

ACE

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**THE
 ULTIMATE
 GAMES
 MAGAZINE**

ADVANCED COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT

EXCLUSIVE



FALCON III

Revolutionary Multi-player Combat!

TIMEWARP!

Incredible Graphic Adventuring
 in Space Quest IV!



Clean, Green and on the Screen

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Behind the
 Industry's Closed
 Doors



MARIO

An Analysis of
 Perfect Gameplay

SONY ON CD

The Giant Reveals
 Its Plans

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30 Pages of
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 in the Pink!

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Take charge of an entire planet from its birth until its death—10 billions years later. Guide life from its inception as single-celled microbes to a civilization that can reach for the stars. THE LIVING PLANET inspired by James Lovelock's Gaia



hypothesis, *SimEarth* simulates the Earth as a single living organism.

THE THINK TANK

Set in the near future, as an alternative reality, *Battle Command* is an arcade/strategy game in which the player controls a single "Master Assault Tank" in one of 16 scenarios (missions) in the ultra war, fought between two dominant races in the new World. Such are the defensive capabilities of each side, full scale attacks or suicidal, so any offensive moves are, if necessary, small "behind the lines" action performed by elite troops in specially design vehicles. The Master is the latest such machine capable of being lifted in and out of hosti-



territory by its stealth chopper and armed with the most advanced weaponry in Northern science can devise.

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F 29 Retaliator presents the fastest and most detailed graphical environment ever seen in a flight simulator. This is the only flight simulation to provide 100 complex missions over four intense battle scenarios. The only flight simulation to provide detailed daily war update reports. The only flight simulation to present the latest in aerodynamic technology introducing ECOP cockpits,



backwinder
A A M S ,
supercruise,
stealth and
more! F29
Retaliator is that
flight simulation.

GUN LAW

"BILLY THE KID" is a one or two player action/strategy game set in the Wild West, which allows the player to assume the identity of either a gun totting desperado with a heart of gold, Billy himself or his ex-best friend, sharp shooting, law abiding pillar of the community, Sheriff Pat Garrett. They are in love with the same woman and ultimately, in a nail biting climactic finale, are going to end up pointing guns at each other. Only one



character can
walk away from
this showdown
BUT THAT'S
JUST THE WAY
OF THE WEST



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"All that is human must be retrograde, if it does not advance."

—H.G. Wells

reviews

Our horizontal section extends to a glorious 36 pages this month, with the top games receiving lengthy 3-page treatments.

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DAVE GRAY: The CD-ROM disc is a colorful, abstract design on its surface. (Photo: © 1999 Electronic Arts)



DAVE GRAY: A screenshot from the game showing a character in a red and blue suit. (Photo: © 1999 Electronic Arts)



DAVE GRAY: A screenshot from the game showing a character in a red and blue suit. (Photo: © 1999 Electronic Arts)

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THE ULTIMATE!

Roger Moore: World is arguably the most playable game ever. But what is it about the escapades of the moustachioed glam man that seduce players so instantly and so fully? It is the graphics. In it, the camera is in the center of the action. Whenever the camera moves, it's because for us all in Moore's world.



THE ULTIMATE!: A screenshot from the game showing a character in a red and blue suit. (Photo: © 1999 Electronic Arts)

We analyze the phenomenon on Page 66.

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The Spectrum Computer Store shows another place in the home entertainment marketplace. Read all about the store, the latest magazines and the latest equipment only in the feature on this page. Page 44.

TAKE YOUR PICK! This month sees ACE covering both the current games scene and the possibilities of future technology in as comprehensive way as possible. The issue has a heavy games bias this time, with thorough features on *Mario*, *Captain Planet*, *Air Duel* and *Falcon 3*. There's a full thirty-five pages of games reviews including *Space Quest IV: Godz*, *Alien Storm* and *FTBL*. But tech fans need not worry, as we've assembled a free supplement 100% dedicated to CD's, Virtual Reality, and Full Motion Video. And there's even a breakdown of those oversized and over complicated terms attached to each. And why the decision to opt for this dangerously exciting mixture? It's all part of our never-ending quest to provide our readers with the ultimate monthly guide to Advanced Computer Entertainment.

features

FREE! FREE! FREE!

The latest in our occasional series of 'lookout, full-on, full-on' deals is our gift supplement. Edited by ACE, Topograde, written and edited by Steve Cooks, it offers a genuine insight into the state of games technology at the moment, and what the future holds. And it's all presented in an easy-to-read format.

Space Quest IV - Major Williams' new Major Williams's complete analysis on computers in their own right and what advice you can take from on page 10.

18 CAPTAIN PLANET

Mintscrape is currently putting together two versions of the exploits of the new mean green fighting machine. We talk to the programmers of both and ask the folks at Mintscrape about their hopes for the product.

22 SONY ON CD

ACE talks to Sony UK regarding their not entirely half-hearted entrance into the CD arena.

24 SUPER MARIO WORLD

Super Mario World on the Super Famicom is possibly the most playable game in the world. After literally months of play we feel ready to offer our opinions as to the very essence of its greatness.

32 FALCON 3

For those of you who like your flight sims real life, Spectrum Hobbyists are keen to cater for the most demanding of tastes, with *Falcon 3* boasting a topographic landscape as well as a host of other state-of-the-art features. How did they do it?

39 RETURN OF THE CONFERENCE!

If you've ever wondered exactly how a software company works, you'll be keen to take us up on our offer to visit a Major Firm and talk to the bosses and the programmers.

40 ECTS SHOW REPORT

We report from this year's computer trade show where the industry folk have been deciding what you'll be playing this Christmas.

44 AIR DUEL

Glye Williams' multi-craft flight game promises to offer players all-out flying action, with the emphasis on the thrills and spills of heroic aero tactics and far less game-time wasted on flag jingling and evading heat carriers. Sounds like a good deal to us.

REGULARS

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The Blues Brothers, Cyber Fight, Sonic the Hedgehog, Battlefield and the Addams Family.

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The latest news of widgets, games and events on the hardware scene from the ECTS show.

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Speak out!

26 TRICKS 'n' TACTICS

Solutions, codes, cheats and hints for the best games of the moment.

ACE

JUNE 1991



COVER STORY

Spectrum Hobbyists' *Falcon 3* boasts a 3D topographic landscape, giving it one of the most realistic combat environments in video for the PC. The added kick of the Microsoft Battlefield system, coupling players with front-running Spectrum Hobbyists' titles to appear in each other's games makes it possibly one of the most important developments in simulation games for a very long time. See Page 32

ALCATRAZ

The island of Alcatraz stands empty and discarded - a relic of the past. But, as night settles, the ruins of the old prison comes to life. In an ironic twist of fate, Alcatraz is now the hide out of an evil drugs cartel, led by Miguel Tardies, its cruel and callous chief. As a crack commando you are about to undertake the most perilous and daring mission ever. Your task - penetrate the island of Alcatraz and capture Tardies. If you fail the State Department will simply deny any knowledge of your existence. There's no such thing as a dead hero.



It's the final countdown as HQ gives the last briefing.



Prepare with care, a single mistake will cost you your life.



Peek about Tardies's men as you move ever closer to the very center of corruption.



Get faster, more and your cover is blown.



Tardies's men lurk on every corner.



FOR
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NEWS GAMES NEWS GAMES

The Cyber Fight
and the new Strategic
Warfare game by an editor
known to most readers—
not! Find out more now.

Rik Haynes meets the world's fastest sprits...



The Blues Brothers

You will soon be able to relive the cult comedy capers of Dan Aykroyd and John Belushi when Titus releases a computer game inspired by the utterly brilliant Blues Brothers movie.

Follow Jake and Elwood, the all-time flyrighter 'n' Blues faithful, as they prepare to conquer the stage once more. The game includes over 200 different scenes of gameplay and the original Blues Brothers' soundtrack. This declares this piece of interactive entertainment to an explosive blend of action, comedy and music.

The Blues Brothers game consists of five levels set in department stores, warehouses, prisons, sewers and city streets. Jack and Elwood each have different qualities related to their physical characteristics. Thus lean and lanky Elwood can jump higher whilst Jack can thread his way through certain places more easily thanks to his smaller, albeit taller, size.

Your enemies flee in fear as soon as Jack grabs a microphone or Elwood toots on his harmonica. The dynamic duo can also fly once they've found some beer bottles!

Rolling, rolling, rolling, keep those duggies moving...

Mirrorsoft and Acclaim Get Together

Mirrorsoft and Acclaim Entertainment from the USA have agreed that Imaginative will market and distribute popular Acclaim titles throughout Europe and Australia under the Acclaim and UN labels.

Acclaim Entertainment, Inc. is a major American interactive publisher and has either released or is currently developing NES and Gameboy titles based around The Simpsons, Batman 2, Mars, Total Recall and A Nightmare on Elm Street to name but three. No details of the agreement or games affected have emerged from the Mirrorsoft office.

It is mistakenly reported in the last issue of R.I.C. Mirrorsoft had finally announced it has

the worldwide home computer console and handheld rights for the Allen 00 science-fiction movie from 20th Century Fox. Interestingly, the firm is still keeping tight-lipped about owning the CD game rights. Mirrorsoft has decided to go for the Lucasfilm Games approach to this business and will release both an arcade and adventure title on Amiga, ST and PC. The games will be available early next year for saleable with the Suspense cinema release Allen 00 film. Signature Movies and Charles Dorey, and has been directed by the genre responsible for three recently Madonna music videos. The movie is currently in post-production at Paramount Studios. And why not?



Cyber Fight

From Acclaim's creative Michael Powell comes Cyber Fight (working title), a release with spectacular 3D graphics which Electronic Arts speculates is the first 'Virtual Reality' combat game.

Set in the future, Cyber Fight is the game of an arena-based govt. Five player-controlled contestants do battle in mighty exo-skeletal fighting machines. Before combat commences, you must arm your Cyber Fighter with edge beaters, rotary cutters, wire-guided blades or nuclear warheads. The variety of Cybermats combat enhancements include radar vision, invisibility fields and battle computers. Gravity, friction, inertia and elasticity all influence the contestants as they run, jump and fly through the battle arena.

Once victorious, you're able to score the remains of your computer- or human-controlled opponent for the spoils of war. You can trade this junk for better hardware. Cyber Fight features one- or two-player action via options or details.

The 3D can't fail to impress. Light-rendered and Geometric shading software technology accurately model metallic surfaces and particle models represent smoke, rocket exhausts and explosions. The game supports 256 colour VGA graphics and all major sound boards.

Cyber Fight will be released on PC in the autumn, with an Amiga version planned for later in the year. Cyber Fight is the most exciting release from EA since Powerman—except for bits of Pop of course!

Michael Powell and Gen Williams, author of Barbarian and Air Duct, are apparently good mates. Turn to page 41 to find out more...





SO WHAT? (PC)

It's never too late to break from looking the common in Indiana games and start playing a computer with what will be one of the most exciting golf games in the market. In fact, you can get the new challenging course in 30 that working like. One of these are available through from Seattle and to support the new course while you're on the way. It's not an early to available in a few days. And on PC version available in the year.



Indiana Jones 4

In Lucasfilm Games trying to promote Steven Spielberg and George Lucas into doing a fourth Indiana Jones action movie? Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis is specifically based around a movie being the movie in Forbidden Planet and Virgin Magazines. Again, Lucasfilm Games is working on an adventure and action titles - both due for release in November. The PC edition of Indy 4 will feature full 256-color VGA graphics with striking music. Starting out of your A&E soundboard. Sadly, there's still no... it as that new Indy movie.

Their Finest Hour

Take to the skies again with this add-on details for Their Finest Hour: The Battle of Britain. Includes an excellent site from Lucasfilm Games and 60 Gold. For \$29.99 you get new missions and a chance to fly some first-rate aircraft from the early part of World War Two.

Shanghai II

Just when the boss thought it was safe to buy you that new PC games get another interestingly addictive puzzle game designed to keep all work for at least two hours per day. With Shanghai II Dragon's Eye from Activision you can experience the intrigue and strategy of this colorful game enhanced with new tile layouts, animation and sound effects. As you master Shanghai II, you earn the right to take on the challenge of Dragon's Eye - a game of placing and blocking tiles against the computer. Shanghai II Dragon's Eye will soon be available on Amiga, ST and PC.



Now you can play Shanghai II on the Amiga.

Sonic Is Seized

An Sega's exact clone game appears on the Magellan, 60 Gold has secured the home computer rights to Sonic the Hedgehog. The deal comes as little surprise in the light of the Birmingham-based firm's ongoing agreement to convert Sega clone-ups like 6400 over to the Amiga, ST and PC.

Sonic the Hedgehog was the "starling" of the influential White Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas earlier this year, with many veteran designers and players saying it was the best arcade platform game they'd ever seen. Some even went so far as to say Sonic beats the best-selling Super Mario Bros. game from Nintendo.

"What we've created is a delightful little fellow whose personality explodes with every minute of gameplay," says Sega. "You're probably wondering how Sonic got his name.

Well, our 8000 Model's ultra-sonic running and jumping abilities are guaranteed to beat the sound barrier into

open. As a matter of fact, in the best of Sega's knowledge, there is no other game character in existence that compares to Sonic's electrifying zipping pace."

No release date has been set for the computer version, though Sonic the Hedgehog should be available on the Magellan as you read this. Happy Hedgehogging!



Now Tetris is back again.

Tetris

The Tetris game, the brainchild of Captain Alexey and Purple Lotus Day, has now set a new record. "Like a good old film that you love to see over and over again," is the sales pitch goes. "Tetris will be again on the shelves to complete your private collection."

"Story?" I wonder how much money Soviet programmer Alexey Pajitnov is making from this re-release deal!



Battletoads

British gamers can look forward to playing *Battletoads*. The smooth but 15-level NES game, now that the Sales Curve and Hasbro have signed a joint publishing and development agreement. "Compared to *Battletoads*," suggests the Hasbro brand trademark, "it's the most like good steam."

Other trademark NES titles to be converted to 16-bit computer formats and published on the Storm label include *Double Dragon III: The Streets of Rage* from Hasbro in Japan, *Andon* and *John James* from the Golden Harvest.

Marvel gets another look with *Billy and Andy* set back in a 16-level beat-'em-up with *Double Dragon III*. Their quest takes them through the mazes in America, China, Japan, Italy and Egypt. The computer

game should be ready for Christmas and a *Double Dragon* movie is currently scheduled to be released early next year. *Apocalypse* is a "top view three-player" interactive heavy metal fantasy action adventure role-up licensed from the Leyland Corp. "Play!"

Old Spectrum players will be pleased to see the return of the madcap hero of *Ultimate's* *Jeep* game in *John James*. The very subtle *Ultimate* team moved onto producing games for the Nintendo console before any other European developer had even heard of the box. They were managed to make some extra cash by selling their brand name to US Gold. That's why they're called *Jeep* now. In the game, James must see his god and job in explorer 12 alien planets in his quest to find and rebuild the Golden Harvest.

The Sales Curve is now looking to put its other-beating NES shoot-'em-up onto the Megadrive and Super Famicom consoles. The south-London firm was recently promoted

The Pay Off

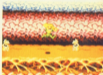
This one is for anybody who hasn't had enough *Caliber* lately. The Pay Off's an extra levels database for *Caliber* which consists of five more levels with about 200 new rooms to explore. All this can be yours for only £24.99 on Amiga and ST. *Seagate Software* told us that while the *Elitmus Brothers'* Philip Wilcox, Steve Kelly, Don Malone and Mike Montgomery were working on the original game, local council workers digging in the street outside their working offices unearthed a real treasure... a multi-milf 16th Century copper!



STAY TUNED

The second issue of the new magazine is out now. It's a great read for all those who love to play games. The new issue is out now. It's a great read for all those who love to play games. The new issue is out now. It's a great read for all those who love to play games.

from Registered Nintendo Developer to European Nintendo Licensee, enabling The Sales Curve to publish Nintendo software on its Storm label throughout Europe, just in time for 1992!



Below: new compared to *Battletoads*. *Apocalypse* was the next one.



Below: *Pegasus* is a game that'll be following in the footsteps of *Legend*.

Pegasus

Storm has taken a lesson from all those role-playing games to work on *Pegasus*, a colorful romp through the six planes of existence. As Pegasus you must collect all the fragments of some crystals before Satan takes total control of your mortal world. Each level is split into two stages. The first has you flying with Pegasus, collecting crystals and killing creatures to survive. Then you cut, jump and fight your way across land before falling the rest of level distance. Can you save the world?

The Addams Family

Orion has stepped up the computer and Nintendo game rights to the forthcoming film based around the lightest American comedy TV-series from the 1960s. The *Addams Family* movie will have an all-star cast including Anjelica Huston and Christopher Lloyd, the *Clay* character from *Sea and The Bark* in the *Father* film.



Below: *Legend* is a game that'll be following in the footsteps of *Pegasus*.

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Legend

Set in a dark world, *Legend* is the next fantasy role-playing game from Top, the programming team behind *Battletoads*.

The game itself is split between 20 stages depicting locations in the Kingdom and an isometric-3D display during the dangerous sequences. *Legend* is introducing *Legend* at the end of 1991 on Amiga, ST and PC.



Accolade Plays Hardball

Accolade has officially entered the 16-bit video games market with *Ballistic*, a new label dedicated to producing titles for the Sega MegaDrive, NEO PC Engine and Nintendo Super Famicom. The first three *Ballistic* games will be *Starflight*, *Starflight and Fortran*. These games will each cost \$35.99 and should be in the shops from next month. Titles due on the Super Famicom and PC Engine this year include a golf sim (led into Accolade's Jack Nicklaus license) and a soccer game. There may even be something on the Sega Saturngear colour handheld console before the end of 1993.

Hardball is the athletic best selling computer baseball simulation with sales of more than 250,000 units so far. Accolade enters the MegaDrive version in the very first 16-megabit sports game. Anyway, this update has fully digitised speech and sound, numerous hitting and pitching options, and a team manager feature for total strategic control.

Starflight (which had a mixed reception) is a game of 'ship-to-ship combat and galactic conquest'. Accolade maintains this very primitive shoot-'em-up represents the industry's very first 16-megabit video game. *ADD* doesn't know where all the money has gone, there certainly isn't any sign of it in the game's graphics or sound!

Synapse is a futuristic action-action game originally released on computer format by Rainbow Arts. This cart is packed with multiple levels and special effects such as waterfalls, storms and thunder.

Accolade has also announced a European distribution deal with Intarcis/Capstone, the American publisher of quite a few marks and 7-bit based games for the PC, Amiga, ST and Macintosh. The agreement includes such titles as the old space '91 military simulation *Star Wars* and the official movie *3D* and *Ter's Excellent Adventure*. *Side's Ocean* own the rights to this title?



Accolade has announced the first 16-megabit sports game for the MegaDrive.

Continued from

page 104 describes in full detail the strategy game. "Constructive is a flexible product that fully supports all the ways" under the game that there is available. "Take the role of a football manager, pitching your own tactics, the computer system both reacts and adapts to the challenge you're meeting and reacting to it. Constructive brings you into the heart of the computer controlled with being a strategic manager." How about you to be a King in sight?

Graham Gooch WC Cricket

Three days, 1100, 160 days of summer are almost here... and so is that Graham Gooch cricket game. *Autogenic* has done off the source code and spruced up the graphics of this classic sports sim and

released it onto the Amiga, ST and PC under the grandiose title of *Graham Gooch World Class Cricket*. The original *WC's* first Cricket was released in 1989 and has sold over 60,000 copies. *Autogenic* seems to be the new version in the ultimate cricket simulation. "All the features you could ever imagine along with incredible animation make this the most exciting cricket game of all time - even if it rains."

The first Manchester United game has excellent cricket action.



Manchester United Europe

The team may have lost the Manchester League Cup last month, but that hasn't stopped Electronic Arts from launching a second soccer sim based around Manchester United. The first game was released in February 1990 and has now sold over 118,000 copies. *Manchester United Europe* takes the team into the European arena of club football competitions featuring The European Cup, European Cup Winners Cup and UEFA Cup. The game also includes the opportunity to play in the European Super Cup and the world Club Championship held each year in Japan. Kinnick took onboard the constructive ideas and suggestions from over 3000 reply cards and has completely reworked the original football game. *Manchester United Europe* incorporates a combination of management and arcade action - along with full goal-keeper control and one to four player options. According to Electronic Arts, *Manchester United* is the biggest brand name in sport. "What did ever happen to that Liverpool game from Crown?"

That's Illogical

Games what? Yet another one of those arcade puzzlers is coming your way. German software house Rainbow Arts describes *Capitol* as a truly skillful and thrilling game. This brain teaser has 100 levels, four different backdrops and a construction kit for further mind benders. *Capitol* has a lot to answer for!



BACK TO THE DRAWING
Three eyes at Electronic Arts' may well draw inspiration in Japan's ever expanding software market. The studio features one of the highest growing rates of the industry in Japan's streets.

Death Or Glory

Death or Glory lets flight-sim fans relive 30 years of air combat across countries of Argentina. You're able to choose between 22 different warplanes, each based around a NASA flight physics model, and fly a mission in any one of six eras. Go for SuperVix Camel fighters from World War One or jump into a Spitfire and dogfight a MiG-29 in the 1980s. Will you be a bombing run through the Falklands in a Sea King? Search or Glory also incorporates a "When It" feature where you can get an F-4 Phantom jet fighter against a Fokker DR1 flown by the Red Baron. This game should be available for the PC in October.



DEATH OR GLORY

Up to 24 players can have a gladiator in Deep Golden, a 3D arena strategy RPG new addition of The Emperor. You need to put together an army, set in the desert. Above, the ship under a flight-themed control console equipped with the ship in military technology. In the left panel and which results in the water to rise. Below, many fighter and some non-powered airplanes that are used in the game. (Image: World of Warcraft) The game has been reported to be currently unlicensed. game. Goody. Deep Golden will be published by M. Ariga and G. B. in the next 1991.

Back To The War!

After attempts at producing original software, Elite has decided to go back to converting coding games onto major home video formats.

The West Midlands company achieved great success in the mid-2000's when its conversions of Paperboy, Space Harrier, Boulder's Bouldie and Commando hit the top of the charts. Since those heady days, Elite has concentrated on console development and games such as Overlander and Genesis 2.

The new new Elite from Elite, currently scheduled for release between November and Spring 1992, will be 16-bit conversions of European Championship 1992 (Team), American Ninja (Data East), Suzuki GP (Wising Run 2 (Namco) and Edward Randy (Data East).

Formerly entitled Team's World Cup '92, the first game is a soccer simulation adapted to Elite with new scenarios, specially-written code in Sweden. "In co-operation with Team, we will be using the source code and graphic data from the on-line original to produce a conversion of the very highest quality," promises Elite.

Elite's the Cat, the development team responsible for Shadow of the Beast and Top Ninja 2, is converting American Ninja. While Suzuki GP (Wising Run 2 pits driver and car against Japan's world championship circuit at Suzuka, Elite says Edward Randy is a truly different looking game with fights taking place on the wings of a fleet of airplanes as they attack and kill all over the side. "The way Edward Randy uses his ship for moving, balance and as a deadly weapon is one of the reasons why this new Data East coding stands out from the crowd."



Alcatraz

Infogrames has decided to produce a sequel to its highly successful Mission game. You lead this commando team assigned to capture a drug boss from his lair in Alcatraz, San Francisco. The four hand-picked "volunteers" consist of two commando-led intervention men (equipped with knives, cross-bow and fire-arm) and two crack shots placed on the top of the buildings. Alcatraz employs some novel gameplay where sound is crucial to success or failure - you have to avoid the slightest sound so that your team won't be spotted. During the game you have to climb cell walls, destroy the concrete stacks with a flame-thrower and search the prison for a helicopter. Alcatraz is available now for Amiga, ST and PC.

MISSION

Protagonist mission game developer designed to enhance the logic of the game. The game is currently unlicensed. program. Recently, team has decided to use the last game game features in the sequel to it. The last the team of mission team.



RBI 2 Baseball

The best people at Denmark are inserting a 'real' Baseball cap into every copy of RBI 2 Baseball. Look cool and play hard. This Amiga, ST and PC conversion of the NES sports game from Tengen features 26 top teams with real stats from the 1989 season, close-up shots and instant replays of home runs. "The animation is superb and the action fast," promises Denmark. "When it plays, the Camera follows the flight of the ball and then zooms to follow your batter's progress from base to base. A radar map at the bottom of the screen gives you an overview of how play is progressing and allows you to decide how far your player should run for, or if hitting, which base to throw the ball to." For those of you not-in-the-know, RBI stands for Run Based on the number of runs scored as a result of a player's hit, whether they be by him or the result of getting other players home. The next ACE sports special will appear shortly.



Fantastic Voyage On CD

In a follow-up story to our exclusive report last month, Polygram's co-founder Ivo Helthénberg has told ACE that he now plans to produce three games based around Polygram's music library CD-ROM games system.

"We now have more than one game in production," confirms Helthénberg. "One of them is set inside the body in a *Fantastic Voyage* game with a working title of *Inner Explorer*. We're doing bronchial blood vessels. It's all very abstract, Cathedral-like structures which you can fit around in with multiple steps killing open viruses and that sort of thing. It's very go out there and wipe them out. Obviously, different viruses respond to different things. One craft is for passing down the blood vessels, one is airborne for being in the lungs, and another moves in and out of molecular bases. Inner Explorer has an educational element because it's spread over a sixty year life-cycle compressed into something like 30 hours of gameplay. This educational aspect will teach you about the inner workings of the body."

Polygram is also planning to use the Thraxil Engine CD-ROM software technology on a new-looking sci-fi game and a pure military combat product which will use similar imagery to the *Planetfall* technology demonstration revealed in the last issue of ACE.

"The reason we want to do this type of game is because we know we can run 3D in real time on just about every CD-ROM machine," explains Helthénberg. "We can model about 20,000 polygons on a chip and render that in just 30 polygons which we can plot it in real time and draw anything in between."

Everything we do now will be window-based, if the processing power is not available the window shrinks."

"The idea is to be on just about everything. The investment in the product is so massive that we have to have it on multiple formats. Our CD-ROM intentions are to support dedicated machines, which are either console-based or like CD-i and CD-iV, MS-DOS and Macintosh. Anything we design now will work on all these formats. The implementors will simply vary according to the capabilities of the individual machines. These games will have set pieces of interactivity, though with trying to be fun-factor gameplay where ever possible. You can have both in one product. We should be shipping our first CD-ROM product in early 1995."



Are video games bad for your health? Rik Raynes investigates...

