORY

Analysis of the history of the Vietnamese conflict soon illuminated several parameters that could be translated into the game. These were that:

(i) the Americans cannot invade North Vietnam, nor stage anything more than raids into Laos and Cambodia for fear of Chinese intervention;

(ii) There would be no US mass conscription or call up of reserves;

Matthew Stibbe, designer of *'Nam*

(iii) There would be no dramatic change in tactics or weapons;
(iv) The US's victory conditions were essentially political rather than military.

Despite these parameters, the actual decisions that the player can make, like airpower, troops, commitment and economic aid, were designed to allow the simulation of a wide variety of different war strategies. The models and the simulation engine had to allow different strategies and react realistically to them. In the end, the best test would be to see if the program reacted historically to real historical input.

The final difficult design problem I faced was the definition of victory conditions. Given that a player might try any one of a number of strategies to win the game, how should it recognise victory? The general consensus about Vietnam is that the Communists could win simply by not losing, and this was translated into the game design by putting the onus on the Americans to 'win' the game.

The main road to victory, therefore, would be to destroy Communist resistance to the existence of a separate South Vietnam by social or economic means. This requires time and means that any prospective president must at least resist attacks on South Vietnam until victory can be achieved. This - not losing while you go about winning - is a second and important war objective. Other strategies involve mixing airpower, civilian, military and economic aid with varying degrees of US intervention.

I have only touched on some of the design dilemmas and processes involved in producing 'Nam. What's really important, however, is that they illuminate four general points about game design that I think everyone ought to be aware of. These are:

- A game should focus on one or more strategic dilemmas
- It should have an appropriate metaphor. That is to say, there should be a workable game structure that can properly represent the various elements at work in real life
- It must have achievable but realistic victory conditions
- It should pit the player against the problems of a coherent and comprehensive reality.

In my opinion, a game must challenge a player, have what you could call 'dramatic unity' (i.e. it mustn't have a sprawling series of disconnected scenarios and should focus on where the action is) and it should reward success.

See you next month, when I look in more depth at the technical issues involved in programming simulation games like *'Nam*.

The man who's place you take in the game – Richard Nixon, President during the later stages of the Vietnam conflict

"Whoopee! We're all going to die!"

Country Joe MacDonald and the Fish, singing at Woodstock

One of the displays from the game, shown here in a prototype version developed on the Macintosh

'NAM OFFENSIVE
Domark are due to launch 'Nam in.....Jan. '91

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PERSONAL ACCOUNTS
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The Battle of Long Tan, L.MacAulay, Arrow Books.
Let a Soldier Die, W.E.Holland, Corgi.
Despatches, M.Herr, Picador.

FILMS
Full Metal Jacket; Apocalypse Now; Hamburger Hill; Casualties of War; The Deer Hunter; The Green Berets (for a laugh)

VIETNAM – THE WHOLE SAD STORY

Von Clauswitz said that war is an extension of politics, and its tool. In Vietnam this was especially true. Both the major contestants in the war – North Vietnam and America – had political aims and these were not compatible with WW II style destruction of the enemy on the field of battle.

By the end, both the minor players became exhausted with the war – the VC in the Tet offensive and the ARVN in the offensives of 1972 and 1975. However, it never really was their war, their conflict was an insurgency. The real shooting war was between the North and America.

The North was ostensibly supporting the Viet Cong in their struggle to unite Vietnam. This had been going on since the French left after the Paris settlement of 1954. This agreement had split Vietnam, like Korea, into two halves. As had been the case in Germany and Korea, the West (especially America) were unwilling to see a free world ally 'go over' to the communists, and so shored up these countries, and accorded them respect as nations in their own right. The Communists, in turn, wanted to gather them into the fold.

BEFORE THE STORM

The Americans saw involvement in Vietnam as part of a crusade against Communist encroachment. This was a policy of 'containment.' Kennedy inspired a generation to 'bear any burden' in the name of freedom. It is, however, not difficult to put oneself into the communists shoes, and see the policy of 'containment' as a policy of 'rolling up communism.'

Kennedy's words became action as large numbers of American advisors and special forces poured into Vietnam in the Early 60's. When Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, his successor Johnson continued the policy. However, in late 1964, the Gulf of Tonkin incident provoked Congress into granting the President emergency war powers to punish North Vietnam for attacking American warships.

Early in the next year operation 'Rolling Thunder' began, which was a bombing campaign of the North, and in March of that year 2 battalions of US marines landed in Da Nang to protect the airfield there. These were the tremors that preceded the earthquake – very soon the American presence in Vietnam had grown to nearly half a million men.

1965 and 1966 were given over to the buildup of American forces in SE Asia. The Army was stretched to the limit to equip and train enough men to fight in the war without calling on its reserves - the National Guard, who were tasked to fill out the ranks of the army in war. They were not called upon until much later, and even then in limited numbers. In a way this typifies the American desire (for understandable reasons) to fight one war with half an army. The army that arrived was good, and well equipped, but short on numbers and lacking the political backing to press home their attacks in a conventional way. Instead they relied on technical fixes and artificial measures of victory. In 1967 all hell broke loose...

(Continued next month).

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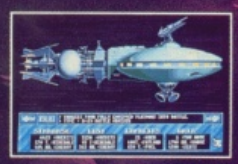

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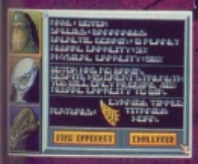

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Last month's Elite console compo lacked the vital address panel for entries! ACE eats silicon and prints it again...plus a special Pink competition where you not only get your say but can win a prize for saying it...

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The infamous ACE Crossward offers you a chance to practise your word-skills and win a prize into the bargain

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Dirk Longhorn with a view from the other side of the counter...

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Over the years ACE has consistently given gamesters the low down on entertainment technology. Check out the subjects we've covered in the past and make sure you're up to date

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Check out some Public Domain games with Mark Smiddy

Don't miss next month's continuation of our guide to 'Writing 'Nam'. The Pinks will be going into battle with Matthew Stibbe and coding the game, step by step...

ACE CHARTS

The ACE Charts give you the definitive list of top scoring games EVERY MONTH – as reviewed by ALL British games magazines.

Each month we print the top five games, as reviewed in the latest editions of computer magazines, for each of the main computer formats. Don't forget – because these charts are based on review ratings around the country, they make an excellent buyers' guide....

We also give prizes awa each month to anyone who can predict next month' entries. You can win up to £150 worth of software for your machine, so it's always worth exercising your vast knowledge of software market trend and submitting an entry.

Finally, we apologise YET AGAIN for the later delivery of Stockmarket prizes. This was caused partly by our high staff turnover during the last year – now a thing of the past, thank Heavens – and partly by difficulties in securing the correct products. By now EVERYONE should have received their prize or an alternative. If you haven't, please 'phone the Editor on 071 251 6222, Ext 2467 and we'll put things right, pronto!

Don't forget!
You can win a prize by predicting next month's charts and stockmarket entries. Turn the page for full details

AMIGA

Supremacy	Virgin	91.25
Kick Off 2	Anco	91.25
F19 Stealth Fighter	Microprose	91
Paradroid 90	Hewson	90.25
Operation Stealth	Delphine/US Gold	90.15

High quality Amiga chart this month, with just over a point separating the top five, and two very different games tying for first place - Virgin's rich and measured strategy game Supremacy, and Anco's highly playable soccer sim.

C64

Salamander	Hit Squad	93.5
Time Machine	Activision	92.34
Ivan 'Ironman' Stewart	Virgin	89.5
Nemesis	Hit Squad	88
Murder	US Gold	86.75

Five new titles in the C64 chart indicates there's a wealth of good software currently being released on this format. The top two titles even beat the Amiga on points.

AMSTRAD CPC

Stunt Car Racer	Micro Style	92.25
International 3D Tennis	Palace	82
Escape/Robot Monsters	Domark	81.08
Vendetta	System 3	76.67
Shadow Warriors	Ocean	74.75

Stunt Car is way ahead of the pack for the second month running, while the Palace wire-frame 3D format was always going to look good on a CPC.

IBM PC

Wonderland	Magnetic Scrolls	97.5
Silent Service II	Microprose	92.67
Ivan 'Ironman' Stewart	Virgin	87
Future Wars	Delphine/US Gold	85
Blockout	Rainbow Arts	84

Wonderland is a 'must' for any adventure fan who wants to see just how this genre has progressed from the old "Go north" days. Very detailed multi-window user interface, which will auto-map your explorations, and beautifully detailed graphics.

THE STOCKMARKET

In addition to our games charts, we also have a bit of fun with the figures each month when we produce the ACE Stockmarket. It's a list of the top 25 softcos as determined by the ratings their games are currently receiving. You can see their fortunes rising and falling in each issue...

We calculate the average mark that each publisher receives for every one of its games on each format and use this to calculate a rating for the company. This is the rating that you see in the second column below. So, for example, if the company is great at sourcing 16-bit games but botches up its 8-bit conversions, that will pull down the average mark, even if you can see one of its titles heading up the Amiga, ST or PC chart printed over the page. If all the games are excellent, or if the company has just one brilliant program doing the rounds at the moment, it will consequently have a high rating.

The third column, labelled '+ or -', shows you how much the publisher's score has improved (or deteriorated) compared to last month. A plus score here, and their games are getting better; a minus score means their games aren't doing as well as they were.

The last column shows how well a company's games have fared compared to the Software Index. This is simply a single figure that quotes the average review mark (expressed as a percentage) that all games, all formats, received in the time between last month's Stock Market and now. It's a quick guide to how good the current crop of titles is, and each company's Index score shows how well their games compare to the norm. For example, in this month's chart, Electronic Zoo's current titles are worth 9.33 percentage points above average - according to the industry's reviewers.

We print only the top 25 companies each month. In fact, we keep tabs on all of them, but you don't want to read through a list of over 100 names in every issue. The asterisks by Magnetic Scrolls and Prism's names indicate that it they are brand new entries to the Stock Market. Magnetic Scrolls has been a developer of some renown for several years, but new distributor Virgin is now giving the outfit its own label within the Virgin-Mastertronic stable.

PUBLISHER	SCORE	+/-	INDEX	Hewson	80.17	-2.73	7.57
*Magnetic Scrolls	97.5	n/a	24.9	Micro Style	79.71	-4.42	7.11
Rainbird	91.27	n/a	18.67	Palace	79.67	-0.33	7.07
Microprose	89.88	6.21	17.28	Psygnosis	79.3	n/a	6.7
Delphine	86.87	-6.13	14.27	Firebird	79.06	0.06	6.46
Cinemaware	86	n/a	13.4	Electronic Arts	78.83	-0.49	6.23
Anco	85.08	-1.42	12.48	*Prism	78.5	n/a	5.9
Kixx	85	12.5	12.4	Domark	77.53	-4.99	4.93
Virgin	84.14	8.08	11.54	Infogrames	77.11	-1.12	4.51
Core Design	82.67	-10.83	10.07	Software Business	76.63	-0.87	4.03
Electronic Zoo	81.93	6.09	9.33	Atlantis	76	n/a	3.4
Mindscape	81.07	11.19	8.47	Sierra	75.73	-4.73	3.13
Empire	80.5	n/a	7.9	Hit Squad	75.67	-2.56	3.07

WHAT THE FIGURES ABOVE MEAN...

First, of course, you've got the game. Then the software house and – in the last column – the average score (converted to a percentage with typical ACE precision to two decimal places) the game received in ALL reviews during the last month. Don't forget that the review ratings are taken from all UK magazines, not just ACE, so we don't necessarily agree with some of the judgements here, but all review ratings are, to a certain extent, subjective.

SPECTRUM AND ST CHARTS OPPOSITE

HOW TO ENTER

STEP ONE

Find a postcard. Enter you name and address, a daytime telephone number if you have one, and the Round Number.

STEP TWO

Tell us your age and which machine you own. Just in case you win!

STEP THREE

Examine this month's charts. Then, using your knowledge of the games scene, try to predict which games will come top of the six machine specific charts. Finally, enter on your postcard:

- the top game for the Spectrum
- the top game for the C64
- the top game for the CPC's
- the top game for the IBM PC
- the top game for the Amiga
- the top game for the ST

YOU DON'T HAVE TO ENTER A SUGGESTION FOR EVERY MACHINE! But remember that your chances of winning may increase if you do.

STEP FOUR (OPTIONAL)

You can also try to predict which company will be at the top of next month's Stockmarket listing (see this page). Enter on the card:
'The top softco will be...(name of company)'

STEP FIVE (OPTIONAL)

If you want to go for the jackpot £150 prize, then select any of the previous categories and try to predict the top FIVE entries for next month instead of just the top one. Then tell us which category you're predicting for – it can be either the Stockmarket or any of the machine categories in Step Three. REMEMBER – YOU CAN ONLY SUBMIT **ONE** JACKPOT CATEGORY!

STEP SIX

Post the card (WITH a stamp!) to us to arrive not later than the closing date for this round (31st October). The address is:

ACE Stockmarket
30-32 Farringdon Lane
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Dozens have won prizes – perhaps you'll be lucky this time!

THIS IS ROUND 12

Each month's competition has a round number so that we can correctly identiry entries. You MUST include the round number on your postcard otherwise your entry may not be processed correctly.

THE RULES

- All entries must be received by October 31st 1990.
- No employees of EMAP, or of any company involved in the production, distribution, or sale of ACE Magazine are eligible for entry.
- Only one entry per household. Proof of posting not held as proof of delivery.
- We cannot undertake to deliver specific software titles as prizes, but rest assured that we will make every effort to ensure that the games get the adrenalin pumping!

ATARI ST

Operation Stealth	**Delphine/US Gold**	**90.67**
Kick Off 2	**Anco**	**90.63**
Their Finest Hour	**US Gold**	**90.25**
Cadaver	**Image Works**	**88.67**
Vaxine	**US Gold**	**88.17**

Operation Stealth has knocked Kick Off 2 off the top spot this month in a closely fought ST chart. We reckon you haven't heard the last of Cadaver either.

SPECTRUM

Time Machine	**Activision**	**91**
Matchday II	**Ocean**	**83.75**
Shadow Warriors	**Ocean**	**81.67**
Escape/Robot Monsters	**Domark**	**80.5**
Hostages	**Infogrames**	**79.75**

Time Machine zooms in at the top, and although Robot Monsters' ratings have tailed off a bit (from 89.5 last month), it's still hanging on in there.

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HARD SELL

Want to splash out on a games machine? Check out this month's console guide for full details of the machines currently available.

There's good news and bad news this month. Sadly, we no longerbelieve we can justify including the Konix in our console listing.On the good side, however, we've got three new entries: the fabulous SNK, plus the Amstrad and Commodore 8-bit machines.

Supplier telephone numbers are their own unless PR agencies are available. As a general rule, however, your local dealer should be the first place to start asking questions.

We've also provided some Star Ratings for each machine, but as with all ratings they should be taken into account along with your own needs and preferences. The more stars the better.

AMSTRAD GX4000

Package: GX4000 console, 2 controllers and *Burning Rubber* game.
Memory: 64K
Processor: Z80A
Price: £99
Contact: Amstrad 0782 566344

IN BRIEF
Amstrad have partly gone up the Commodore path, but have wisely taken the opportunity to upgrade the hardware. The palette is increased, with multitasking hardware scrolling and 16 hardware sprites increasing to 32 with interrupt tricks. Unfortunately the sound chip is the same old tinny one used in the CPCs, albeit in stereo - you can't have everything, I suppose. While some software houses express reservations of the machine being a success outside Europe (and hence reticent about committing support to it), many are working on titles for the machine.

GRAPHICS
Resolution: Same as Amstrad CPC.
Palette: 4096
Colours: 32
TV: Yes.
Monitor Output: Yes.
Monitor Supplied: No.
Monitor Options: SCART, Amstrad socket.
Sprites: 16, 32 with hardware interrupts.
Speed: Pretty good for 8-bit technology.

SOUND
Speaker Quality: Depends on TV/monitor.
MIDI: No.
Stereo Output: Yes.
Performance: Unimpressive 3 channel chip as on old CPCs, but now runs independently of main processor.

HARDWARE
Joystick: 2 game controllers supplied.
Ports: Monitor/TV ports, stereo headphone socket, 3 joystick ports (2 digital, 1 analogue).

SOFTWARE
Existing Software Base: Very small.
Current Releases: Plenty of releases due any time now.
Games: Arcade
Prospects: Very good, with several software houses working on titles.
Software Loading: Instant

BUYLINES
Best Buy Price: As RRP.
Second Hand Availability: None as yet.
Maintenance: One year guarantee.

STAR RATINGS
Graphics: ★★★
Sound: ★★★
Expansion: ★★
Overall: ★★★★

ATARI LYNX

Package: Lynx with *California Games* pack
Memory: 64K
Processor: 6502
Price: £149.95
Contact: Atari 071 388 9871

IN BRIEF
The Lynx was designed by a team including RJ Mical, one of the men behind the Amiga. If that doesn't convince you consider it runs a fast 6502, has 8Mb of game storage on its cards and supports multi-player games. The graphics hardware has built in hardware scrolling and image scaling. Software is a little thin at the moment but bound to increase during 1990. Although not officially available yet in the UK, the Lynx is widely available from distributors.

GRAPHICS
Resolution: 160 x 102
Palette: 4096
Colours: 16
TV: No
Monitor Output: No
Monitor Supplied: Yes - 3.5 inch backlit colour LCD
Monitor Options: None
Sprites: Special graphics hardware effectively treats ALL screen objects as sprites!
Speed: Fast

SOUND
Speaker Quality: Very good
MIDI: No
Stereo Output: Yes
Performance: 4 channel, 5 octave stereo sound has to be heard to be believed.

HARDWARE
Joystick: 4 way joypad.
Ports: Cartridge port; multi-player port; miniature stereo headphone jack.

SOFTWARE
Existing Software Base: Very small.
Current Releases: *California Games* is a great freebie.
Prospects: Uncertain.
Software Loading: Almost instant.

BUYLINES
Best Buy Price: As RRP
Second Hand Availability: Very few
Maintenance: One year's guarantee.

STAR RATINGS
Graphics: ★★★★★
Sound: ★★★★★
Expansion: ★
Overall: ★★

ATARI VCS

Processor: 6507 (2600)/6502 (7800)
Recommended Retail Price: VCS2600 £39.99; VCS7800 £79.99
Contact: Atari 071 388 9871

IN BRIEF
The VCS2600 is a reboxed version of the original Atari games console which until a couple of years ago remained the best selling home video games system of all time. The VCS7800 is a revamped version of the VCS2600 with a faster processor, slightly better sound and vastly improved graphics.

GRAPHICS
Resolution: 192 x 160 (2600); 320 x 242 (7800)
Palette: 16 (2600)/256 (7800)
Colours: 4 (2600)/16 (7800)
TV: Yes
Monitor Output: No
Monitor Supplied: No
Monitor Options: No
Sprites: N/A/64
Speed: Slow

SOUND
Speaker Quality: Depends on TV
MIDI: No
Stereo Output: No
Performance: Limited to 1 channel on 2600 and two on 7800.

HARDWARE
Joystick: Supplied
Ports: 2 x 9 pin D for joysticks; TV; cartridge port.

SOFTWARE
Existing Software Base: Small
Current Releases: Rare
Games: A few
Prospects: Unsure in the light of new competition from Japan.
Software Loading: Instant

BUYLINES
Best Buy Price: As RRP.
Second Hand Availability: Worth looking
Maintenance: One year's guarantee.

STAR RATINGS

	2600	7800
Graphics:	★	★★
Sound:	★	★★
Expansion:	None	None
Overall:	★	★★

C64 GAMES SYSTEM

Package: Console unit, controller and 4 games (*Klax, Fiendish Freddy, Flimbo's Quest* and *International Soccer*).
Memory: 64K
Processor: 6502
Price: £99.99
Contact: Commodore 0628 770088

IN BRIEF
Take a Commodore C64 computer, remove the keyboard and stick it in an unattractive slab of a box and what have you got? A "new" console! It's an unusual move, but with the clout of Commodore behind it, it just might work.

GRAPHICS
Resolution: 160 x 200 in multi-colour mode.
Palette: 16
Colours: 16
TV: Yes
Monitor Output: Yes
Monitor Supplied: No
Monitor Options: RGB
Sprites: 8
Speed: Slow CPU, helped out by custom graphics and sound chips.

SOUND
Speaker Quality: Depends on TV/monitor
MIDI: No

Stereo Output: No
Performance: 3 channel SAM - one of the best 8-bit sound chips.

HARDWARE
Joystick: Joypad supplied.
Ports: None

SOFTWARE
Existing Software Base: Potentially huge, but small at the moment. Commodore anticipate around 100 titles by Xmas.
Current Releases: Plenty forthcoming from various software houses.
Games: Arcade
Prospects: Uncertain. Do people really want a console version of an ageing, though admittedly good, computer? Software support is likely to be pretty good for a while at least.
Software Loading: Instant.

BUYLINES
Best Buy Price: As RRP.
Second Hand Availability: None
Maintenance: One year guarantee.

STAR RATINGS
Graphics: ★★★
Sound: ★★★
Expansion: ★
Overall: ★★

NINTENDO NES

Standard version - console, plus game controllers plus 1 game (*Super Mario Brothers* or *Turtles*); Action Set comes with Zapper gun, *Duck Hunt*, and *Super Mario*
Recommended Retail Price: Standard model £80; Deluxe model £100
Contact: Deighton PR 071-836 2973

IN BRIEF
The world's largest selling console, largely because of the playability of some of its games rather than its hardware specification, which is 8-bit average. Better supported now in the UK than it used to be.

GRAPHICS
Resolution: 256 x 240
Palette: 52
Colours: 16
TV: Yes
Monitor Output: No
Monitor Supplied: No
Monitor Options: None
Sprites: N/A
Speed: Average

SOUND
Speaker Quality: N/A
Stereo Output: No
Performance: Average

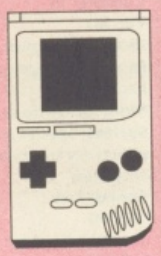
HARDWARE
Joystick/Mouse: 2 dedicated controllers supplied. IR wireless controllers with 30ft range now available for £39.95.

SOFTWARE
Existing Software Base: Around 50 titles available here. Many more available in Japan but these require a converter to run.
Current Releases: Nintendo predict about 2-3 titles per month.
Prospects: In the UK, improving due to increased support – but this is yesterday's technology.
Software Loading: Instant

BUYLINES
Best Buy Price: As RRP.
Second Hand Availability: A few.
Maintenance: One year's guarantee. Faulty machines return to dealer.

STAR RATINGS
Graphics: ★★★
Sound: ★★
Expansion: ★★★★
Overall: ★★★

NINTENDO GAMEBOY



Package: Main unit + 1 game (*Tetris*)
Memory: 64Kbit (8K bytes)
Processor: Custom 8 bit
Price: £69.99.
Contact: Deighton PR 01-836 2973

IN BRIEF
Nintendo were the first company to produce a dedicated handheld console and now it seems everyone wants to get in on the act. On reflection even the Game Boy was a long time coming since the technology employed by the display is starting to look dated. Not to be dismissed simply because of mono graphics – this machine has some superb titles and the two-player link-up option has tremendous potential.

GRAPHICS
Resolution: N/A
Colours: 2 (monochrome)
Monitor Supplied: Yes - LCD display is lit by ambient light.
Sprites: Information not available
Speed: Fast for what it is.

SOUND
Speaker Quality: Depends on headphones.
Stereo Output: Yes
Performance: Plays a lot better than it looks.

HARDWARE
Keyboard: Select and Start + 2 option buttons.
Joystick: Single 8 way controller.
Ports: Headphone socket;dual-machine interface.

SOFTWARE
Existing Software Base: The best for any handheld.
Current Releases: Increasing
Games: Arcade and puzzle-type.
Prospects: Excellent
Software Loading: Instant

BUYLINES
Best Buy Price: As RRP
Second Hand Availability: None.
Maintenance: Grey imported machines rarely have any real warranty. UK machines have 1 year warranty

STAR RATINGS
Graphics: ★★★
Sound: ★★★★
Expansion: Dual machine interface has lots of potential.
Overall: ★★★★★

NEC PC ENGINE

Package: PC Engine + controller and 1 game
Memory: 64K internal + 8K video; 2 - 128K internal 32K video
Processor: 8 bit custom
Price: N/A (US price around $199)
Contact: Local dealers

IN BRIEF
Sadly, it now seems unlikely that this machine will ever be officially supported by NEC in the UK. It's CD-ROM add-on drive is now the largest selling CD unit on the market and is responsible for much of the recent increase in CD development. There's also a sixteen bit version, vastly more powerful, called the Turbographx, but this is only rarely available through importers and at a price – usually around £300. NEC also have a handheld version of the Engine which is software compatible with its larger brother.

GRAPHICS
Resolution: 256 x 216
Palette: 512 (Tgx. - 1024)
Colours: 32 - 16 background and 16 shared by sprites.
TV: Yes
Monitor Output: N/A
Monitor Supplied: No
Monitor Options: N/A
Sprites: 64 (Tgx. - 128)
Speed: Very fast considering this is an 8 bit!

SOUND
Speaker Quality: Depends on monitor.
MIDI: No
Stereo Output: Yes
Performance: 6 channel stereo

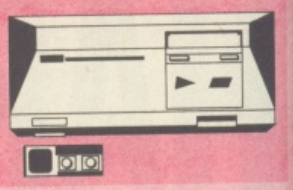
HARDWARE
Disk Format: CD ROM at extra cost.
Disk Price: Read-only so N/A
Disk Performance: Superb - the CD ROM adds a new dimension.
Joystick: Supplied with dedicated controller.

SOFTWARE
Existing Software Base: Large
Current Releases: Increasing.
Games: Almost exclusively arcade.
Prospects: Good.
Software Loading: Cartridge is instant; CD OK.

BUYLINES
Best Buy Price: Currently grey import.
Second Hand Availability: V Rare
Maintenance: Watch out - grey imported machines rarely have any real warranty.

STAR RATINGS
Graphics: ★★★★
Sound: ★★★★
Expansion: ★★★★
Overall: ★★★★

SEGA MASTER



Package: Console using cartridge or smart card plus game controller and 1 game (*Alex Kidd in Miracle World*).
Recommended Retail Price: £79.99; £99.95 (+light gun); £129.95 (+ light gun and 3D glasses).
Contact: Virgin Mastertronic 071-727 8070

IN BRIEF
Japanese software base is not as good as Nintendo's but more titles reach UK. Mastertronic have given good support to the machine so the prospects look good. Like the Nintendo, however, this 8-bit machine uses established but dated technology.

GRAPHICS
Resolution: 256 x 192
Palette: 64
Colours: 16
TV: Yes
Monitor: No

SOUND
Speaker Quality: Depends on TV.
Performance: 3 channels.

HARDWARE
Joystick: Game controller supplied.

SOFTWARE
Existing Software Base: Very good.
Current Releases: Good
Games: All arcade
Prospects: As good as any 8-bit console.
Software Loading: Instant.

BUYLINES
Best Buy Price: As RRP
Second Hand Availability: Some
Maintenance: One year's guarantee. Faulty machines return to dealer.

STAR RATINGS
Graphics: ★★★
Sound: ★★★
Expansion: ★★★
Overall: ★★★

SEGA MEGADRIVE

Package: Megadrive, controller, and *Altered Beast*
Memory: 74K main + 64K video
Processor: 68000 + Z80B
Price: £189.99.

Contact: Virgin Mastertronic 071-727 8070

IN BRIEF
Excellent example of the new 16-bit console technologies. The first decent 16-bit console to receive official support in the UK.

GRAPHICS
Resolution: 320 x 224
Palette: 512
Colours: 64
TV: Yes
Monitor: No
Sprites: 80
Speed: Very fast

SOUND
Speaker Quality: N/A
MIDI: No
Stereo Output: Yes
Performance: 12 channel stereo sound is produced by a custom FM chip and sounds fantastic.

HARDWARE
Joystick: Dedicated controller supplied.

SOFTWARE
Existing Software Base: Poor
Current Releases: Few in UK at present
Games: All arcade
Prospects: Very good.
Software Loading: Instant

BUYLINES
Best Buy Price: As RRP
Second Hand Availability: N/A
Maintenance: One year on UK machines.

STAR RATINGS
Graphics: ★★★★★
Sound: ★★★★★
Expansion: ★★★
Overall: ★★★★★

SNK NEO-GEO

Package: Console unit and controller unit.
Memory: 64K work RAM, 64K video RAM
Processor: 68000 + Z80A support.
Price: £399

Contact: Active Sales 081 752 0260

IN BRIEF
Technically the most advanced console currently available, the games are of arcade quality, with huge sprites and excellent sound, although the current crop of games are not totally astounding in regards to their gameplay. The game cartridges can store up to 330 Mbits of data, but this is reflected in their price - £199.99! All is not lost, since Active Sales intend to launch a club where members can rent software for £25 a month. Definitely the system to have if you want to pose, and to be very poor!

GRAPHICS
Resolution: Arcade quality.
Palette: 65536
Colours: 4096
TV: Yes
Monitor Output: Yes
Monitor Supplied: No
Monitor Options: RGB, SCART
Sprites: 380
Speed: Remarkable

SOUND
Speaker Quality: Depends on TV/monitor
MIDI: No
Stereo Output: Yes
Performance: 13 channel stereo.

HARDWARE
Joystick: Supplied, second available for around £70.
Ports: Walkman socket

SOFTWARE
Existing Software Base: Just 8 titles at present.
Current Releases: 4 more planned by the end of the year.
Games: Arcade.
Prospects: Uncertain, but the members' club could help swing chance in its favour.
Software Loading: Instant.

BUYLINES
Best Buy Price: As RRP.
Second Hand Availability: None as yet.
Maintenance: 1 year guarantee.

STAR RATINGS
Graphics: ★★★★★
Sound: ★★★★★
Expansion: ★
Overall: ★★★★

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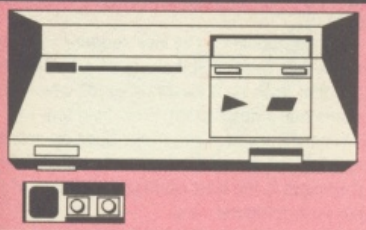
SEGA MASTER



Plenty of new games are being developed on the Sega Master System thanks to the multitude of European third party software deals signed in recent months. US Gold and Mirrorsoft are two of the top software companies currently producing Sega Master System titles.

The impressive USG Sega Master line-up includes *Gauntlet, Impossible Mission, Leaderboard, Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, Paperboy* and *Heroes of the Lance. Gauntlet* and *Impossible Mission* were favourably reviewed in the last issue of ACE.

Meanwhile, Mirrorsoft is converting *Back to the Future II, Xenon II* and *Speedball* onto the Sega Master System.

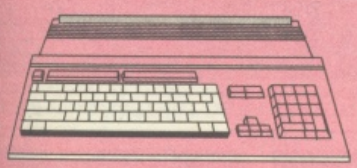
Back to the Future Part II is based around the film of the same name. "The plot of *Back to the Future II* offers terrific scope for a classic game," says Mirrorsoft. "Having sorted out his present in the original film, the hero Marty now has to travel into the future – 2015 to be precise – and influence the lives of his children. However, while in the future he finds an almanac which lists all the sporting results of the last century. Tempted to use this almanac to place bets in the present on sure fire winners he is talked out of altering his destiny by his mentor Doc. But his arch enemy Bif is not so scrupulous and using the Delorean time machine gives the book to his father in 1955 in order to ensure a cushy life for himself. Thus Marty is then in a mad race against time to retrieve the almanac and ensure that past and present unfold in the way they were preordained."

"*Xenon* was regarded by many as the definitive 16-bit shoot'em-up," states Mirrorsoft, "but the Bitmap Brothers achieved the impossible and came up with *Xenon II - Megablast* which stuns everyone with the calibre of its graphics, it's surprising special effects and it's very hot soundtrack." Now Mirrorsoft is converting this baby and another Bitmap Brothers game, *Speedball*, onto the Sega Master System. *Xenon II* on the Amiga was a vertically-scrolling shoot'em-up with a full-screen three-layer parallax scroll and the Megablast (13th Precinct Hip Hop) Mix by Bomb the Bass. The Bitmap Brothers took original samples from Bomb the Bass and incorporated the soundtrack into the game.

Do you have any hints, tips, cheats or maps for any game on the Sega Master System? If you do, send them to us at: **SEGA MASTER ACE LINES, ACE MAGAZINE, EMAP IMAGES, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU.**

● Rik Haynes

AMIGA



Phew! What a show! In case you didn't know (and how could you not), the Computer Entertainment Show (previously known as the PC Leisure Show) has just been and gone. I was pleased to see that just about every stand running 16-bit software on demo used an Amiga in preference to the ST, confirming its position as THE 16-bit machine to have.

My award, for what it's worth, to best stand at the Show goes to Virgin Mastertronic – and they also win the prize for the best poster: as you came up the escalator the first thing you saw was a painting of Judge Dredd from the comic 2000 AD roughing up something that wasn't Turtle-y unrecognisable!

JD, of course, is now appearing in a Virgin game, which looked nice enough and had recognisable sprites but seemed to be just another multidirectional scrolling shoot-'em-up. Their stand also featured the conversion of the arcade hit Golden Axe, which I was very impressed with - who needs a Megadrive with ports like this?

Other games of note are *Flip-It and Magnose* from Mirrorsoft (a simultaneous two player platform affair that I think could be a surprise hit – I played a pre-prod version at Mirrorsoft and found it extremely easy to get into and very playable), and *Powermonger* from Electronic Arts (I know, I know, we keep going on about it at ACE but it really is excellent). *Wing Commander* from Mindscape is apparently on the way – if ever there was a space game destined for Amiga stardom, this has to be it – but I'm a bit concerned about the fact that they'll be porting it from a PC original..

At the Show I eventually staggered onto Commodore's stand. I glanced up and saw umpteen video monitors proudly boasting the presence and capabilities of the CD-TV. "It's really here", I thought, and sought out its physical form. After a quick search I found it – behind a glass screen, the only indications that it was more than a balsa mock-up being a green power light and a digital VCR-like clock on the front.