Super Mario School

Nintendo is taking no chances with the next generation of game designers and programmers. The fit-ripped console company has set up a school in Tokyo to teach teen coders how to animate sprites, design a platform game from top to bottom, and fix-time collision detection.

The school is appropriately named Mario and teaches 30 would-be Nintendo game engineers how to code the perfect console game on the Super Famicom, Gameboy and NES. Literally thousands of hopefuls have applied every. A job at Nintendo is virtually guaranteed for the most successful students.

ACE plans to visit this school for game developers soon. Look out for our exclusive report in a future issue...



FAST FORWARD

Film makers on the loose near in the future issue. Here also calls go on US. From subjects who have made video and video. American way games already feature in by with the industry partners in film fields are trying. conditions. American used used by the best. film to design integrated into. It seems the best option. can work are leading in their. within 1993 points and. leading stream for some. best cinema. film. could. production. could.

Music Master

Ubisoft's latest is a departure for the French game developer. *Music Master* is a musical multi-program for the Amiga, ST and PC where you can create and modify your own sound samples and compose music.

Music Master finally transforms your computer into an actual synthesizer.



its "virtual" problems. The package comes with 30 ready-made music tracks, 100 sound files and the capability to integrate its audio into your own programs. The latest ST version is also fully compatible with MIDI and the MP31 standard used by Ubisoft in the game *RA*.



Video Seizure

Playing video games could damage your health... if you suffer from photosensitive epilepsy.

The parents of a 15-year-old girl from Michigan in the USA have filed a law suit against Nintendo, claiming a video game caused an epilepsy seizure. The young girl was playing *Kid Kona* on her NES console when she suffered a seizure states the family lawyer Douglas Peterson. "She had a grand mal seizure and was totally unconscious," Webster says. "The doctor told it was a videogame induced epilepsy."

Photosensitive epilepsy occurs in approximately 3% of epilepsy patients in the US, that's one in 30,000 of the population. Photosensitive epileptics can suffer seizures after exposure to flashing lights, television screens and video games.

A healthy girl before the attack, she will now have to take medication for the foreseeable future. The law suit seeks at least \$10,000 in damages. Lynne Coop, a spokeswoman for Nintendo of America, says the company is receiving comment on the case and it has had a chance to review the lawsuit. Current studies suggest there is no reason to believe videogame seizure is strictly related to Nintendo product.

The World at your fingertips

Super Famicom - Fun For All The Family



The Super Famicom's incredible potential has now been taken a step further into a fantastic world of graphics, game play and sound.

Advance Console Entertainment offers an easy entry into this domain with a recognised performance upgrade known as the Advance Colour Enhancement.

Due to the increased display of colour and sound on the standard FFA-1 and 'Scan' modified Super Famicom, you can now use the use of the modified CH-1/CH-2 switch (found at the back of the machine) to select between the standard mode and the Advance Colour Enhancement mode for what is ultimately a stunning difference.



Thanks to a dynamic research and development team providing up to the minute technology with high performance products, Advance Console's Super Famicom is surely superior to any other.

The Advance Colour Enhancement mode is exclusively designed by, and available only from, Advance Console Entertainment.

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- * Hundreds of hours of play-time
- * PC version supports Roland MT-32, Creative Labs and CMI sound boards

Availability on:

IBM PC (DOS), AT/386, (Soundly, 6844) £24.99
 Amiga (1 megabyte only) £19.99
 Amstrd EP (1 megabyte only) £19.99



letters

Send your letters to **Jim Douglas Priory Court, 30-32 Farington Lane, London, EC1 3AU.**

EASY PCs

What is it exactly that you have against PCs? I am tired of reading vitriolic comments like "When was the last time you saw a good shoot-em-up on the PC? ACE 4.0 is misleading statements saying that a good games PC costs several thousand pounds (ACE 3.6). And then of course there is the completely incorrect PC information in the Pro Pages.

As you stated that people will realize the PC is actually quite cheap and is a far better games machine than the Amiga. Or what?

My 16MHz 386 has VGA, Memstar, 40Mb hard disk and an AdLib sound card, yet it cost me less than £1000. And let's face it, nobody who plays games buys a PC less powerful than that their days.

Does £1000 sound like a lot? Well how much do you think that configuration would cost for an Amiga? My PC is superior in EVERY way to an Amiga, and I know what I'm talking about because I play on one of my friend's Amigas every week.

Now, there are plenty of good shoot-em-ups on the PC. My own favourites are Thunderblitz, Force II and Ring Commander. In particular, Force II is so fast as to be completely unplayable unless I turn off my Turbo switch. Even then it runs significantly faster than the Amiga version.

The proof is the statement which you seemed to ignore in Chris Low's PC Power letter - their processing power runs twice compensated for lost of hardware sprites.

I know that you favorite machine has been superseded in every respect, but why don't you just stop the sour grapes and accept the fact?

**M Scotland
North Yorkshire**

We're far from biased toward the Amiga. Indeed, we're continually being criticised by Amiga owners for always slating the prices of machines just like yours. Space Quest II, one of this month's featured games is only available on PC at present, and it's the VGA graphics and excellent storage capacity of the machine which makes it work. And Falcon II, this month's cover story no less, is an which machine? PC.

However, contrary to your opinions, it is possible to play excellent games on an entry level Amiga system (£800 with a decent monitor) while by your own admission, PC owners have to spend at least £1,000 on an upgraded machine before they can get started.

And until we see *Shade of the Beast II's* parallel scrolling, graphic definition and sprite movement on a PC, we'll have to disagree with your statement about your machine being superior in every way.

ACE is a multi-format magazine, and I wish individual owners would write up to the fact that we are inevitably going to print favourable opinions about machines other than their own.

CAUSE FROM CONCERN

Firstly, I would like to say how much I agreed with the Massimo letter in the April edition, but perhaps the software companies need to gain more than they lose through this practice of advertising before the game has been completed. If getting magazines to review unfinished copies, it means that things that the company have no intention of fitting into the final game can be used to describe it under the label "specifications subject to change". This way, it increases public anticipation, when in reality, the game might not be as good as promised, thus, falsely boosting sales.

This point leads on nicely to my second point. I am very disappointed by Avco, and their *Kix Off* games. Can someone please tell me how Mike Singleton can create a whole world in 3D with freedom of movement throughout and yet, after four versions, updates, Acco (S) cannot provide totally different pictures, and features, refs on a standard 327?

This relates strongly to my first point. The adverts for *Kix Off 2* showed screen shots portraying firemen and different patch surfaces. The "smoke grenades" reviews told us these would be available. I rushed out to upgrade to R20 and was disappointed by the results. Now the final literature is being advertised, and when I

picked up the box, lo and behold, these features are still only available on the expanded Amiga.

Something has got to be done about the standard in the software business. If software houses don't end users when their advertising went out too early, they would not allow it to happen. They must be reassured some kind of benefit, and if it is as I have suggested above, it is a breach of trust between the companies and their customers.

**R.D. Davies
Nottingham**

Sorry to disappoint you, but the software industry can't quite do the crooked back-hand conspiratorial view of iniquity you seem to think. Early ads and late games are unfortunately accidents, and missing levels/features are more attributable to lack of time and memory than a desire to lead users innocent Joe Punter. If you've got a real gripe, Jim, save Amiga would be pleased to try and sort it out.

CART TRICKS

On the subject of consoles, I myself own a Sega MegaDrive and a Nintendo Gameboy, and I want to express my sympathy at the lack of quality software available for the MegaDrive.

Why on why the Sega would so often not do what you hope after time. Don't they realize that once you've played one or two you've played them all.

Apart from the high price asked by all of the games manufacturers for mediocre cartridges, I feel that the originality in games design has gone down hill. I believe that the MegaDrive is being held solely in graphic capabilities and not playability.

To give an example, the best games at the moment are John Madden's Football and Mickey Dixon. They both have great graphics and playability when as football, demolition thing etc, have good graphics and that "played once, put it to the back of the shelf" type playability.

I feel that games manufacturers could at least try, why not look at previous games from other machines and see if they can reproduce the great addictiveness and playability values.

I feel that loads of older games could be "big up" updated and re-released on the new line of high quality consoles.

If not as a single game, then as a compilation, how about a compilation of old ULTIMATE games or WIZARD games (somebody must hold the rights, even if the company has gone bust). I don't expect work to stop on design of new games or arcade conversions, but I feel there is a hole in the market where originality and playability are being left behind. So come on game manufacturers. Let's go back to the days when you didn't need spending a pound on a game because you got more than a month's play out of it rather than 3 hours most games offer these days.

**M. Pilgrim
Workshop**

How right you are! We feel there's a lot of scope for improving and upgrading old cinema sets to maximize the capabilities of both 3D film and console machines. How there's an idea for a feature...

THE LESS, THE MORE

I am writing to you about some things I think are missing from the magazine. I think ACE is good, but there are a couple of improvements which could be made.

1) Please, please, please cut down on the amount of writing you bring at a review. I love reading about it but there is far too much to read. And don't say that I don't have to read it, because the more writing there is, the more I want to read about the game.

2) Can you please stop the extra pages. 3 pages would be good.

And to finish off my point, can the letter writers please stop complaining about the mag. It is brilliant.

L. McNeill
York

Glad to help on one count. You'll have already realised, I'm sure, that letters and three pages long this month. However, it's entirely driven by the amount of interesting correspondence we receive; you write 'ain and we print 'em.

Next in reviews' list, we feel we've got the balance pretty much there. Any less and we couldn't do the games justice.

ALIEN 3-D

During a conversation about VR headsets, a suggestion cropped up regarding VR television. Imagine that TV pictures were broadcast so that they could be viewed using the headset. Pictures would appear in perfect 3D. It would be the ultimate thing there. Also, using NICAM digital stereo (if CD-quality) it would also sound realistic.

It wouldn't be too difficult to film, simply requiring two slightly offset cameras as used in the good old 3D films that required time and red glasses.

Just think of it. Flat, wide screen TV would become obsolete. After all, who would want to watch a 2D screen?

Herein and so it films would spring to life. It would be just as though you were in the room with Ripley waiting for the Aliens to arrive! 3D-TV would bring a whole new dimension to these types of films (just intended). Future programmers would be able to demonstrate things far better than on an ordinary TV. Just imagine if they dropped a camera into the front of a Formula One car - experience the same as Maxwell's on football - just like being on the terraces!

However, I could envisage problems. Only one person could watch a set at a time, proving fairly limiting to be very expensive. It could also be a very solitary pastime. And the sheer volume of some films could prove very daunting. If you were being chased by the Alien wouldn't you be worried? How laws governing this would have to be introduced to prevent people from watching something too stressful.

How the technology to make do this so why doesn't someone try to make a 3D TV system? Or has one already been made?

Ian Flory
Barrif, Scotland

Aliens. It's a nice idea, but isn't it underlining the concept of VR to just use it as a high quality 3D glasses system? Also, the cost of using two cameras to film would probably make such an exercise prohibitively expensive, at least until a cheap user-base was installed.

For more interesting is the use of VR to actually walk around and interact with a computer generated environment. But that doesn't mean you can't meet up with your favourite film star. Software routines exist to take two photographs and deduce the intervening animation frames in real time. Thus, by taking a range of images of, say, Sigourney Weaver (available stored on CD-ROM), the program could calculate just about any pose imaginable.

This image could then be superimposed on your 3D world, and you could fight the man-eating Aliens site-by-site with Ripley. Admittedly the price of such high-power hardware puts it out of reach of the average consumer, but as computer power increases as prices drop, it won't be too long before a workable system will be in the home.

CONVERT!

I'm getting totally 3D'ed off with software publishers. I own an IBM PC and generally speaking most games are available on this format. But software publishers don't seem to acknowledge the fact that there are PC versions of their games in their adverts. One example of this is Virgin's advert for Golden Axe. There is no mention of a PC version, yet the next day I visited my local computer shop and it was there - a PC version of Golden Axe! This seems to happen with many games - Pang, Chase HQ II, Rastan, Robocop II to name but a few.

Also, why are some of the major film licenses not available on the PC (e.g. Navy Seals)? Surely if these films are such big hits (Starline has claimed by word), they should be converted to America's most popular machine? And what about arcade games?

Finally, why aren't screenshots from all formats on the games packaging, not just the arcade and 3D-d versions, but the Atari 2600 as well?

Leo See
Reading

MANUAL LABOUR

I am writing to your magazine in the hope they my letter will be seen by the software houses.

The cause of my dismay, and the subject of my concern is the quality of many of the manuals which are supplied with current games. All too often these contain the bare essentials needed to play the game and little else, sometimes a useless little novella - though in so the player has to wade through pages of terrible prose in order to gain a few vital playing hints.

In the world cases that and error is needed to work out basic game functions.

In this minimalist approach to manuals real life necessity - some computers, merely those with a reputation for high-quality games manage to produce excellent manuals, although it saddens me as a fan that but these are mainly US companies, eg. Sid and Tripoli. It has been argued that part of the fun of a game is discovering what is possible, but this can become a tedious

The nature of most music conversions, especially from Ocean, make them pretty unsuitable for conversion to the PC, hence the Nightdread Action/Adventure option for PC users.

UK software companies must cater for the UK market, and research suggests that PC owners are less keen to look out for a product simply because of its connection to a movie.

As for screenshots on packaging, companies are pretty free to include as many or few as they wish, so long as the overall look gives a fair and reasonable impression to the buyer of the game they will get. The best screenshots are inevitably used because they simply look more attractive - the aim of packaging is to make the product enticing to the potential purchaser, after all.

The cost of producing separate packaging for each version is prohibitive and space on the back of a single box is too limited to devote to relatively unattractive 8-bit shots. Best say.

WHAT'S THE FUSS ABOUT?

While I agree that virtual reality is an exciting concept and has great potential for Advanced Computer Entertainment, I find it very hard to believe that VR will create a gaming revolution.

doors after a while. Some of us players are actually interested in the game mechanics (e.g. the 92 probability with weapon B, at range 1 with attribute 2) and the wealth of printed matter (manuals for classic RPGs would indicate that gamers wish to know these things). Again, most of D&D's manuals have a section on these very topics.

Perhaps, some of the money spent in producing these rich manuals could be devoted to the?

Finally (although this is a personal view) I would argue that a small amount of "factual" information, given in the form of a history, armor descriptions or technical details for objects in the game world make that imaginary world far more real and credible than any short story.

John Leigh
Type and Wear

American manuals tend to be superior to their British counterparts for two reasons. 1) The American PC market is desperately competitive, and with products costing upwards of \$90, the most easy way to highlight the perceived value of the product (since everyone is claiming amazing speed

playtimes and lengthy gametimes) is to include some glossy books. 2) The British public are perfectly happy to put up with crappy manuals (since, until recently, we haven't had the opportunity to be "spoiled" with the American bumper-books. What you're never had...

However, with Sierra, Microprose and Mindscape heading up the top-end of the UK market, the future is looking brighter.

And I don't feel that the technology used is a great leap forward, or even particularly "state-of-the-art".

Both the hardware used and the software programming techniques involved to create VR (and more specifically the Virtuality system) have been around for a few years. There is nothing new about miniature televisions, quadcoptic sound or field projection 3D. It is the combination of existing technology that creates this so-called "breakthrough", and it is fairly logical that if you stick a pair of ears (in your own eyes, attach sensors to your body and link it all to a system using a 3D program you can get Virtual Reality. I also think comparisons being drawn between VR and the Cyberpunk concept of Cyber-space are inaccurate and misleading, as Cyber-space is a direct computer link with all the senses, not just sight and sound, where you become totally integrated into the game world and not a casual observer controlling data within the program via fairly basic input devices.

In short, I feel that VR is not quite as important as it is being made out to be, and if the computer industry and the media continue to blow it up out of proportion with hype, many people are going to be disappointed when they find out what VR is really like.

Matthew Kearney
Groveend, Kent

Do gloss over the complexities of a true VR system a little easily. You ignore the fact that these systems adjust your "world view" according to your movements, generating a true sense of a realistic environment. Also, interaction with the Virtual world is as

natural as the real one: to pick up an item you simply move your hand's virtual counterpart and grasp it. Via tactile feedback you can actually feel the object you're holding. Agreed, the Virtuality is a relatively simple VR system, but it's still a huge technical achievement.

Surely the comparisons between VR and Cyberpace are justified? The aim of both is to create a reality yet artificial interactive environment where the control interface is effectively invisible. True, Cyberpace doesn't require that the user wear sensor suits or goggles, but then again, it's a fictional concept and doesn't actually exist!

MAKE MINE A MEGADRIVE

am thinking of purchasing a Sega Megadrive, but first there are a few questions I'd like to ask you.

- (1) Is there any chance of the Megadrive playing the old Sega Master System games?
- (2) Is there any chance that the Megadrive will become as popular as the Kings with any of the big software companies?
- (3) Do you think the Megadrive is worth the money that it's sold for?
- (4) Is there a chance that Megadrive games will become available in the big high-street stores, e.g. W. H. Smiths, Books, Waterworld?

(5) Do you think it's best to use that order for games?

(6) Is the Megadrive capable of producing high-quality graphics and sound?

John Holmes,
Lutonstaff

Glad to be of service, John. To answer your questions one at a time:

(1) How certainly can Sega produce a piece of hardware called the Power-Base Converter for around £25, which will allow you to play any Master System game on your Megadrive. But isn't that a bit like playing a scratched 78 on a Goodman's remarkable stereo system?

(2) Everyone seems to be keen to get into console development, especially for the Megadrive, so definitely yes.

(3) That's really up to you to decide. In ACE's opinion the Megadrive is the best console available, and with the recent drop in price to £150 for the Mercury Mouse game bundle, there's never been a better time to buy.

(4) Yes - you should be able to find Megadrive software in places like Dixons right now.

(5) Mail order co.'s are pretty reliable. However, the current economic climate is putting these businesses under a bit of pressure, so with it the names you know: Even if things do go seriously awry then rest your mind, safe in the knowledge that the consumer is fully covered by the Mail-Order Protection Scheme.

(6) Yes... and not for sprite-based games (about 100-ops, platform affairs and anything soundly 2D) the Megadrive beats the Amiga hands down, but the Amiga's qualities shine through in third-person 3D games and anything requiring complex user interaction.

INDUSTRY ANSWERS

Welcome to a new area on the letters page. Each month, we'll be dropping an Industry Expert into a not especially comfortable perch and bombarding you with your questions. This month, I got in Peter Blincks, Managing Director of Microsoft.

Peter will be ready to answer your queries about Microsoft's games, its hopes for the future, and the industry in general.

So, if you wonder what the big 80 has in store next Predator 2 is on the streets and how they're handling the conversion of Alien II, show them attention for the CD market, fix it your chance to find out for yourself. Don't be shy! Send your letters to: Peter Blincks, Managing Director, ACE Megadrive, Priority Court, 30-32 Farnington Lane, London EC2R 3AU.

As **MINDSCAPE** prepares the first ozone-friendly video game, **Rik Haynes** wonders if the competition will go green with envy...



The Captain Planet game has the ecofriendly characters and pollution-free, ozone-friendly graphics. The game's message goes beyond the fun and adventure of a standard strategy.



CAPTAIN

With his spiky green hair and mission to save the Earth, Captain Planet is a new breed of comic superhero.

Like any of the shark-pinked Batstrap and chrome-late wireless ponies of previous generations, this Turtle-buster uses totally natural ingredients like Earth, Wind and Fire. American children no longer cry out "COMEBACK!" in warrior aggression. No, they're too busy enjoying Mother Earth from uncaring heights.

The same thing could happen to British pre-teenagers too: the Captain Planet cartoon series is being shown during a prime-time slot on ITV on every Saturday evening. And, no big surprise, a software company is currently working on computer and console games based around Captain Planet. Let's just hope Mindscape doesn't give us recycled garbage!

THE STORY SO FAR...

Six, the strongest spirit of Earth, sends magic rays to five youngsters from around the globe—Miles (North America), Linka (Greece), Od (China), Kwame (Africa) and Ma (South America). These are God's team in the battle against the further destruction of the Earth. Each has the personal power of Earth, Fire, Water, Wind and Heart.



Only Captain Planet can save the children from evil and give them the skills to be future heroes.



IT'S GOT TO BE C

THE VERY BEST SOFTWARE ENTERTAINMENT, SCORED BY BRITAIN'S MOST EXCITING AND INVA

CRUISE FOR A CORPSE*



Screenshot from 'Cruise for a Corpse'



Based on the 1930's, legendary *Kismet* Decadence is about a ship on the Mediterranean. But the journey has the twist: a legend about Raziel's quest to investigate a crime - the murder of his love, Nikita Karakodja, the Greek shipping magnate. It's up to Raziel to throw some light on this sinister case!

- Wide range of activities, including the option to question other characters in their unique *Kismet* style
- PC version features 256 colours, 4MB & 8MB sound card support
- Available on the platforms of choice

STEEL HEART, SABLE & PC (EGA, VGA, SVGA), TANDY ADVISE & BROADWAY.

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THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND*



Screenshot from 'The Secret of Monkey Island'



A comedy set during the "golden age" of piracy in the Caribbean, the game's funny plot leads our hero, Riven, from the old world, on an hilarious, complex, swash-buckling search for the fabled Secret of Monkey Island.

- Features over 300 graphics, an original ragged sound track and a "punk" or "old-timey" library.
- A wide variety of original, entertaining puzzles, clever hidden messages to follow, surprises.
- Proportionally scaled, colorful characters and cinematic pans and camera angles.

STEEL HEART, SABLE & PC (EGA, VGA, SVGA, MCGA, NO-EM, ROLAND) AND MCD ROMS.

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Continuation



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CRIMEWAVE™



Screenshots from IBM PC



A FORTHING MEDICINE DREAM!
A powerful crime syndicate has taken over large areas of our major cities, turning them into a vast criminal wasteland. Arms, extortion, drug distribution and more - become a villain.

Four powerful allies and the criminal organization and rescue the President's daughter.

- More than a "shoot 'em up" game, *CrimeWave* contains several unique features: keycards, different weapons, varying levels of difficulty along with a variety of other strategy elements that provide endless hours of challenge and excitement.
- A multitude of brilliant 3D color rendering game screens.
- Incredible digital "Movie Captain" (starring real actors and models).

IBM PC, AMIGA & PC-GEM, MACII, VGA, VGA and IBM, SOUND-PC.

U.S. GOLD SOFTWARE, INC.
10000 WILSON BLVD.



ACCESS™
Software Incorporated

A.D.S.™ ADVANCED DESTROYER SIMULATOR From the creators of *Shogun*, IBM



Screenshots from IBM Mega



It's World War II... the naval forces of the world are waging war in fierce and devastating sea battles... You must command the destroyer and see to it that you lead and do battle in 10 challenging missions.

A.D.S. is a stunning sea battle simulator using 3D technology.

- Multiple manuals include detailed maps of the combat areas together with historical and technical information.
- Adjustable difficulty level will suit all levels of players.

ATARI ST, AMIGA & PC, VGA, VGA

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U.S. GOLD

FUTURA
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ACE EXCLUSIVE FROM NEW YORK



LASER VISIONS

A popular misconception is about to be smacked. Video gaming is no longer the purview of snotty male teenagers playing Space Invaders till the early hours of the morning. When a four-footed name like Sony actively gets involved, you know video games are a format whose time has come.

"The demographics of video games are changing — females and adults are getting involved too," confirms 29-year-old Cliff Ostrowski, President of the newly formed Sony Electronic Publishing. Based in the never-sleeping sprawl of New York, this subsidiary of Sony Software Corporation has been specifically set up to create, produce and distribute interactive and multimedia entertainment and software information products.

Ostrowski adds, "We're trying to achieve a wider audience through a combination of technology and more exciting programs."

The global entertainment giant is aiming for the perfect fusion of software and hardware by housing the images and music produced by movie and record companies. Not such a crazy idea, when you consider Sony already owns Columbia Pictures Entertainment and Sony Music Entertainment (formerly CBS Records). Not surprising is these two companies include Sherry Anderson, Gloria Estefan, George Michael and the Shaka-style crossover Harry Connick, Jr. Not forgetting Michael Jackson, who recently signed a lucrative contract with Sony believed to be worth over \$200 million.

You will soon be able to watch the movie, hear the soundtrack and play the game without ever having to leave the "quality-assurance" of Sony.

Sony video games, you've got to be joking!

That's what Rik Haynes thought, until he spoke to the President of Sony Electronic Publishing...

Many of the best-selling console and computer games of recent years have been structured around movies. Players have been driving down the streets of Gotham City, getting back to the Future and fighting crime in *Noblesse*.

Unsurprisingly, software houses such as EGS Gold, Golan and Microsoft are getting most of their future star-making hopes into the likes of *Godfather II*, *Terminator II* and *Alien II*. Despite the popularity, the quality of video games based on movies has rarely lived up to the original concept. Will Sony deliver the best of future?

"Star Columbia and TriStar studios are very interested in getting more control over how the movies will be exploited in video games. We want to make sure that the quality of the original product is maintained," declares Ostrowski.





Sony has already made some successful, albeit small, steps into the world of video game development through CD-i (Compact Disc Interactive). Before for the Nintendo Entertainment System was the first hit. This arcade adventure game was actually written by Software Creations in Manchester. Gafson has decided to publish further original video games under a new name, Sony Insignia, a subsidiary of Sony Electronic Publishing. He may even start another label, Sony Electronic Entertainment.

"Sony Insignia is in charge of all video game development. This unit is using a variety of software developers including five European game specialists, Ocean and Software Creations. I think Ocean has done some very good work. We are confident that they can produce what we've asked them to do," states Gafson.

Ocean's understandably stated. Software Director Gary Bracey says: "I don't think we could have any greater partner in the consumer electronics industry. Hopefully this relationship will enable us to venture into new areas along with Sony."

The first fruits of this deal will be cartridge and floppy disk games based on two new films from Columbia Pictures. Hudson Hook has Bruce Willis, the star of Die Hard and Moonlighting, playing a cool lawyer who tries to go straight before being forced into dealing some crooked suits of Leonardo DiCaprio. Hook is a top-grossing movie telling the story of a grown-up Peter Pan. The film, directed by Steven Spielberg, has attracted top names like Dustin Hoffman, Robin Williams and Julia Roberts. He waxes the estimated cost of producing the movie currently runs at \$20 million!

"We feel Hook is a natural for video games," claims Gafson. "We're making sure that the equipment of the video game is tied closely to the development of the movie and story. We want to make things as exciting as possible."

ACE has got a feeling that Hudson Hook and Hook will be improvements over recent movie-licensed product from Ocean: take our London featured article on page 60 (Bracey told us

Ocean will publish the games in Europe while Sony will handle North America and Japan. They will be released later this year on a variety of formats.