Commodore apparently intend the CD-TV to be released in the Spring of 1991, with around 25-30 software titles ready for its launch by such software houses as Domark and Gremlin. Also Commodore are distributing 2000 pre-production CD-TVs to various institutes for thorough pre-launch testing. If anyone at Commodore is reading, I'm perfectly willing to sacrifice some of my spare time to give the system the once-over! The bad news, however, is that the adaptor for Amiga owners to give us CDTV compatibility is going to be a long time in coming.

AMOS, the blisteringly fast graphics handling BASIC from Mandarin Software, is becoming a vital purchase for those with even the faintest interest in programming. Mandarin's Chris Payne told me that since the release in June the program has sold just under 25000 copies – very impressive for a utility.

Chris also told me that they have just released Version 1.2 of AMOS. This corrects the bugs and speeds up some of the routines (as if they weren't fast enough already!). An upgrade program is being released into the public domain, so owners of the old version should keep a look out for it at their local PD stockists.

On demo at the Show was the 3D solid graphics handler called, imaginatively, AMOS 3D. It was written by one of the guys who programmed *Xiphos*, and is impressively fast. The final product, released around Xmas, will come complete with the main program, three games, an object editor and a manual for £39.99. To implement you simply move the AMOS 3D program into the original AMOS folder, boot up, and - voila! - it's installed, as simple as that. Also forthcoming in the New Year is a compiler for around the same price. This, I am promised, will compile ALL AMOS commands, unlike some compilers I know of, and will on average double the speed of your programs.

To end with, a question. Why aren't there more isometric 3D jump 'n' dodge games like *Knight Lore* and *Head Over Heels* on the Amiga? The recent *Treasure Trap* and the very old *Airball* are the only ones I can think of (*Cadaver* doesn't really count as it's more of a graphic adventure). I used to love that style of game – surely there must be others who feel the same?

● Sam Vickers

SEGA MEGADRIVE

Well, the CES has come and gone, leaving in its wake a trail of goodies. No, I'm not talking about the masses of journalists collapsed in drunken heaps all around Earls Court. I'm talking about something much closer to our hearts – the official UK launch of the SEGA Megadrive. How was it received? In the words of Lesley Walker from Sega UK, "Very, very, very, very, very well indeed". The huge crowd of budding Megadrive owners crowded around the Virgin stand at the show was an encouraging and heartwarming sight for both Sega and anyone interested in buying one, as this kind of support in these early days obviously bodes for a strong market indeed, which naturally ensues cheaper machines and huge software support. As it is, Sega forecast over 14000 units will be sold between now and Christmas. Interestingly enough, when we liaised with Sega concerning the competition elsewhere in this column, they were unable to give us any software as prizes for the simple reason that all the software they had has already been sold, and any software now being shipped in has to be sent out to cope with the intense demand. Has there ever been such keen interest in a machine? To our minds, only the launch of the ZX Spectrum back in 1982, and even that was nowhere close to this sort of demand.

Speaking of software, which with any new machine is the key to early success, you'll all be interested to know that 14 titles are planned, including *Altered Beast*, which is packaged free with the machine. Price point for the new software lies between £29.99 and £39.99, a not too unreasonable demand, especially when compared to the £60 price tag on imported titles for the grey machine. Sega plan to release titles at the rate of two a month, which in all honesty, isn't a hell of a lot. Sega plan to use external third party developers, such as EA, but whether these companies will be producing and marketing their own product remains to be seen. News on that front next issue.

I've received positively stacks of mail this month inquiring whether any of the existing imported titles are to be converted, as well as many other titles. I'm sorry to say that this month I can't tell you, as Sega don't seem to know themselves. The entire software future of the Megadrive is shrouded in all sorts of mysterious meetings, and fingers crossed next issue we'll be able to reveal all.

For grey import owners, you may be interested to know that this month sees the long awaited appearances of *Strider* and *Atomic Robokid*. *Strider*, as you all know, sees you as Matt Strider, super tough athlete, running, leaping and cartwheeling your way through a multitude of four way scrolling levels, facing such adversaries as mutated slugs, and a court jury that come together to form a huge dragon. Looks pretty hot to us.

Atomic Robokid is the lovable story about the lovable little robot that looks like Dusty Bin with guns that goes on a lovable crusade where he causes mass destruction. Featuring four way push scrolling and some rather huge sprites, it's one to watch out for. And of course, there'll be full reviews in the next exciting installment of your fave computer rave.

SEGA MEGA COMPO

The Megadrive has to be the name on any clued dude's lips this month, and to let the world know that you know what's going down, you've got to dress right. We've teamed up with Sega to offer three, yes three lucky readers the opportunity to be the talk of the town with almost complete top to toe Megadrive outfits comprising of caps, attractive long sleeve T-shirts, extremely limited edition Sega laces, badges and a nice Sega holdall to, erm, hold it all when you're not wearing it. What do you have to do to be one of the practically-holy trinity? Answer this simple question. In the UK, SEGA's 16-bit console is known as the Megadrive. What monicker is it known by elsewhere?

Answers on a postcard, along with your name and address, to: MEGADRIVE ACE LINES COMPO, ACE MAGAZINE, EMAP IMAGES, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU.

● Tony Dillon

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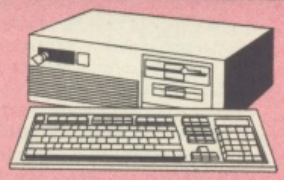

Let's kick off with some game news, and in particular with a new phenomenon: the simultaneous (and apparently coincidental) appearance of a number of games bearing a remarkable resemblance to one another.

In his excellent book, *Adventures In The Screen Trade*, screenwriter William Goldman refers to a similar occurrence in the movie business, where a successful feature is usually followed quickly by a rash of lookalikes (by the way, try to get your hands on a copy of this book – apart from being entertaining, it's a real eye-opener as to the way things are done in Hollywood).

However, in *Silver Screensville*, these lookalikes only follow a film that's been phenomenally successful – here we have two groups of apparently closely-related games, neither of which are really cashing in on any previous success.

The first group encompasses three polygon-based 3D driving games: Mindscape's *4D Sports Driving*, Accolade's *Test Drive III* and *Crash Course* from Spectrum HoloByte. All three of these are similar in style to Domark's *Hard Drivin'* – but surely that game wasn't such a huge success as to inspire this flurry of activity.

I'm as yet unable to comment on which one will be the most worthy of your perusal: I've only seen *Test Drive III* running at the CES show and had a quick glimpse at Mindscape's effort, but I haven't really had a chance to take any one of them for a test spin. It looks as though the first to get their particular motor into the showrooms will have an uncatchable head start.

The other group of close relations takes in two flight simulators, both based around Russia's aviation hardware (at least it makes a change from the usual American flying F-words).

The first of these to appear will be Electronic Arts' *Stormovik*, which promises to allow the user to pilot the Sukhoi SU-25 Stormovik, this is apparently "the Soviet Union's toughest battle-proven ground attack aircraft". On the other hand, Domark's *MiG-29 Fulcrum* is a simulation of – wait for it – "the Soviet Union's most advanced front line attack fighter aircraft".

Both simulations have been put together with some degree of Soviet assistance – EA says that theirs is "the first flight simulator from the Soviet perspective", while Domark's is allegedly "the world's first ever Glasnost flight simulator".

I suppose that ultimately, it all comes down to whether you'd prefer to be battle-proven or most advanced. Either way, you can make your choice towards the end of the year, as EA's effort is due out later this month and Domark's shouldn't be too far behind. Personally, I would advise potential purchasers to wait until both products are on the shelves before making a decision.

SOFT TALKING

And all of this talk of flight simulation leads us nicely back to where we came in. Last month I mentioned Bob Sidgwick and his Bristol-based company, RC Simulations. Bob's dream is to produce the closest thing to real flight, using little more than standard PC hardware and his unstoppable imagination.

So far, using Microsoft's *Flight Simulator v4.0* (or, when he's more combat minded, one of MicroProse's latest fly-boys), a Maxx yoke (which is in effect a pilot's joystick) and a set of foot pedals, he's come as close as I've seen to simulating the effects and sensations of really flying - hold your right thumb up in the air and place your forefinger about quarter of an inch away from it... that's how close he's got.

In addition to all of this, Bob's taken two peripherals which were originally devised for use with word processing and other office-type computer uses and incorporated them into his system. The Covox Voice Master is a headset and software arrangement which allows the user to communicate with the PC through spoken commands. That's right folks, you can now unleash those Sidewinders by simply shouting 'fire'. And while you're at it, another Covox gizmo, the Speech Thing will even allow the machine to reply to your commands – you say 'gear' and the machine will respond with 'landing gear up' or whatever.

Those of you who came along to last month's Computer Entertainment Show at Earls Court may have seen Bob demonstrating this set-up on the RC Simulations stand. However, if you didn't, and would like to learn a little more about the whole thing, give Bob a call on 0272 550900.

Right, that's about it for this month. Tune in again next time and we'll take a look at what's available in the rapidly-expanding world of budget MS-Dos based software. Does cheap necessarily mean nasty? There's only one way to find out... see you next month.

• Ciaran Brennan

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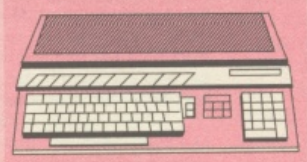

The Computer Entertainment Show is a bit like heavy drinking – great fun at the time but you develop a huge headache, become very tired and dry and the next day you can't remember a bloody thing that happened. The memory loss in the CES's case is not for the lack of good software, but rather for the surfeit of it. There's so much that eventually it all cancels out!

The biggest surprise (and the biggest disappointment, from my point of view) of the Show was the lack of an Atari stand, and I know several people who feel the same way. The Atari spokesman, Peter Walker, told me that from Atari's point of view, while they endorse the idea of a show, they felt the venue (Earls Court) and the timing to be "unsuitable".

Quite frankly, this has to be rubbish. OK, so Earl's Court isn't the best place to be, but the timing couldn't have been better – from our point of view, though perhaps not from Atari's. And Earl's Court didn't stop Commodore from putting on a grand display.

However, those who want to see the latest Atari products "in the flesh" may be interested to hear about Atari's "Whistle Stop Tour '90". The first ever tour of its kind, Atari fans will be able to visit a promotional train packed exclusively with Atari computers stopping at Bristol, Manchester, Leeds, Newcastle, Glasgow and Birmingham

Visitors will be able to get involved in technical workshops, see product demonstrations, chat to an advice bureau, meet celebrities and enter competitions. Several third party companies, such as Mirrorsoft and Microdeal, and various User Groups are heavily involved. The entrance is free, and it should be worth visiting for the novelty value alone. Those wanting more info should contact Atari PR on 071 388 9871.

Plug over, back to the Computer Entertainment Show, and new software in particular. Ubisoft are a France-based company whose games in my opinion, while always gorgeous graphically and sonically, have been less interesting gameplay wise. This may well change if my first impressions of their new title *B.A.T.* are anything to go by.

B.A.T. is an RPG adventure, already previewed in ACE 33) set in the 22nd Century. The evil genius Vrangor (you always feel like you've heard these names before somewhere, don't you?) is threatening to destroy the planet Selenia if he cannot control it. Unfortunately Selenia is the source of Khegol, an energy matter that makes space travel possible. Whoever controls Selenia, controls the galaxy.

You play an agent of the goody goody B.A.T. (Bureau of Astral Troubleshooters), who has to eliminate Vrangor and bring peace (ah!) to the Universe. Again. Okay, so the scenario may not be that special (in fact it bears several similarities to Frank Herbert's book Dune) but the presentation certainly is. It's the nearest I've seem to a Hyper game (like the Macintosh game Cosmic Osmo) on one of the popular home micros.

Every location is depicted in beautiful detail, and moving your mouse pointer over the screen you can interact with certain features of the scene. For example, move the pointer over a subway entrance and it will change into a down arrow. Click and you'll move to the subway location. Alternatively move the pointer over a smartcard slot on the wall and it changes to a hand holding a card. Click and your card (assuming you have one) is inserted. It's all very simple and intuitive.

Interestingly, purchasers will receive a hardware add-on to plug into the Atari's cartridge slot that gives the machine 16 channel sound! The down side of this is that the game will cost £10 more than the usual Atari games. Ubisoft intend to use this add-on with future games, though you'll be pleased to know that two versions will produced, one with and one without the add-on, so you won't have to pay for it twice. Look out for a full ACE review in a future issue.

Are Atari really about to enter the console arena and slug it out with the big bad boys of Sega and Nintendo? Well, if the rumours are true, yes. Apparently Atari may launch an ST-based console early next year, with the 68000 CPU running at 12MHz and 4096 colours on screen for around £200 - we're talking about an SNK Neo-Geo beater here!

And the name of this little beauty? Well, Atari's excellent handheld is called a Lynx, so big daddy's called... the Panther! If the rumoured specs and price are correct, then it really will be one wild cat. Atari, as usual, are keeping pretty tightlipped and will neither confirm or deny the possibility if the console. All we can do is it sit and wait. If I hear any more news, you'll be the first to hear about it.

One comment before I go - where are all your letters? With all the STers out there I thought at least one of you would write in! Put away Kick Off 2 for ten minutes (no-one said this would be easy) and get pen to paper. You know it makes sense. Bye for another month.

● James Cogan

GAMEBOY

It's officially here! The world's favourite handheld console was officially launched into the UK last month – via the Hard Rock cafe, London's up-market burger bar. "The ultimate new travel accessory for the man and girl about town, Gameboy allows players to take the fun and challenge of the TV-linked Nintendo console anywhere... on a miniature screen," says Nintendo's PR agency.

"After the ubiquitous Walkman, which entered the language in the eighties, Gameboy adds a new dimension to portable entertainment and is sure to become a familiar sight on tubes and trains, boats and planes." Not a very original sales pitch is it!

"The stylish compact video game system, with a library of interchangeable game paks, has a 2.5" screen, cross key joy pad and stereo earphones. At £69.99, Gameboy comes complete with the *Tetris* cartridge, a compulsive building block puzzle game, and a video link cable for head-to-head competition."

Serif, UK sales and marketing agent for Nintendo, says: "we anticipate a rush for Gameboy in the run-up to Christmas as handheld (or 'palm-top') game machines become the new craze for today's style-conscious youth."

"With international end-year sales of 11 million units, Gameboy is the leader in the new wave of handheld machines. Gameboy features a library of interchangeable game cartridges, detailed graphics on a dot matrix screen as well as stereo digital sound. Game titles, for players of all ages and skill levels include *Tetris*, *Tennis*, *Golf*, *Super Mario Land*, *Qix* and *Solar Striker*. Gameboy software retails at £19.99 each."

You can now buy Gameboy gear at Dixons, Currys, Rumbelows, Woolworths, Virgin and other major retailers.

THE FIRST 40 PASSCODES TO MICKEY MOUSE

Level	Code	Level	Code	Level	Code
1	SSSS	2	SZWS	3	ZS2S
4	ZZPS	5	SW3S	6	SXES
7	ZW4S	8	ZX9S	9	WSRS
10	WZFS	11	XSJS	12	XZKS
13	WWMS	14	WXCS	15	XWAS
16	XXOS	17	S2SZ	18	STWZ
19	Z22Z	20	ZTPZ	21	SP3Z
22	SYEZ	23	ZP4Z	24	ZY9Z
25	W2RZ	26	WTFZ	27	X2JZ
28	X2KZ	29	WPMZ	30	WYCZ
31	WPAZ	32	XYOZ	33	2SSW
34	2ZWW	35	TS2W	36	TZPW
37	2E3W	38	2XEW	39	TW4W
40	TX9W				

TOP TEN TITLES

What are the ACE team's favourite Gameboy titles? These are the ten games that Garry Williams (publisher of ACE and well-known Arsenal supporter) plays, with an explanation of why he thinks they're so good...

1) BATMAN

"Very much like *Super Mario Land* but with enough extras to make it special. Killing Jack is difficult (shoot him six times in the head), but getting past the second part of the batwing stage is for experts only. This game is a must."

2) TETRIS

"Say no more. Pick it up, you won't put it down. Head to head *Tetris* will become an official Olympic sport."

3) SUPER MARIO LAND

"Not the most addictive member of the Mario family, but a good two weeks worth of play in it. Watch out for a surprise when you've think you've finished the final screen – you haven't!"

4) REVENGE OF THE GATOR

"Be careful, there are two versions of Pinball available. Settle for nothing less than the *Gator* version. The bonus level with the dinasaur eggs is great fun."

5) TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

"About the only decent beat'em-up on the Gameboy, beware of most of the kung-fu games as they're ponderously slow and repetitive."

6) SNOOPY

"The return of cute games, 120 levels of fun. Not as addictive as *Tetris*, but you can stop and return to the game by entering a code."

7) QIX

"Too difficult to describe, but if you want a weird puzzler this is your boy."

8) TENNIS

"Persevere with this game. Once you've got the ability to swerve and smash the ball, and you can get to the net, you're unbeatable – except for the lob (a real bastard shot)."

9) BEACH VOLLEY

"Ocean's home coin-op version available to play on the bus."

10) ALLEYWAY

"One of the many *Breakout* clones, frightingly addictive but needs a level entry code system. By the time you've got to level 16 you don't want to be starting again at level 1."

WRITE ON AND SEND IN

What are your favourite Gameboy games? Have you got any hints, tips or maps for any Gameboy titles? What's your hi-score on the latest Gameboy releases? Share your expertise and knowledge with your fellow Gameboy players by writing to us at: **GAMEBOY ACE LINES, ACE MAGAZINE, EMAP IMAGES, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU.**

● Rik Haynes

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C64/128

Many Commodore 64 owners may have been a little disappointed by the lack of specific titles at the recent Computer Entertainment Show. The main buzz undoubtedly focused around consoles and 16-bit machines, leaving 8-bit owners somewhat out in the cold. Does this signal the final admission by software houses that the 8-bits are fading fast? Why is it that the industry as a whole seems to be pandering towards the more technically advanced machines and ignoring the already huge 8-bit user base? Obviously advancements have to be made, but at the expense of a market which has existed for so many more years?

A spokesman from Probe Software, (the team responsible for the forthcoming Turtles Licence in addition to numerous arcade conversions) said that from their point of view the C64 is "still quite buoyant... the market is stable. Probe will be supporting the 64 with high quality software in forthcoming months." Probe also revealed that Commodore are about to ship a large quantity of product to Eastern Bloc countries, in the hope of establishing a new user base to ensure that the 8-bit machines remain current. Considering the state of many Eastern Bloc economies however, the success of this venture remains to be seen...

However one swallow does not a summer make (I think), and with that in mind, more opinions were sought...

David Birch, speaking on behalf of C64 supremos Thalamus, said immediately that he feels there are "too many 64 users for the machine to be let down." With that in mind, Thalamus are to continue their excellent track-record with Armalyte II (the original qualifying as probably the best 8-bit blast EVER), Creatures and Summer Camp, (the latter two titles are both cutesy games with CREATURES in particular looking superb).

Although going on to say that the "market is generally heading towards 16-bit and consoles", David believes that "as a progressive move... the C64 console is an excellent idea, although it will have little if any impact on current owners". To this end, Thalamus will also be releasing two game cartridge versions of all their previous titles. Still looking positive isn't it... on to System 3.

Although essentially presenting the same argument as both previous companies, stating their full continued support of the original machine, System 3 went on to say that the advent of the C64 console is a far from negative thing, being a company that has had more than its fair share of lost revenue due to piracy. Although this may seem a little mercenary from the point of the user, I as a C64 owner myself, am inclined to agree. Thus, whilst the trusty brown box is far from defunct, the degree to which piracy has progressed may in itself be responsible for somewhat discouraging companies away from the more traditional storage media, and onto the cartridge. Now comes the twist in the tale....

The last company to be verbally assaulted were Palace software, previously responsible for such C64 mega-games as the Cauldron duo, The Sacred Armour of Antiriad, Barbarians 1 and 2 and more recently, 3-D International Tennis, something of a breakthrough in 3-D programming.

Yes, you guessed it, exactly the same response as the other companies. This would hardly seem to toll the death knell for all you C64 user would it? Or would it? A spokesman from Palace stated that although the 64 has far from reached its limits, there appears to be very little original product about. Although rather a sweeping statement, I am yet again inclined to agree. More specifically - "the more creative programmers tend to prefer to use the 16-bit machines simply because of greater capability." In somewhat surprising support of this statement, Palace do not plan to release any further 8-bit product "at this point in time." Before all you C64 owners cry betrayal, it was then made clear that this is not a policy decision, rather that the programmers who proffer their wares to the company are genuinely more 16-bit specific.

However, rather than round off on something of a negative note, Palace did announce that in a recent poll calculated by Gallup from information gathered by ELSPA, (regarding software sales), the faithful Commodore 64 came second only to the mighty Amiga!

Now, it's plug time. The powers that be at EMAP have decided to put together the definitive guide to the Commodore 64. Hopefully it will be an "all you need to know and more" guide to both hardware and software aspects of the machine - it looks to be a one off so be sure to keep yours eyes peeled.

Please, please, please.... We would still like to hear from any C64 enthusiasts who feel that there is something to say, that we at ACE haven't already said. Any would be contributors please write to the usual address and who knows, your big break into fame could come sooner than you'd have thought!!

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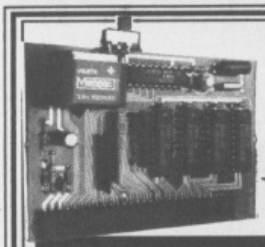

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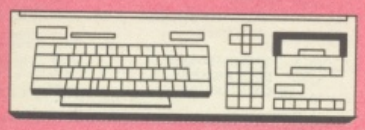


Last month's column, although touting the name CPC seemed to concentrate rather more on the new GX4000. Well, fret no more, this month sees the rectification of that blatant disregard, and thanks to those users who inspired and contributed towards the column.

To kick off, let me introduce you to a group of people dedicated to furthering the cause of us Amstrad owners – the United Amstrad User Group. What they offer, is a bi-monthly magazine (CPC User), containing news, reviews, technical assistance and comps amongst a wealth of other things, in addition to both Public Domain, and reference book libraries. At present, the yearly fee for these facilities stands at a measly £7.00.

In further explanation of the library facilities, the PD library is split into two sections. The first of these is cassette based, consisting of three tapes available for the price of just 4 first class stamps, and from which you may copy anything that takes your fancy. The second part of the PD library is on disk only, and is quite extensive, so for a fee, U.A.U.G will copy entire disks or specific files to your own media. The book library works on the same basis as a public library, its primary use to the user being that you are able to check out a book you may wish to buy, or cannot locate in shops. Sample copies of the magazine are available for £1.50 from the address specified previously.

TAME THE GAME

Next up, some cheats tips and multiface pokes for both oldies and the more recent titles. First off, we have P-47 Thunderbolt:

LEVEL ONE - THE TRAIN

The bombs are the last power-up before the arrival of the train. Whatever you do, DON'T miss these. Wait until the last few carriages are visible, go to the top of the screen approximately half an inch from the far right and you should find yourself safe from harm – bombs away!

LEVEL TWO - THE BOMBER

Whichever power-ups you collect on this level, try to ensure that you do not have the bombs when reaching the end of level as to use these properly, you need to be above the bomber. The safest tactic is to remain below the bomber as far as you can. Note however, that when the bomber explodes, it drops like a lead-balloon so be sure to move quickly.

LEVEL THREE - THE TANK

Once again, the best weapon to use here, are the bombs. Due to the fact that the tank keeps moving however, you are unlikely to find a safe place to sit, so fast reflexes are the order of the day. One method is to sit just above the tank to the far right of the screen, dodging between bullets and bombing for all you're worth.

LEVEL FOUR - THE BATTLESHIP

Bombs, bombs and more bombs. Fly the length of the ship and then return backwards, bombing all the while. and not forgetting to avoid the other aircraft. When the scrolling halts, make a bee-line for the top right hand corner and bomb like mad. (Incidentally, entering ZEBEDEE into the high-score table gives you infinite lives...)

VINDICATOR

The passwords for levels two and three of this Ocean game are (respectively) OPPENHEIMER and LENOLAGAY

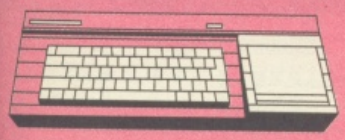
That's all the tips for now, but I'd just like to wind this column up on something of a bitter note. For far too long the CPC has been neglected by software houses, looking upon it as a machine of inferior capability and as such, support in recent months has been in my opinion, minimal. Sure, there have been plenty of conversions, but only from companies who release software right across the board in an attempt to clean-up revenue wise. I can accept the fact that this may be so for most (if not all) of the 8-bit machines, but to my mind, the CPC has suffered the most. Amstrad's launch of the 464 plus will, I feel, do little to further the cause in that it will undoubtedly be brushed aside by many as "just another Amstrad machine", especially in the face of the 16-bit and console boom.

Sad as this may be to neglected Amstrad owners, my case in point was proven only recently when, upon 'phoning several software houses to enquire about future CPC releases, I was met with the general consensus that the Amstrad has all but disappeared and that "we have no plans to produce any further software for this range...!"

All I can say to this, is that it seems a shame that when a machine that has widespread public support is technologically superceeded, it is thought of as all but defunct! This is most definitely not a sleeping dog that can be left to lie. Letters of rage and demands of retribution please. Speak up all you CPC owners! Write to me at the usual ACE address with your comments hints, tips and requests for features on the Amstrad range. Thank you in anticipation.

● Alex Ruranski

SPECTRUM



The Spectrum is dead! Long live the Spectrum. A brand new user of technology seems to be slowly taking over in the computer market. They are not using it to learn to program. They do not see the machine as an educational tool. They are pure game players. They want bigger, better and faster games. Can the Spectrum hold out in what seems to be a marketplace fight between David and Goliath?

Home computing really began way back in February of 1980 with the launch of Sir Clive's Sinclair ZX80 which found its way into the home under the guise of an electronic hobbyist's project in a kit form whereby your £79.95 bought you all the components needed to build it yourself. This strange marketing made the Sinclair ZX80 the first sub £100 computer – and brought computers out of their specialist scientific home and directly into the hands of the public. Mainly due to the popularisation of home technology by the only computer company name that is recognised by young and old alike – the Sinclair Spectrum.

The Sinclair ZX80 had 1K of RAM, no graphics or sound and had just a rudimentary Sinclair Basic programming language. But it captured people's imaginations and the rest, as they say, is history.

The ZX81 was in the shops by Christmas and sold over 450,000 before the machine was replaced by the ZX Spectrum.

With an already phenomenal and loyal user base, the ZX Spectrum and its descendants have found their way into over five million homes today, with an estimated active user base of 250000. So why has the software market started to shy away from the Spectrum? Most software houses now write games on PC's or Amigas and port programs down through the ST and sometimes, when they feel a product may be right for the 8-bit market, onto the Amstrad's, C64's and Spectrums and in the process sometimes make poor decisions in doing so.

Part of the problem is actually more to do with the people that write the games. Programmers who wrote good games on the Spectrum are generally gobbled up by the 16-bit world. And for good reason. Ex-Spectrum programmers had to develop incredible ways to save memory – from self erasing code to cramming code into areas of memory that were never meant to be used. They took the Spectrum way beyond its original limits. It's for this reason that most of them have now been lured away from the Spectrum to utilise their talents in the lucrative 16 bit markets. This has lead to very few games being originated on the Spectrum and has led, arguably to a decline in the overall standard of games available with a few notable exceptions.

And it's rare that the notable exceptions do notably better in sales than games that are surrounded with industry hype. So many games now seem to be the product of piggy back marketing with the big money going into buying licences of the film, of the video, of the arcade game of the pie. Maybe part of the supposed decline of the Spectrum is more to with the way the money for research and development for Spectrum is spent. It seems, in some cases, to be getting smaller pieces of the R&D pie.

Spectrum games still sell in vast quantities and will continue to do so as long as people buy the machine. If anyone destroys the Spectrum the accusing finger should be pointed at the software houses, not at the Spectrum which continues to provide a solid and inexpensive introduction to the world of computer games.

This poor cousin attitude to 8-bits, is due, apparently they say, to the demise of the Spectrum et al. But is it? Only eight months ago we saw MicroStyle's Stunt Car Racer come onto the market. The 16-bit versions of the game, with their customised sound chips and half meg memories, were actually poor cousins to the Spectrum and C64 versions with their so-called poor graphics and tiny memory.

There's a strong money motivation for software houses to concentrate on 16 bit but it's always nice to see that the big houses like Ocean, US Gold, Domark and the kings of the 8 bit-budget the Codemasters still make games for the Spectrum and have no plans to move to 16 bit only, as they believe that a market that has more Spectrums in it than the Amiga and Atari St combined still has a rosy future. And by that they mean they can make money and as long as there is money to be made, there will always be someone there – making money from selling games that people want.

Send your Spectrum game comments, tips and cheats to: SPECTRUM ACE LINES, ACE MAGAZINE, EMAP IMAGES, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU.

● Garth Sumpter

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DOUBLE STRIKE!

Yes! TWO competitions! First, because of a production error in last month's issue, we've giving you another chance to enter the Elite Console compo... The entry form is at the bottom of the page – and here's the low-down...

If you're console crazy, or just console curious, Elite have offered to launch the new Pink Pages by very generously giving away one each of ALL the major console machines. This is an opportunity you just can't miss to grab some of the neatest buzzboxes you can get your hands on.

What's more, it couldn't be easier. All you have to is fill in the form below, answering the questions. No trick questions, no strings attached – just tell Elite what you think and they'll enter your entry in a prize draw for one of the following machines:

Sega Master System, Sega Megadrive, Nintendo NES System, Nintendo Gameboy, and Atari Lynx.

HERE'S WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO...

1. Select which machine you would like to win.
THEN...
2. In no more than 25 words tell us why you chose this machine.
THEN...
3. Rate from 1st to 3rd choice which of the following titles you and your friends would like to see converted for your chosen machine:-
(A) *Space Ace*
(B) *Dragon's Lair*
(C) *Paperboy*
(D) *Robocop*
(E) *Hard Drivin'*
(F) *Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles*
(G) *Kick-Off*
(H) *Frank Bruno's Boxing*
THEN...
4. Cut out the coupon and post it to the following address:
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ALL ENTRIES WILL GO INTO A PRIZE DRAW TO BE HELD 31st OCTOBER 1990.
Deadline for receipt of entries is the morning of that day. Those of you who have already sent entries either to Elite or to ACE can rest assured that they WILL be included in the draw.

ELITE CONSOLE CRAZE COMPO FORM

My choice of machine should I win is (tick one): Sega Master System ❑ Sega Megadrive ❑ Nintendo Entertainment System ❑ Nintendo Gameboy ❑ Atari Lynx ❑

My name: .....
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Why I chose the machine ticked above (in no more than 25 words)
.....
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My three choices of game are: (enter letters identifying game in list):
1.....
2.....
3.....
(A) *Space Ace* (B) *Dragon's Lair* (C) *Paperboy* (D) *Robocop* (E) *Hard Drivin'* (F) *Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles* (G) *Kick-Off* (H) *Frank Bruno's Boxing*

PINKY COMPO

We want to know what you think about the all new pink pages in ACE? If you give us the info, you could win a special software prize worth £25! So start thinking and get writing...Just grab a postcard and send it to us with your name, address, and machine format, together with your answers to the following questions:

1. What's your favourite section in the Pink Pages?
2. What's your least favourite section?
3. What would you like to see most in the Pink Pages?
4. List five games you think should be included in our Great Games Classics of All Time listing, to be printed for this Christmas.

Send your card to ACE Pinks Questions Compo, Priory Court, Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU. The first five solutions out of the hat on 31st October will get the prizes.

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ACE DIARY

OCTOBER

7-13 OCTOBER SOFTWARE RELEASES

Demonware: *Oops Up* (Amiga £24.95). Arcade/puzzle-style game with soundtrack from the recent Snap hit.

Krisalis: *Rogue Trooper* (ST, Amiga £24.99). Shoot 'em up featuring the 2000AD comic character.

Vulture Publishing: *ProSoccer 2190* (ST, Amiga £19.99). Soccer simulation, 22nd century style.

Electronic Zoo: *Subbuteo* (Spectrum, C64, CPC tape £9.99, disk £14.99, ST, Amiga, PC £24.99). Table top soccer conversion, developed for Zoo by Goliath Games.

Ocean: *Battle Command* (ST, Amiga, PC £TBA). Long awaited sequel to Rainbird's *Carrier Command*, featuring air and land combat.

***Billy the Kid* (ST, Amiga, PC £TBA). Original game developed by Level 9: interactive movie style game set in the Wild West.**

***Plotting* (Spectrum £9.99 tape, £14.99 disk; C64, CPC cartridge; ST, Amiga £TBA). Block puzzle game with construction kit to create your own screens.**

Audiogenic: *Helter Skelter* (Spectrum, C64, CPC £9.99 tape, £10.99 disk; ST, Amiga £9.99). Re-released platform game.

***Loopz* (Spectrum, C64, CPC £9.99 tape; ST, Amiga £24.99). Puzzler, reviewed in this issue.**

***Emlyn Hughes Trivia Quiz* (Spectrum, C64, CPC £10.99; ST, Amiga £24.99). Squeaky Emlyn introduces over 2,000 questions on various topics.**

Domark: *Spy Who Loved Me* (Spectrum, C64, CPC £9.99 tape, £14.99 disk, ST, Amiga £24.99, PC £29.99). Latest game in the long-running James Bond series.

***Paradroid 90* (ST, Amiga £24.99). Andrew Braybrook's updated version of the space shoot 'em up.**

Sunday 7
East Germany, the German Democratic Republic, was formed on this day in 1949. Fifty one years later...
Monday 8
Tuesday 9
Independence Day, Uganda
Wednesday 10
Thursday 11
Friday 12
Saturday 13

14-20 OCTOBER SOFTWARE RELEASES

Ocean: *Nightbreed* – the arcade action game. (Spectrum, C64, CPC £9.99 tape, £14.99 disk, ST, Amiga £19.99). Kick and dodge game from the Clive Barker novel Cabal and now Nightbreed, the movie, featuring a cast of grotesques.