"We will support any format that makes sense," Gafson reveals. "We're not limiting ourselves to any one particular format. We could publish video games on potato chips if it made sense. We have to make sure that we maximize the copyright, so in many consumers as possible can enjoy the games. We have an obligation both to the artist and the consumer."

Sony is also getting into the video game business as a hardware company. "We will be announcing our second plant for video game hardware in a couple of months," indicates Gafson. He is probably referring to the recent agreement with Nintendo, whereby Sony is supplying an add-on CD-ROM drive for the Super Famicom console. Industry sources suggest the price of the new drive will be just below

MULTIMEDIA IN THE HOME

The question being will be introducing multimedia to non-reading American consumers with the release of a CD-ROM package for the home computer market. "We're attempting to release a hardware product for the IBM PC-compatible world and the consumers you need like headphones, and the software will be less than \$500 to \$700, over \$1000," reveals Sony Electronic Publishing President Ken Gafson.

His most multimedia software will include action title entertainment and educational titles incorporating digitized video, audio, graphics and text. Gafson will soon introduce this knowledge with a number of different books and magazine publishers. The initial CD-ROM for the home will be eventually regard into a catalogue of 40 CD applications including title categories: entertainment, video games, family language development, reference, music titles and other relevant titles. The price of release date has been set for the European market. It may first of selling around for CD-i like the rest of us! "The reason we're going for CD-i, it's very simple. Before from being exciting that it is a video market that will allow you have a lot of CD's around. The most important thing is to get you from one place to another. Multimedia technology might get you there faster but it's not going to be around for a few years."

"We would publish video games on potato chips if it made sense."

Ken Gafson
President of Sony Electronic Publishing

£100,000 (approximately \$400).

Gafson's less sure about creating 'novel' video games, though. "Today, with current technologies, music doesn't really come across that eagerly. However, once we introduce CD-based video games we open a whole new category of opportunities. We will be working with our music artists once this technology gets introduced."

WIRED FOR DATA

Ken Gafson may not look like an ordinary portable audio CD player. It plays the latest CDs straight from the CD-ROM with very high quality, but Sony claims the compact format much more than this. Much why this most hard disk is also compatible CD-ROM device with the capability to display illustrations, sounds and visual guides on a small size on a 3.5" screen. Already available in Japan, this device may still be released into the USA and Europe before the end of the year. Sony will market some 20 or software titles available in Spanish. Most of this will be educational based literature of the nature of the product. "We're getting into all kinds of stuff programs," says Sony's Ken Gafson. "We're doing for this thing is very simple and family orientated. For instance, you will work into video titles + Ocean (Ocean is their partner and then to their favourite authors). They can then use it to their personal library - text and an encyclopedia also will connect via the device information. We're sure that the Sony Insignia will have a number of applications in the business world but it is generally a consumer product. There are a tremendous amount of opportunities."





Few games have kept the hardened gamers of ACE addicted as long as Super Mario World on Nintendo's Super Famicom. It's addictive grip over our hearts, and mind-boggling goodness, what is it about Mario World that makes you want to keep playing? And why do so few other games have that special 'it'?

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

The Super Famicom is a high-gloss era of electronics hardware. Mario World boasts streams of fresh visual tricks - fast multi-level parallax scrolling, smooth sprite rotation (as in the Assault course), searching-like effects, hidden and fade-outs - thanks to its graphics chip. The Famicom's sound chip is no slouch either - the exciting effects in the star levels is proof enough of that.

What really impresses is the amount of thought that's gone into the design of Mario World and its inhabitants - there's nothing that just sits back or looks out of place - and the cartoon-like animation makes the characters instantly appealing and lovable. The care that's gone into the game is exhibited in never let local details such as the dust rising from Mario's feet when he stabs his foot into a Spiny's Bushy Tail, or the way Mario pulls his cap down tight over his head when he crouches.

But anyone who has played Dragon's Lair Full will tell you that it takes more than pretty pictures and stunning sound effects to make a classic game. As good as Mario World's graphics, qualities are, they are basically king on the cube. The game elements that make Mario so addictive and engrossing could just as easily be implemented on an Amiga or ST.



Super Mario World on Nintendo's Super Famicom is arguably the most playable game ever written. But just what is it that makes Mario the maestro? ACE dissects the game and explains where Nintendo are going right and where others are going wrong.

KING



CONTROL
Mario is nothing if not agile. Depending on whether the 'Special' button on the control pad is held down or not, Mario can jump to various heights, and even change direction in mid-flight. This change physical law justifier for Mario World is vital to the player's enjoyment - in a platform game there's nothing more fulfilling than jumping and then realising that you're going to

ACE
MARIO'S WORLD: THE GRAPHICS CHANGE, BUT MARIO'S GAMEPLAY IS AS GOOD AS EVER. THE NEW LEVELS BRING MORE OF THE SAME



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THE MARIO

level especially in the path of a monster that's just wandered on-screen, a problem that inspired the otherwise highly enjoyable *Contra*.

Another major control feature is Mario's double jump. It's a resource of 1x1, and players will find

themselves sliding into bubbles, however, as the player gains in experience, he or she learns to compensate for it and then use it to their own advantage, especially when in the air, to perform some fancy manoeuvres, teasing and

turning, bouncing from the head of one monster onto the head of another. Fans of Asteroid-style games like *Duke* and *Strider* will well know the subtle but crucial importance of such complete mastery of the controls.



But when building platforms was a great tool of control, making them more of a resource than a means to an end, it was made so often, incorporated by adding enemies, that it was almost always used. (MARIO) The long Super Mario Bros. was about how much more, Mario's life, and



Some
will be
jump to
to jump
strange
and should
smack - it
being
and going to

DEPTH

The variety in missions, allowing players to view their progress via a variety of means, means that Super Mario World has a wide range of challenges. From the classic 2D platformer to the 3D action-adventure, Super Mario World has a lot to offer.

VARIETY

It's the spirit of life, they say, and it certainly adds a strong flavor to Mario World. As the player progresses through the 100 levels of Mario World, he or she is constantly encountering new challenges and being to adjust their playing style to survive. Difficulty progresses, making things to have more and harder to kill items, whereas, Mario World's worlds change very little. Instead, it's the game style that changes.

In effect, each level has its own specific learning curve. Unlike most games where the player is encouraged to play to see what new graphic delights await, Mario World induces the player with the lure of a totally different game challenge.



FAIRNESS

Since Mario II never fails, when you die it's invariably your fault, and not just random chance. Too many gamers rely on the shortcuts led to trick the player, a sudden burst of items from the bottom of the screen in Action 2, a monster appearing from nowhere, and dropping an egg at you in Two. These sort of games rely on you learning when these surprise attacks occur and reacting accordingly. Mario World rarely allows you to come out of anything, a winning game means it's about to fall, crashes that slowly at first then speed up, allowing the skill player to avoid trouble.

Mario World, although constantly full of surprises, cleverly introduces new game elements slowly. For example, on one level there are platforms with numbers on the side.



When Mario stands on one, it starts moving to the right, carrying Mario with it. The number starts to count down, and when it hits zero the platform disappears. When first encountered, these platforms are shown with ground, giving the player a chance to study some how they work. But later the platforms will carry Mario over bottomless chasms.



So what's holding other games back? Well, memory is probably the biggest factor. Super Mario World can afford to go to town simply because each Super Nintendo cartridge can address instantaneously an incredible 16 Mb of data.

Compare this to, say, the Amiga. Most games are designed for the basic 128k available - that's 33 times less memory than the Nintendo! And a 640k model inside the box will also cost up around \$100, you'll begin to see how tight things get.

Memory aside, there's no technical reasons why Mario World



couldn't convert almost identically to the Amiga too, to a lesser extent, than it is on PC.

Another important point is the amount of development that goes into a Nintendo game. Twenty odd people are credited with Mario World, whereas typically three or four write a UK

game. But remember that Super Mario Bros II on the MSX has sold over 7 million copies (ignoring in excess of 1000 million) and compares that with sales of 50,000 for a top UK game, and you'll realize it just isn't viable to allocate a similarly sized team.

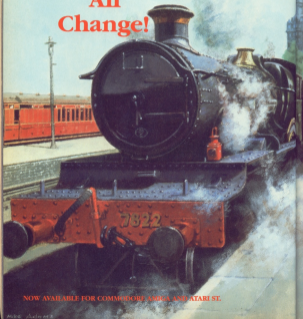
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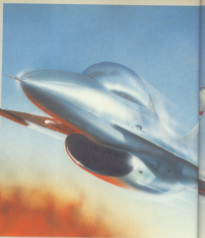
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games/ By
Steve Cooke**



FALCON FANTASY



The main responsibility for coding and development's heavy design work lies in the flight sim department. The team includes: Andrew Armstrong (left), Steve Cooke, Andrew Armstrong (right), and Steve Cooke.

Spectrum Holobyte's Falcon has been sky-ramming its way for almost as long as General Dynamics' real-life F-16 has been firing up afterburners. Once the undisputed king of 16-bit flight sims, the game's supremacy has come under ever increasing fire from more recent releases and nowadays only a particularly indulgent fan could give

it a sporting chance against the combined weight of Jet Fighter 2 (see next month), F-16 Interceptor or F-16 II.

Undaunted, Spectrum Holobyte are about to launch another mission against those who dare to intrude upon their air space. The release of Falcon 3.0, scheduled for early June, is the first sortie in an reinforcing assault on the military

simulation market - not just because of the quality of the game, but because it revolves around a whole new multi-player concept: the Electronic Battlefield System.

EBES has been three years in the making - most of which was spent on steady refinement of the concept rather than actual coding. It's going to be firing salvoes at several different targets, not only



Use in the game your flight deck, including the 3-D panel of the main instrument area. Adapted by the operators, including the flight deck and instrument panel, into the game graphics.

Falcon 3.0 offers all the latest multiple-view facilities, including virtual reality.



Folland sits on your shoulder in his Falcon, alert for the unwelcome attentions of that ubiquitous and evil Scots Snake Pilot, who serves here as an AI tank leader.

IT'S ONLY A GAME

Getting back into the cockpit of Falcon 3.0 for a moment, what – apart from a monobus multilayer capability – does this latest promise?

First, the game is a massive improvement as its excellent predecessor in terms of scenario. Whereas the original Falcon has fixed missions, being mission, after a week or two of intensive gaming, the unobtainable might add, Falcon 3.0 offers the player a three-way choice: a complete, non-linear language scenario, infinite at mission, or even the option to design your own missions for that particularly devoted or personally inspired combat challenge.

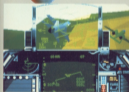
Once you've made up your mind, you enter a whole game sub-state involving equipment and manpower management. Starting with your teammates, you can create different squadrons and save them to disk together with their call signs, attributes, flying history, morale and individual skills.

Weapon selection is detailed and comprehensive. Unlike the earlier Falcon programs, Falcon 3.0 gives you a complete choice of enhance their military supplies, target

Use the main features of the game after you understand control and management systems, including your virtual cockpit that appears when all you get your straight line into air.

Falcon 3.0 Technical Data

- Supports Windows 3.11 or MS-DOS software on appropriate.
- Requires over 8 megabyte RAM.
- Extensive capability includes 3D6000 frame buffers, 33MHz video graphics monitor, Microsoft Integrated graphics interface, MIDI graphics interface, video boards, SCSI, MS-DOS 5.00 or later, Hercules and memory banks, and mouse.
- Graphics alone requires three full-time artists.
- Minimum support from 1000 to 1000 board; also about network and networking.
- Extensive Operational System capability.
- Suggested US retail price.



will it feature advanced multiplayer capability, but it also allows players using different Spectrum Hardware files to do battle over the same terrain. And, just to let a final shell at the opponent, it could also be implemented in arcade, as well as a special ultra-high resolution version.

The maximum number of participants in an CBS scenario hasn't been fixed yet, but you can

be certain it will be a lot more than the traditional two player head-to-head. Falcon 3.0 is the first game to feature in-built CBS capability. The next will be AI Tank Killer (see panel), followed by an CBS version of Tank in 1952. By the time we enter the single European market, you could be tanking across a 3D virtual world in your metal monies, while your buddy from

France, ranging from the WWF head boxing inside a Phoenix guided bomb. It's commercially available for the PC, it's also project leader Kusanagi (Parasol), "we've got it in the game."

Naturally you choose your weapons according to the mission you have to accomplish. There are three different features of air to

operate in Israel, Kuwait, and one that has yet to be decided, but could be modeled on Panama. If you can't be bothered to design your own mission, don't worry — there are over 200 associated with each theater, providing enough challenge to keep you playing for weeks, if not months.

If you're on campaign and out in the real war, your day starts with a choice of available missions. Your selection could be influenced by many different factors: weather, availability of team mates with the correct skills, defense/offense activity on possible routes to the target, available weaponry, and other life-or-death decisions.

If you're in normal (as opposed to DDO) multiplayer mode linked over a modem, or — for PC players — via a network, you can choose whether to fly missions head-on or jointly.

Before you can fire up on the runway, however, you've got to decide how to reach your target. If you're 3-D you can choose detailed maps of possible routes, including information about threats on route and relevant topography. You might choose, for example, a low-level strike, using the valleys for shelter and then approaching your target from behind a range of mountains, limiting visual contact to the last few vital seconds. Topography — as we'll see later — is vitally important in the game and plays a major role in tactical decision making.

Letting out on a mission can get you Kylemer with as many as eight friendly aircraft, giving you four possible double-up formations. Your radar displays will have given you waypoints and time/coordinate data that can be fed to each formation, enabling you to rendezvous or split off at any time en route or at the target. You can also pre-select combat procedures for different scenarios, enabling you to, for example, send a colleague ahead to bomb certain strategic points en route before committing the rest of your men.

Choosing the pilot skills you need will also involve reading considerations left, for example, send Lieutenant "Okey" Cobblers who's a stab-flier with the anti-air but has evaded all round that mountain range at high altitude so he can batter that artillery range, ready to our approach from the North accompanied by Captain "Shivers" Miller, who couldn't hit four targets at 500 yards, but can take out practically anything with wings... and so on. The level of detail involved in mission planning is so great that, as the weight of responsibility begins to settle on your shoulders, your alternate heads are



By the author and picture by Peter Hunter

The National Aerospace F-16 Fighting Falcon first hit the targets in January 1979 after several years of development and military spending commitments.

Additional funding to give developers a chance to stabilize costs for F-16 users (I have joined the space-to-leave side of the world's most expensive fighters. Its success has guaranteed it a major role in aerial combat well into the next century.

NOE readers who would like a superb portfolio of F-16 photography could do a lot worse than start out with the Peter Hunter's excellent pictorial overview of the aircraft, published by Ian Allan Ltd, and from which this photograph was taken. This can be ordered from your local bookseller (ISBN 0-7155-5701-0).

But could we give you topographical knowledge — you also get enhanced terrain features as well. And don't get me started on the amazing set of three-dimensional displays — you really get a sense of the terrain, and you can choose that both the view and graphics are 3-D.

plugging the ground routes before you've even got into the plane...

TOPG: THE WORLD

Once you've actually made it above 200 feet, you're in for another surprise — the topography. I haven't seen a single game with good 3D terrain," says Kasperis. "We will be the first company to bring out a flight sim with a realistic 3D terrain."

Mountain simulation 3D isn't just pyramids. They're towering jagged polygons of rock that live close, verdant valleys. Once you're in the driving seat, you and your wingsman can take the high road or the low road. We fly over a full 64x64-tile terrain map — the game version that we like was still in development and didn't have the sum of speed one would like to see in a finished product, but Spectrum Hobbyists are confident they can deliver a satisfying patch in the kitchen when

you slow the atmosphere in the foreshortened view.

There's variety up in the sky as well as down on the ground. As well as the F-16, you'll encounter at least five other makes of plane, including AN-26s (quite a few) who can communicate vital information about threat and opportunity beyond your personal horizon. And if you've got a PC you get some pretty heavy sound as well, thanks to 48.6, SoundBlaster, Hi 32 and PS1 sound systems support.

Simulation sensitivity is adjustable too, over four levels ranging from a button-pressing beginner's mode. For those who want to be able to climb to 6000 feet at full speed without dropping a single point on the speed indicator, to a serious simulator fan's tendency with a control sensitivity that, claim the company, "is the same as a professional simulation trainer." And



they ought to know — they make them.

You can also determine many other game factors, ranging from enemy logic (from "Dumb" to "ACE"), engine effectiveness, and speed of game set-up. The latter is particularly useful if you want to get up into the air within seconds of booting up your computer and don't get bothered with all that real-world simulation stuff beforehand.

Spectrum Hobbyists had a winner on their hands with the original Falcon. If the finished version of Falcon 3.0 lives up to the promise of the program we saw running in Oakland, California, it'll be burning up the skies over Dingledale, the Conchos, Warrington, Tierra del Fuego, Carlsborg, the Piddle Valley... wherever there's a means plug to fire up with, a computer to aim and a comfortable chair to get you airborne.



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Screen shots shown are taken from the Atari ST versions. Actual screens may vary by format.

Flames of Freedom, the new blockbuster from the creators of Midwinter, offers you total freedom. Freedom of choice, Freedom of action, Freedom of movement.



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The sea surface is generated by constantly moving fractal points, causing you to bob up and down as you swim or sail across it.

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There can surely be nothing more easy and fashionable than the ACE t-shirt. This latest item in the Ace Clothing Collection is what every self respecting computing genius will be wearing this season. The eye catching ensemble has been exclusively designed by ACE's own art studio, Jim "Gaulier" Mills, for the lover of fine things and the reader with good taste. The t-shirt is available in sizes small, medium and extra large and can be purchased at the ridiculously low price of £5.99



There is no better way of storing your copies of this, the world's finest computer entertainment magazine, than in an ACE binder. The binders are available in two designs - so as to satisfy even the most stalwart supporter of style and quality - and can be yours for the embarrassingly inexpensive price of £5.99

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You don't just get to play games at the ACE Conference either. Even more important, you also get a chance to meet the people who develop them. In 1998, ACE readers have gone or refer to companies like US-Go!, Activision, Demtek, and Microsoft. We're now counting the hunting season again for 1999, and our first venues will be Virgin and Games.

Virgin are based in their London and Bristol air up in Sheffield, so readers from different areas of the country will get a chance to pay a visit to someone (relatively) close. If the distance is daunting, don't worry - we've got you covered up to Manchester, Scotland, and Reading, so leave your fingers crossed.

THE HUNT

What happens at an ACE Conference?

This question is actually impossible to answer because we try to structure the day as little as possible. As a general rule, however, conferences begin at 12.30pm (and end around 1.45pm, a light lunch is provided to keep you going).

When you arrive you're introduced to the other attendees, then try to create a spread of age ranges and machine owners, at each round, to the ACE staff members who are present. So they play and, of course, to the software house come you're visiting. You'll probably get a quick guided tour of the premises and a member of the software house will tell you a bit about the business side of developing games.

Despite the fact that we have a lot of fun and games at conferences, there is a serious side to it all too. Here at ACE we believe that contact between developers and the people who actually buy their games is vitally important for everyone. It gives them a chance to hear your honest opinion about their titles (which you'll be encouraged to give) and you a chance to hear their opinions or topics ranging from features and pricing through to graphics and gameplay.

During the afternoon, the software house will usually enjoy showing off some of their latest titles under development. You'll get a chance to play some of their games and tell the developers what you think of their efforts. During past ACE Conferences, ACE readers' opinions have actually resulted in significant changes to new games - something you can justifiably boast about for several months afterwards!

At the end of the day, you'll find you've made some new friends - and most important, you'll know a lot more than most people about the real world of game publishing. So... what are you waiting for?

HOW TO JOIN THE PARTY...

Each month, we'll let you know in the magazine 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 send us:

- 1 Which conference you would like to attend if you're applying for more than one, just then in order of preference. (If no conference is listed for the software house you'd like to visit, just put the software house's name down and we'll put you on the list for their conference when it is organised in the future.
- 2 The machine you own, so we can make sure you get some juicy free gifts for your system!
- 3 Your age, so that we can ensure a good spread of age groups at each conference.
- 4 If you are a subscriber, send your application to us alongside together with the address given from the last issue of ACE that you were sent.

If you are not a subscriber, we make a token charge of £5. This will result in having the payment for the conference and we reserve the right to refuse admission to anyone who hasn't got it! If you're taken out a subscription then applying, you can bring your address card with you instead - as if you're planning on visiting to a conference anyway. It's a small way of effectively saying 'I'm on your subscription form' - you can find a subscription offer on page 68/9 in this issue.

Obviously we have to limit the number of people attending each conference. Members vary depending on the location, but we ensure a good spread between night and 'D' groups for each event. All places are allocated on a first come, first served basis.

A couple of weeks beforehand the notice is started (unless your conference isn't for you come whether you've been selected). If any of you submit applications early please, we'll distribute you for a future conference and choose someone else to take their place.

FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES

Virgin Mastertronic

A truly unique day not only the company who brought you game ideas ranging from Star Wars to... into an exciting world of new technology and development, and who are part of a group that's into everything from artificial intelligence to...
The location: Virgin Mastertronic
The date: Wednesday 17th June

Gamesville Complex

A company who have produced the most stunning amount of software the software industry has ever seen, from being pioneers as a pioneer of the field to a dynamic and innovative publisher with support from the... and...
The location: Gamesville
The date: Tuesday 15th June

LET'S DO THE SHOW RIGHT HERE ▶

The games-buying public aren't invited to the ECTS. ACE sneaks you in the back door...



Not even University students. It's the Business Design Centre in nearby Hammersmith, London for the show.

This year's European Computer Trade Show was a peculiar event. Although never expected to exceed the success of the Entertainment Show in September, it was more the less a somewhat subdued affair, with folks from the software far less concerned about having an enjoyable time and more concerned with examining more of their swaggers on the sunny side of actually making money.

The non-consumer policy enables exhibitors to wander around freely without being harassed, and makes for a slightly more serene atmosphere, but without the flashing lights, bumping music and frenetic buzz generated by a consumer-led event, it's easy to forget that these people are in the entertainment business.

Without the incentive to double the prospective customer, most exhibitors opted for conservative

booth-like stands with a meagre frontpiece and an office inside. Indeed, the quotient of profitable deals was pretty high, but rooms seemed to be feeling much fun.

Even the promotional activity seemed to be a bit half-hearted with a couple of men dressed up as Leonardo's wandering boldly through the ranks of suits.

Among the more noteworthy items on show were Sonic the Hedgehog, a game freely offering Megaforce owners some ammunition with which to defend themselves from rabel Famicom-Mania fans, and the arrival of the Gearsport.

And the best news of all is that the number of exhibitors signing up for a massive presence at the trade and consumer European Computer Entertainment Show in September is rising by the day. We look forward to seeing you there!

THE PARTIES:

After all the deals have been done, and before the ink has dried, buyers tend not to fidget but businesses are enjoying offload drinks in one of the nearby taverns.

Saturday evening, and **Mc Taylor's** near Southfield market is the venue for the Black and White Party, arranged by PR guru Simon Harvey and Golan's Gary Broady and Dean Stewart.

■ Atmosphere: 7 - Non-groovy sounds. A bit crowded owing to size of the venue. However, the beer was flowing nicely and everyone was in a good mood. Helped along by top industry



Left: **Sharon** (left) and **Sharon** (right) from the **Sharon** group. Sharon is also competing a range of products including Simon Perry's **Crash**, **Archie**, **Archie** and **Archie** in a variety of roles.

Right: **John** (left) and **John** (right) from the **John** group. John is also competing a range of products including Simon Perry's **Crash**, **Archie**, **Archie** and **Archie** in a variety of roles.

Left: **John** (left) and **John** (right) from the **John** group. John is also competing a range of products including Simon Perry's **Crash**, **Archie**, **Archie** and **Archie** in a variety of roles.



Right: **John** (left) from the **John** group. John is also competing a range of products including Simon Perry's **Crash**, **Archie**, **Archie** and **Archie** in a variety of roles.





squares and the fact that the show hadn't start at yet and no-one was knocking.

● **Food:** 1 - Bubbled Hungry joints need some decent food, not merely peanuts and cherry nibbles.

● **Drink:** 0 - "Free" beer and wine supplied through it cost £75 on the day for entry in the first place.

● **PR Validity:** 0 - No product to push, this was an all-out fund-raiser. Everyone left their hair down and had a nice time. Gary, Simon and I was footed their already soaring popularity among the industry movers and shakers.

Sunday evening, and the *Biggie Live!* Leicester Square's trendy Hippodrome plays host to the industry for what should have been a glittering and enjoyable event from all concerned, leading further from the truth would have been hard to imagine. This particular party was heralded as a big deal owing to the announcement of various computer-future awards. However, investors were disappointed on a number of counts. The ceremony took forever, there weren't any awards to give away (they were held up in transit) the celebrity valiant was terrible and the "free" bar instead with less than half price drinks. And the cost of entry? £44 each.

● **Atmosphere:** 2 - Trendy location, lots of people.
 ● **Food:** 3 - Fumble (jiffy).
 ● **Drink:** 2 - Champagne/beer. Not from cheap.
 ● **PR Validity:** 0.

Monday evening saw the *Accolade* cocktail reception in full swing in The Filing Station bar, attached to the Business Design Centre.

Ready here so many industry heavyweights, had to come into quite early close contact with each other. The promise of sampling the most Accolade Atom Bomb Co exhibition was become a prize was awarded for anyone brave enough to successfully determine its contents (sound sampling enough to fill the station to bursting point).

● **Atmosphere:** 4 - No music. Lots of fun but



● **Drink:** 0 - No personality, overpriced (this despite a bar) around the show.

● **Food:** 0/10 - Nothing was catered for. Both food and drinks were disappointing. Another typical trade show event.

● **Atmosphere:** 0/10 - Nothing was catered for. Both food and drinks were disappointing. Another typical trade show event.



● **Drink:** 0/10 - Nothing was catered for. Both food and drinks were disappointing. Another typical trade show event.

● **Atmosphere:** 0/10 - Nothing was catered for. Both food and drinks were disappointing. Another typical trade show event.

enjoyment hampered by feeling like you were standing in a cattle truck in the rush hour.

● **Drink:** 1/0 - Anything you want, all for free.
 ● **Food:** 5 - Lots of nice nibbles, not especially substantial.
 ● **PR Validity:** 3 - No big announcements to maximize potential coverage for the receptive audience.

■ **Jim Douglas**

For a full report on the show's major announcements and events, see the *Planet* pages.





to remember. It is a great flight sim for beginners and experts alike.