US Gold/Delphine: *Cruise for a Corpse* (ST, Amiga £24.99) Agatha Christie style mystery, using Cinematique interface.

Rainbird: *Betrayal* (PC £34.99, ST, Amiga, C64 £29.99) *UMS II* (PC, Mac £34.99, ST, Amiga £29.99). Upgraded version of acclaimed war simulation from 18 months back.

Hewson: *Onslaught* (PC £24.99). Role-playing adventure. *Future Basketball* (ST, Amiga £24.99). Basketball with weapons. *Stormlord* (PC £24.99).

Domark: *Wheels of Fire* (Spectrum, C64, CPC £14.99 tape, £19.99 disk, ST, Amiga £29.99). Driving compilation featuring *Chase HQ, Turbo Outrun, Power Drift* and Domark's own *Hard Drivin'*.

Accolade: *Altered Destiny* (Amiga £24.99) *Stratego* (ST, Amiga £24.99, C64, Spectrum, CPC £9.99 tape, £16.99 disk). *Gunboat* (Amiga £24.99, Spectrum, CPC £9.99 tape, £16.99 disk) *Star Control* (C64, Spectrum, CPC £9.99 tape, £16.99 disk, ST £24.99). *Elvira, Mistress of the Dark* (PC £29.99). US horror queen in spooky arcade-adventure.

Sunday 14
National Day, Madagascar
Monday 15
Tuesday 16
Wednesday 17
Thursday 18
Friday 19
Saturday 20
Birthday of Ian Rush, 1961

21-27 OCTOBER SOFTWARE RELEASES

Mindscape: *Tracon 2* (PC £44.99). Air Traffic Control sim with new airports and multi-player features. *Captive* (ST, Amiga, ST). Tony Crowther 16-bit game – imagine *Dungeon Master* crossed with *Populous*. *The Ultimate Ride* (PC, ST, Amiga). By Chris Grey who did *Fiendish Freddy*, same style, same humour. *Skid Marks* (PC, ST, Amiga). Driving game by team which did *Duel* and *Test Drive*. *3D Boxing* (PC, ST, Amiga). Also from the *Duel/Test Drive* stable.

Virgin: Ivan 'Ironman' Stewart's *Super Off Road Racer* (Spectrum, C64, CPC £10.99 tape, £14.99 disk; ST, Amiga, PC £24.99). Four wheel drive dirty track racing against the clock and various opponents.

Virgin: *Zork 1, Planetfall, Wishbringer, Leather Goddesses of Phobos, Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (ST, Amiga, PC £9.99 each). Welcome re-release for these classic Infocom adventures.

***Monty Python* (Spectrum, C64, CPC £9.99 tape, £14.99 disk; ST, Amiga £19.99, PC £24.99). Surreal platform-style game which neatly captures the Pythonesque atmosphere.**

***Judge Dredd* (Spectrum, C64, CPC £9.99 tape, £14.99 disk; ST, Amiga £19.99). Patrol Mega City One the only way Judge Dredd can in this platform-based game.**

Psygnosis: *Carthage* (Amiga £24.99). Arcade/strategy game set in the Carthage of the Roman Empire.

Psygnosis: *Nitro* (ST, Amiga £24.99). Road racing over four different courses.

Psyclapse: *Matrix Marauders* (ST £19.99). Futuristic racing over nine different tracks.

Micro Style: *Rick Dangerous II* (PC £24.99, ST, Amiga £24.99, Spectrum, C64, CPC £9.99 tape, £14.99 disk). *Simulcra* (ST, Amiga £24.99). Fast 3D shoot 'em up.

Demonware: The Power (Amiga £24.95). More puzzles, played to musical backing from the no. 1 hit record.

Innerprise: *Time Guardian* (Amiga £24.95). Time travel-based shoot 'em up.

***Battle Squadron* (ST, plus special STE version £19.95). Shoot 'em up; STE version features hardware scrolling and stereo sound.**

Electronic Arts/Interplay: *Dragon Wars* (Amiga)

Electronic Arts: *Powermonger* (ST, Amiga £29.99). Set up your own civilisation in uncharted territory in this much-heralded game from *Populous* development team Bullfrog.

Sunday 21
Monday 22
Tuesday 23
Wednesday 24
Independence Day, Zambia
Thursday 25
St Crispin's Day - patron saint of shoemakers and leather workers.
Friday 26
National Day, Iran National Day, Austria
Saturday 27
Clocks go BACK one hour at 2.00am Sunday morning. That's an extra hour in bed.

28 OCT- 3 NOV SOFTWARE RELEASES

Microprose: *Covert Action*

Electronic Zoo: *Xiphos* (ST, Amiga, PC £24.99). Latest program to tap into the *Elite* space trading/shoot 'em up genre. Action is set across five universes, in large 3D graphics.

Audiogenic: *Exterminator* (Spectrum, C64, CPC £9.99; ST, Amiga £24.99). Coin-op conversion.

Magnetic Scrolls: *Wonderland* (PC £34.99). Adventure based on Lewis Carroll's classic Alice books, with a truly innovative multi-window user interface and beautiful illustrations.

Blade: *Laser Squad* (PC £24.99). Strategy game.

Oxford Softworks: *Chess Champion* (PC £29.95). *Go* (ST, Amiga, PC £24.95). Version of ancient Chinese board game. *Backgammon Royale* (ST, Amiga, PC £24.95).

Software Business: *Bomber Bob* (Amiga £24.95). Wacky shoot 'em up.

THE ACE DIARY CONTINUES ON PAGE 149

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ACE DIARY

Sunday 28
Monday 29
Republic Day, Turkey Bank Holiday (Republic of Ireland only)
Tuesday 30
Wednesday 31

NOVEMBER

Thursday 1
Anniversary of the Revolution Day, Algeria
Friday 2
Anniversary of the opening of M1, London to Birmingham, in 1959.
Saturday 3
Independence Day, Panama
Sunday 4
All Formats Computer Fair takes place at New Horticultural Hall, London SW1.
Monday 5
Guy Fawkes Night.
Tuesday 6
Computer Graphics exhibition opens at Alexandra Palace, London N22. State of the art graphics and animation show.
Wednesday 7
Anniversary of the October Revolution Day, Russia Computer Graphics show continues. Mac User Show opens at Olympia, London W8. Continues until November 10.
Thursday 8
Anniversary of the first British album charts, printed in Melody Maker. The first number one album was the film track from the musical South Pacific. Final day of the Computer Graphics show.
Friday 9
National Day, Cambodia. Act abolishing capital punishment in Britain cam e into force on this day in 1965. Alternative Micro and Electronics show opens at the Staffordshire Show Centre, Staffs. Show/bazaar for hobbyists and electronics enthusiasts.

3 - 9 NOVEMBER SOFTWARE RELEASES

Ocean: *Total Recall* (Spectrum, C64, CPC £9.99 tape, £14.99 disk, ST, Amiga £19.99). Futuristic shoot 'em up from the Arnie film.

***Pang* (Spectrum £9.99 tape, £14.99 disk; ST, Amiga, PC £19.99). Cutie arcade game in *Rainbow Islands, NZ Story* style, reviewed in this issue of ACE.**

***Puzznic* (ST, Amiga £19.99). Eliminate colour/symbol coded blocks from the screen – another of those infuriating puzzle games. Will it be better than *Loopz*?**

Blade: *Lords of Chaos* (ST, Amiga £19.99, PC £24.99). Strategy/role-playing from the Laser Squad team.

LET THE DIARY EDITOR KNOW!

Don't forget that the ACE Diary is not just here to tell you about CES, Christmas, and the next General Election – it's also here to publish details of YOUR forthcoming event, however small, however esoteric. If you're up to something and want people to attend, the ACE Diary will help get them there – and you don't have to pay a penny (though space is sometimes limited).

For example, if you live in Tamworth or nearby, what are you doing on Saturday 1st December? Because...

"...I am running a show at the Tamworth Arts Centre on Saturday 1st December called the 8-Bit Micro Show. It caters for Spectrum, C64, C16, +4, VIC 20, MSX, Electron, SAM Coupe, and Amstrad CPC. It costs a reasonable 50p to get in and runs from 9.30am to 4.30pm.

Food and drink will be sold and everyone who attends will get a free programme. There will be about 20 stands at the show. TURBO, the SAM Coupe magazine will be the re along with Kwazy Soft, Tamsoft, and many others. Mostly selling games, showing demos, utilities, back issues of Turbo, and PD Software for the C64, Speccy, and SAM Coupe...'

Thanks for that info from Adrian Betts...Further information if you need it from The 8-Bit Micro Show, 8 Healey, Lakeside, Tamworth, Staffs, B77 2RF

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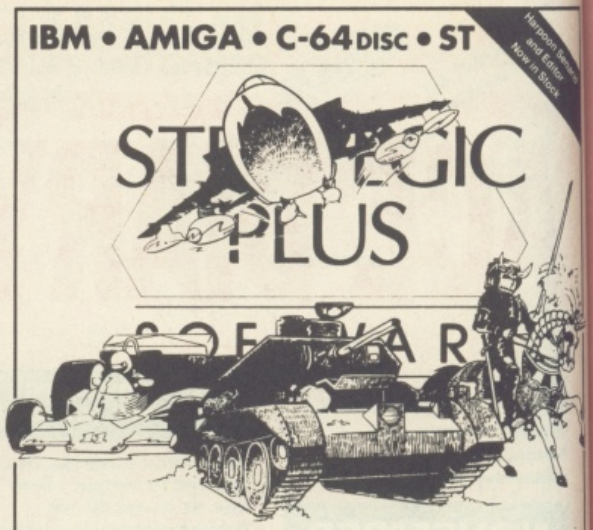

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HOT OFF THE SHELF

***Hot Off The Shelf* pinpoints those games that are on the shelves NOW and are worth your discriminating attention. The ACE Classics column, which pinpoints Great Games of All Time, is now due out next month – our apologies for the delay, but see the compo on p124**

ANTHEADS
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★ **ACE RATING 902**

CAPTIVE
Mindscape • Atari ST/STE £24.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk • PC £29.99dk
Another in the ever expanding number of RPG's portrayed using first-person perspective. Captive, programmed by the veteran Tony Crowther pits you against hordes of rampaging aliens, with nothing but a briefcase at your disposal! This briefcase however, contains a computer giving you remote-control over a four-droid team, with which you must free yourself from the fotress where you are imprisoned. Excellent bitmapped graphics, atmospheric realtime stereo sound and a total of 65000 levels to explore place Captive very much in the ACE rated bracket.
★ **ACE RATING 930**

CHAOS STRIKES BACK
FTL/Mirrorsoft • Atari ST £24.99 • Amiga TBA
The long awaited sequel to *Dungeon Master*. If you have already played through the first program you can use your existing characters, otherwise there is another hall of mirrors you can select from. Chaos has a similar feel to *Dungeon Master*, but is much tougher. There are also some new features thrown in, like a character editor and help oracle (very handy). If you haven't played *Dungeon Master* then play that first before making a definite date with this game.
★ **ACE RATING 945**

CONQUEROR
Rainbow Arts • Atari ST £19.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk • PC £24.99dk
An arcade style tank sim which makes use of a 3D graphics system based around the one David Braben developed for *Zarch*. There are three types of game available: arcade, attrition, and strategy. All three are best played with two joysticks *Battlezone* style, but there are enough control options to suit every set-up. A definite buy for tank buffs.
★ **ACE RATING 925**

CORPORATION
Core Design • Atari ST £24.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk • PC £29.99
This role-playing cybernetic extravaganza from CORE pushes the limits of previous RPG's just that bit further. Corporation is a 3-D exploration, puzzle-orientated arcade combat game (?) in the mould made traditional by the original Dungeon Master RPG. Your objective is to find and remove an embryo belonging to the ultimate biogenetic killing machine, bred by the UCC Corp. Light-source shaded raphics and sound of film-like quality, along with excellent playability and an intuitive control method all contributed in pushing Corporation over the 900 mark.
★ **ACE RATING 945**

DAMOCLES
Novagen • Atari ST £24.95dk • Amiga £24.95dk • PC TBA
This unusual combination of flight sim and adventure game, and sequel to the well-received *Mercenary*, has been in development for a couple of years now, but the resulting game has been worth the wait. The wireframe graphics of the original game have been replaced by solid 3D vector graphics, but they are just as fast. There are now nine planets to explore instead of one city, so there is plenty of long term challenge here.
★ **ACE RATING 935**

F-19 STEALTH FIGHTER
Microprose • Atari ST £29.99dk • Amiga £29.99dk • PC £39.99dk
A program that could well be described as the Flight Simulator's Flight Simulator. The PC version has enjoyed much success since its launca year ago, and now it's brothers on the ST and Amiga look set to do the same. The sim is based around the much talked about (or perhaps that be whispered about) Stealth Fighter. It boasts four huge sceanrios with hundreds of missions, and plenty of detail. If you are looking for the definitive flight sim, then you can't go far wrong with this one.
★ **ACE RATING 935**

FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER
Mirrorsoft/Spectrum Holobyte • Atari ST £??.?? • Amiga £??.?? • PC £??.??
From the people who brought you the superb *Falcon* comes yet another world beating flight simulation. It is based on the book of the same name by Steven Coonts and has you flying either an Intruder or a Phantom on bombing and reconaissance missions over vietnam. The simulator iery strong on features, including a superb (if a little unrealistic) auto-pilot option.
★ **ACE RATING 910**

FUTURE WARS
Palace • Atari ST £24.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk • PC TBA
A totally mouse-driven graphic adventure from French developers Delphine. You are cast as a mild-mannered office window cleaner who gets caught up in an alien plot to conquer Earth in the 43rd century. The graphics and background music are very striking and the game is made very accessible by the lack of text entry. There is enough of a challenge here to keep most adventurers happy for some time. A delightful game.
★ **ACE RATING 910**

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GRAVITY
Imageworks • Atari ST £24.95dk • Amiga £24.95dk • PC TBA
Deep space strategy unlike anything you've ever seen before. The universe is being invaded by the alien outies who are attempting to turn all the suns in the universe into black holes. Meanwhile you must create as many inhabitable systems as possible. The game makes use of the principle of Einstein-Minkowski fourspace – this makes for some very unusual graphics. When you add programmable drones and travel via black holes you have yourself a highly original and compelling game.
★ **ACE RATING 930**

HARPOON
Mirrorsoft/PSS • PC £29.99dk
Quite simply the best naval simulation to be released for the General Public. The battleset that comes with the game deals with East-West conflict in the North Sea, but other battlesets will be available soon. A clever system of three map types is used to effectively manage each mission. The nice thing about *Harpoon* is that the computer takes care of all the boring mechanics, allowing you to concentrate on broad tactics. A must buy for anyone interested in modern navel warfare.
★ **ACE RATING 940**

INDIANAPOLIS 500
Electronic Arts • PC £24.95
The ultimate racing game. *Indy 500* uses state of the art solid vector graphics which really add something to the high speed action. As in Activision's *Bomber* there are a variety of out-of-cockpit views to select from. the realistic handling of the cars will have you coming back to this game time and time again.
★ **ACE RATING 935**

INTERPHASE
Imageworks • Atari ST £24.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk • PC £24.99dk
Your task is to guide a female saboteur to the heart of the Dreamtrack Corporation by interacting with a strange 3D environment. The game is very weird and very compelling. It is also very hard – don't expect to get through this one in a hurry.
★ **ACE RATING 915**

KNIGHTS OF LEGEND
Origin/Mindscape • PC £29.99dk
Role Playing at its best. An expandable game set in the land of Ashtelarea. There are twenty-four quests to complete, or you can simply enjoy exploring. The program stands out because of its attention to detail. There are no less than forty different algorithms to decide how and when an enemy retreats for instance. Impressive stuff.
★ **ACE RATING 945**

LOTUS TURBO ESPRIT
Gremlin • ST £TBA • Amiga £TBA
The latest hot new endorsment from Gremlin in the shape of Lotus Turbo Esprit, is something of a godsend for speed freaks. Hailing back to the classic Pit Stop II, LTE allows head to head action with the use of split screen display. Sound and graphics are of a very high quality and implemented excellently. It's very fast, certainly furious and guaranteed to keep your palms sweaty and your teeth gritted.
★ **ACE RATING 875**

M1 TANK PLATOON
Microprose • PC £39.95dk
The ultimate tank sim. Not only are there realistic 3D vector graphic sequences with a hell of a lot of atmosphere, but you also have to think carefully about choice of platoons, men, and the way you tackle each scenario. Microprose had to call on the Freedom of Information Act to get all the information that they needed for the game. The result is one of the most frighteningly accurate tank sims we've seen.
★ **ACE RATING 926**

MIDWINTER
Microprose • Atari ST £29.99dk
The latest mega hit from top programmer Mike Singleton, creator of *Lords of Midnight*. The game is set on a frozen island in the future. Your task is to recruit members of the Peace Force to fight off General Masters' invasion force. This is done by managing people and resources via a series of Fractal Maps and menus. The game has disappointing sound, but nice 3D graphics, and enough solid gameplay to keep you going for months.
★ **ACE RATING 948**

MYTH
System 3 • C64 £9.99cs £14.99dk • Spectrum £9.99cs £14.99dk
The game that pushes the C64 and Spectrum further than they have ever been before. Fight your way through several time zones to reach the ultimate confrontation with the

god Dameron. The game is captivating not only because of it's size and depth but also because of the superbly animated sprites and sheer playability.