Four levels of difficulty will help you to learn quickly - and options - autopilot landings will allow you to concentrate on airframe action. The controls are simple, effective, and easy



into of nearly half a million square miles.

Each area contains hundreds of missions and each mission will differ depending on your chosen tactics, even if you fly it twice!

Fly missions in any of six real world areas from the Persian Gulf to Vietnam, Central Europe to the Middle East and the North Cape to North Africa, giving you a total flying



to automatically change the view for you, so that you're always looking right at the centre of the action.

An amazing ten viewpoints give you the opportunity to view the fast flowing 3-D environment from virtually anywhere around your plane - and a unique "Director" option can be used



attack being flown at you.

The newest smart weaponry and laser-guided armaments are perfect for launch - it's your job to make sure that you're in the right place at the right time, and avoiding the constant enemy



the hottest seat of them all - Take a look for yourself!

enemy pilots and missile crews act and react intelligently and quickly. Success depends on making the right moves - and making them fast. F-15 Strike Eagle II puts you in

F-15 STRIKE EAGLE II



F15 Strike Eagle II follows F19 and Gunship into the front line. The latest and best



AIR SUPERIORITY

The F15 Strike Eagle is the latest in a long line of F15 Eagles, whose development began in the mid '60s. Originally conceived as an ultra-powerful, ultra-fast air-superiority fighter, the design has developed into an air-superiority fighter with ground-attack capabilities.

The F15 Strike Eagle is one of the fastest, most manoeuvrable, and most powerful military aircraft in the world. It has the capacity to carry the latest air-to-air and air-to-ground armament in addition to its 20mm cannon.

The latest version of the Strike Eagle is equipped with a sophisticated zoom FLIRTV/Laser target tracking system that allows the pilot to see close up views (either TV or thermal) of the target at all times.



MICROPROSE
SIMULATION • SOFTWARE

and great from MicroProse will soon be available for Commodore Amiga and Atari ST.



AIR DUEL

Welcome to the first all-action dogfighting flight simulation from MICROPROSE. Rik Haynes talks to programmer Glyn Williams about his new baby... and the game!

Do you ever wonder what it's like to dogfight at supersonic speeds over bright desert skies? What about catching the Red Baron in World War One? Imagine the kind of real-time-thrust action you could do in outer space with a futuristic fighter? These are just three of the questions that have inspired Glyn Williams to write *Air Duel*, a flight-sim that lets you dogfight some exhilarating combat aircraft from the past, present and future. With *Air Duel* you can climb into a Soviet-Czech biplane or hit hyperspace with an interstellar spacecraft. You can even go Torii Torii! *Duel* is a Japanese Zero carrier-fighter from the Second World War.



Building away from the cockpit of your spaceship.

Explain the concept of *Air Duel*!

I'm more interested in *Air Duel* being a game rather than a simulator - although it does borrow from the simulator genre. My original intention was to make it more towards a coin-op sort of 3D game rather than a hourly detailed simulator. The simulation elements are important to Microprose so I'm developing those a little bit more.

Coin-op, what's that?

Things like immediacy, speed and pace. The fact that a playing session will be two minutes rather than two hours. With a coin-op, it's immediately obvious what you're supposed to do with it. You don't have to read a manual to play it. You just pick-up and go. The objective is simple and obvious. There are certain ways of doing things in combat. There are scores and when your attention is being diverted in a particular way you get a big arrow rather than a subtle hint. The difference is a stylistic one.

What do players get up to?

The objective of the game is aerial combat and dogfighting. The fact there are two players fighting each other is, ideally, the most intense way possible - unless their involvement is that



Beating the airfield by flying through an open hangar or performing stunts when requested about you could save extra fuel consumption in some planes.

conflict is maximised, their emotional involvement should be heightened. The ideal way of playing *Air Duel* will be between two players with split-screen or two monitors.

How does the game work?

It's about to there are four scenarios to choose from, which are sort of classic dogfighting encounters through history. This is a way of adding value to the game and makes *Air Duel* about four separate products in its own right. The World War One scenario is played over the extended battlefields of Europe in 1918 - Soviet-Czech versus Fokker triplanes. This is an introduction to dogfighting, you get very close to your opponent. You have quite slowly so there's a stronger element of strategy. The second scenario is set in the Pacific during World War Two, Carrier-based Mitsubishi against Japanese Zero's over a little Pacific island. The main difference between the two World War scenarios is pace really. World War Two introduces cover as an element in the conflict. The next scenario is the present day and this introduces jet aircraft, rather, HUDs and missiles as well as retaining the other elements. I'm going to do it in a really desert sort of scenario, carrier-based F-30 against the MIG-25 (one of the fastest planes in the game). It was designed before the Gulf War but nobody will believe me. For the fourth option I thought I'd get so excited and do a space game, I can chuck anything to the wind. Gherly goes out of the window. You have a much wider selection of weapons systems, some of them quite stupid and bizarre.

JUST WILLIAMS

An *Avant* will be the last project that Steve Williams will design and write entirely on his own. He now has plans to exit the life story software development team dedicated to the award-winning *Avant* games. The 27-year-old Williams wants to do more game designing and to already developing a top computer programming team with lots of artists and animators on staff. He also desires to expand his work to do a project in Windows that challenges some simulation with smart-like actions and automatic intelligent controls. "I'd like to make the actions bigger and wider," Williams says. "These are different worlds for Windows. Many developers have been using graphics. Something along the lines of what you see. Several studios are going down into the computer and leaving the rest of the old ones. It's quite an interesting type of project."

Will there be ground objects?

When I pick up a simulator the first thing I ever do is find a bridge or try and fly through a target, things like this. I'm not interested in essentially landing a 747 at Gatewick. I just want to do the stunts and stuff. So I want to force that kind of action into *Avant*. Every one of the scenarios is structured for the kind of thing. There are start positions and opportunities scattered throughout the maps. These are really useful in gameplay terms. Putting a start during the course of the game translates into into score, fuel or weapons. Imagine, if you're taking fuel on fuel the conflict is going to end and you're left if you can manage in a way that brings with the amount of fuel you've got available you could go back to full fuel and recovery and have that as an advantage over your enemy.



Give some examples of these stunts?

There's some quite difficult. There's bridges and things that you have to underfly. Bombing. There's barns and various buildings that you have to fly through. And then there are some more exciting ones. In the World War Two scenario there's a carrier with holes under the star deck which you can actually fly through. This, are you with me? In the present day scenario there's obvious things like suspension bridges and oil stores. Similar to this, there are also things that you want to blow up other than your opponent. These are called false targets like fuel supplies, ammo dumps, radio masts, missile sites, all that sort of thing. Of course these Active Targets are appropriate to the current scenario. You fly over trenches

and crates filled with water - and MiG tanks, observation balloons and Zeppelins - in the World War One setting. The Active Targets blow up entertainingly and also translate into scoring points, fuel or weapons. These are very much gamey sort of things. They don't fit in with a mission-driven simulator.

Is it difficult simulating planes in a computer game?

It's quite interesting that. One of the ways that Microsoft have been useful is that the Project Manager and Game Designer Martin Multi-Can actually fly. So he does know what he's talking about. I do think there's a lot of talk about flight models by programmers. I'm trying to get something that feels right more than anything else. Response and flyable. The model has to be quite realistic as well. If I'm saying this is supposed to be a MiG-21, people would be disappointed if they could fly it 500 miles per hour or just the speed of sound. So you have to make the model make it behave within a reasonable set of characteristics that resemble that aircraft. It's more about being fun to play and fun to fight with.

Have you nearly finished *Avant*?

The surface detail is very scarce. Only half the artwork is done. It's at that sort of stage. Sort of in the middle. *Avant* was born out of the ashes of the Fighter project I was doing for Activision. If it was a team of 50 working on it, *Avant* would be finished next week. Since it's only me, it will be finished sometime later this year. I've got to take the prototype which is working complete and which that up into something people want to pay a lot of money for. So there's a lot of work left to do on presentation. You're going to have a really rich form of content and options which allow players to fundamentally modify the way the game works. You can tweak about with how the game plays and scores, how difficult planes are to fly, whether you bounce off or



crash into the ground, and so on. You effectively get 10 games for the price of one. It's like a team - one activity - which is beating the other player. It wins and dies on that one activity.

Were did you get the ideas?

Many through my own frustration with flight simulator products. They don't address what my needs were. I want to blow things up and kill other people. I wasn't interested in executing meticulously detailed missions. That's my gut reaction when I pick up a flight simulator product. In *Avant* you want to locate the enemy straightforward. That's normally a very difficult thing to do in a computer flight sim. You can't look behind or around you. You can't look into the distance very well. The tradition way to overcome this is by providing instruments. With a racing you don't need to know about radars and HUDs or open keys on the keyboard. So in *Avant* if you can't find the enemy you fire some shots off - you've got limited ammo so it's costing you something - and you immediately get a big floating arrow that tells you the direction of your enemy. The wouldn't look too out of place in an arcade.

Can you describe any advances in the code base?

I'm kind of happy with the way my graphics system works. Not so much in dynamic performance, which I think seems about to be the same with every simulator released these days, but how nice and easy it is to program. This means it becomes quite expensive for me to do things like, um, getting it to do stuff. If I wanted to show a particular view from a particular angle after something has happened, it's really easy to setup a little program to do that. It's all very well and good having a graphics engine which can run at terrific speeds but if it's a bugger to program your game it's going to suffer because it makes it very expensive to do a lot of little effects. Here will pay off. I can say I want order to come out of this creating aircraft just by turning on a model generator. Does that make sense? I make full use of the computer's colours. In the World War One scenario for instance you get "fogging". I suppose you could also call these depth-cuing. It's going to be mistiness. I want to get a quite unique look for the game. In terms of detail, you can actually see the propellers moving round.



VR TAKES OFF

Well, it's finally happened - and console will never be the same again. The world's first virtual reality console made it inside this month, at the ecstatic insistence of the general public. At least those of the general public that were lucky enough to be standing at SouthCoast World in sunny Gosport - for that is the place where the arcade industry finally made it into the 90s.

The Virtually 3D Unit, first covered in ACE last year, has finally made it into the arcades after an impressive World launch at Warwick Conference Centre which included tandem flyers, public address systems, and a number of coloured balloons.

It's a real party, all right, but it's not the kind of party you'd expect from a virtual reality console which looked that old. It's the kind of party you'd expect from a virtual reality console which looked that old. It's the kind of party you'd expect from a virtual reality console which looked that old.

If you're a true virtual reality fan, however, you'll notice we're not following their lead and all around the country there's very little to be seen any more. If the console is still in the system to be seen.

Well, the game's on offer for the Virtually 3D Unit, one mainstream or console game called VTO, and another more original title based in the true Space Opera tradition, BattleSphere.

VTO, first. Playing the game on-Center level, the easiest, you get given limited ammo and dynamite - so you can't do anything spectacularly exciting. It's a question of rapping down waves of enemy fighters that appear in order to run vehicles, either military jobs, rendezvousing with a G-120 fighter intercepting off automatic... then you have to do it yourself, or by landing on a carrier or airfield.

Default controls are on the right-hand joystick, along with the game/continue trigger and primary camera button. On the left joystick you have a simple forward/stop/stop, back/stop/stop action.

This is itself a surprise, with fast vector action, fractal landscape and beautiful of use.



great speech, sound effects and a "Get Down! Hit me! Don't! Top Gun style CD soundtrack to top everything off.

But more you've mastered Center level, BattleSphere and Ace levels that probably bring in extra controls, extra looks and extra great is the fact of some very intelligent enemy fighters. The fight model becomes realistic, returning and losing the plane becomes decidedly tricky and there's a big go/stand back to see for that. All great things on about yet. There's also a Flight vs Flight



level that will let you play head-to-head with up to 20 or so linked machines!

Some early players have called it comparable to being in a top-1000 flight simulator - others a cut for your own. In either case, some getting over the occasional wall that there is no screen that you're inside the game universe itself!

Items sparse in the game that all our fans are going to break over, because it lets you live out your wildest Luke Skywalker fantasies for real. This is a game set in a real 3D universe, in Space, there's no system, left/right! There are a lot of alien fighter craft, however and they're all out to get, you!

In actual fact, they're defending their MotherShip - and quite a Mother it is too. Unfortunately, you for you plus a whole team of guys have to head over to it and take out all its laser ports (keeping considerable skills and then ultimately live a bomb into the depths of the main exhaust port. No worries, eh? Again, play happens in waves of attack, with your getting increasingly more generous if you manage to take out each wave more waves.

0043



colored the 1990 game in white. You're being hunted by a whole squadron of enemy fighters (okay, maybe fewer) and you're a non-working machine, and you can see right on the dashboard. As you fly, the frequency will change, allowing you to hear all progress as a function of a battle.

Note: "Ace Combat" may be all that you'll ever know this thing and we're all good. If you were to see from the perspective of a pilot, you'd see the dogfight in a way that will be all you'll see.

What makes *Battlezone* an outstanding game is its innovative use of the 3D environment.

Superposed on your view in the headset is a desktop display that includes, not surprisingly, a gun sight. Move your head, and the gun sight moves too—that is, it's not linked to the direction of travel of your Pod. It's like having a laser stick at the end of your nose, so you end up tracking alien fighters across space with your head in one direction, as you zoom towards the MotherShip.

Different skill levels bring in different weapon types (axe, plasma star and the infamous Chem Bomb—drop one and see why) and tender enemies, while you can either slug it out with a head in *Robotnik's* *Player vs. Player* mode or even by and take out each other's *Battlezone* in the main *Battlezone* level.

However, if you really feel like getting friendly, you and a friend can share a Pod, with one of you being the Driver and the other being a Pod.

Battlezone has given me the best buzz from a game since I got good at *Defender*—which puts it straight up there in my top three ever. It's a lot for yourself to see if it hooks you too!

With a car, driving home is a breeze, but exploring is a different story. Don't miss out on the fun.



Thunder Force - Capcom -

After the success of *Mirza*—playing to the world for hours of this world—*Capcom* are now trying something of the same ilk, but for up to four players at a time. Nice graphics, good sound and some neat palette effects should make this pop for both proto-*Commander*.



Big Karnak - Quilico -

A horizontal romp with jump jumps, plenty of shiny enemies, but is based Egypt. More of a puzzle element than many of its kind—and with more than adequate graphics—this one appears to be tailored to game. Turn it!



Vandyke - Jaleco -

Well—it's *Conan* time, as your large, bar-headed lot should be in the checked list (should be in the checked list) scrolls vertically up the screen and looks out of assorted Goblins, Robots, Cannons, etc., etc. The top-down view isn't OK, but this is a lot of a filler rather than a major release from the increasingly cloying *Jaleco*.



Action Sixteen

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SCREEN TEST



Age 15+ and the Sims series alternate between 3D graphics in urban settings and 2D graphics and cartoonish characters in the Sims 2.



But even the classic intelligent characters and cartoon graphics can't slow it after updating the engine!

IT TAKES ALL SORTS

And that fact is rarely more evident than when discussing games. One man's meat is more often than not another's poison. And when hyperbole and superlatives fill the air like so many rooster's human emissions, it's easy to become desensitized to the real food of the reviews. Here at ACE, we try to be a little more conservative in our approach. You won't find wasted words here. ACE reviews aim to be level-headed and analytical. But that doesn't mean we don't get excited about the games we see. We simply make sure we get excited about the right ones.



The PC - Percolated Interest Curve
— is the most sophisticated reviewing tool around.

The curve is divided into six sections, indicating the player's adrenaline 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...

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 full comment for more details.

We won't rate a game unless it represents what you'll find on the shelves. If a game's not finished, we won't rate it, instead we give it an ACE Preview card that tells you how we think it's shaping up. In most cases, a full review of the finished game will follow in a later issue.



- Each of our reviews
- Featuring 10 reviews
- The new player's guide appears for steps 10



- Twelve stars to award
- The latest on game steps
- The player's guide to our review system

ACE AWARDS

ACE always awards each of approval for outstanding software performance. It's generally awarded to those in award graphics, or originality you'll see the appropriate ACE Award. Here are the rules: (and it's only one - in which case it'll get the ACE Award. Software/Review you have been awarded)



ACE only awards this one to games of outstanding quality in 3D graphics in a 3D environment without limitations.



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



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



Based on the "Mightiest" award of games that can make or break them, ACE only awards this one to the best from use of words in a game.

THE LINE UP

Computer and Console pages 58-65

- 01 SPACE QUEST IV Gold
- 04 GOOD Remake
- 05 ALPHINO Platinum
- 08 SHADOW DANCER 20 Gold
- 09 SOULER Bronze
- 10 BILL OF BUDES Bronze
- 01 BARRAMAN Ocean
- 04 ARMS SYSTEM 10 Gold
- 05 BERSERK Gold
- 06 JET FIGHTER 2 10 Gold
- 07 THE MIGHTY Game
- 08 THE MIGHTY Remake
- 09 COMBAT Impressions
- 11 BUBAL RESPER Platinum
- 12 B-TYPE Platinum
- 13 ARMO BLAZER Platinum
- 16 MEGA TRAVELLER Empire
- 05 PREDATOR 2 Image Works
- 01 SHARPLAND 2 10 Gold



Having spent a considerable time in a dark, cavernous, and somewhat claustrophobic environment, you'll be glad to see the bright, open world of the desert city, and then will be glad to see the even brighter, open world of the desert city.



Nothing like the hero of your adventure game after a radio check-in doesn't lead well for a sustained level of amusement. However, that Roger Wilco has been around for a full four games now, and his latest excursion is a more lush and incredible trip than any before must indicate that the job has some considerable leg.

Wilco, kept junior and reluctant space hero, is confronted in a cozy bar by the likes of a local like Segal Police. No ordinary constabulary these, once in the parking lot it envisages their intentions are strictly for Roger's demise. It looks as if Roger's goose is cooked, and only the swift actions of the friendly Time Rippers enable him to escape.

And so, after a lengthy intro sequence, Roger finds himself dropping through the other end of the time rip into... well? Space! Space! Wilco's home planet has been virtually destroyed by the evil Island and is, on the brink of collapse. Staring, exasperated, wander the darkened streets, burned out vehicles lie abandoned and useless, robed with laser fire. What has happened? How can Roger get back to the, er... adventure? And what is that pink fluffy robot doing?

Controlled exclusively with point-and-click commands, Roger moves reasonably freely through his environment, examining, looting

SPACE QUEST

IV

ROGER WILCO & THE TIME RIPPERS

SIERRA reaches new heights in goofball adventuring

and collecting objects, talking to characters (or encountering them). The two most immediate points of note are that (a) the graphics are astonishing, and (b) Roger gets killed in a real lot.

It's a rough old life for a space hero these days. Continued thanks by the Segal Police stand as Roger's discovery, clearly seeing some down in the sewer's, unstable explosions, and that's all in the first ten minutes!

Residing these utterly wild, obviously takes a lot of practice, but Roger will rarely come unscathed without some foolishness on your part. Dangerous situations are always clearly explained, and thanks to an excellent user-interface, the game can be saved in virtually any position with the minimum fuss. Even in move-



Illustrating the detailed graphics are a flying creature, a character in a futuristic setting, and a character in a futuristic setting.



Here's the most horrible feature of all: a deadly, dead character (above right) who always stays where he is and will never move or do anything important, but will subvert every important situation that is his business in a subtle and nefarious way that only Roger's unique skills can unravel.

critical situations, a Save can be used without filing up previous game turns.

Apart from the graphics (which in places are quite awe-inspiring, status descriptions for all major items in the game are included. Thankfully, no cut-out "I can see nothing of interest here" messages are included. The only negative point to make is that since the designers have gone into such detail, it's sometimes a bit difficult to identify what are "useful" objects and what are simply background features.

Speech is the area where the player has the least control. The player can click his "talk" icon on any character in the game, which may or may not initiate a dialogue. The player can't tell Roger what he is interested, the computer feeds Roger lines appropriate to his current situation. As into a girl's retailers without any trousers on, and Roger will have a discussion about buying some. The format works better than you may expect.

The back-and-forth nature of time-travel games can usually turn into a pass in the neck, peering at over the place to try and effect events, before they happen and the like. Here the path is quite linear, it's a feasible sort of way. Rather than offering enormous areas to explore and get lost in, the player is for the most part kept in a suite of around ten locations, and forced to concentrate on the problems at hand, before moving onto the next one.

Indeed, the nature of the puzzles is pretty solid. On finding yourself in an apparently dead-end situation, the answer will usually be close at hand. In that sense, Space Quest II is an immensely fair game, allowing the player in theory to play through all the puzzles first time-round, without learning too many costly lessons. This doesn't mean the game is easy - far from it - but it helps dispel irrational fears that maybe if you were to retrace two days' effort and get the levers it would help you by the space ship, for no better reason other than it's the only object you aren't holding.

Occasionally the game will demand that an event has happened which will make Roger "lose" something before allowing another occurrence. For example, in the Galaxy Casino ball, Roger (for a number of reasons) needs to



either **RETRACTED** in a space ship by the time-traveling Roger, Roger must **SHED** on the ball but he has more than his wits.

Without much more working time in Space Quest III, although it has some working.



IBM PC

800

RELEASE DETAILS

IBM PC EMM386 OEM ROMS



Space Quest III's top-notch graphics give a fairly high-class flavor to an otherwise gamey title. A direct shot, Amy (right) has that classic feminine including smile and gem-set of the chest and playing her happy little lady out of the question.

got dressed up as a woman. The first time I played, after dithering around the mall for a bit, I found myself presented with a helpful shop assistant and was, into my shiny-black number and wig in no time. However, after coming unglued and reloading, my visit to the boutique was in vain, and I couldn't get sensed to save my life. Since I presumed I needed the disguise to get past the fairly security-guard on the door, I didn't occur to me that I had to try to try to use the Automatic Taper Machine before attempting to buy the dress. The tailor machine does a visual identity check, you see, registering the helpful mess or otherwise of the assistant in the boutique.

The self-referential nature of the plot makes for good reading and easy review. A particular favourite of mine is the option to treat back in time to Space (June 1), and hear Super-VGA Roger wandering around the excellent threshold graphics of his first adventure. Black and white footcubes were thinner to chase Rog and his lanky-boy P90-colour ways out of town. And if you think that's convoluted, how about going to visit a software store in the future selling karking other things a working electronic to look for... *Space Quest IV!*

Dramatic scenes are handed out, although they may verge too-much on the Dragon's Lair style for some gamers. There are instances where lengthy scenes of animation preclude a brief opportunity for you to act. Must be chance or try the wrong option and Roger will eventually beg it. Again, however, the 'save-at-anytime' makes it possible to save right back into the action at the critical moment should your choice prove incorrect.

There's no doubt, though, that *Space Quest II* is a slow, challenging and entertaining adventure, gaining a lot from doing away with a team partner and concentrating on the team's graphics and storytelling abilities.

■ *Ben Douglas*

...A THOUSAND WORDS

One of *SG 44's* novel features is the graphics function. Rather than being constrained to a particular single screen location, Roger triggers a scroll ending numerous panoramic views of his environment by walking to the edge of certain screens. Roger triggers a scroll just appearing his new location and then it connects with the last. Although the scrolls work smoothly, it's generally able to the feeling of motion. Although intuitively I suspect, the technique is most used to a few more inspiring moments, settling around along into success in an underground scene. However, it's considered to be an essential option because and relied on a breathtaking also could also quite convincing.



The Stone is back in the future taking Multi-2 the time to get shopping but that's getting the attention of the AI!



The welcome to the future taking the environment to the next level.



A screenshot of the game SG 44 showing the character in a futuristic environment.



A screenshot of the game SG 44 showing the character in a futuristic environment.



The lengthy intro sequence leads into the main Stone Roger is something that does up to an attempt to escape the AI's grasp.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

Some games have a reputation for offering plenty good value for money. This one is no exception, but the inclusion of extra goodies gives gamers a real reason to the package. *Space Quest IV* is no exception, containing an extremely useful copy of *Space Quest magazine*, a lot of digital for all sorts of the space-nerds.

Of course, aside from the feeling of completeness felt by the user when in possession of the whole package, the inclusion of entertaining magazine and games like *Star Wars* and *Star Wars* until you have a particular problem gives the player some valuable encouragement to buy the original for himself.

More and more information in *Space Quest* is really what the game, and can be extremely useful if it's found.

When you consider the high production and a play-through of the first two or three, all presented in the quality image of the future channel.

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Instead, lots of the most interesting aspects of both *Blade of the Immortal* and *Blade of the Samurai* are left out of the game, and instead the developers of *Blade of the Immortal* have opted to bring better action control to the console. The developers of *Blade of the Immortal* have opted to bring better action control to the console. The developers of *Blade of the Immortal* have opted to bring better action control to the console. The developers of *Blade of the Immortal* have opted to bring better action control to the console.



Ah, hell. Difficult times for all concerned, especially when this is your first child. While the *Blade of the Immortal* team and genre in a sealed room, all *Blade of the Immortal* can do is nervously gaze the console, their smoke like crazy and wait, wait, wait.

Good is a multi-directional scrolling, arcade adventure, where you must guide a funky hero through a hazardous quest to slay the vile Lord of the Underworld. Your epic journey will take you through four distinct regions, a twisted Greek city, an ancient temple, the hells below and finally Hell, each split into three sub-levels packed with ugly monsters, valuable treasure, deadly traps, secret rooms and cunning puzzles.

Midway and at the end of each level there's the ancient Greek version of the shopkeeper. You can buy a wide selection of weapons (daggers, throwing stars, bombs, etc.), plus loads of special items like invulnerability shields, monster trackers and spirit bombs.

And you'll need all the help you can get, especially when you reach the end of a level. Because that's where you'll have to face a huge guardian which will do its best to make sure you go no further.

Now, now, after that pain. Admittedly the *Blade of the Immortal* will no point for originality, but they're

G O D S



RENEGADE take you to Hell and back in their latest release

done for arcade adventures what they did for shoot 'em-ups with *Temes 2*, i.e. take all the best ideas from other games and then add that nice something special to fill it head and shoulders above the rest.

So what is that 'something special'? Well, for a start the monsters have been added out with state-of-the-art brains. On the first few sub-levels the creatures are as thick as so many short planks, but it's not long before they're beating you down, avoiding your shots, kicking magic



The Colosseum arena game has a lot of variety. You can play as a gladiator, a chariot driver, or a gladiator's horse. You can also play as a gladiator's horse, which is a bit more challenging. The game is very fast-paced and has a lot of action. It's a great game for anyone who likes action games.

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When you start the first and second levels, you start with a score of 1000. You can play as a gladiator, a chariot driver, or a gladiator's horse. You can also play as a gladiator's horse, which is a bit more challenging. The game is very fast-paced and has a lot of action. It's a great game for anyone who likes action games.



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900

AMIGA

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901

ATARI ST

When you start the first and second levels, you start with a score of 1000. You can play as a gladiator, a chariot driver, or a gladiator's horse. You can also play as a gladiator's horse, which is a bit more challenging. The game is very fast-paced and has a lot of action. It's a great game for anyone who likes action games.

RELEASE DETAILS

AMIGA	ATARI ST	ATARI 5200
ATARI ST	ATARI 5200	ATARI 7800
IBM PC	IBM PC	IBM PC

them and generally being a big nuisance.

Then there are the puzzles. Tipping switches and pressing pressure pads in certain orders can reveal all sorts of surprises, but all of these demands. Sound effects are cleverly used to give subtle clues to off-screen events, such as a switch clicking a distant trapdoor to open.

There's a gimmick that is playing through an area a hundred times. Here you're on a slightly different wall area mimicking a patch which, when triggered, reveals a secret home-packed room.

Fast but certainly not fast are the game's graphics. They're a wonder to behold, and the scrolling is excellent for an ST. The Amiga scrolling is better than the ST's but not on par with, say, *Temple of Apes*—but then *Temple of Apes* doesn't have Gobi's depth of gameplay.

New for the capping, rigger. At control, including movement, firing, toggling switches, and picking up and dropping objects, it's via the joystick. It's a little fiddly at first, but not annoyingly so, and you'll soon have the hang of it. The items also

take a little turning from left to right and vice versa, which can be frustrating when you're being attacked from both sides. But neither of these faults in any way less the gameplay of what is undeniably an enjoyable product of great depth.

Congratulations, Boregame. Go down the path and keep all your masts a peg and a fat rigger your first child is a healthy booming bundle of joy.

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Are KRISALIS 'court'-ing disaster with their latest sports sim?

It has to be said that Jahangir Khan's World Championship Squash resembles a game released a couple of years ago. But you should never judge a game on looks alone. Although the graphics may seem a little dated compared to other current releases, they don't affect the gameplay or lose any real influence on the general feel. Just assured that Squash will test your reflexes and joystick skills to their utmost limits.

The game allows you to choose between six independent competition systems: a Club Tournament played according to the league rules and a knockout World

Championship. A variety of options, including ball type, service rules, competition characteristics and the ever-so-useful practice mode, can be selected from the icon-controlled menu system which may be displayed in five European languages (another step towards 1992?). There's also an option to select and watch matches played between the computer opponents; it's supposedly designed for you to build up a picture of their individual styles and skills, but it's no real help and very dull.

Like the real thing, Squash is quite difficult to get into, but once mastered it can prove extremely addictive. Your player can be moved around the court with joystick. Tapping, fire and pushing the joystick when near the ball will play a job or power shot to the left, right or straight-ahead. There's an option to let the computer take shots for you so that you can concentrate on getting your positioning right - very useful.

The games feel is quite good with a very realistic ball animation and not-so-realistic

player control which gives an impression of slightly random movement. The unusual isometric-3D view of the squash court makes it difficult to correctly position your player to hit the ball, but after a few practice matches you should be able not only to effectively control the character, but also to produce some brilliant shots which will make your opponent run away in fear.

Sound-wise the game is above average. It incorporates realistic sound effects and some jolly tunes which could make you tap your fingers and maybe sometimes stomp your feet (and that's maybe!).

In all, Jahangir Khan's World Championship Squash is a good sports simulation which unfortunately lacks the graphic quality of today's top games, but should bring the pallid many hours of enjoyment. (Don't be put off by the initial chaos, remember - practice makes perfect)

■ Tom Tomlinson-Cornell



In your menu, where you can save or load your achievements and options by clicking on the coloured icons.

JAHANGIR KHAN'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SQUASH

proficiency among the public. Frequent gun battles, corpses littering the pavements, excessive use of car sirens, traffic congestion caused by road blocks and above all a high price rate will cost you popularity and probably your job. However, if all crimes are quickly solved and the gully are successfully sentenced a Court your popularity will rise and you may be rewarded with a promotion.

Graphically the game is above average with an well-designed game screen, meaningful icons and several nice touches, including digitised pictures. The backstory one of the area serves its purpose quite well, although the multidirectional scrolling is far from perfect. The game doesn't make a full use of the computer's sound capabilities, however the player's life bar makes life into a pleasure to watch.

In the whole, Hill Street Blues is an entertaining game, but the high-difficulty level means it won't appeal to everyone. Strategy fans will find the game challenging and rewarding to play, but more casual gamers may find them selves frustrated by the large number of balls which need to be kept simultaneously in the air.

■ Tom Tomlinson-Cornell



The professionally-designed street scenes allow you to save or load your game, and also the design features an on-line manual and statistics of all the participating competitors.



AMIGA 2500/3000 (with 512KB chip, though some modified versions allow 640KB) requires little more of hardware power than the Atari 2600, and offers a more advanced feature set.

PRICE
725

ATARI 2600

With a price tag of just over a third of the Atari 2600, the Amiga 2500/3000 offers a more advanced feature set. The Amiga version of the game is available on the Amiga 2500/3000 and the Atari 2600. The Atari 2600 version is available on the Atari 2600.

PRICE
725

ATARI 2600

With a price tag of just over a third of the Atari 2600, the Amiga 2500/3000 offers a more advanced feature set. The Amiga version of the game is available on the Amiga 2500/3000 and the Atari 2600. The Atari 2600 version is available on the Atari 2600.

RELEASE DETAILS

AMIGA	£79.93	OUT NOW
ATARI 2600	£79.93	OUT NOW
IBM PC	£79.93	OUT NOW

LICENCE



DARKMAN

This spoof comic-style thriller from White Director Sam Raimi doesn't quite live up to his previous, Full Moon movies. Although there is an occasional glimpse of the Raimi slapstick genius in *Darkman*, the film was a flop at the box office. Still, this fact doesn't seem to bother Ocean. *Darkman* is now out on video (cost \$24 from CIC. Ocean expects it to be a bit of a sell on the small screen — and possibly on computer and console as well.

Raimi describes *Darkman* as a "high-tech, action-packed *Phantom of the Opera*". The idea of the game, naturally enough, is to play through the events of the film.

Doctor Peyton Westlake, played by towering Irish actor Liam Neeson in the movie, is a brilliant scientist working on a new synthetic skin used for burn sufferers. Taking old photographs of burn victims, he's able to create a mask using a computer to recreate their faces. Unfortunately, the skin is photosensitive and cannot last longer than 99 minutes in light. An evil gang lead by David (then breaks into Westlake's lab looking for an important document. They kill his assistant and, attempting to leave unnoticed, they blow up the lab and flee with it. Horribly burnt, he receives surgical treatment, making him unable to feel any pain. The side effects include violent mood swings — alternate flows through his body unchecked going from great strength, fearless escapes from the hospital, becomes the *Darkman*, and seeks his revenge.

With comic-design input from Ocean Software Director Gary Skidley, the Amiga and ST versions of *Darkman* have been handled by Mark Ward (programming) and James Darko (graphic artist). Ward previously wrote the 1988 versions of *Alien* (US Gold), *Star Wars* (Broderbund/CDS) and *LN Squadron-05 Gold* — while Darko has



Darkman has a nod of the hat that the 3D version of *Darkman* (Ocean Basic) also includes scripted events. Everything you experience may differ on this underground level.

provided the music in *Strider*, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, *World Cup '90* and *LN Squadron* for US Gold. Jonathan Dure, Ocean's resident artist of the audio, is composing the music and sound FX.

Darkman is in the familiar Ocean movie-to-game mould. A little bit of beat-'em-up coupled with the ubiquitous platform section and a 3D section for added spice. "The basic idea of the game was to replicate the action of the film as closely as possible," offers Ward.

Players take the role of Westlake, also the *Darkman*, and begin snapping photographs of David's henchmen as they briefly appear at a series of windows. So we're talking Ocean "Stealing Gallery" yet again. If some good pics are taken, they'll have enough data to make a mask and disguise themselves. This translates into a few hassle-free seconds on the next stage, which bears an uncanny resemblance to the *Double Dragon* martial arts arcade game. Players then enter, surprise, a warehouse. This

Rik Haynes lifts the lid off Ocean's game-of-the-movie construction kit ethic...



Rik Haynes and Ocean's creative development staff.

Rebuilding the movie

Phantom of the Opera

With the addition of

Darkman, Ocean

has a new

approach to

game-of-the-movie

construction.



Rebuilding the movie Phantom of the Opera With the addition of Darkman, Ocean has a new approach to game-of-the-movie construction.

is the standard platform section that you get in all Ocean movie conversions," Ward confirms.

After these platform parts, the player runs and jumps across rooftops while being chased by a helicopter. "This is quite a nice little level," according to Ward. He says this section is a little bit the *Super Mario Bros.* Although the style is similar, the smoothness is a bit lacking. This is followed by the "3D bit" where *Darkman* grabs onto a rope hanging from the helicopter. Players have to dodge traffic on the road and avoid being shot. Finally, players are thrown into a showdown with the big boss at the top of a building. Don't we see this in *RoboCop 2*?

Ward and Darko developed *Darkman* over the course of five months on the PC-based PGG development system. They used the script and stills from the film as a source of reference. Interestingly, Ocean couldn't actually use the faces of the actors in the game. The sprite expansion part in the 3D section has caused the most headaches as far as coding is concerned.

REVOKED?



WILD WHEELS

Wild Wheels is an odd take on a genre—and a blast from the past, the least in hybrid games where the program sets the pace for the player.

Wild Wheels' Israeli developer started out in 1992 producing games for the old Macintosh computer. The first hit for the title was, in fact, an art package called *Architectural Dreams* featuring 3D graphics for the production of 2D games. For this reason, computer before turning the attention to users' entertainment. The first path led more success with the design and development of *Landlord* and *Landlord 2000* (Electronic Arts).

The concept behind Wild Wheels stems back to Israel and more recent footage of successful American-style playing football with Jews. In the game, players control teams of five cars in a race to become the last one on the opposite end. These cars' movement are a futuristic one between stock cars and those found within the *Mad Max* series. "We're going up with some fantasy vehicles if you like," says a



Wild Wheels is a mix of football and racing. The concept is to be a

application for the PC. "They're not yet interested in systems software."

The first car program drove to a fairly simple combination engine vehicle called the *Wheelie*. The competitors are now they can approach to trigger, body and water vehicles. They'll even end up driving around very which can stand at all times, respectively.

Wild Wheels, a change-over, inspired game, is played from a track on 3D view of the track with players able to rotate their cars on the ground direction. Drivers of football vehicles have the advantage of being able to perform very tight turns. "They can practically spin on a dime," says the application's developer. "It's a challenge to get a car off the track with a car off the track. They have to be very fast to get away from the car off the track." The game is a mix of football and racing. The concept is to be a



Wild Wheels is a mix of football and racing. The concept is to be a

Wild Wheels is a mix of football and racing. The concept is to be a

WIZKID

The game development talents of *Thunder* and *Low*, better known as *Thunder*, will soon be on display again in the sequel to their many failures was their first ever effort. *Wizkid* was a concept developed with a lot of effort and a great team player team-up. In fact, on the day of the game, *Wizkid* is a mix of football and racing. The concept is to be a

Wild Wheels is a mix of football and racing. The concept is to be a



Wild Wheels is a mix of football and racing. The concept is to be a

Does that mean he's a good programmer? With efficient code which doesn't crash, I wouldn't say my game designing skill is up there though. "I just rocks for greatest achievement has been a *Wizkid* Simulator HD for the Atari ST. And did he like the *Wizkid* film? "It's a low budget movie and it stars some of the acting it's a bit long. It's a bit more. It'll do well on video."

Take any *Wizkid* licensed game of the past three years and it won't be hard to make striking comparisons between them. The tracks warehouse, platform scene, shooting gallery and head-to-head section are all starting to wear a little bit thin. Perhaps *Wizkid* should

spend more time on development? *Batman* in the *Amiga*, for instance, was written in less than eight weeks. In early days we encourage Ocean's lack-luster attempts at more sophisticated software. After all, the Manchester powerhouse has been voted Software House of the Year more times than I can remember. Lack of originality doesn't really matter when you're assured a top five hit in the charts—or does it? Consumers want to try something new occasionally. Ocean are certainly not the only offenders, but as arguably the top outfit in the country, they have a responsibility to lead by example, and break this slightly over-familiar mould.

ACE PREVIEW

• Offers guidelines on how to write.

• Provides guidelines on how to write.

LICENCE REVOKED?



As an Elf you must jump, dash and shoot your way through trouble.



ELF

IT "The idea for Elf just sort of came together," says Paul Opley of Nintendo Systems. "It's quite hard to say how the game actually developed. We just thought of the Elf character and the rest flowed around that."

Opley is in charge of the graphics and Damian Bees, his mate from University, is programming Elf. This is the first computer game they've worked on and, amusingly, Bees's first attempt at machine code programming. Even considering these potential stumbling blocks, the team took five½ years to get to the point. They began the Elf back in February last year. "We weren't really influenced by any other games, though we did want to play a lot of platform games on the BBC micro."

A fairly wide adventure, Elf's split into six levels. Each of these span over 100 screens and is filled with different backdrops and creatures. First comes the Forest with trees and hills in the background. Next you're outside the ruins of an old castle complete with crumbing walkways and underground passages. Here mini-towers give you grief with spears, darts, cannon and flamethrowers. Progress across the lake using logs and a series of platforms, while dodging flying fish and a few other things. Run away from swamp people and olive beetles. Venture into the cavern filled with dwarves mining precious crystals. Don't forget you've got to rescue your girlfriend from the evil gans.

Elf is very puzzle-oriented, although there's a lot of shooting and jumping involved. These puzzles stem from Opley and Bees using

dash together and hatching silly ideas. Characters in Elf are all intended to be humorous. The things they want are silly. Like the old lady who is after a pair of false teeth. "The whole thing joins together as one big joke," confides Opley. You must interact with and talk to these crazy creatures. Along the way you bump into a series of shops where you can swap the junk collected on your travels for more useful spells.

The gorgeous graphics seen in the game would fit very comfortably in a Japanese console. Does Opley think Elf will appear on the Megadrive? "That's up to Games," he concedes. The boys' next project will probably be a space game, but he's not saying too much about it at this stage.



Remember the Elf he is in a special to save his girlfriend from an evil gang.

DR. MORTON SHOWBIZ

Just when Brian Fox has been getting someone else music and sound effects for the past few years, this 34-year-old softwarey has seen their Martin Gillingay as music's main musician. As a manager for the rock and roll Elf in the short silence of night, just like most people do in their age, Gillingay can be an obvious case of a musician on musician. Brian Gillingay and Martin, all in the same way, he recently added credits to his collection of music-related credits. There is nothing better at getting his first composition to the Nintendo Super Entertainment Family. He got the first single later of any musician and the second double in eight months (and he wanted to be able to). "Creating great quality music on the Elf is a real battle," says Fox. "It would be nice if more National sound modules were used by 16 computers. I don't see samples on the range."

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GOLDEN SHOT

Rescue a President, pilot a top jet and save the World from aliens in US GOLD's forthcoming releases



Merces
Merces starts with
right the wrong
mission from the
starting scenario
game program.
Merces is a
game.
Merces is a
game.
Merces is a
game.
Merces is a
game.

MERCS

US Gold have had a string of successes with their Capcom arcade machine conversions, including *Shinobi*, *Strider* and *Black Tiger*, and *Merces* looks set to be the latest conversion yet.

The former President of the United States, while on a peace mission in central Africa, has been kidnapped by Zulu rebels. Due to the possible diplomatic repercussions, the US Government can't mount a rescue mission with its own troops, and is forced to hire an elite band of mercenaries to do its dirty work. Okay, so the story's not going to win the Booker Prize, but as an excuse for a nonstop frenzy of violence it works perfectly.

(Middle view)
Merces starts with
right the wrong
mission from the
starting scenario
game program.
Merces is a
game.

The rescue mission is split into eight stages, each entailing a nightmare trek through crowds of heavily-armed rebels, past lumbering tanks and around machine-gun nests to a face-off with a giant end-of-level piece of hardware. Along the way extra weapons, power-ups and energy refills can be collected by shooting open parking crates found along the way.

Congratulations are due to Torito, who have done an excellent job of reproducing the pace and excitement of the arcade coin-op on the ever-so-livable Amiga. *Merces*, due soon, should easily satisfy the bloodlust of even the most violent shoot-'em-up fan.

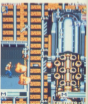
■ David Egan/Amiga



Merces
Merces starts with
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ICE PEOPLE



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Merces is a
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A new video game
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Merces is a
game.

Release Details

Merces
Merces is a
game.

TWO FOR THE PRICE OF THE ONE

In May you'll find an issue of **The One** 100% dedicated to the Amiga computer. All that's best in Amiga gaming will be inside. And on the outside you'll find not one but TWO disks!!

The disks are packed with Amiga game demos and also a complete game - US Gold's top-rated hit **E. Motion**.

E. Motion the game was programmed by the Assembly Line team and won every top magazine rating going on its release last year. **The One** itself commented "A work of genius" and awarded it 97%. Other magazines were less stating in their praise.

Last year it cost £24.99. Now it can be yours in full, along with the best Amiga magazine in the business, for just £2.95.

Streetdate is April 26th - don't be the only one to miss out...





It's difficult to combine strategy and tactics with colourful graphics and animation, either historical authenticity or excitement seems to fall by the wayside. In the case of Cohort, though, the combination comes off fairly well. History buffs will find enough to satisfy them, while arcade addicts will be able to keep their eyes open for a change.

The success of the Roman Civilisation was based on their military prowess as much as the sophistication of their laws and government; in other words, smash the barbarians first then build them an aqueduct. Cohort puts you in charge of one of these warring influences. Like Impressions' last hit, Rome's Onix, the



game has a fairly limited scope but gives you plenty of control over your strategy and tactics; you fight a small battle rather than an extended campaign. Each of the dozen scenarios has a definite objective - take that bridge, hold that hill - but you can also define your own scenarios.

The game is entirely mouse-controlled; you control the blue army, your opponent the Red, with each unarmoured figure on the screen representing 100 men and each fortification 50. You can choose one of eight pre-defined armies, or define your own.

There are seven different troop types: light, medium and heavy cavalry, archers, light, medium and heavy infantry. You also have a choice of four terrain: open field, bridge, cliff and hill. An overview display shows the whole of the landscape with troop positions.

The screen display features a number of sizes of the bottom, which access different information displays and control options such as game save; the main window showing the battle field; and control windows which pop up in the middle of the screen.

You can issue movement orders to individual figures or groups by clicking on the appropriate icon in the command window; to move a short distance, select a group, return to the main

THE TOTAL
890

RELEASE DETAILS

AMIGA	£79.99	CD-ROM
ATARI ST	£79.99	CD-ROM
IBM PC	£79.99	CD-ROM

display and place a cross on the point you want to move to. For long moves, use the directional arrows to select the direction of movement. You can then scroll around the battlefield, watching your forces move into battle, and monitor their progress by clicking on the icons for attack strength, defence strength, morale power, morale and numbers in the command window.

A number of different battle formations can be selected, but you don't have the option to go for exotic manoeuvres like the shield-backed Turtle, Rome's the pity. Once you have selected a target for mobility, the best is automated.

One of the best features of the game is the realistic background soundtrack of thundering hooves, clashing swords and the screams of dying men. When two units clash, combat continues until one retreats, is wiped out, or loses to morale and is routed. A statistics display gives you the totals for alive, dead and routed for each army, and a "Fast Forward Battle" mode allows you to move quickly through the battle.

With lack of efficient communication between forces, this form of warfare presents extraordinary challenges. Cohort manages to present all these challenges in a colourful, entertaining and fast-moving form. It's a pity!

Chris Ansell

COHORT

Strap on your armour and get ready to smash the barbarians in IMPRESSIONS' colourful Roman romp



Efficient using the ability when battle has been won to get a close-up view of the group positions.

The main battle you can get an overview view of the main battle strategy.



DAS BOAT



Will **MINDSCAPE's** U-boat sim give you that sinking feeling?



These submarines in action attack from the surface with their surface-to-air missiles. The submarine control interface is designed by employing 3D environments.

Great! Identifying an underwater submarine? The ability to view other submarines through sonar is one of the many features that make this game's most realistic control interface. You can also identify and track other submarines and submarines.



Identifying the submarine? The ability to view other submarines through sonar is one of the many features that make this game's most realistic control interface. You can also identify and track other submarines and submarines.

Identifying a surface submarine? The ability to view other submarines through sonar is one of the many features that make this game's most realistic control interface. You can also identify and track other submarines and submarines.



Identifying the submarine? The ability to view other submarines through sonar is one of the many features that make this game's most realistic control interface. You can also identify and track other submarines and submarines.



RELEASE DETAILS		
AMIGA	1994	OUT NOW
ATARI ST	1994	OUT NOW
IBM PC	1994	OUT NOW

Dive below the waves, the submarine crew wait, not daring to move a muscle for fear of alerting the enemy ships passing high above. One submariner slowly raises his hand to wipe a bead of sweat from his eye, clearly looking a pointer to the floor. The metallic clang rings around the vessel like a bell. There's a moment of heart-stopping tension. Has the enemy found? Seconds pass, then minutes. The enemy ships move on. The crew - for now - are safe.

These staff - anyone who watches those 100 war films, BBC 1 always shows on old Sunday afternoons will know the scene. Can Das Boat generate a similar atmosphere of very claustrophobia?

Initial impressions are mixed. The manual is interesting and filled with some fascinating facts about U-boats and their crews. The in-game presentation, however, can really only be described as adequate. Although the main menu has an attractive drawing of a U-boat under attack as a backdrop, the rest is very drab, largely being point-and-click lists on a plain grey background.

The number of variables that can be altered is impressively large. The player can choose to control one of three U-boat classes, and define how much (and hence how fast) the game is by adjusting how reliable the torpedoes are, how quickly repairs are made and whether equipment developed post 1941 (when the game is set) can be installed.

Before beginning the missions proper, there's an option to get in some basic training, where you can practice skills such as shooting down enemy planes with the deck anti-aircraft gun, navigating through a minefield, avoiding depth charges and torpedoing enemy vessels. This is a nice feature, as it allows the first-time player to get straight into some action.

There are only five missions on offer, each set in exotic locations ranging from the cold Arctic to the warm waters of the Mediterranean. The missions are generally well-enderby (based, and their difficulty varies) critically between very easy to very difficult. One mission, which simply involved sailing from one side of the map to the other while shooting down waves after waves of enemy aircraft, was completed on my first go. Another mission involved hunting down three enemy ships; after a long hunt I was blown out of the water within seconds of encountering the first ship.

While Das Boat is enjoyable enough, what it lacks is any real feeling of tension or atmosphere. Apart from the occasional dramaticated status message from your First Officer, there's no indication that anyone's on board apart from yourself, and any sense of being responsible for the lives and safety of fifty odd sweaty, grimy bodies trapped in a leaky tin can is sadly lacking.

Though dedicated sim fans may find Das Boat lacking in detail and be repelled some of the more 'arcade-like' aspects, as a playable introduction to the world of simulation software it's ideal.

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R-TYPE

It's here! IREM's ultimate shoot-em-up of all time blasts onto the Gameboy

Every round the office go all nuts when R-Type is mentioned. The nostalgia level associated to this particular alien-death-fest is stronger than most. Inevitably, the more mature Gameboy version has its work cut out if it is to be considered a decent conversion of a game best known for its fantastic colour graphics.

But addicts will be pleased to learn that the most successful version of their favourite is every bit as frenetic, frustrating and fun. Your aim is to halt the advance of a renegade alien army, which is rampaging through space destroying everything in its path. Many methods have been tried, but the might of the aliens' arsenal has proved all but an attack, not least because the intricate interiors to many of the generation-craft are so complex, a large ship simply can't negotiate its way around inside.

Right At your whim, R-Type can fully transform into a futuristic space shooter. Even the light inspired this page graphics that appear when you're forced to battle up the screen. Imagine it and control it as you will. And hey, look!



Instead, your mission is to pilot a lone fighter craft through the massed ranks of fighters and freighters, destroying the infrastructure of the enemy forces as you go.

Initially, your ship is equipped with a pulse-beam which can either be rapid-fired by pulling the fire button or built into a huge ball of ammunition by holding down and then releasing the button. However, by blasting particular types of alien—easily recognisable after a while—you can collect sub-weapons, diagonal lasers, rockets and the most vital power-up of all, a life pool which sits on the front of your ship.

The pool shields you from some forms of harm and is itself impervious to attack. In certain circumstances, when flying up a blind alley or facing an especially well-protected end-of-level monster, it's advantageous to fire off the pool and then guide it deep into the heart of the hostile zone. By making contact with the 'soft' part of the target, the pool inflicts an equivalent amount of damage as a constant laser beam, and also leaves you free to concentrate on the mechanics of flying.

Ultimately, R-Type is top-notch. It should serve to remind critics of the Gameboy's most capable tier that it's right up there with the best.

■ *Jim Douglas*



Even our most critical critics will agree through the years that R-Type is a masterpiece. And, with correct hardware and help from our friends, you can still get it out from under your nose in the way that best suits your needs.

780

GAMEBOY

RELEASE DETAILS

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BURAI FIGHTER DELUXE



Not too TAXAN, man



Even our most critical critics will agree through the years that Burai Fighter Deluxe is a masterpiece. And, with correct hardware and help from our friends, you can still get it out from under your nose in the way that best suits your needs.

781

GAMEBOY

RELEASE DETAILS

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For thousands of years, the Bura have had four core objectives... the conquest of the universe, but only have they created huge armies of robots... They've also topped up Max Payne and Max Hunking and Barbara Decker for a interstellar war. Your mission, understandably enough, is to stop this misery. So strap your proton-pack on, charge up your laser cannons and get ready to blast some Bura.

Burai Fighter Deluxe is split into five different stages, each filled with wacky stuffguns and Bura and end-of-level boss battles with baby names such as Gigantorab, Jeopende and I'ngakull. If you hadn't guessed by now, the baby is yet another scuffling shoot'em-up. You start the game with a single gun which can be upgraded to really nifty and up-coming things.

The screen can scroll in all directions so it's quite easy to miss a pick-up, bonus or escape route. Sometimes the direction of the scroll changes to try you on a ledge. Your journey is the same every time you play, so it's just a

question of remembering to be at the right place at the right time. Most of the fun comes from exploring the little nooks which can yield extra goodies. The aliens are pretty easy to destroy, you'll have more difficulty holding around with your direction of fire than heading the laser-cannon fodder.