★ **ACE RATING 925**

OPERATION THUNDERBOLT

Ocean • Atari ST £19.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk • Spectrum £9.99cs • Amstrad £9.99cs • C64 £9.99cs

Eminently successful conversion of the hot coin-op hit *Operation Wolf*. Grab your Uzi and shoot your way through hordes of terrorists to rescue the luckless hostages. There are new 3D scenarios this time to add to the frantic lead spitting of the original. Best played with a light gun, but a mouse will suffice if you don't have one. Joystick or keyboard controls don't really cope however.

★ **ACE RATING 927**

PANG

Ocean • Amiga £TBA • ST £TBA • PC £TBA • C64/128 £TBA • Spectrum48/128 £TBA

This unlikely mish-mash of space invaders and asteroids makes it to the home computer in all its arcade glory. Bursting bubbles over 50 screens around 17 countries throughout the World, provides for addictive, compelling arcade fun. Excellent quality graphics and sound, and slick presentation make PANG indistinguishable from its arcade counterpart. Go on... burst a bubble!

★ **ACE RATING 840**

PGA TOUR GOLF

Electronic Arts • PC £24.99

Well, what can I say? For anyone who's never set eyes on a golf sim, this is one. Four accurately modelled courses and a wealth of options provide for a comprehensive and playable game. Each course is has been designed for the proffesional player, so fortunately there's a driving range to allow you to practice that swing. Features such as course maps, percentage range indicators and a 3-D display of the green showing every pit and ridge all contribute in pushing PGA GOLF into the ACE Rated category.

★ **ACE RATING 910**

PIPEMANIA

Entertainment International • Atari ST £19.95dk • Amiga £19.95dk • Spectrum £9.99cs £14.95dk • C64 £9.95cs £14.95dk • Amstrad £9.95cs £14.95dk • PC £19.95dk • Macintosh £24.95dk • Archimedes £24.95dk • MSX £9.95cs £14.95dk • BBC/Electron £9.95cs £14.95dk

The game that proves plumbing can be fun. You must construct a continuous length of pipe from several sections before the flooz escapes. The action is just as compelling as that in games like *Tetris* and will have you burning the midnight oil in an attempt to beat the odds. It is available for practically every machine, so there is no excuse for not owning a copy.

★ **ACE RATING 910**

PLAYER MANAGER

Anco • Atari ST £19.95dk • Amiga £19.95dk • Spectrum £9.95cs £14.95dk • C64 £9.95cs £14.95dk • Amstrad £9.95cs £14.95dk

Kick Off with a management/strategy element. The game is completely icon driven, making it easy to get into. The management detail is superb, right down to planning in-match tactics. And for the match you can either watch from the sidelines or join in with the *Kick Off* style fun.

★ **ACE RATING 920**

ACE CLASSICS!

All the games in HOT OFF THE SHELF – this month's software selection – have been released in recent months and should be readily available from your local dealer or by mail-order. We've chosen the titles carefully to ensure that, if one should take your fancy, it ought to be readily available. Don't forget that most dealers will be happy to order titles for you if they haven't got them in stock.

However, the truly discerning player knows full well that some of the greatest games of all time are not generally available in the shops. ACE is compiling a listing for next month of History's Greatest Games. Not only that, but we'll be giving you advice on where and how you can get your sticky paws on them. Some of them you'll know immediately, *Thrust*, for example, and *Impossible Mission* – but who remembers *Citizen USA*? Don't miss next month's definitive guide to putting together the ultimate software collection.

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Betrayal	18.99	18.99	-	-
Battlemaster	16.10	16.10	*18.99	18.99
Breach 2	16.10	16.10	-	16.10
BSS Jane Seymour	16.10	16.10	-	-
Centurion	-	-	16.10	16.10
Cadaver	16.10	16.10	-	-
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Effectively the follow-up to the resoundingly successful Tetris, Welltris takes the original idea and literally turns it on its head. Seen from a plan-view, Welltris requires you to rotate coloured shapes that fall down the walls, fitting them together to make a horizontal or vertical unbroken line. This achieved, the line disappears to make way for another. Sound familiar? Despite the obvious connection, Welltris looks good and plays well and is worthy of anyone's collection.
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Domark Amiga £29.99 • Atari ST £24.99dk • C64/128 £14.99c / £24.99dk • Amstrad £14.99 c / £24.99dk • Spectrum (+3) £24.99dk / (48/128) £14.99c
Hard Drivin' disappears from the classics column to reappear on this Domark compilation, which also sports three other successful driving games. Namely, Chase HQ, Turbo Out Run and Power Drift. The answer to every boy-racer's dream, each title shows its own individuality and has done well in its own right. And just in time for Christmas too!
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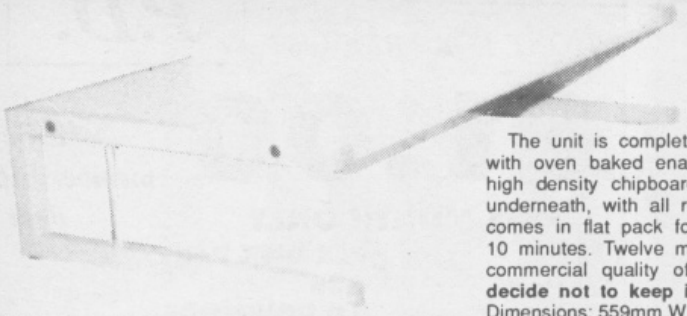

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MUSIC

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FREEBIES!

MARK SMIDDY explains how you too can get leisure software for the price of a disk – without breaking the law....

Software pirates seem to be under the impression that programmers get paid lots of cash for their work. Speaking as an ex-games programmer, let's get something straight – we don't. Many of us can hardly scratch a living and it's only the talented or very lucky few who strike it rich. Leisure titles do cost a lot of money. It is easy to see how ordinarily, law-abiding citizens can sway from the divine path of righteousness and take the copied software. But there is an alternative: Public Domain (PD) and shareware titles. These give everyone a chance to try before they buy – with the author's full permission. Despite what is commonly thought, PD games software can be quite excellent.

Probably the largest choice of PD games is the ST, primarily because of the existence of PD games specialists, Budgie UK. Their current catalogue lists over 80 titles in the leisure field – some of which have been properly packaged and sell (in more informed dealers) for the princely sum of £6ú2.99! Who said software was expensive?

Budgie's current games best-seller is ***Ace Invaders*** from Gary Wheaton, the man described by the company's Camey Meartens, as "King of the exploding pixels...". The game itself, as the title suggests, is a highly-polished variation on the 70's *Space Invaders* theme. Gary also supplied Budgie's 9th current bestseller, the amazing ***Galaxia***.

A surprising second in Budgie's repertoire are the ***Budgie Crosswords*** a collection of crossword puzzles. Hot on their heels is another old-favourite (cliche, classic etc. depending on viewpoint) ***Moneyspinner*** – based on the good old one-armed bandit theme. Budgie's STOS game ***Perils of Penfold*** is based on the cult "Danger Mouse" cartoon and just missed a prize in the STOS competition.

OTHER ST HITS

Other favourites in the Budgie stable include:

- ***Mr Dig*** **– The Dig-Dug theme revisited**
- ***Make a Break*** **– Based on the Snooker trivia quiz**
- ***Football '88*** **– A football manager**
- ***Safe as Houses*** **– inspired by *Monopoly***

AMIGA FREEBIES

Hot on the ST's heels is the Amiga. This only lacks games because most of the programmers spend their time either writing demos or utilities. Like the ST, the graphics found in the limited number of Amiga titles is generally of a very high calibre. Generally few come even close to commercial offerings, but most are quite acceptable.

The best of the current bunch has to be ***Star Trek – The Game Of The Future Of Mankind*** – from the prolific Trekie, Tobias Richter. Supplied on two disks crammed full of graphics, animation and sound effects – many taken from the original series; this Shareware offering is better than the original commercial ST offering in many areas. "Treking Tobias" (as he likes to be called) has done a superb job – every home should have one. *Star Trek* works best with two drives or a hard disk though.

For those with a preference for more traditional shoot-em-ups, the hot favourite making its way around the libraries now is ***Bionix 2***. Written by The Challenge – just to prove it could be done – ***Bionix 2*** is a 32 colour scrolling blast in the *Sidewinder* theme. 17 Bit have a copy on disk 746 which you can get for a miserly two quid. Also highly recommended for children of all ages, ***Flashbier*** is a simple puzzle game which casts the player as a small Punch-like character and charged with the task of retrieving a bottle of Newcastle Brown Ale. 255 levels on the classic *Boulderdash* theme, great sound and a catchy tune should keep the kids amused for hours.

PC PROSPECTS

Trailing well behind the vast range offered for the "home" computers is the PC. In truth, given the graphics available, the PC is not well served with games. Few would even have made it to the listings page of familiar 8-bit titles of old. A couple shine out from the murk, and thanks to some last minute telephone calls and hours agonising over a hot MODEM – thanks to the lads at Folio Shareware – ACE can bring news of some real hot PC property.

Arcade fanatics will be pleased to hear some genuinely nice looking software can be had for just a fiver in the form of ***Aliens***. This has nothing to do with *Invaders* though, it's an isometric platform game in the style of classics like *Batman, Head-over- Heels, Airball* and so on. Although the game only runs from drive A with an icky CGA display, the graphics are good and the gameplay satisfyingly addictive.

{P}Fans of the classic board game, RISK and anyone with a vague interest in genocide or just ruling the planet can take time out to play ***Global Warfare Simulator***. Although this game can be played in text only, the graphics available in EGA make it shine out as one of the best in this genre – yet the author only requires a measly fiver to register.

Among the list of options, up to between 2 and 10 players can try to decimate each other's armies; alternatively, the game can just play with itself while you sit back and watch. In these days of Glasnost and Perestroika this is the only way to play at war.

The list of games presented here is by no means an exhaustive one; there are hundreds of titles out there both Public Domain and Shareware. In closing, if you do play a Shareware game, please don't forget the authors. A few pounds is worth the extra time and effort they have spent adding the polish that makes a good game great.

● **Mark Smiddy**

The 8-Bit Scene

Everything in the garden is rosy if you have a 16-bit micro (ST/PC/Amiga) but users of aging 8-bit micros will find a dearth of PD games titles. There are several reasons for this. In the beginning, when 8-bits ruled the Earth, PD was all but unheard of. The only titles likely to be handed around cropped up at computer clubs in the form of utility software and the odd demo.

Compounding the situation, most of the popular 8-bits (Spectrum, Amstrad etc.) rely on tape based filing systems which are far slower to duplicate than a disk based setup. By the time disks arrived for the 8-bit formats in large numbers the 16-bit machines were already well established.

The final twist of the knife comes from the users themselves. 8-bit machines are far easier to program (in BASIC and M/C) than their 16-bit cousins. This means most simple games arrive in the form of magazine listings for users to type in. In the 16-bit world, this is all but impossible since the physical size of code and data prohibits magazine listings.

16-BIT CONTACTS

- **ST: Budgie UK, 5 Minster Close, Rayleigh, Essex, SS6 8SF**
- **PC: Folio Shareware, West Brooke W orks, 140 Thornton Road Bradford, BD1 2DX. Tel: 0247 393769**
- **Amiga: 17 Bit Software, Tel: 0924 366982**

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ZAK MCKRACKEN

The solution continues from Mike Bareham

You should now be controlling Leslie. You will now be taken to Mars where Melissa and Leslie are waiting for your commands. Open the spaceship door and get in . From the glove compartment take the fuse and the cashcards. Use the oxygen valve then pick up the digital audio tape. Go back outside and give Melissa her cashcard.

Switch to Melissa, enter the ship and close the door. Use the oxygen valve then take off the helmet and switch to Leslie.

Walk left to the monolith and use the cashcard on the slot. Wait for the token to drop then walk right back to the building and enter the door. Use the token on the metal plate then pick up the burnt fuse. Use the fuse in the fusebox then close the fusebox. Close the Mars door and open the hostel door. Go inside the hostel. Pick up the vinyl tape from the right hand locker and open it. Pick up the flashlight then walk to the bunk and pull the covers. When she calms down a bit pick up the broom alien. Walk to the right and pick up the ladder. Walk back out through the door. Open the Mars door and go outside. Then use the broom alien on the sand outside the hostel. Walk to the right to the huge face.

Use the ladder on the door then push the buttons in the same combination as you saw in the village in Kinshasa. (You did remember to write them down didn't you!) The door will now open. Pick up the ladder and walk to the great chamber. Walk to the right until you get to the second huge statue. Read the markings and make a diagram, calling this No. 1. Switch back to Zak and use the yellow crayon on the strange markings on the statue. Now draw the diagram you just drew (No. 1). When done, click on finished drawing then pick up the shard. Go out of the door then find your way back out of the temple using the map titled "Mexico Temple". Make your way back through the jungle and on to the Airport.

Use the reservations terminal. Buy a ticket to London and walk to the plane. Go through the automatic doors then give Annie the scroll, flagpole, whiskey, wire cutters and both shards of the crystal. Switch to Annie.

Give the whiskey to the sentry then turn off the switch. Use the wire cutters on the fence. Walk to Stonehenge and use both bits of the crystal shard on the altar stone. Use the flagpole on the altar stone. Now read the scroll. The crystal shards will now be fused together to form a yellow crystal. Pick up the crystal and walk to the guardhouse. Give the yellow crystal to Zak then switch to Zak.

Walk to the airport and buy a ticket to Miami. Walk to the plane. Buy a ticket to the Bermuda Triangle then walk to the plane. Walk around the plane for a while - the pilot will have given you a parachute. Wait some more. You are now inside and alien spaceship. Make note of the colours the pilot presses on the wall (you'll need them to get off the ship later). Press the button on the door. An alien will come and take you to the king. As soon as you can move give the guitar to the king. The alien will now show you the way out. Make sure you don't cross the line on the floor or you will be transported back home and you don't want to do that yet. Walk back into the king's room and read the Lott-o-dictor. Make a note of this number. Walk back to the coloured buttons and press them in the order you wrote down. Walk to the left of the line on the floor and wait. You will soon be falling very fast!

CORRUPTION

The tale unfolds with Alexis Kofteros, Cyprus.

At 11.25 in Margaret's office you will hear a very interesting conversation. Go outside Mr Hughes' office and listen to the wooden door. Then head for Theresa's office. Wait until she leaves then unlock the door and enter the office. Get your partner's phone.

At 12.10 you will learn something that can turn your life upside down. After that, go to your BMW. Drop everything on the pavement except your car keys. Enter the car but leave the door open. Put the key in the ignition and turn it. Then go out. Your car will end up in flames after the explosion and you will wake up in the hospital. Wait until the nurse leaves then get up. Get papers and pillow case then go out and west.

Get the bandage and wear it. Go east then south, open the locker and get clothes. Put the clothes in the pillow case then get the stethoscope from Bear and wear it. Go north and west, lie on the bed and put the stethoscope in case . Once in the ambulance, get up, drop bandage and pyjamas. Wear your clothes and open door. When you reach familiar territory jump out and get all your things from the pavement.

POLICE QUEST

The solution completed from Anthony Quinn.

When you are assigned to the narcotics division you will be introduced to Det. Laura Watts. Follow her to the office after changing into your plain clothes. Laura will show you round the office. Read the clipboard and make any notes necessary. Before you are assigned to narcotics you will respond to a speeding suspect car. When you stop it, sit in your car and notify dispatch. They will tell you to approach with extreme caution. Wait for help to arrive. When help arrives, get out, load gun. draw weapon and type "Get out". Your suspect will get out and start walking towards you . Type "Stop" or "Hands up". Approach him only after your partner tells you that he has him covered. "Cuff him" quickly then search him. You will find that he is armed and carrying drugs. Type "read rights". Question him then get him into the car and take him to jail. Book him under "Drugs". Then you will go to the "Blue Bar" as instructed, then back to the station to take up your narcotics post.

After changing into plain clothes, follow Morgan's and Watt's orders. Examine the clipboard then open the filing cabinet. Among the files will be one for Hoffman who you arrested on a drugs charge. Take notes if necessary. Laura will call you to a stake out in the park. She will stay in the car while you hide in the bushes. Tell her when you are in position by the radio. Two men will meet and exchange packages. You should have your gun loaded and drawn prior to hiding. Once the change has been made type "Hands up". The boy will come to a halt. The man will attempt to run. Type "Radio". This will tell Laura to grab the escaping suspect. Cuff the boy and "Read Rights". Return to the patrol car where Laura will tell you there is no time to talk. Or you will be informed that you are not close enough. Move down to the bottom of the screen and the detective in the brown shirt will turn to face the same direction. Then approach him directly and talk to him. Get the voice transmitter from him then type "Radio" to check it. Go back to the bar and tell Wood the password. He will escort you to the back room after searching you. Sit down and wait for the third player. You will recognise him as the man you have been searching for, the Death Angel. You must now play well and win more money. If you are successful the Angel will invite you for a drink. He will also ask if you want a job. Reply "Yes" and follow him out the side door up the stairway. Then type "Radio" or "Transmit". This will tell your backup where you are. Then just before you enter the Death Angel's room, transmit again. Your backup is now informed of your location. The Death Angel will tell you to fix yourself a drink while he answers the phone. When the Death Angel returns he will draw his gun and aim at you.... but he will be interrupted by a knock at the door when your backup arrives.....!