The fantastic graphics and boss battles are few, but the small size of the sprites is disappointing. A little more effort should have gone into creating the music and sound-effects too. Those broken dashercher things and crap just don't cut it. Here the wrong note intention of these I found a new Japanese audio crew? I think not.

■ *Jim Hayes*

Special Thanks to **Shochem Games**
 (001 348 8000)
 for supplying this cart.

AERO BLASTERS



Score of 22,900 with boss machine gunned out in Aero Blasters. The boss is the "Giant Ship" and the player is "Aero Blaster" (left).

KANEKO take to the skies in yet another Megadrive shoot-'em-up

Can Megadrive gamers bear yet another shoot-'em-up? Kaneko obviously think so. Aero Blasters is yet another in the long line of turn-the-handle-and-look-around-horizontally-scrolling firefights. Anyone who's played a modern shooter will know the score: fight your way through a seemingly endless supply of alien zooms, picking up power-ups and baddies along the way, to a final confrontation with a massive gunner.

To be fair, Aero Blasters does have a few features which, if not completely novel, at least add spice to a somewhat stale brew. For a start there's the option for two players to simultaneously take on the alien might.

Then, on some levels, there are areas where the camera narrows to ridiculously thin tunnels. If that were not enough, the scrolling increases to hyper-fast speeds. Somehow you've got to try and avoid smashing into the walls. Believe me, it'll leave your joy-pad drenched in sweat!

The power-ups are impressive yet familiar. Though the way that they're obtained is a little



Building breakdowns are one of the features of Aero Blasters. The player is "Aero Blaster" (left).

unusual. A supply 'drod is periodically dispatched from 'home base' to help you out. Shooting it a couple of times causes a stream of power-ups to be pelleted into the air. You then have a few seconds to try and pick the

AERO BLASTERS

MEGADRIVE

785

RELEASE DETAILS

MEGADRIVE £19.99 OUT NOW

KICK OFF 2



A NEW DIE SOCCER SIM

-GOLDEN JOYSTICK-
GAME OF THE YEAR

1 9 9 1

- BLISTERING PACE
- PIXEL PERFECT PASSING
- SUPERB TACTICAL GAMEPLAY

KICK OFF 2 greatly enhances the gameplay of KICK OFF, winner of the THE GAME OF THE YEAR in the U.K., and similar awards right across Europe. A host of new features have been added to the ones that enthralled players the world over:

- Full size multi-directional scrolling pitch with the players, markings etc. in correct proportion.
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- Interactive Kick Off joystick controls to dribble, pass, shoot, head or chip the ball and do sliding tackles.
- Set piece: FREE KICKS including distance and the ability to dip the ball or head the ball round a defensive wall.
- 5 types of corner kicks with full control of shot power, long and short throw ins.
- Team selection from a squad of 18 with substitution and a choice of tactics.
- Longer and rpg competitions with Extra Time, Injury Time and sudden death penalty shoot outs.
- Facility to view, edit and save the Action, Playoffs and create a Golden Shots disc (Mac, IBM & CIB) 64)
- Facility to load Player Manager teams and tactics for a single or league game.
- Red and yellow cards, 16 different referees, injury time and a host of features create an atmosphere for a game which is real fun to play.

An International class player takes charge of a third division club as Player Manager. His brief is simple -**Bring Back The Glory Days.**

His success depends on his playing skills on the pitch and managerial skills in devising winning tactics, acquiring the right players from the transfer market and building a team worthy of the highest honours.

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Primitives to flick the ball in the air and do a blistering header or a spectacular overhead kick.

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MEGATRAVELLER 1- THE ZHODANI CONSPIRACY

A quantum leap for sci-fi RPGs? Well maybe... take on the Zhodani and save the world for yourself



Beyond the Games Designer's Workshop's world-famous gaming system, Megatraveller 1 is the first in a series set in the 30th century space of the human empire and the alien Zhodani, whose precise powers and logical approach to victory leave only a set of pointed ears and green blood to make them visually human.

Like Isaac Asimov's science fiction, the universe of the Megatraveller RPGs is one almost entirely occupied only by humans. This makes it easier to comprehend the desires and motivations of your opponents, but doesn't do much to add any exotic alien flavorings to the massive sci-fi adventure.

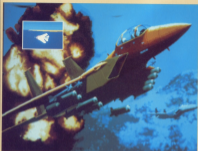
Like most RPGs, only the basic scenario of the game is set in place, the characters you design and your approach to the adventure are completely free. Certainly, there are a vast number of options, unless you opt for the easy life and accept the default party of characters, you can choose your characters from the military classes including army, navy, marine,

merchants and priests, along their specialized skills as gamblers, high-tech work, computer artists, cooking, administrators, lawyers, and cartographers.

Having defined your five characters or accepted the defaults, you'll find a 3-D view screen where first appears the 2-D tactical screen on the right, and status reports for your characters at the top.

The scenario involves the Zhodani fleet to investigate another border war with the galaxy's rival Imperium empire. As a planetary administrator, you're the info you need, and a bonus that, at a really an incentive, compelling you to "help" the planet's toughest before you do that, wanting to prevent a galactic war. Various, somewhat high-potential programs will be available and any of the two main empires' best units.

In 32 cases of language, you can have several alternative characters, making the dialog with them and being used to help you, creating better. Whether it's a good thing or not, it's a



ACE PROFLY's wide base of support options, including the ability to choose from various target sets, is an extraordinarily nice in-flight briefing screen.



A wide range of views from the cockpit are available.



Whether a mission, the long-range view, or a wide-angle view, you always have something to see.

F-15 II

MicroProSE opt for the "action sim" with their new coin-op conversion?

MicroProSE's F-15 coin-op has proved to be a pretty big hit in the states, and you'll be able to get your hands on the joystick of one in the UK pretty soon (unless you visit the Touchdown in London where they have one already).

The coin-op, designed by MicroProSE themselves, was pitched at a high-tech arcade player sick of matching quarters but not after some pretty intense gratification.

The computer version, therefore, is aimed at the home simulation market. It bypasses all the fiddling around with coin mechanisms and roller levers and enables the player to get pretty much into the action from the off. You don't even have to land the plane for yourself if you don't want to. Just let it be ferreted, the fun of these games is watching the enemy birds, not trying to put all their wheels down at the right time.

The most important distinction between the two is that while the coin-op would lead players pretty specific instructions as to their next target and it's whereabouts, F-15 on home machines offers a bit more flexibility.

And the way it's shaping up so far, the title looks as if this not especially deep game may well become a starring success for the company who built its reputation on producing heavyweight simulations.

Revving naturally around a series of seek-and-destroy missions in such global beauty spots as the Middle East, Vietnam, Libya and the Persian Gulf, the game arms the player with variable cargoes of air-to-air and air-to-ground missiles, as well as around a thousand rounds of rapid-fire cannon shells.

Incoming missiles can be deflected by dropping clouds of aluminum-chaff, or by of those Top-Gun escape rolls.

It's far more score-orientated than previous games from MicroProSE, awarding points for virtually every part of the mission where there's some skill involved. Take out a bad guy with your cannon and shove him into the ground and you'll score more points than if you simply boots off a missile and let it do all the hard work.

A range of views from both inside and outside the plane is available and there's even an omniscient view, so you can ensure that your

ACE PROFLY

Great fun and

- Excellent graphics
- Excellent sound
- Excellent controls

A simple conversion from a computer flight sim

Release Details

DOS 4	£24.99	Yes
WIN 95	£24.99	Yes
WIN NT	£24.99	Not known

play hasn't started its date with doom. For gamers who are keen to add a flight simulator to their catalogue, but are less impressed with hefty manuals and flight paths, F-15 could be the answer.

Richard Lewis

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STREET FIGHTER II

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**STATE OF THE ART
ARCADE VIOLENCE!!**
EXPOSED INSIDE...



This is the great idea of the simulation: to give you the chance to try other political decisions and see how they would affect the course of the Vietnam War.

NA

Take a holiday in Cambodia and check out **DOMARK's** military/political simulation

With "The Doors on the radio all the time, the Gulf War putting everyone in the mood for a good war, and 70's fashion bits have filled our streets with strange sights, what better time to launch a game based on the Vietnam War?"

Domark's strategy title, *Nam*, is a little unusual in combining both political and military aspects; it's not enough to win the war, you must also win the hearts and minds of your people if you want to remain in power. The game covers the period 1960-1975, so you have a choice of playing either President Nixon or Johnson. Your main problem, as it explains in the historical section of the comprehensive manual, is that your Viet Cong opponents do not really have to win; all they have to do is stick it out until you are exhausted, and forced to withdraw. If you follow the real-life American military policy, you will inevitably lose, so to win a convincing victory you have to come up with some strategy which evidently escaped the best American military minds of the time.

The PC version comes on four 5.25-inch disks or two 3.5-inch, complete with a thick manual and colour pointers. In EGA mode the graphics are fair, but design is not too imaginative, the Amiga version looks nicer, while the *3D* is disappointing.

The loading screens feature digitised images of troops and helicopters, together with subtly military sampled music; after choosing your required language, you move from here to select one of the scenarios. These include two where you have to fight the war from the start, either as Nixon or as Johnson; and three which avoid much of the political manoeuvring, including the



This screen aims to help the user understand the terrain and the location of the units and the status of the units.

M

South East Asia proved to be a strategically fertile environment as troops were continuously fed by their commanding units. This is a major feature of the game. The game is a real-time strategy game. It is a real-time strategy game. It is a real-time strategy game.

For offensive, a major North Vietnamese push of 1968: the Tet, a bloody conflict featuring US Marines dug-in on a island with heavy air support; and the 1970 Spring offensive.

If you choose a full campaign, you start in the Oval Office with a contract of the President: in front of him are two plans, one of newspapers and the other of official reports. Click on one to bring up headlines which give you an idea of the progress of the war and the mood of the nation, and the other to issue orders.

The reports index has eight options; the first is Maps. This gives you a coloured map of the whole Indo-China area, and by clicking on specific areas you get close-ups showing troop

deployments. Clicking on the symbol for a particular unit brings up a display of its name, nationality, strength, efficiency, morale and so on; moves are entered by clicking on a unit and then on a new location on the map. An 'order path' appears on the screen, and the forces will begin to move at a speed determined by its equipment, the terrain and so on. If you have sufficient manpower you can 'mobilise' a unit unit; this is particularly valuable when guerrilla forces pop up unexpectedly and engage your forces in weak areas.

Back to the President's report screen, and other options allow you to control troops to the conflict or withdraw them, control reserves, send financial aid to South Vietnam, commit air support, display a summary screen featuring the alternative allied/communist kill ratio, or return to the main screen. These options are in effect budget proposals for the American government, and will not come into effect until the next fiscal year, so forward planning is essential.

Plan is a well thought-out simulation which non-the-less is rather dull to play; a bit like the war itself, it's a game of half-hearted attacks, strategic withdrawals and inconclusive battles. The graphics are decent but not too imaginative, and the sounds for separate units could be clearer, apart from the intro music, sound is minimal.

If you are particularly interested in the Vietnam campaign, either from a political or military standpoint, this is a worthy simulation; if you like your war a bit more exciting, perhaps you should look elsewhere.

— Dick Jenkins



South East Asia proved to be a strategically fertile environment as troops were continuously fed by their commanding units.



<p>700</p>	<p>IBM PC</p>	
	<p>710</p>	
<p>700</p>	<p>ATARI ST</p>	
	<p>RELEASE DETAILS</p>	
<p>JANUS</p>	<p>034.00</p>	<p>0371 MARCH</p>
<p>ATARI ST</p>	<p>034.00</p>	<p>0371 MARCH</p>
<p>IBM PC</p>	<p>034.00</p>	<p>0371 MARCH</p>



The color palette is by far the most powerful weapon of the Predator's arsenal. But it also has one big drawback: It can only kill one alien.



At the end of each level the cunning traps and the hot blooded alien kills all your buddies down from the open battlefield, leaving nothing quite looking good and being much worse than you can see.

Los Angeles 1997 is certainly no city for angels anymore. Colombian and Jamaican drug cuts fight each other and the police for domination of the streets. But a new alien is about to come in to play, or should that be prey?

Ten years before, the sole survivor of an ill-fated military mission in the South American jungle described his captain's battle against a bizarre alien hunter that stalked them for sport. The creature, armed with advanced weaponry and a cunning invisibility suit, gruesomely obtained its victims and wore their skulls as trophies.

Now it would appear that humans are 'in season' again...

ImageWorks' latest movie-tech places you in the role of harassed Detective Lieutenant Mike Harrigan, an officer of the besieged LAPD, who must survive four levels of flesh-and-blood



IMAGEWORKS ask you to slay a little prey or

PREDATOR 2

Each level plays like Tobe's Operation Wolf. The screen slowly scrolls right to left, and gunfobs/grenade-throwing comrades walk, run, roll and even drive past-screen, blocking away at the harigian figure at the bottom of the screen, depleting his limited energy. Using the mouse or joystick, you can aim Harrigan's gunright and try to give some back.

Lifting the bar are scores of bullet cartridges which, when shot, magically become part of your ammo reserves. Other even more useful items - laser-firing guns, smart-bomb rockets, energy-renewing fix sockets - can be similarly acquired. Get to the end of the level and there's a super-shoot-out between you and horde of bedfellows.

This all sounds like a pretty straightforward turkey shoot. But there are complications. Incoherent (and very stupid) cutlines amble around the screen - about too many and you'll be suspended. And then there's the mysterious Predator, visible only by the night-vision effect

of his camouflage suit, who at first is quite content to pick off the rampant druggies but later on, as you home in on his lair, begins to take a more active interest in seeing wannabe hang up his badge - for ever.

Predator 2 is aesthetically a very high quality - you'd expect nothing less of coders Am Developments. There's a superb intro, the game looks great, sounds, fun and plays well. But considering what could've been done with such an exciting license the re-voicing of an old and now pretty tired idea comes as a real disappointing twist.

■ **Geoff Kibbey**

700

AMISA

RELEASE DETAILS

AMIGA	£25.99	OUT NOW
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Owners of EPs with floppy disk drives should be pleased that they too can download bits and more software. Here's our call-off to ImageWorks for a £9.99 disc containing the first level data.

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Waterworld	ST, Spec

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TNT

Tricks 'n' Tactics

This month there are hot tips for IceMan, sixty codes for Lemmings, a Colditz playing guide, the complete solution to Dragon's Lair II, and lots, lots more...

Lemmings

YES, there paracodes for the game featuring those adorable but quite loopy little balls of fat, as supplied by Paul Mathys from Rotterdam. Get lemming! ... er ... I mean, go home! ...

1	A0XG
2	PR8LMQFL
3	88ANL8PPT
4	8PLM8Q78
5	PL8L888GT
6	8PL888888
7	88L888888
8	888888888
9	L8888888
10	88888888
11	888888888
12	88888888
13	888888888
14	L88888888
15	888888888
16	888888888
17	888888888
18	888888888
19	L888888888
20	888888888
21	888888888
22	888888888
23	888888888
24	888888888
25	L88888888



26	88888888
27	88888888
28	88888888
29	88888888
30	88888888

MAYHEM

2	88888888
3	88888888
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5	88888888
6	88888888
7	88888888
8	88888888
9	88888888
10	88888888
11	88888888
12	88888888
13	88888888
14	88888888
15	88888888
16	88888888
17	88888888
18	88888888
19	88888888
20	88888888
21	88888888
22	88888888
23	88888888



Z-Out

This sweet little story for the Amiga comes from Mike Smith from London. Also, bomb out! ... need getting you down? Then press J and K simultaneously for infinite energy. Can't get beyond Level 1 in great pity, because some of the later levels are fantastic! If why, just press J followed by any number from 0 to 9 to skip levels.

24	88888888
25	88888888
26	88888888
27	88888888
28	88888888
29	88888888
30	88888888

TWO-PLAYER LEVELS

2	88888888
3	88888888
4	88888888
5	88888888
6	88888888
7	88888888
8	88888888
9	88888888
10	88888888
11	88888888
12	88888888
13	88888888
14	88888888
15	88888888
16	88888888
17	88888888
18	88888888
19	88888888
20	88888888



Awesome

Another brief but beautiful cheat from Rick Smith. To obtain infinite lives and credits in the MCI-rated space game, play until you get to the single-energy screen and use the joystick to move the cursor to the top left hand corner on the screen, then press fire on the joystick and the "4" sign on the numeric keypad. What could be simpler?



Xenon 2

Does the man never rest with his PC cheats? It's Paul once again, this time with a cunning way to get infinite lives in the litmasq first space shoot-'em-up. Simply press F7 after selecting the graphics mode and then during the game press I the letter 'e'!

Starry

More PC games, courtesy of Paul! For infinite lives in this Defender-esque shoot-'em-up, type in MASM 5.1 at the selection screen.



Car-Vup

Another Amiga and ST cheat from Simon (we're very grateful). For a catlike time killer, type FUSEYCAT on the high-score table. Typing BUMPER during the game gives you temporary invulnerability and typing NEKOPIE takes you straight to the final level - are you sure you can handle it?



Wrath Of The Demon

Wrath Here's an excellent treat for all fans of this pixel-perfect, astonishingly-atrociously and deadly-addictive arcade adventure. Simply follow this guide set in by Joe Benkaville from Frame, Gamezet, for complete satisfaction...

At the Dark Tower kill the small birds who throw things at you and collect the potion. When another one arrives kill him and then his mate.

Go that you end up with three Potions. Once you're in the Tower follow the instructions below to reach and kill the Demon.

Go right and enter the second door on the floor, then enter the first door you come to and collect the Lightning Potion. Go back through the door you just came through, go right, collect

the Potion and go through the door. Carry on to the end of the corridor and do the same in the next corridor collecting all the Potions you find on the way.

Now go left, enter the next door you come to, flick the switch and come back out. Go left, go through the next door and collect the Potion. Come out again, go into the next door on your left and flick the switch. Come out, run at the door to the right, flick the switch and enter the door on the floor to your left. Run to the right, go through the next pair of doors, go left, collect the Key and go back past the three doors you just came through.

Run at the way back down the passage and go in the door on the floor right at the start. Jump over the spikes and enter the door. Collect the Key, go back over the spikes and out through the door. Go in the next door on your right again, go right, enter the second door and then go through the closed door. Kill the Goblin and collect the Key. Go back past the pair of doors you just came through, run left and go through the closed

door. Run left, go through the first door and then enter the third door.

Kill the Dragon, collect the Key and come out. Run left to the end of the passage, run left again and enter the door. Go through the third door, flick the switch, come back out and go in the closed door on your left. Collect the Potion, come out and enter the last door on the right. Go through the first door, collect the Potion, come out and enter the next door on the right. Go in the first door, collect the Poison and enter the second door to collect the Potion. Go out, run to the end of the passage and enter the door.

To kill the Demon jump and shoot him. When he looks up dodge the spear beams from above, when he looks down stand in between the holes in the ground to avoid the flames, when he moves his hand stick the key and when he covers his mouth go to the back of the screen and jump to avoid the flame. Keep shooting the Demon until he's dead.

Police Quest

No one said it was easy on the streets. Though perhaps James Jack can make life a little more pleasant with the following hint which'll help you get the "No Bad Haircut" for the most loggishly difficult Sierra adventure.

After you've joined the Maricopa Brigade and your new office has been chosen to you by Lyons, open the cabinet, find the Hoffmann file and read it. Pick it up again, close the cabinet, get the clipboard and keep turning the pages until you see Hoffmann's photo. Type "Get Wanted Poster" and go to the Court.

Walk right until a man asks you what you want, then type "TWO IS AN OMBROGENCY," wait until he comes back, open the door and then give Hoffmann's file and the Wanted Poster to the Judge. After typing "Tatted" you will get the "No Bad Haircut." Now go back to the Police Station and carry on with the game...

Weird Dreams

Attention all you business computer players! Fred Greig Smith of Galaxy has a neat tip for the IBM PC version of this bizarre tale through the dream state.

In the Hall of Mirrors, walk into the right-hand mirror and key in the Morse code for "BEE THREE SHORT LIPS, THREE LONG LIPS, THREE SHORT LIPS" using the '+' key on the numeric keypad for infinite lips. Additionally, whenever you're in trouble, tap the '+' key a number of times and you will complete the section, except when fighting the Wisp or the Sleaz.



Chase HQ 2

There's nothing more annoying when you're trying to catch a criminal than stumbling off the road and getting straight into a tree. So try out this cheat for the Amiga and ST conversions of the crime-fighting out-top. Hold down it and P3 while the game is loading, and as if by magic, you'll find all the road-side obstacles will disappear if only it could be like that in real life!



Bugs Bunny

It's not funny being a bunny when you can't level 1 and you've paid lots of money for the cart. Okay, okay, so I never was very good at poetry. So I'll shut up and let Mike Mizaloff from Woburn/Masson take over with the full list of level codes for this Garfield cartoon caper.

2	52F5	26	WY2
3	2525	27	WY2
4	22F5	28	WY2
5	5W05	29	
6	5005	WPM)	
7	2W43	30	WY2
8	25F5	31	WY2
9	W000	32	WY2
10	W023	33	255W
11	W525	34	22WV
12	W3W5	35	W52W
13	W0W5	36	W52W
14	W023	37	2W5W
15	W0W5	38	2W5W
16	W025	39	W0WV
17	5255	40	W5WV
18	52W5	41	W0WV
19	2222	42	W0WV
20	21F2	43	W52W
21	W525	44	W0WV
22	W025	45	W0WV
23	21W2	46	W0WV
24	21W2	47	W0WV
25	W025	48	W0WV

49	225W
50	21WV
51	222W
52	W5WV
53	W52W
54	21WV
55	W5WV
56	W5WV
57	W0WV
58	W5WV
59	W5WV
60	W5WV
61	W5WV
62	W5WV
63	W5WV
64	W5WV
65	W5WV
66	W5WV
67	2222
68	2222
69	W52W
70	W52W
71	2242
72	2W52
73	W0WV
74	W0WV
75	W52W
76	W52W
77	W0WV
78	W52W
79	W52W
80	W52W



Horror Zombies From The Crypt

Simon & Co. again, this time with the level codes to this zombie-averse adventure on the Amiga and ST.

2	W0LWV
3	W0WV
4	W0WV
5	W0WV

Wishbringer

Poor Randy of Sheffield has generously presented us with the complete solution to this classic Indiana-adventure, which was recently re-released at budget prices. What a bargain! But, before we begin, here are some general tips...

Try not to get caught by the lower guards - these are the giant beasts stomping around the town which may over-annoy you if you're not careful. When you hear the guards approaching, move away and wait a few turns before you continue. O.K. - now, on with the solution...

The game begins with you standing outside the Post Office. Go IN, WAIT and GET ENVELOPE. You will be told to take the envelope to the Magic Shoppe, so go OUT, and head NW. YES when you're asked if you want to enter the premises. N, WAIT, GIVE ENVELOPE TO DRAGONSLAY, WAIT, N to enter the ground, GET BOMB, OUT to leave the ground, S, E, E, E, ONE BOMB TO GO TO keep it quiet. N, WAIT, GET NOTE from the librarian, S, E, E, GET SEA HORSE and THROW IT INTO SEA, N, N, W, EXAMINE FOUNTAIN to see a coin and a gold fish within. GET COIN, E, E, N, GET SHELL, USE SHELL for a clue. N, W, W, N, UP onto the hilltop.

GET HORSESHOE, N, E, N, N, E, BROW BRANCH, UP, W, N, UP, E, S, UP to arrive outside the Magic Shoppe. Now BROW ON COIN, OPEN DOOR, IN, EXAMINE CLOCK, WAIT, GIVE ENVELOPE TO WOMAN who hands it back to you and asks you to read it. OPEN ENVELOPE, READ LETTER TO WOMAN, WAIT, GET COIN, OPEN CAN, WAIT - now the strange woman will give you details of your quest...

Leaving the shop you head GO DOWN, N, N, DOWN, S, E, DOWN, EXAMINE BUSHES, IN, GIVE CAN TO TROLL. Opening the can the Troll will shriek in terror and flee allowing you to cross the bridge. So, GET CAN, OPEN GATE, S, S, S, IN to enter the church. GET CANDLE, BUT S, EXAMINE FOUNTAIN (there is a token in the fountain, but it is guarded by a vicious Pteroda fish).

N, N, EXAMINE PIT, E, E, DROP SHELL AND HORSESHOE (as they are of no further use), N, N, N, N, E, DROP CANDLE AND GET BRANCH, W, S, S, W, UP, OPEN STUMP on top of the hill top, N, S, PUT BRANCH INTO PIT, PUT BRANCH in the poor creature, DROP BRANCH and then GO AT X to find a whistle. So, GET WHISTLE and BLOW WHISTLE...

You are teleported across the water; there is a castle here, so go IN, WAIT and GET KEY. Now WAIT and BLOW WHISTLE again - you will travel back across the water and arrive back inside the pit. The magical whistle is laid on the main journey. Leave it!

From the pit go E, E, N, N, N, E, GET CAR OLD, W, S, S, E, E, GO IN WAIT to the palace, to gain a magic wand. Now go W, S and DOWN MAJORS, GET LEAFLET, WAIT, the mailbox will sprout itself, and follow you everywhere from now on! So, go N, N and LOOK IN CAR to see if it has a false bottom. SQUEEZE CAR and then DROP CAR, GET STONE.

Now head W, S, S, DROP LEAFLET, E, GIVE COIN TO YOGG to gain a ticket. IN, GIVE TICKET to you can enter the cinema, EXAMINE CARTON to see a 3D film advert. N, LOOK UNDER SEAT to see a pair of 3D glasses and then GET GLASSES, WEAR GLASSES, WAIT, WAIT, WAIT, WAIT, WAIT to gain some useful information.

Leave the cinema by going OUT and then REMOVE GLASSES, OUT. When asked if you really wish to exit, type Y and, once you're left, input E, WAIT, WAIT. The mailbox will come to life and attack you, but the mailbox (which is still following you around) will lead to your defence. Both contraptions will be destroyed. Now go IN to enter the arcade and EXAMINE MACHINE, GO OUT and head N, W. Now (DROP ALL, PUT CANDLE, W, IN, WAIT, WAIT), you will be locked in a prison cell. (So MOVE RED, GET ALL, IN the clock into the hole). You end up in a tunnel, with only your

candle for light. Go IN, E and PUT BURNET OIL ON BURN, to stop your light wicking it out.

Now OPEN HORNED BARK, GET BOTTLE AND REMOVE W, N, UP, N, E, S, S, DROP BOTTLE, GET GLASSES AND STONE and GET NOTE. Now PUT WORDS INTO FOUNTAIN to keep the plants happy while you GET TORCH. Now go E, E, IN to enter the castle, BURN TORCH ON DOOR (on the machine), PUSH STICK INLET, AGAIN, PUSH STICK SOUTH, AGAIN, PUSH BUTTON. Are you sure? YES. Really? YES.

Now input the magic word you learned from the pedlar to open the drawbridge. Go W and WAIT; you will be dubbed unconscious. Waking, you find yourself chained to a table which is a part of a machine. Mr Drop is here. So WAIT, GIVE NOTE TO DROP, GET COIN AND GET KEY, UNLOCK CHAINS WITH KEY, PUT LEVER, GET NOTE, READ NOTE - it tells you how to pass. Meet the guard dog and then OPEN GATE, UP BOMB PARTING to reveal a creek hidden behind. TURN CORNER to escape the guard dog.

Don't leave the castle yet, but go UP instead. It is very dark here, so WEAR GLASSES, GET BROOM, EXAMINE PAPER, EXAMINE SECOND SWITCH, PULL SECOND SWITCH DOWN, REMOVE GLASSES. Head N, N, OUT, E, BLOOD HELL, PUT BOG, OPEN DOOR into the cottage, E, READ MESSAGE, DROP NOTE, DROP

KEY, DROP GLASSES, GET STEEL KEY, OUT, DROP CANDLE, N, UNLOCK DOOR WITH KEY, IN to enter the library. EXAMINE DESK.

The door will slam shut, leaving you in darkness.

Fortunately the Wishbringer Stone you are carrying flares into light. So, input S, BROW, CASE WITH BROOM, EXAMINE SCULPTURE, PUT

STONE INTO HOLE. Sure? YES. Really? YES. You are teleported

back to just outside the Magic Shoppe entrance, where you may UNLOCK OH DOOR and all will be made clear...

THE END!



E-Motion

Yeah, you guessed - it's Simons going against the Amiga and ST arcade packer certainly had me testing my hair out in frustration, so type MOONLARK and press F1 to skip a level level or F2 to skip ten levels.



Monty Python's Flying Circus

It's Simons again, who explains "How to recognize cheats from a long way away". Lesson 1: The level cheat. Type your name as SIMONS on the high-score table to start on any level you've reached.



Nitro

Simon Donner and friends from Beaky have certainly been busy - they send us news and words of excellent cheats for the Amiga and ST. This one's for Fyggrool's great little buggy-racing game. Getting stuck on a level? Then type in NITRO to jump to the next.

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ACE CHARTS

The ACE Charts give you the definitive list of top-scoring games EVERY MONTH - as reviewed by ALL British games magazines.

A JACKPOT WINNER AT LAST!

Well, it had to happen in the past few months. After years and months of agonising to have crowned the market with both by offering its own version of a carefully researched game - and now one of the highest scores in the jackpot! The way it was it was a hit, but Andrew Allen - you, Andrew, who gained all five games in the *Amiga* CPC, Commodore Amiga - always had it on his mind to find!

In fact, we were delighted to have Andrew win the grand prize because this is probably the last month in which the *Amiga* and *Chart* will appear in these games form. In our next month, we'll be presenting a much improved chart section... and we should see both by going away some great prizes.

Other winners in round 11 were *Barbaric Wars*, *Red Wolf* and *Country Club* by G. Adams, J. Barnard, M. Morgan, and M. Marshall.

What you can win...

You'll get a mystery game worth up to £20 for your choice of any one pick out NEXT MONTH'S top-chart entries. Get off the right to top category and your 8 gold £20 worth of software! Only instructions are applicable.

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 software as determined by the ratings these games are currently receiving. You can see their features rising and falling in each issue.

Having collected all the games reviewed in the latest issue of computer magazines, we calculate the average mark that each publisher received for every one of its games on each format. This is the rating that you see in the second column. So, for example, if the average is good at receiving 70 for games but function on the front cover, that will still show the average mark, even if you can see one of its titles leading up the Amiga, ST or PC charts on these pages. 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 last column shows how well a company's games have fared compared to the industry index. This single figure represents the average review mark (expressed as a percentage) that all games of format received during the last month. 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, Core Design's current titles are worth 14 percentage points above average - according to the industry's reviewers.

Although we print only the top 25 companies each month, we have tabs on all of them. Occasionally a new company will enter the listings (marked with an asterisk). This month, we welcome *Electronic Arts* to the ACE Stock Market.

Finally, we don't record categories which have only received a single software review.

Pub./Game	00/00	1-5	0000	Markets	00 0	0.00	0.00
Game 1	94	4/5	17.00	Palms	92	-0.07	0.00
Spaceman 100000	90	4/5	15.00	Palms	90.75	0/5	0.0
Microgame	89.00	-04.00	15.00	Spreads	89.00	-0.00	0.00
Micro Image	89.75	-0.11	13.1	Image Works	89.49	-0.11	0.00
Comets	89.23	-	13.00	Electronic Arts	89.47	-0.17	0.00
Action 24	87	-00.75	10.20	Elite	86	-10.4	0.00
Storm	86.00	-11.00	10.20	Redline Inc	86	-0.01	0.00
Core Design	84.00	-1.20	10	AmigaSoft	79.25	-17.00	0.00
Progress	84.0	-0.47	9.00	Orion	78.00	-16.7	0.00
ST Gold	83.00	-0.01	9.00	Storm	77.00	-16.00	0.00
Code Masters	82.23	-0.23	9.00	Electronic Arts	77.0	0/5	0.00
Orion	82.01	-1.01	9.00	Orion Software	77.0	0/5	0.00

AMIGA

Redline Ranger	Micro Image	92.75
Speedball	Micro Image	91.5
Gold	Storm	90.07
Redline System	Microgame	90.00
Silverware	ST Gold	90

Budget re-releases dominate this month as Micro Image's first two golden titles get the latest of to a fine start.

C64

Silverware	Mastertronic	94.3
CJ's Elephant Action	Code Masters	93
Supremacy	Virgin	90.3
Gold	Storm	89.7
Super Monaco	ST Gold	89.3

Blargie is to be picked up here as ten cheaper than the ratings. Slightly ironic, perhaps, to see a budget version of Silverware's outstanding 1989.

AMSTRAD CPC

City's Challenge	ST Gold	90.00
Loops	AmigaSoft	89.0
Light Cavalier	Infogrames	87
Walters	Infogrames	87
Karoo	Mastertronic	79.5

Infogrames grab the French flag from ST Gold with new conversions. Loops and Walters show that puzzles are one of the few games free from format limitations.

IBM PC

Speedball	Micro Image	95
Red Baron	Dynamix/Storm	93.00
Life and Death 2	Microgame	90.00
Linda	Acadsoft	89.5
Jones in the Post Lane	Storm	87.00

Micro Image 2 recently earned rare status. It's good to see the original can still hold its own with the games of today.

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 **prize** — or win your entry on the back of an envelope. Enter your name and address, a telephone number if you have one, and the Round Number.

STEP TWO

Fill in your age and which machine you own. Just to know you exist!

STEP THREE

Learn the month's stars. Then, using your knowledge of the games scene, try to predict which games will come top of the six-machine genre charts. Finally, enter on your card:

- the top game for the Spectrum
- the top game for the ZX1
- the top game for the ZX2
- the top game for the MSX PC
- the top game for the Amiga
- the top game for the ST

YOU DON'T HAVE TO ENTER A GUESS. TIPS FOR ENJOY MAXIMISED the number for your chances of winning this month if you do.

STEP FOUR (OPTIONAL)

You can also try to predict which company will be at the top of next month's 100-company list by name this month. Enter on the card: **The top twelve will be...** (name of company)

STEP FIVE (OPTIONAL)

If you want to go for the jackpot £750,000.

Then select any of the generic categories and try to predict the top five entries for next month (before you get the top one). Then tell us which category you're predicting for — it can be either the Mostmarketed or any of the machine categories in Step Three. **MEMBER — YOU CAN ONLY SUBMIT ONE JACKPOT CARD EVERY**

STEP SIX

Four times (with a stamp) to us to enter our draw that the closing date for this round is 31st May. The address is:

**ACE Bookmarket
30-32 Finsbury Lane
London**

BCR 584

The best overall forecast for each category wins out of the lot and sets the prize. If you get more than one entry correct, you'll be entered in further draws for each category, but increasing your chances of winning a prize. And don't forget to include the Round Number!

THIS IS ROUND 19

Each month's competition has a round number so that we can correctly identify entries. The **MUST** include the round number on your postcard otherwise you entry may not be processed correctly.

THE PRIZES

- All entries must be received by the 31st May 1991.
- The prize of £2500 or of any company merchandise (at the discretion of ACE) requires no receipt for entry.
- All prizes are subject to availability. Should it become necessary to award no prizes, we will announce this in advance via our press, but not necessarily that an alternative entry will be made for the games get the amount claimed.

ATARI ST

Midwinter 2	Starburst	95
Grids	Strategy Software	91.75
Billings Cloud	Image Works	88.75
Cybertron 4	US Games	88.75
Silverware	US Games	81.25

Midwinter 2 and Grids scores almost identically to last month. Silverware features in four formats in all this ST rating of 88.25 — its lowest mark in all the top fives.

SPECTRUM

Highlands	US Gold	95
Ham's Quest	Granada	91.5
Elkman	Mastertronic	88
Loose Wolf	Softlogic	88.5
Kanon	Mastertronic	87

Strong Spectrums start with five new titles all scoring highly. Again, Softlog's score falls slightly with Silverware and Kanon.

G.P.S

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All prices include postage and are valid for Great Britain only. Please add 5% for 8-13 day courier for hardware.

ATARI

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Atari Power Supply Unit	9.95	Atari Software FROM "The Great Escape"	29.95

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HARD SELL

Well, well, well! aren't you lucky! Since again AOL is printing the full hardware specifications for all major consoles and computers. The console starts here, and turn to page 104 for the computers. All the data have been thoroughly updated to provide you with an up-to-date guide to all the major machines you'll find on the high street.

Supplier telephone numbers and their own online PC agencies are available. As a general rule, however, your local dealer should be the first place to start asking questions.

The Star Ratings go from one (best to five (worst), but remember - these should be taken into account along with your own needs and preferences.

AMSTRAD GX4000

Package: GX4000 console, 2 controllers and Burning Rubber game.
Processor: 68010 28.66

Console Memory: 512

Recommended Retail Price (RRP): £199

Contact: Amstrad 0783 198344

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 multi-colour hand-warmers and 16 hardware sprites increasing to 32 with inter-processor mode. Unfortunately the sound chip is the same old funny one used on the CPC, also in stereo - you can't have everything, I suppose. While some software houses express reservations of the machine being a noisy-outside foreign land/foreign remains about something support for 16, many are working on titles for the machine.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: Same as Amstrad CPC.

Palette: 4096

Colors: 32

Bit: 16

Monitor Output: Yes.

Monitor Support: No.

Monitor Options: (CRT), Amstrad 4042.

Sprite: 16, 32 with hardware inter-processor.

Speed: Good for 4-bit technology.

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Depends on Processor.

MSX

Series Output: Yes.

Performance: Unimpressive 1-chann. 1-bit chip as on old CPC, but now runs independently of main processor.

HARDWARE

Joystick: 2 game controllers sup-ported.

Ports: Monitor's ports, stereo head/phone socket, 2 joystick ports & digital, 4 analogue.

SOFTWARE

Titles: Around 275.

Cartridge Memory: 128

Existing Software Base: Small but growing fast.

Current Releases: Thirty titles due by January 1995.

Prospects: Very good, with several software houses working on titles.

BUYERS

Best Buy Price At RRP: £199

Second Hand Availability: None as yet.

Maintenance: One year guarantee.

STAR RATINGS

Graphics: 4 + + + +

Sound: 4 + + + +

Expansion: 4 + + + +

Overall: 4 + + + +

ATARI LYNX

Package: Lynx with California Games.

Processor: 68010 600

Console Memory: 512

Recommended Retail Price (RRP): £129.95

Contact: Intel 08 011 368 9471

IN BRIEF

The Lynx was designed by a team including 16-bit, one of the men behind the Amiga. If that doesn't convince you consider it runs a fat 6502, has 512K of game storage on its card 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 found to increase during 1994.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: 192 x 192

Palette: 4096

Colors: 16

Bit: 16

Monitor Output: No.

Monitor Support: Yes - 1.5 inch SMD90 colour LCD.

Monitor Options:

Sprite: Special graphics hardware effectively treats all screen objects as sprites.

Speed: Fast

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Very good

MSX: No.

Series Output: Yes.

Performance: 4-chann., 2-bit stereo sound has to be heard to be believed.

HARDWARE

Joystick: 4 way joystick.

Ports: Cartridge port, multi-player port, miniature stereo headphone jack.

SOFTWARE

Price: £16.95.

Cartridge Memory: 64K.

Existing Software Base: Very small.

Current Releases: California Games is a great feature.

Prospects: Uncertain but several new titles in the pipeline.

BUYERS

Best Buy Price At RRP: £199

Second Hand Availability: Very few.

Maintenance: One year guarantee.

STAR RATINGS

Graphics: 4 + + + +

Sound: 4 + + + +

Expansion: 4 + + + +

Overall: 4 + + + +

ATARI VCS

Package: Both VC2600 and VC2700 come with controller and two games.

Processor: 6801 0300/0500 17MHz

Console Memory: 128K known.

Recommended Retail Price: VC2600 £139.95, VC2700 £99.95

Contact: Intel 08 011 368 9471

IN BRIEF

The VC2600 is a revised version of the original Atari console which, until a couple of years ago, remained the best selling home game system of all time. The VC2700 is a special up-version of the VC2600 with a faster processor, slightly better sound and vastly improved graphics.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: 192 x 192 (2600), 200 x 200 (2700)

Palette: 16 (2600/270) 27000

Colors: 4 (2600/270) 27000

Bit: 16

Monitor Output: No.

Monitor Support: No.

Monitor Options: No.

Sprite: 16/32

Speed: Slow.

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Depends on TV

MSX: No.

Series Output: No.

Performance: Limited to 1 channel on 2600 and two on 2700.

HARDWARE

Joystick: Supported.

Ports: 2 x 8 pin D for joystick.

PC cartridge port: No.

SOFTWARE

Price: £1.18

Cartridge Memory: Not known.

Existing Software Base: Small.

Current Releases: None.

Prospects: Unsure in the light of new competition from Japan.

BUYERS

Best Buy Price At RRP: £199

Second Hand Availability: Worth looking.

Maintenance: One year guarantee.

STAR RATINGS

Graphics: 2 0 0 0

Sound: 0 0 0 0

Expansion: None None

Overall: 0 0 0 0

C64 GAMES SYSTEM

Package: C64G console, controller and 4 games (Xmas, Football, Tennis, Wizard's Quest and International Soccer).

Processor: 68010 600

Console Memory: 64K

Recommended Retail Price: £79.95

Contact: Commodore 0428 170008

IN BRIEF

Like a Commodore C64 computer, remove the keyboard and stick it in an unbranded slab of a box and what have you got? A "box" controller takes so far have been less than impressive.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: 192 x 192 in multi-colour mode.

Palette: 16

Colors: 16

Bit: 16

Monitor Output: Yes.

Monitor Support: No.

Monitor Options: 625

Sprite: 8

Speed: Slow CPU, helped out by the 64K custom graphics and sound chips.

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Depends on TV/Stereo.

MSX: No.

Series Output: No.

Performance: 1 channel 16-bit, one of the best 8-bit sound chips.

HARDWARE

Available (imped supplied).

Price: \$695

SOFTWARE

Price: Around \$25.

Cartridges Memory Efficient, Existing Software Better

Potentially huge, but small at the moment. Commodore anticipates around 100 titles by Q3.

Current Releases: Plenty forthcoming from various software houses.

Prospect: Uncertain. Do people really want a console version of an aging, though admittedly good, computer? Software support is likely to be pretty good for a while at least.

BUYERS

Best Buy Price: As 1997

Second Hand Availability: None

Maintenance: One year guarantee.

STAR RATINGS

Graphics: 4+*

Sound: 4+*

Expansion: *

Overall: 4+*

NINTENDO NES

Package: Standard Pack includes console, plus 2 game controllers and Super Mario Bros game. Most interesting point is allowed full sub-video control game for adults. Action Pack is standard, but includes Japan gun and Duck Hunt game.

Price: \$199.

Console Memory: 25.

Recommended Retail Price: Standard Pack \$179.95, Deluxe Pack \$249.95.

Contact: Daylight PR 071 834 2073

IN BRIEF

The world's largest selling console, largely because of the popularity of its hardware, which is 8-bit average.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: 256 x 240

Palette: 13

FX: Yes

Monitor Output: Yes

Monitor Support: Yes

Monitor Options: RGB, SCART

Speakers: 0

Speed: Average

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Yes

Monitor Output: Yes

Performance: Average

HARDWARE

Inputs: 2 dedicated controllers supplied. 16 8-bit controllers with 20% range available for £39.95.

Ports: None-out of the ordinary

SOFTWARE

Cartridges: Memory: 1 bit.

Existing Software Base: Over 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.

Prospect: In the UK, improving due to increased support - but this is probably technology.

Software Loading: Instant

Best Buy Price: As 1997

Second Hand Availability: A few

Maintenance: One year's guarantee.

Faulty machines return to dealer.

STAR RATINGS

Graphics: 4+*

Sound: 4+*

Expansion: 4+*

Overall: 4+*

NINTENDO GAMEBOY

Package: Mini-unit with 2GB

game.

Price: \$199 (estimated 8-bit)

25GB.

Console Memory: 25.

Recommended Retail Price: \$199.95.

Contact: Daylight PR 071 834 2073

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, but it is deserved simply because of more graphics - this machine has some superb titles and games making use of the touch player link-up option are tremendous fun (see Trend).

GRAPHICS

Resolution: 256 x 192 characters.

Palette: 4 plus shades.

Monitor Output: Yes - LCD also play in 8-bit colour light.

Speakers: 0 (in 8-bit)

Speed: Fast for what it is.

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Depends on headphones.

Monitor Output: Yes

Performance: Plays a lot better than it looks.

HARDWARE

Inputs: Built-in 8-way joystick.

Ports: Headphone socket, built-in microphone.

SOFTWARE

Price: £29.95.

Cartridges: Memory: 4bit.

Existing Software Base: The best for any handheld.

Current Releases: Increasing

Prospect: Excellent

BUYERS

Best Buy Price: As 1997

Second Hand Availability: None.

Maintenance: One year's warranty

STAR RATINGS

Graphics: 4+*

Sound: 4+*

Expansion: Good machine interface but lots of potential.

Overall: 4+*

NEC PC ENGINE

Package: Console unit, controller and free game.

Price: £180 (around \$200)

Console Memory: 64k internal, 64

video. (Photographic: 128k internal, 32k video.)

Recommended Retail Price: £199 (at price around \$249)

Contact: Lunar dealers

IN BRIEF

Lately it has been widely felt that the machine will over be officially supported by NEC in the UK. Its CD-ROM add-on drive is now the largest selling CD unit on the market and a responsibility for much of the recent increase in CD development. There's also a 16-bit version, easily more powerful, called the TurboGraphic, but this is only rarely available through importers and at a price - usually around £280. NEC also have a handheld version of the engine which is software compatible with its larger brother.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: 256 x 128

Palette: 16 (Photographic: 512k)

Colour: 32 - 16 background and 16

coloured by sprite.

FX: Yes

Monitor Output: Yes

Monitor Support: Yes

Monitor Options: Yes

Speakers: 0 (TurboGraphic: 128)

Speed: Very fast considering this is an 8-bit

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Depends on monitor.

FX: Yes

Monitor Output: Yes

Performance: 3-channel stereo

HARDWARE

Inputs: None (in extra cost)

Ports: Performance Support - the CD-ROM adds a new dimension.

Available: Supplier with dedicated

controller.

SOFTWARE

Price: Around £25-40 (imported)

Cartridge: Memory: None known.

Existing Software Base: Large

Current Releases: Increasing

Prospect: Good.

BUYERS

Best Buy Price: One import.

Second Hand Availability: 1 Rare

Maintenance: Touch up - 16-bit imported machines rarely have any real warranty.

STAR RATINGS

Graphics: 4+*

Sound: 4+*

Expansion: 4+*

Overall: 4+*

SEGA MASTER

Package: Console using cartridge or smart card plus game controller and new kind of tiltable start game.

Recommended Retail Price:

£79.95, £99.95 (4-light gun), £129.95

(4-light gun and CD player).

Price: \$99

Console Memory: 32k.

Contact: Virgin Mastertronic 071

722 8829

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 prospect looks good. Like the Nintendo, because this 8-bit machine was established but dated technology.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: 256 x 192

Palette: 64

Colour: 16

FX: Yes

Monitor: Yes

Monitor Options: Yes

Speaker Quality: Depends on FX

Performance: 3 channels.

HARDWARE

Inputs: Some controller supplied

SOFTWARE

Price: £10-40 (usually £20)

Cartridge: Memory: Not known.

Existing Software Base: Very good.

Current Releases: Good

Prospect: As good as any 8-bit console.

BUYERS

Best Buy Price: As 1997

Second Hand Availability: None

Maintenance: One year's guarantee.

Faulty machines return to dealer.

STAR RATINGS

Graphics: 4+*

Sound: 4+*

Expansion: 4+*

Overall: 4+*

SEGA MEGADRIVE

Package: Console unit, controller

and 30-second demo game.

Price: £199.95 (around \$249)

Console Memory: 768 main, 128

video.

Recommended Retail Price:

£199.95

Contact: Virgin Mastertronic 071

722 8829

IN BRIEF

Excellent example of the new 16-bit console technologies, the first decent 16-bit console to receive any support in the UK.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: 320 x 204

Palette: 14

Colour: 16

FX: Yes

Monitor: Yes

Monitor Options: Yes

Speed: Very fast

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Yes.

FX: Yes.

HARD SELL

PART 2:
The computer section starts here.
Read on...

ACORN ARCHIMEDES

Models: Archimedes 100, 200, 400 (200 top)

Package: Keyboard, mouse and other equipment included and \$194 (plus monitor below or extra)

Memory: 512K, 1.0, 1.5, 1.8M, 4.0 MB; 400 adds 640, 640

Processor: Acorn ARM

OS: Prices range from \$799.97 for A2000 clone to \$2699.00 for 4400 with video monitor

Contact: Acorn 0203 263000

IN BRIEF

Still the cutting edge of more sophisticated Acorn's ARM is about the fastest (on this side of a Cray). This very exciting machine - although gathering admirers since the introduction of the A2000 - will also be a great games software base and is best left to the enthusiasts.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: 320 x 256 or 640 x 256 with normal monitors; 640 x 512 available with multi-sync monitors.

Palette: 4096

Formats: From mono up to 256 x 200 x 256 or 16 x 240 x 11.2.

TV: No

Monitor Output: Mono composite video output - 600 x 400.

Monitor Supplied: Depends on package bought.

Monitor Options: Acorn dedicated 14 inch flat-panel, colour; 12 inch high res mono; Multi-sync colour.

Speech: 1

Speech: Blistering

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Good

OS: 10th order hardware.

Flown Output: No

Performance: 16 Channels (8 stereo pairs) 8 outputs, 1 internal output

HARDWARE

Disk Format: 5.25-inch - 800K

Disk Price: From £1.50 upwards

Disk Performance: Good and fast.

Keyboard: 100 keys with one programmable auto-repeat. Early key-

boards have a cheap feel given the quality of the machine.

Joystick/Mouse: 2-button mouse, a joystick for joystick.

Interface: 25 pin D parallel (high mouse), 5.0mm stereo headphone (a/c), 14 way din, RS232 expansion ports, RS 422 video output, VDI interface.

SOFTWARE

Existing Software Base: Still very limited. Some games available most software is for productivity and business.

Current Releases: See above.

Games: Most famous are Zaxxon (Amos and Compuser), but there have been several impressive one-off titles released recently.

Graphics: Potential is enormous. Some excellent packages available. Shader 1.4k graphics, but development is somewhat slow.

Programs: Limited. Even the cheap models feel a touch competing with TRS and Amiga.

Software Loading: Very reliable.

BUYERS

Best Buy Price: As low

Second Hand Availability: 1000 units, some 300 and 1800 starting to appear but expect to pay for them.

Maintenance: One year's guarantee. Return to factory machines deal in.

Models: Classic, 2000, LC, etc.

APPLE MACINTOSH

Package: Monitor with built-in CPU and disk drive, separate keyboard.

Memory: 128 (Classic 1), 256K (Classic 2), 512K, LC & SE, 768K (SE) Processor Motorola 68000 (68010) 68450 (a/c), 68000 (68010, 960)

Recommended Retail Price: Classic 1 £1975, Classic 2 £2025, 512K £2295 (SE 4096 hard-disk) LC £2000 (256K 4096 hard-disk) £2200 (256K 4096 hard-disk), £2300 (256K 4096 hard-disk)

Contact: Apple 081 560 1100

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Excellent

OS: 10th order, separate publishing.

Flown Output: Yes

Performance: 16 Channels (8 stereo pairs) 8 outputs, 1 internal output

HARDWARE

Disk Format: 5.25-inch - 800K

Disk Price: From £1.50 upwards

Disk Performance: Good and fast.

Keyboard: 100 keys with one programmable auto-repeat. Early key-

boards have a cheap feel given the quality of the machine.

Joystick/Mouse: 2-button mouse, a joystick for joystick.

Interface: 25 pin D parallel (high mouse), 5.0mm stereo headphone (a/c), 14 way din, RS232 expansion ports, RS 422 video output, VDI interface.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: Classic & SE 512 x 340, LC 640 x 480 (or 640 x 480 (interl.) & 640 x 830 (quad).

Palette: Classic & SE are black and white, LC 256, 640 or 768 or 16 grey in max. 16.

Formats: 256 with colour monitor TV, etc.

Monitor Output: Integral monitor.

Monitor Supplied: Yes

Monitor Options: 16-colour mono & colour available for LC & SE.

Speech: None

Speed: Classic 1 slow, Classic 2, 3000 & LC (naturally fast), SE very fast.

SOFTWARE

Speaker Quality: Good

OS: 10th order, interleave, available.

Flown Output: No (no real use).

Performance: 4 Channels give good performance.

HARDWARE

Disk Format: 5.25-inch - 1.44MB

Disk Price: £1.50 - £2.50

Disk Performance: Generally fast

Keyboard: Separate with 87 keys including function keys and numeric key pad. Optional extra in the Apple Extended keyboard with 100 keys.