INFOLINES

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ACE CROSSWORD

Our monthly prize word puzzler, set by the inimitable MIPS

Not again!!! Last month's crossword grid suffered from the same bug as August's – the square at the end of 15 across was accidentally blanked out. We've now checked ALL the grids and ensured they're OK. Congratulations, however – all entrants spotted the error and still managed to get the answers. Full marks to everyone.

PUZZLE PRIZES

Until recently, we've been offering £25 cash prizes to winners of the ACE puzzle and crossword, but several people have been asking us for games instead. From now on all prizes will be in software, so please make sure you include your name, address, and machine format when you enter.

CLUES ACROSS

5 Game from Origin giving ill feeling (3,5)
6 Read about it being expensive (4)
7 PC in mad coma forming software house (6)
9 B52's flight simulator (6)
10 You finish in debt with this start (5)
11 Exact copy of leading computer Noel programmed (5)
14 Rita is confused by a computer (5)
15 Get out the habit (5)
17 Tax boys playing without a game (6)
18 Hear one swearing a mouse could move it (6)
19 Average sort of name (4)
20 Next Rose played a game (8)

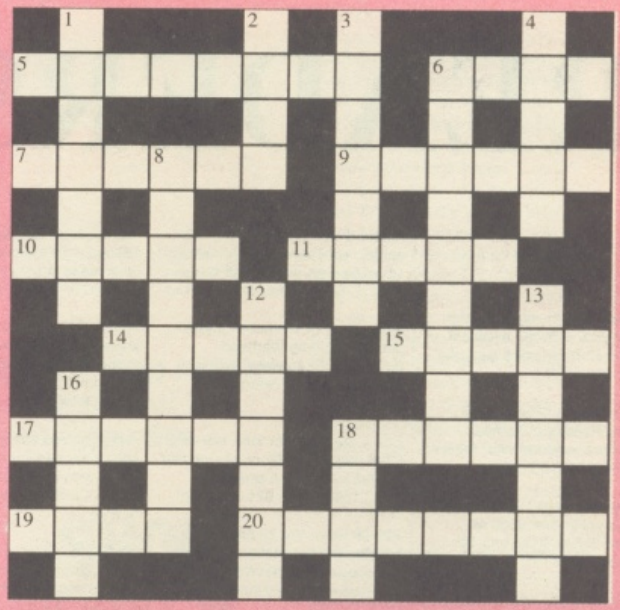
CLUES DOWN

1 Game in which Dave gets into motor (7)
2 Game played by top man at Whipsnade (4)
3 Eccentric, uneven dance (7)
4 Earl's redirecting the beam (5)

OOPS!

Shortage of space this month means we have had to postpone again the solutions to the June and July crosswords. We'll try and fit them in next month.

We're also trying to contact any Crossword and Puzzle winners who have NOT received their prizes. If you're one of these unlucky souls, give us a ring and we'll sort you out straightaway.



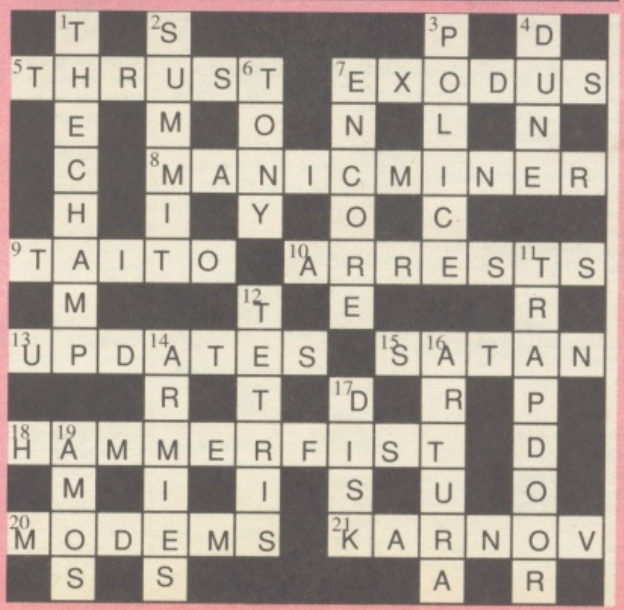
6 Masterful type of game from System 3 (9)
8 10-0, perhaps, before take off (5,4)
12 Lets rep circulate computer service (7)
13 Idol one smashes in game (7)
16 Betsy's new collections of bits (5)
18 Popular musical's cast dancing around (4)

HOW TO ENTER

Every month we offer a free game worth up to £25 for your machine if you're the sender of the first correct crossword solution out of the hat. The address to send your solution to is:
ACE November 90 Crossword,
Priory Court
Farringdon Lane
London
EC1R 3AU
The deadline for entries is always the first Thursday of the month named on the cover. In this case, it's Thursday 1st November 1990.

SOLUTION TO OCTOBER 90 CROSSWORD

And the winner was Steve Wood of Wolverhampton, who receives a a free game for his Atari ST.



ACE MAGAZINE DOES NOT CONDONE PIRACY! ANY ENTRIES WILL BE FORWARDED TO THE FEDERATION AGAINST SOFTWARE THEFT.

ACE READERS' PAGES

FOR SALE

Amstrad 464 with colour monitor £500 original software excellent condition £173 for quick sale ono Tel 081-950-8030

Atari ST Games Choice of 65 including Populous, Bismack, carrier Command from £3. Tel Jim on 0795-534916 after 6pm.

Hardley used sega H/S includes 5 top titles worth over £200 all together. Sell for £125 ono Tel: 0703-898825.

AMIGA A2000HD with 40Meg Hard Drive 2X3.5" disk Drives/1084 monitor/printer lots of games blank disks £2500.00ono Tel Reading 0734-872616.

CBM 64C Datasette over 80 games, 18 months old. Excellent condition £100 call 081-979-2210 after 6pm.

A500 1 meg Philips 8833 monitor external drive table 40 games boxed lots extras £650ono Contact Paul Answerphone 0227-712875 Excellent condition.

Atari 1040STFM 1 meg 2nd drive, mouse over 150 games open for offers Tel: 0270-257398 Crewe The Royal Hotel, evenings.

Amiga games boxed originals Chase HQ, Falcon Strider, Batman Movie, Indiana Jones Adventure etc.. £2-£10 Tel 097-855-638.

Atari 520STFM + manuals + joystick + blank disks + loads of games - £300 ono Tel or write 0375-644549. 3 Pearsons, Corringham, Essex.

Used quality games for sale or exchange for Nintendo Entertainment System. Ring 0737-833502 Ask for Richard.

Amiga games programmers Guide explains all aspects of game programming! Details from CJ Ditchburn, 2 The Woodlands, Nunthorpe, Middlesbrough, Cleveland.

Brand new LC10 mono printer + external (1meg) drive for Atari ST £169ono Also Atari + Amiga games around £10 each All originals eg/Xenon 2 Tel: 0707-59908.

Amiga 500 6 months old Still guaranteed £250 worth of games, joysticks, mouse, magazines, many blank disks, Bargain £350 Tel Julian 081-531-2438.

Sega megadrive Pal + 4 games still boxed as new sell for £250ono Tel: Alexander 081-778-2947

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Amiga 500 TV modulator joystick, games including Warhead, Battletech, Pirates etc.. Sell for £250 Tel: dave Preston 0772-34421

C64 + datasette for sale with over £300 games C1802 colour monitor joysticks leads and powerpack. Just £150ono Tel: 071-794-3323.

F29 £8 Stunt Car £8 Falcon + Mission £12 Infestation £6 Silent Service £4 Powerdrome £4 ST originals all offers considered Tel: 0491-680642.

Amiga and C64 (tape) originals Amiga All under £5. 5 Strand Rd., Clonakility, Cork Co, Ireland Send SAE.

Wide range of ST Software Kick Off 2 etc.. for list William 13 West Parade, Norwich NR2 3DN.

Amiga 500 Disk Drive RAM expansion, joysticks, software inc Wordderfect, Thunderblade, Falcon, Commodore monitor. Worth £800+ Sell £500 Tel: 081-074-0718.

Sega Megadrive, 2 joypads Altered Beasts, Last Battle Ghouls and Ghosts Perfect condition, boxed £240ono. Call 0695-22815 evenings. Ask for Micheal.

CPC464 Speedking, back magazine and about £200 of games. Any offer above £150? 0532-571615 after 7pm Ask for James.

Amiga A500 1meg 1084S monitor Vortex 40M Hard Disk Star LC10 printer, £450 games DPamt111 protext, The lot : £1750 Tel: 0463-790340.

Sega Mastersystems with £300 worth of games, lightphaser, 2 controllers will sell for £00ono. Contact David on 0628-72542 after 8pm.

Atari 520STFM excellent condition recently serviced £800 games including Midwinter, Microprose Soccer, plus Extras £250 Tel: 08697-326 Thanks.

Spectrum +2 with joystick manual and games as new £200ono Tel: 0925-838298 buyer collects.

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Megadrive (scart) Philipps CM8833 monitor (scart) 5 games, both 2 months old boxed £150 and £250 respectively Tel: 0536-520969.

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Atari STFM year old, DSDD joysticks £800 games including Populous, Falcon etc.. excellent condition £300 Tel Gavis evenings. (0233) 628043.

Amiga games boxed originals Midwinter, Imperium LSL3 £50 The lot Write to Mr S Law 88 High street, Crediton, Devon. EX113LB In P+P.

Atari Lynx, Gates of Zendocon, Blue Lighting, Californian games, Electro cop. Excellent Condition £210ono Tel: Mathew 0843-603654.

Amiga contacts wanted all around

PENPALS

the World. Write to Magnus Lindhe, 45800 Fargelanda, Eweden. Letters with disks 200% reply.

Amiga contacts wanted contact Brendan Carty, 150 Brookville Park, Drugheda County, Louth R&P of Ireland. Tel: 041-33665.

Amiga Contacts wanted. Send lists, disks for Tom Phelan 10 Gtorges, ST Waterford, Ireland.

Contact Rattlehead for Fast & cool Swappin. Write to 2B Noktalisok, 7/12, 06700 GOP Ankara, Turkey. Be First (only Amiga).

Amiga contacts wanted to swap patest. Write to Marius Gronvold, 24D Smedsrudu, 1405 Langhus, Norway 100%. Write soon.

Amiga Penpals wanted 100% reply send lists and disks to Ray, 413 Gleneagles Ave., Rushey Mead Est., Leicester.

Amiga contacts wanted Write to PL 30 57201 SLN, Finland. 100% reply guaranteed.

Amiga contacts wanted. Send your stuff to Kari Laukkanen, Ilsarvenpiiri 15, 74100, Ilsazhi, Finalnd.

Decent Amiga contacts wanted. New stuff only. Send lists, disks etc.. to 21 Cable Rd., Whitehead, Co. Antrrim. N.Ireland.Amiga contacts wanted for latest Untouchables, 148 Ulster Ville Park, Portadown, Co Armagh. N.Ireland. Can also sell.Amstrad CPC Penpals to swap tape or disk games. 100% reply. Mr.Wilson, 64 Fishponds Rd, Kenilworth Warks.

Amiga contacts wanted worldwide I will reply to everyone. Write to: Spyros, 14 Aristovalou Street, PS 246, Limassol, Cyprus.

OTHER

Football Fanzine, all clubs features, backchat, letterspage, competitions, free issues, details. 157 Letter Creeve Ballee, Balleymena County Antrium, N.Ireland.

Yamaha SHS 10 Keyboard (C64 Entertainment pack includes one) Will buy Cheapest, under £20. Write Ian 207 Purbbrook Way Havant, Hants.

HELPLINE

HELP needed for the game The Kristral. I also have complete solution for Bards Tale 1and 2 with maps. Write to 36 Martell Way Crickhawell, Powys NP8 1TH

HELP all transporter codes needed for Starquake on the ST. Help also needed for Strombringer, Knightmare, and Xenon for the ST. Write to Ian Coles, Midend Cottage, Tuft Beeches, Oldcroft, Nr Lydney Glos.

Complete solution for Zak Mckrcken for the ST available. Please send SAE to: S.Gaoutsis 13 Denison Rise, Salisbury, Wilts.Quick cassette based method of entering C64 6502 programs wanted. Also 2nd hand printer (C64) wanted Stuart on (0476) 76446

Can anyone help me with a complete Walk through to Police Quest 1 and 3, Kings Quest 1,2,3, Space Quest 1,2,3 and Manhunter 1. I'll pay well for a correct solution.

HELP desperately need deep Space and/or Seven Cities of Gold for Atari ST Write R.Coley, 36 Dunstall Ave., Burgess Hill W.Sussex.

I need help for the game Night Orc and Tower of despair both for the Spectrum 484 128 2. I will send back postage to anyone who sends me hints. Write toMr Prescott, 22 Ellesmere Rd., Blackpool Lancs.

HELP has anyone got the cheat for Batman (the 2.99 version). Also looking for anyone willing to sell or swap MSX Computer tapes as they are very hard to get. Please contact Ian Fuffe, 31 Archill Rd., Co Iyrane N.Ireland.

Solutions for adventures wanted will repay with tips for games. Send to John, 53 Theobaldds Rd., Cuffley, Herts. EN6 4HL

I desperately need help. I need to swap your spellcaster, Time Soldiers, and any role playing games for Sega Master system for any of my Sega 8 bit games Any new or old releases considered. Call mathew on 061-436-2800 Please Hurry. Ta!!

Brazilian Crew seekd and offers help on Amiga stuff. Write to: Marcos Rua Cinco de Julho 324 Apt 602, 22051 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

HELP from PC users I need help for the following PC games, Heroes Quest, Conquest Bequest, if you have tips, solutions, hints I will write tome. I also have a large no of adventure games . Mohamad Saleh, PO box 211733, Aman Jordan.Zak McKracken Complete solution for the ST. Please send A4 SAE to: S.Gaoutis 13 Denison Rise Salisbury SP1 3EW.PLease help on Future Wars (disk 2) I can't get out of the Monastery and if anyine has any cheats, pokes or maps forCloud Kingdom, Falcon or darkside send them to Andrew Nelson 16 Patringto, Garth, Bransholme Hull. PS If anyone is selling a master sega system please write too!

NOTICE!

DO YOU WANT TO BE IN OUR READERS PAGES? YES? THEN GO TO PG.120 AND FILL IN THE ENTRY FORM AND STICK IT IN THE POST!

ACE DEALS

Our regular column highlighting special offers around the country. Useful to check out before you head for the shops...

The arrival of the Sega Megadrive is being celebrated by **Virgin's** retail outlets, the Games Centres, with promotions and money-off deals on Sega products.

From now until the end of December, you'll get a voucher worth up to £10 when you spend a certain amount of money which Virgin hasn't quite decided yet (sorry!) on anything Sega in a Virgin Games Centre. That £10 voucher can be used against the value of Sega gamepacks.

SSI fans will also find the Games Centres a useful place to go shopping this month: for every AD&D adventure you buy, you'll get a free clue-book for the game to go with it – should come in handy.

Virgin obviously hasn't heard that there's a retail recession on – there are two new Games Centres opening round about now, with more to come before Christmas.

In Belfast, the brand new **Virgin Megastore**, complete with computer games division, should be open for business by the time you read this, while the **Cardiff Megastore** plus Games Centre is due to be up and running in November. Both will stock a full range of consoles and software.

There are more console offers around at the Computer Stores in Yorkshire. Place your order for the Nintendo Turtle pack with them now, and they'll give you five £1 vouchers to be spent on any software – not just Nintendo – in their outlets.

Computer Stores also have a similar deal going for the Image Works' Teenage Ninja Hero Turtles game: order that now and get £1 off your next purchase.

The Gremlins 2 video could be yours in a raffle-style competition which you can enter by buying Elite's *Gremlins 2* game, and in a similar compo, there are teddy bears to be won with the purchase of Database's *Fun School 3*.

Perhaps the Mindscape biggie, *Days of Thunder*, is more to your taste. Each Computer Store has a huge, room-filling poster from the film in its window, and anyone buying the game stands a chance of winning the poster itself when the window display is changed.

If you've been collecting tokens for the Computer Store Funbank scheme, be warned that this offer is finishing at the end of October – so claim those freebies soon.

Up in the North East, there are gift vouchers on offer from **Computer Shops** and **Byteware**. Buy your Sonmax Zipstick auto-fire joystick from them and you'll get £1 off your next purchase.

Selected Computer Shops/ Byteware outlets (check with your local one) are offering a trip of a lifetime in a Lotus car to buyers of Gremlin's Lotus game. Simply buy the game and enter your name at the shop ...

OUTLETS

You can find **Computer Shop** outlets in the Arndale Centre, Manchester; Newcastle, Leeds, Preston, Sunderland, Stockton and Nottingham. Also part of the Computer Shop chain are the two Games Store outlets in Carlisle and Middlesbrough, which stock role-playing games as well as computer software.

Virgin has its Games Centre outlets on London's Oxford Street (at Marble Arch, within the Megastore, and at no 100) and Bristol, and also in Megastores in Birmingham, Brighton, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow (at Union St and Argyle St), Leeds, Nottingham, and now Belfast.

The **Computer Store** chain is based in Yorkshire, with shops at Printing Office St, Doncaster; Ivegate, Bradford; Trinity St Arcade, Leeds; Market Place, Huddersfield; Westmoreland St, Wakefield; St Sampson's Square, York; The Woolshops, Halifax; Market St, Barnsley; and also at High Street, Scunthorpe.

Please remember: all offers and promotions are subject to availability of stock. Although we do our best to ensure our dealer promotion information is accurate at the time of going to press, ACE cannot take any responsibility for changes or cancellations to dealers' plans.

SHOP WATCH

Software seller Dirk Longhorn gives a view from the other side of the counter. This month – is piracy responsible for the software boom, plus Amiga incompatibilities...

Buy any monthly computer magazine and there is a better-than-average chance that the reader's letters section will contain a complaint that software prizes are too high. Occasionally this may even take the form of a letter of 'justification' from a self-confessed pirate who defends his actions by pointing to the high price of original software as mitigation. The argument usually claims that £25 is too much for a piece of entertainment software, and in some cases this – sadly – is true; there ARE many commercial programs that are poor value. Likewise, there are many which give so much pleasure that £25 seems an inadequate sum for such a return: the Player Managers, Red Storm Risings, and Wings of the world.

But there can never be any excuse for piracy. The individuals who perpetrate this crime are not outlaws, desperadoes, or modern-day Robin Hoods; they are parasitic thieves who lack the intellect to realise the consequences of what they do. The sad thing is that home computer industry as we know it will surely die if their activities continue to go unchecked.

If you don't believe me, you can't have noticed how rapidly dealers are embracing the new generation of consoles. Have you noticed how EVERY major publisher is committed to writing for Sega or Nintendo? Did you know that some titles this Christmas (on 64 and Amstrad format) are going to be available on cartridge only? Including Robocop II?? Piracy is the catalyst that is converting the low cost computer into a cartridge only console.

In many ways, of course, this is a good thing – instant reliable loading is not to be sneezed at – but there will be some game types that will die out along with the computers that originally spawned them; text adventures, for example, will be something for middle aged reviewers to get nostalgic about.

If you know someone who's pirating games, telephone the Federation Against Software Theft or your local Trading Standards office. Your name will not be used and all information will be treated in confidence.

INCOMPATIBILITY CORNER

Some recent 'incompatibilities' we have discovered through our poor frustrated customers...

Damocles

The Amiga version will not run properly if extra memory is installed, though it will on some systems! No, we don't understand it either...

Red Storm Rising

The Amiga version will occasionally crash if the installed extra RAM is not the official Commodore upgrade.

Little Computer People

The Amiga version will not run properly on ANY 500 system. It works fine on the A1000 with Kickstart 1.1 but anything later than that and the guy locks himself in the cupboard and won't come out again...honest! It makes me wonder why on earth Virgin saw fit to re-release it...

Combo Racer

The Amiga version again...If you have one of the latest 1.3 machines (1.3B) connected to a television then the picture will continuously roll. Connection to a monitor is the only remedy we have found so far.

Finally, a word of warning to all consumers. Always check new purchases for viruses, even if the package is sealed. There have been several instances recently of products coming directly from publishers with a virus already installed on the disk.

My name's Dirk Longhorn.
Goodnight

● This is an independent column and does not necessarily represent the views of the magazine...

ENCYCLOPAEDIA MICROMANNICA

Here it is...a list of those vital topics that every up-market gamester needs to have at his command. Just because you thrashed the host at two-player *Tetris* doesn't mean you'll be the star of the party. No chum, you need know-how. And here it is....

Each entry has a brief explanation, followed by a reference to an issue, so that you can hunt down the full lucid, in-depth, ACE assessment.

If, however, you missed an issue because you were abroad on a covert SAS operation, or nursing a sick relative in Botswana, or some other unlikely excuse, fret no longer. Back issues are available for all issues from ACE 4 inclusive (except ACE 11) at the giveaway price of £2.50 each in the UK and £3.50 each for overseas. These prices include post and packaging (surface mail). Overseas readers wanting airmail delivery should enquire as to the cost at the address below, listing the issues required.

To order, clearly list the required issue numbers and send them, along with your full name and address and a cheque or postal order for the full payment made payable to ACE magazine, to:

ACE Back Issues, PO Box 500, Leicester LE99 6AA.

ACE Back Issues can expand your collection – and your mind. Here's a checklist of topics covered in previous mags...

• **ASAT (AVIONICS SITUATIONAL AWARENESS TRAINER)**, combat flight simulator for the US Air Force by Perceptronics. Uses Falcon software by Spectrum Holobyte/Mirrorsoft. Features include: networking for multi-player action, tactile feedback and fingertip weapon selection. [ACE14]

• **BATMAN DIGITAL JUSTICE** is the world's first interactive hypercomic by Pepe Moreno. "Digital is the art medium of the future." [ACE30]

• **BATTLETECH,** "the world's first complete computer simulation for play", featuring multi-player cockpits equipped with 40Mhz 16 million colour graphics processors, stereo spatial sound and lifelike controls as you command 31st century Mechs. [ACE28]

• **BIT BOPPER**, the world's first total audio-visual entertainment system by Technation. Alex Blok's cyberscratch bit-tripper packs twin 32-bit decks, Sony erasable optical disc and custom-made video samplers. [ACE19]

• **CD-I** (Compact Disc Interactive) is destined to become the entertainment and education medium of the 90's. [ACE9/21/22/24/32/33/35]. Check out Issue 30 for multi-media principles (hypermedia in particular) and issue 24 for a preview of the Philips CD-I system.

• **CDTV,** Commodore's attempt to bring multi-media to the mass-market. An Amiga with built-in CD-ROM drive and CD-audio capability, redesigned to look like a VCR. [ACE34]

• **COSMIC OSMO,** the world's first hypergame - courtesy of Cyan Software/Activision. Check out issue 23 for the first review, issue 24 for a feature on hypergames, and issue 30 for general hypermdia coverage. New Osmo CD-ROM version featured in issue 36.

• **FLARE TECHNOLOGY**, trio of talented Cambridge-based games hardware engineers. Their custom-designed Flare One micro formed the basis of the Konix console. [ACE11]

• **FUJITSU FM TOWNS**, a 32-bit 16 million colour computer with built-in CD-ROM drive. If you bought ACE 31 you could have won one! [ACE27]

• **HYPERGAMES** like Cosmic Osmo and Batman Digital Justice are paving the way for CD-I entertainment. [ACE24/30]

• **INMOS FLIGHT SIMULATOR**, the world's first multi-player Transputer game running at 23 frames per second on 11 Transputers. [ACE7]

• **INTEGRATED FLIGHT AND ENTERTAINMENT SERVICES SYSTEM**, Plessey's answer to boring plane journeys - video games displayed on the seat in front of you. [ACE25]

• **INTERACTIVE VIDEO TAPE**, an alternative to CD-I. [ACE26]

• **KONIX CONSOLE**, a powerful British console with revolutionary built-in joystick controller which could change into a steering wheel, motorbike handle or aeroplane yoke. Ultimately failed due to a lack of marketing money. Rumours suggest a new buyer is interested. [ACE18/25]

• **LIGHTSPEED SPRITES**, three researchers from Carnegie Mellon University, USA have developed an algorithm enabling them to generate graphical simulations of objects seen travelling at 99% of the speed of light. [ACE34]

• **MEDIA LAB**, Boston-based research institute with one simple brief - invent the future. People at this Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) facility are working on computer generated holograms, interactive computer newspapers and virtual reality man-machine interfaces. [ACE9]

• **NEO-GEO**, a new home- and arcade-based games console from SNK in Japan, with storage capacity for 64Mb games cartridges and IC card capability. ACE gave you an exclusive chance to win one in issue 34. [ACE32/34]

• **POPULOUS**, highly invluential 963 ACE-Rated arcade strategy game by Bullfrog/Electronic Arts. [ACE18/19]

• **RENDERMAN**, the unique 3D graphics system by Pixar which creates polygons with photorealistic detail. [ACE35]

• **TURBOEXPRESS,** currently the best colour handheld console - a portable version of the NEC PC Engine, fully compatible with existing games cartridges. [ACE35]

GAMESBUSTING WITH TNT BACK ISSUES

Here's the first of a two part guide to Tricks and Tactics in back issues. This month, complete solutions and guides, next month – other tips, cheats, and pokes.

ISSUE 29
Dungeon Master Guide (part one) - Les Rigden
AD&D and *Bard's Tale* - Colin Taylor
Batman- the Movie - Adam Morley

ISSUE 30
Dungeon Master Guide (part two)

ISSUE 31
Space Ace - David Williams and Chris West
Dungeon Master Guide (part three)
Future Wars - Phil Thompson

ISSUE 32
Dungeon Master Guide (part four, final part)
Complete guide to *Y's* - Jojo Cicero and Mark Cook

ISSUE 33
No guides or solutions, but loads of shorties

ISSUE 34
Castle Master - Incentive
Midwinter - Microprose
Guide to hacking on the C64 (part one) - Jon

ISSUE 35
Drakkhen Guide (part one) - Adam Morley
Xenomorph (part one) - Alan Coates
Guide to hacking on the C64 (part two)

ISSUE 36
Defender of the Crown (mini players guide) - Paul Thomas
Lots of shorties

ISSUE 37
Drakkhen (part two)
Xenomorph (part two)
Guide to hacking on C64 (part three)
The ACE guide to solutions.

HOW TO PLACE YOUR ENTRY

All you have to do is send off the form below, together with your payment; Entries to the Pink Pages cost just £6.00 each. (Except for helpline which is free).

- The maximum is 20 words except for Helpline. (Helpline entries can be extended to 100 words max – use another sheet of paper if necessary).
- The service is NOT open to trade advertisers.
- We will print your advertisement in the first available issue.
- Entries which could be interpreted as encouraging software piracy will not be accepted.

ENTRY FORM

POST TO: **ACE Readers Page, Emap B+CP, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.**

Please place my ad in the next available issue of ACE.

Name .....

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☐ Helpline ☐ For Sale
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☐ Cheque ☐ P.O.

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THE BLITTER END

THE SHOWDOWN

September, and as Beetlejuice would say, "It's showtime". Ah yes, the Computer Entertainment Show, where thousands of punters gather in Earls Court to see the latest hardware and software, while a small group of hacks gather in the hospitality suites to see who has the best buffet and lager.

TALKIN' TURTLE

Things started well (from my point of view, anyway). At the opening ceremony were Esther Rantzen and Frank Bruno (on behalf of Childline, the charity beneficiary of the Show), accompanied by two Turtles and Robocop. As the cameras of the paparazzi snapped and clicked, the "Heroes in a Half Shell" shoved Robocop out of shot to the cheers of the Mirrorsoft staff. The metallic Mr Plod may well be here to protect the innocent, but who's going to protect him?

Talking of the "shelled dudes", visitors to the Show may have wondered why only Raphael and Donatello were present. Well, there are only four Turtles in the world, and according to rumour (and, be warned, a large pinch of salt must be taken with this one), Leonardo and Michelangelo couldn't be there because they were at another public appearance - in Puerto Rico! Can you get pizzas in Latin America?

DON'T MOVE, CREEP!

Returning to poor old Robocop, it really wasn't his Show. Not only did the Turtles hassle him, he also tripped over on the upturned edge of some carpet. Mind you, at least he didn't pick up a young boy and throw him across the room when the plucky lad tried to poke him in the eye, as a certain Italian star of console platform games did.

Of course, the fun doesn't stop when the Show closes - there are still the parties in the evening. At the Commodore/Ocean joint bash, I can't help thinking that Ocean won't have been too pleased at the giant video wall being dominated all night by Mirrorsoft titles (to promote Commies new "Screen Gems" bundle with the Amiga).

I admit I had a couple of drinkies at the party, but one software development supremo obviously likes a few more than that if the state of him, slumped on the floor comatose, was anything to go by. Unfortunately, your Probing reporter couldn't quite make out who he worked for.

ACE HAPPY HOUR HOTLINE

Are you stuck on the 8th level of Moon Megablasters II? What games is ACE playing this week? Which video games console should you buy? When will the Fujitsu FM Towns, NEC PC Engine or Nintendo Super Famicom become officially available in the UK? Have you got any questions regarding Advanced Computer Entertainment? ACE has all the answers. Just call our HAPPY HOUR HOTLINE on 071 251 6222 and ask for David Upchurch (up) or Alex Ruranski. The Hotline is open Monday-Friday from 5pm-6pm (it will temporarily close every month during the ACE deadline period). Sorry, we *cannot* accept calls outside the Happy Hour.

ARE YOU GOING TO TEXAS?

We are happy to announce the name of the lucky ACE Reader who has won the Origin Halloween competition. Miss D Bulmer from Lancs will be spending the night of 31 October 1990 in the company of a games creating genius at his millionaires mansion in Austin, Texas. Every year, Richard 'Lord British' Garriot, the creator of the *Ultima* series of epic fantasy role-playing games, throws a massive spooky bash at his glorious gaff to celebrate the year's best witching hour in absolute style. This is the party of a lifetime. You can find out what happened in a future issue of ACE – along with full exclusive details of the new Origin games currently in development.

In the meantime, don't forget our special review of *Wing Commander*, Origin's new cinematic space flight-simulation, in the next issue of the ultimate games magazine. Not only will you get the definitive ACE review of the game, you'll also witness all the *Wing Commander* Trade Secret gameplaying tips – straight from the programmer's mouth.

OOOPS!

The 'Kodak Develops CD Camera' story on page 7 is slightly off-the-wall and about ten years too early! Kodak is, in fact, developing, a photo CD system where people can transfer 35mm negatives taken with normal cameras onto a photo CD which can display these digital images on TV using a special audio CD-player currently being developed by Philips. "Photo-CD is expected to appeal to a broad cross-section of amateur photographers, as well as professional and industrial customers," says Kodak.

WHERE ARE YOU, BABY?

The behaviour of some of the visitors was just as disgusting (snigger!). One of a certain Top Ten female star's backing singers had her behind pinched by a cheeky young chappy. In return she slapped his face and said "Now go and have a w**k, and in future nice girls like me won't come and sing to nasty little boys like you".

MORE TASTY TIPS

A.Reader has been very busy this month with a selection of indispensible hints.

- "Do not attempt to load Spectrum cassette software into your Amiga because they don't make full use of the blitter and they tend to get stuck in the disk drive."
- "Be careful when crossing your busy high street. Don't be fooled into thinking that oncoming bus is a figment of your virtual reality."
- "Don't poke around your machine with a screwdriver... it invalidates your warranty and could cause a nasty shock."

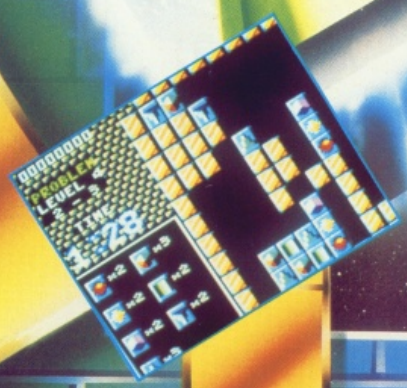
If you have any 'useful' hints send them into me at: TASTY TIPS, THE BLITTER END, ACE MAGAZINE, EMAP IMAGES, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU.

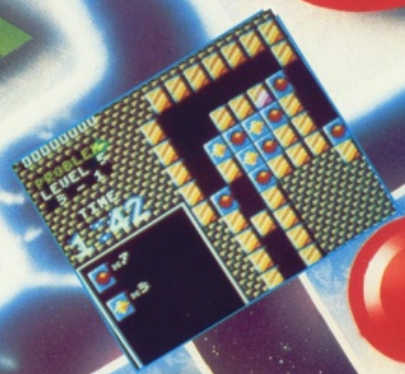
● Bit Bit

PUZZNIC

The latest and greatest puzzle game to hit the Western World has now come to your computer! The best-selling coin-op game by Taito employs 144 levels of fiendish perplexity as you position the blocks and make them disappear. **Sounds easy?**

The gameplay is staggeringly simple - the ingenuity lies in the formation of the screens! Get puzzled by PUZZNIC and be prepared for many long nights of frustration and excitement!





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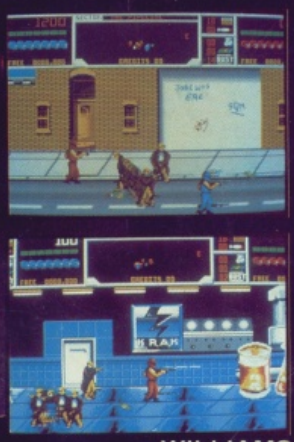

WILLIAMS

The hottest coin-op game in the past two years now comes storming on to your computer - with a vengeance! Controlling a Miami-Vice-style cop, you crusade through the criminal world of pushers and dealers, shooting, arresting and basically destroying everything in sight! Every level of tense and non-stop action introduces greater hazards, traps and firepower in what has been hailed as the greatest shoot'em-up coin-op game ever!

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COMMODORE
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