Joystick/Mouse: JoyPad, 4 cost supported, high-quality simple button mouse is supplied with machine.

Interface: 2000 - Apple Disk II; SE connection, 2 SCSI/HDAD2 using external disk drive, 16-pin Euro-Sig expansion slot, 900 - 18-25 connection, internal audio amplifier (a/c) - 2 63.149V4431 serial, 04-25 SCSI T.

SOFTWARE

Existing Software Base: A very wide base exists in all fields except games.

Current Releases: Adequate, though largely of US origin and in the business or B2-B field.

Games: Very few arcade titles but plenty of non-B2-B adventures.

Graphics: Lots of interesting software for those interested in OS publishing.

More: Very well supported for MSW software - but it's expensive to boot.

Programs: As always, excellent - especially in business and B2-B.

Software Loading: Quick, reliable.

BUYERS

Best Buy Price: Generally the 2000 - Macs are only sold through dealerships. Ask for a discount for cash.

Second Hand Availability: Scarce and expensive. A better market exists in other models but these are fast moving.

Maintenance: One year's guarantee. Apple offers AppleCare - "insurance" you take out to cover the cost of repairs after the guarantee has run out.

ATARI ST



Models: Atari 1000/500, 500FX, 1000TX, Mega 10, Easy

Package: 100 and 1000 have keyboard built-in; disk drive, floppy drives have separate hardware.

Power Pack: Includes 500FX's with light gun, joystick and 1000 of "free" software.

Memory: "Discovery" (built-in) offers better value software to those who build units on 512K and an educational base.

Memory: 512/1024 and 500FX 512K, 1000TX 1024, Mega 10 1, 2 or 8MB; Easy 2 or 4MB, 510 machines expand internally to 6MB.

Processor: Motorola 68000

Recommended Retail Price: 500FX (Power Pack) £285, 500FX (Discovery Pack) £390, 1000TX £290, Easy 1000

Contact: Atari 0753 13344

IN BRIEF

Excellent as a general purpose home machine for games, small business and productivity. It's the number one choice for 68010 machines. The 512 price still gives it a slight edge over the graphically more advanced designs. The main entry ST - Easy - is equally well suited to the musician's portable price if it is complete. IBM or 640K TV with hard disk and mono monitor in a small box.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: Low res 640 x 350, medium res 640 x 480, high res 640 x 800

Palette: 512K 512, 100 4096 (Sharp 2)

Formats: Black and white in high-res, 4 colours in medium res, 16 in low res.

TV: No, Not Sharp.

Monitor Output: 512K models only, others through TV modulator.

Monitor Supplied: No. Sharp has integral LCD monitor.

Monitor Options: Atari monitors (a/c) or high-res monos, SC 1443 (no TV colour).

Speech: 1

Speech: Fast

OS: High resolution display if only available on monochrome monitor.

medium and low-end displays only available on colour monitors or TV. After 1988 to late 1989 standard on 1700 improves the OEM access.

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Depends on monitor.

Music: Yes.

Monitor Output: 171 only.

Performance: 3 channel sound is average to good depending on software. 171 features 8 bit PCM sound but no stereo software use it.

HARDWARE

Disk Formats: 1.5 inch - 750k

Disk Prices: £1.20 to £1.40

Disk Performance: Reliable and fast. Early models were supplied with a single-sided disk drive.

Keyboard: 81 keys including 10 function keys. Has a cheap flat which can be replaced with third party spring 81s.

Mouse/Joystick: 2 joystick ports are standard. 1 button mouse to replace with monitor. Easy to replace with a trackball.

SOFTWARE

Existing Software Base: Excellent. A few budget titles are starting to appear now.

Current Releases: None of the major software houses ignore the 1700 so it will be served with plenty of good software.

Games: Across the board.

Applications: Good with some excellent software to integrate them.

Music: Excellent. Plenty of sound computers, editors and MIDI software make this the musician's choice.

Prospects: Very good, but the Amiga is currently the favourite with software houses in the UK and the ST has been tested to capture a market in the States.

Software Loading: Several software companies now supply their games on one double-sided disc, often using the second side for extra graphics or sound, meaning compressed disc loaders either read out or across the first side, or even seem to jump off to run single sided discs. The alternative run compressed disc, initial software disc, installing which is equally annoying newer owners.

UPDATES

Next Day Prices: As 800 available but for the twice yearly bundles.

Second Hand Availability: Very common and quite cheap. 1700s can hold their value well - better than old, single sided machines.

Maintenance: One year's guarantee. Return to dealer if faulty.

based but built in their standard 1700. A1000 is a very powerful machine indeed.

Memory: 4096 K DR, 4 1700 & 4 2000. 16bit. A1000
Processor: 5000 5000000
Monitor: 80000 40000 80000, 16 or 256K

Recommended Retail Price: 4000
USA: Screen Sales £199.95. Flight of Fantasy Plus £199.99. Data CD The 800 pack (2000 80) left (2000 80) A5000. 800 pack (2000 80) left (2000 80) A5000. A 1700 from 1700. 2000 from £1700. 16bit-256K head (2000). 4000 from £1800. 16bit-256K head (2000). £200 price inc. VAT.
Contact: Commodore 0632 750000

IN BRIEF



A stunning specification with custom chips to rival almost everything around, the Amiga is the first choice for the most serious of games players and video professionals. After an initially shaky start, the machine continues to sell extremely well and has maintained the ST in the UK, though the latter machine still has a slightly larger install-base. The A1000 is more idiosyncratic - well to the A2000, but cheaper. The A1000 is a low-end workstation substitute, including workstation-2, featuring enhanced font, file handling, and security features plus Amiga files, a multi-media programming tool. A1000 also comes in three configurations, ranging from a 160K/40K/50K head-disk to a 256K/100K/50K disc.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: From 120 x 100 to 640 x 400 (more possible in software)

Palette: 4096

Colours: 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 or 65536
Pixel: With resolution.

Monitor Output: Colour + composite video to monochrome.

Monitor Supported: Yes

Monitor Options: C104 £149.99
Notes: 16 hardware + optional 8000 from software.

Speed: Very fast with good software.

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Depends on monitor.

Music: Yes. Third party inter-face available.

Screen Output: 2 phone connections.

Performance: Amongst the best around. Custom hardware supports 3 channels of 8 bit digital sound into the four channels.

HARDWARE

Disk Formats: 1 1/2 inch - 875k. A1000 401000k/400k hard disc formatted.

Disk Prices: £1.20 - £1.50

Disk Performance: Very and fast

gish. Third party software is available to improve matters.

Keyboard: 81 keys. 10 function keys and separate cursor cluster.

Mouse/Joystick: 2 button mouse supported as standard.

Monitor: Two independent stereo audio channels (20 or 16bit). 171111 serial expansion compatible workstation video, expansion kit (licensed on 4 1700 & 4 2000). £1 bit on A1000s. Commodore expansion on A1000 only. Internal PC expansion on A1000, A1000 and A1000.

SOFTWARE

Existing Software Base: Similar to the ST.

Current Releases: Everyone's doing them.

Games: Something for everyone.

Graphics: Quality and range is unsurpassed.

Music: Needs better support for MIDI. Internal sound software is well supported thanks to 89 standards.

Prospects: Excellent.

Software Loading: Very bad. Very early installers. Mugged by clones.

UPDATES

Next Day Prices: 250 Amiga 1000 can be picked up cheaply though but these lack the entire graphics modes of later models. Try to find a good value pack.

Second Hand Availability: Growing summer. One buys are late Amiga 1000 with Kickstart 1.4.

Maintenance: One year guarantee. Return faulty machines to dealer.



Model: IBM's PC was the first PC to be accepted in large quantities from the first PC and remain the standard by which all others are judged. There are hundreds of clones and variations including offerings from International and Commodore. In general, after the Commodore, the original IBM you still get speed and better graphics standards. The extra money is worth it if you can afford it.

Package: Depends on the manufacturer although most are supplied with monitors. They are now being bought in 48 (most) or 60 (very) being.

Memory: Usually 128K or 640K.

Can be anything from 64K to 1024K. Always go for a 640K model.

Processor: Intel 80080/8088 in base machine is sometimes replaced with the faster 80100/8088. More expensive machines are based on 8088 multi-lead 386, 386DX, 386 and even the latest 486.

Recommended Retail Price: Can be picked up for as little as £200 for a "no frills" machine. With top-of-the-range 686 based clone - and the official IBM options - the days the term "junk for a good £100 or 200" model for between £750 and £750.

IN BRIEF

Speed: Expect if you want the ultimate all-around, the PC will be long in business origins. Almost every major software house now puts their titles to the PC but these remain lacking the consistency of the best third custom machines - which means they tend to be limited in sound and graphics. Definitely not first choice if entertainment is your preferred use for computers, or if you cannot afford the better VGA or VESA models (which are really essential for good games playing).

GRAPHICS

The first PC owner's filled with graphics as standard but most clones incorporate the necessary hardware and software a monitor. There are three main standards. CGA - a fairly but all-to-common colour display. VGA - the lowest colour display worth considering. VESA - an AdapteC/ leading display and Hercules manufacturer. ISA or VESA which are usually only fitted as standard to more expensive machines. (AdapteC/ V2000 is one exception).

Resolution: CGA 320 x 200. ISA 640 x 480. VESA 640 x 480. VESA 640 x 480.

Palette: CGA 4 bit (two fixed) and 64K/4 VESA 256

Colours: CGA 4, 64K 16, VESA 64, Hercules 2

Monitor Output: 15, 200MHz

Monitor Options: IBM 8345/4

Monitor Supported: Yes. Many monitors are designed to suit one or two models - some have colour, green or white monochrome display - check before buying.

Speed: None

Prospects: From very slow - 8000 - to very fast - 80486

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Built in sound is very good. Third party add-on sound boards such as Sound Blaster and Ad Lib 17100 - which is fast becoming a standard - provide synthetic quality sound through an amplifier.

Music: Third party interfaces available.

Screen Output: With board, yes.

Performance: Not the best machine for the money but 6400 - an Acorn/11 offers more for £400, the Amiga more for software sound boards.

HARDWARE

Disk Formats: 1 1/2 inch - 800K/800K 1 1/2 inch, 1 1/2 inch - 400K/400K

Disk Prices: 80p - £1.00

Disk Performance: Average. Most PC owners also buy hard discs.

A large amount of 16 bit applications software reduces for much until you

AMIGA

Models: Amiga 1000, A1000, A2000, Amiga

Package: A1000 has keyboard and built in drive with 400000 1700, A1500 and A2000 have separate key-

have a hard disk.

Replacement: Almost all entry systems as there are clones. Prefer the AT or extended AT layout to the XT layout since it's easier to use.

Keyboard/Mouse: Neither supplied as standard. The better choice includes a mouse or at least a mouse port, especially since many newer PCs (see Estimated) has become more popular.

SOFTWARE

Building Software Base: Visit Current Releases: all major software houses now produce some thing for the PC, with many now supporting the superior DOS3.0 mode.

Games: Most of the best Amiga 287 titles appear on the PC, eventually.

Graphics: Given the right graphics adapter, the PC has nice graphics and the software is usually excellent. On a standard VGA PC the graphics aren't as matter how good the software is.

Music: Unsurpassed it's pathetic however, add-on boards offer some of the best sound you'll hear on a home computer.

Programs: The PC is the eternal champion - its offers full by the way side it carries on getting better and better all the time. This is aided by just constantly improving the machine's processor and the vast user base demanding better equipment.

Software Loading: Fast and reliable, very fast from hard disk.

OUTLINES

Best Buy Price: Watch out for package deals from large chains and mail order companies. If you don't know too much about PCs, get for a

name you know.

Second Hand Availability: Common but be careful you do not get a doped out motherboard. **Maintenance:** Usually one year's

guarantee - but competition has forced the price of motherboard/keyboard down to an affordable level. This often means they fit in situ free.

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So, there you have it, the facts in full. Now all you have to do is decide which is the best machine for you. We at ACE reckon that these days, if you can afford it, you really need both a console AND a computer to cover all the bases of Advanced Computer Entertainment.

Our choices? The Sega Megadrive and the Commodore Amiga. The Famicom is a better machine than the Megadrive but it's official unavailability in the UK means that it's a bit of a dark horse at the moment.

But not all of us (any of us!) can afford to fork out the smackeroos for two machines, in which case our recommendation is to plump for the Amiga - it's a great all-rounder with some superb software available for it.

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MEGADRIVE



How many games have you bought for your Megadrive recently? And how many have you been pleased with? These questions that? The odds in the increasingly expensive game of Megadrive Roulette are becoming more and more unattractive. Like the computer market a couple of years ago, for every decent Megadrive game, there's at least one rubbish one.

While companies like Electronic Arts are getting to grips with the Drive and learning that games must be handled in a different way on Console and computer, games are still appearing from companies who you would expect to know better of a design strategy for standard.

However, perhaps this less than perfect state of affairs will simply force Megadrive owners to be more selective. It's good news for magazine sales, since owners will inevitably be happier to pay £1.95 for an opinion they can rely on when there is a danger of buying a real cinch otherwise.

On the upside, though, Drive software is fast

IBM PC



I like multimedia seems to be the subject of talk floating around the lips of many PC entertainment software developers. Since away at the Mother and multimedia both down to an entertainment/ education software system taking full advantage some audio/video technology hooked up to a mass storage device, very usually a CD-ROM drive. The reason software developers are getting so excited about it is that multimedia software is the sort of thing you can get anybody interested. Not just computer tech heads, but just wide eyed game freaks, any Joe Shmoe or Jerry Seinfeldian that walks into Deans with a few pennies to spend.

It's all down to the remarkable amount of information you pack onto CD-Rom type optical storage devices. Instead of a couple of more aged based papers on the file screen and peevy looking speller throughout the rest of a game, it's wholly possible to have plenty, literally thousands, of stunning graphics. Instead of a few

ing stuff becoming more varied, and the number of scoring shoot-outs in Battlefield on the wane.

The rather unexciting titled *Calbert versus Calton* and the *NBA Playoffs* is a fine example of just that, being a damned bad basketball game.

Featuring eight teams, you can face off any team against any other, and either play against the machine or a friend.

Each team member has an ability of his own, sounds like a fantasy role playing game, and their attributes can be displayed while making team selections.

These abilities fall modelled on the real-life performance of the human players are mirrored in the game itself. A player who has an excellent basket shooting record is more likely to score from a distance than someone who's not.

Control over the player works in KickOff style, identified by wearing black shoes instead of white, the player currently under your control can dribble, pass and shoot the ball upon your command. Getting used to the passing ball items, and the keypad makes it a bit tricky, although generally it isn't too fiddly.

The characteristic behaviour of the players even extends to the way they shoot the ball. Some will try to dunk it, others will aim it in, while some may try flamboyant manoeuvres will silly names which rarely work.

LEADER offers arcade-quality play and enough in terms and capabilities to keep your mates baffled for weeks.

Michael Evans

carp steps to make up the games sound, full stereo-CD quality samples can accompany anything you do. With the 950MB or average CD-ROM disc can hold there's no problem of jamming everything 3 and a quarter inch floppy.

Best of all, the technologies all available right this moment and at extremely reasonable prices. Intel's recently launched 750 MHz chip set can easily deliver the awesome amount of processor grunt needed to create highly complex 3D speed animation. Funny enough it's available as a PC board. CD-ROMs been around for a fair while, mostly used for entertainment and utility software. Tandy has just announced a fully fledged CD-ROM system for just £399 (transmission matrix translates that to the £230 ballpark). Funny enough Tandy have reserved the PC market as their major target - it all adds up to the PC being the most pragmatic choice for anyone looking for a mass-appeal multimedia. So if this stuff's all available right now, why aren't we all

THE SOFTWARE

The software to take advantage of these wonderful boxes of tricks has just failed to materialise and the reason why? Standards, or rather lack of them. There's no one standard platform for the type of computer entertainment to be run on. Luckily things are looking up. Microsoft have announced plans to fully support a large number of multimedia graphics and storage devices to be supported in their next release of Windows. That should be due in the summer of this year.

DIRECT LINE

To YOUR micro...

Monthly machine specific columns for the users of the ten most popular machines, written from a personal viewpoint by other users...

Also Sony and Nintendo collaborating on a proposed standard that encompasses multi-media in entertainment computing, based around a highly powerful video chip, set that could easily appear in the form of a PC plug in board. Microposers are just about to announce a proposed set of guidelines for the standardisation of CD-ROM based multimedia software, with the PC at its centre. Obviously there's a lot to be for the big boys to slug out before a solid standard has been decided upon. But it's happening.

BUT WHY OF THE GAMES?

But will it mean better games? Certain outcomes seem to check in cartoon laughter instead of jokes and it's a worry that some publishers' games will give in terms of presentation rather than content. The switch from entertainment software so we know it now to that of the future is very large and developing the new techniques needed for this type of coding will definitely mean a few stumbling steps. Done so they are steps in the right direction.

COMPETITION

Just room for a final coupe to round off with this month. The first entry out of the hat will receive five pieces of PC software of our choosing.

Send your entries to the normal address.

The question:
What does IBM stand for?
See you next time!

AMIGA



Remains are abound at the moment regarding a new development on the Amiga hardware front: the likelihood of Amiga cartridge-based games. If the rumors are to be believed, the new machine will offer the games player games that currently play fine on more disks, or on compact cartridge without the annoying loading breaks associated with disks. If this is true, then games such as Dragon's Lair and its many sequels and 3D titles will have more memory available to them, which will also allow developers to add extra stages or add-up most titles' final end and presentation. In addition, the main focus of such a system is that it will effectively kill off the software industry's arch-enemy piracy.

From what we have heard, Microbrag are already looking into the possibility of the system with their PC spin, Wing Commander, the first look-up for release. Apparently, the Amiga version will span an additional 30-40MB (which still may not have been necessitated for the South Seas version), and being it on to car-

tridges will not only make the game more accessible but probably cheaper, too. One problem is how to do it, though, and that is with licenses. As since we looked at the feasibility of cartridge titles, there may be slight problems in whether companies who own a license will be allowed when they want to ship it on a cartridge as well as on a disk. This is certainly a gray area of the moment, and will take a long time to settle before any companies spend time, effort and money on releasing cartridge-based titles to the arcade conversion.

Even so, creating a cartridge system could be the best logical step in terms of game design. Imagine a game with graphics similar to those of the Dragon's Lair series, only coupled with the gameplay that those titles lack - if the rumors are to be believed, the cartridges could handle it. In addition, the possibility of career games improved, added to, and even compiled games that for more affordable games, both details as exactly at the moment, don't hold you back for the system, but even so, this could be the development which extends the Amiga's user base even further and makes it even more affordable.

DRUG INFO

Each of the role game sub-games will be performing a different cover theme to Ocean and their developing team, Ocean France. Of an currently in the process of converting the title-over Dragon's Lair, Snow Bros. over to the Amiga, and, from what I have seen, this is going to be one to watch. Usually, Snow Bros's gameplay is akin to that of Tetris' classic, Bubble Bubble, so much that the same bones of the game makes clearing a number of screens of their alien inhabitants.

However, when so Rain and Bob were armed with a huge supply of bullets to do their dirty work, Snow Bros's controller, a little woman - you probably haven't seen a number of controls which, when added to an analog, cover them in more and temporarily double them. By making this process, they are essentially turned into controls which can then be picked up and rolled across the screen. As the ball patterns used a camera of over the screen, taking anything in its path, before starting into a wall and killing it, occupied. Each of the pattern-based games must be cleared within an set decreasing timer, and success grants the player with access to the next of the fifty screens.

The conversion is as close as we have come to expect from Ocean France who, in the past have been responsible for the ballist Ping and Cast conversions, and contains nothing from the original video. The graphics use the Amiga's entire 32-colour palette, and the speed of the original has been slightly increased, resulting of an almost perfect conversion. If Ocean games are your bag, then you are going to love Snow Bros. Actually, what we're on the subject of analog-to-digital conversions and the Marston game, it seems that Ocean are also going to be producing conversions of the first game in the Bubble Bubble series, which is called something like like Liquid War, and Ocean France are currently about to begin work on Hammer Bros as soon as their duties in the aforementioned Snow Bros are complete. Here is where at the moment, but we expect that DragonBall will be drafted in for the Liquid War homebrew - originally when you have superb Bubble Bubble conversion.

Steve Ward

ATARI ST



It's hard to keep up with Microbrag's outpouring of music products for the ST; it seems that you're just finished making one sampler or music set only when there's another one on the market.

The latest releases are **Quartz V1.5**, an update of the 4-channel "sample sequencer", and **Playback**, a second-epoch cartridge which gives the ST, STX and STFM the stereo capabilities of the STX.

Quartz V1.5 has a main level if you launch the ST's musical interface when compared to the Amiga. At the normal price of \$49.95 it's reasonable, but of the introductory offer price of \$24.95 to amateurs.

Ripping on any ST without the need for additional hardware, it's very much intended to give the ST the same sort of sample-sourcing abilities as the Amiga, allowing low sample-rates taken-in can be chosen from the 128 word library provided, or imported from Microbrag's floppy or other popular samplers.

Since the samples are imported at up to 15000, you're in good luck you can take to the sounds through a TL module, or simply a floppy cartridge. Sample processing software lets you loop, filter or repeat samples

before adding them to the 256-word library which is available for each Quartz composition (there can be saved as three sets).

Quartz's main display has a conventional musical view on which you can enter notes by selecting their value from a menu box, clicking on the required screen position, and adding to the current pitch. This is a hit-and-missible process, but you can enter notes much faster directly from a MIDI keyboard.

We can't tell the music for an individual note or for the whole composition, and once you have the basic composition laid down, you can add it by recording voice change messages, loop points, velocity (or "velocity" up to 100 times) or you can have auto-tuned, solo-fades, slides, transpositions and so on.

The results can sound very professional with a little patience, and the package includes modules which allow you to select Quartz' compositions in your best programs written in assembler, Basic or C, so Quartz is not as suitable as a development tool as it is for working around programming software.

Version 1.5 allows STX owners to output through the stereo ports simply by pressing F5, F6 or 1 and 2 go through the left channel, voices 3 and 4 through the right. For ST, STX and STFM owners, pressing H4 will route output through the Playback stereo cartridge. If you already have Quartz V1, you can upgrade to the double-sized 10.5 disk, which includes the new program, more demo-music and samples. In ST, if you want to upgrade to the new version of all three Quartz disks, which again have extra demos and samples on side 2, it will cost \$5, and don't forget to return your original disks to Microbrag.

The other new product, **Playback**, is an interesting-looking grey box which plugs into the cartridge port, and has two phone socket outputs which allow you to

connect it to an external amplifier. It's compatible with **Quartz**, **Reply H8**, **Reply Professional** and **Microbrag** II software, adding stereo capability to what were mono samplers. But remember it's not a sampler itself: if you want to digitise your own sounds, you have to use one of Microbrag's other hardware samplers.

Normal price is £29.95, but again there's an introductory offer price of £13.95. One of the low price you might not think it worth the bother, but the **Playback** package also includes **Drumbeat**, a 4-channel 128-word drum sequencer program which also "lets" it output 15 samples to be recorded, up to 50 drum patterns can be compressed and held in memory at once, then assembled into 16 songs, each of up to 32 steps. You can alter timing values and/or pitch, and control timing internally or from an external MIDI clock, which makes **Drumbeat** a good alternative to a cheap MIDI drum machine.

In the package you also get a **Quartz Demo**

Driver, which allows you to combine your own Quartz compositions, groups, delays and varying messages in colour or from menu editors. Lastly the package includes stereo output drivers written in HiSoft Basic, GFA Basic, STX3 and machine code, so you can even use the stereo sound in your own programs.

Since Microbrag are marketing ST software development, you can take their programs **Playback** compatible, and public domain libraries are supporting Quartz with additional fonts and samples. It looks as if nothing can stop Microbrag's domination of the ST amateur music market. **Buy!** **Play!** **Microbrag**, PO Box 68, St Austell, Cornwall PL25 9HL, Tel. 0756 48000.

Steve Ward

PC ENGINE

Welcome to the June column for the PC Engine. This month has seen very little in the line of new Engine games. It seems that all the games suppliers in Hong Kong have slowed down supplying games, etc. for the PC Engine, and are concentrating on the Super Famicom and the Megadrive. This means the US mail order companies now have to deal directly with the Japanese companies. This means that the latest games will get to our grey shores slightly quicker. It also means that there may be a slight increase in the price.

THE LEGENDS OF TOMRA

Back to the new releases. The highlight of the month is the release of The Legend of Tomra. In this game you play the heroic Tomra who must recover lost treasures, etc. The game itself is full of platform-type action, with lots of baddies to keep you amused. The graphics are almost arcade perfect, and good sound effects and music are abundant. The only bad point for the game is that the gameplay is a bit repetitive, with the same sort of

action all the time. Overall if you liked the arcade game you should love this, but otherwise there are better platform games aimed for the PC Engine.

TV SPORTS FOOTBALL

This game made an immense impact on the computer scene when it was released several years ago, and now it's out on console. The object is simple: play for, and make strategic decisions for, an American football team. The graphics are the same as the Amiga version, with plenty of speed and color. The game itself takes a bit of getting used to, but soon you'll be throwing touchdown passes, and intercepting practically everything. The game also features transmission screens with cheerleaders and reporters. This is the first incarnation of a Championship game onto a console, and if this is anything to go by, it is looking forward to the release of it Game-Foot The Desert, and TV Sports Baseball.

ZERO 4 CHAMP

This month's final release is Zero 4 Champ, in which you participate in that dangerous sport of drag racing. The try to progress up the rank ings, aiming to beat and beat become the champ.

HERE BE PRIZES!

I was surprised to read an article in NCL about forged console games. The prizes apparently target the PC Engine and the Megadrive. I had never seen or even heard of copied PC Engine games, but with a few phone calls to people in the know, I found out that the problem was quite widespread. The copied games first came from the Far East, and were sold to mail order companies as if they were new.

New games have been got the technology to copy the games themselves. Some of the pricier games are of obvious inferior quality (the packaging is often photo-copied etc.), but others are so well printed that it is impossible to tell the difference from the original. Prizes is a serious problem, and drives consumers from the computer writing games, possibly sending them out of business. Let's hope the law catches them on these matters as soon as possible.

TOP OF THE POPS

If you're in doubt as to which games to buy here is my top five which I think deserves your hard-earned cash.

- 1. **Master Blaster.** A classic game. The idea is so simple that it sur-

prising nobody thought of it before. The great bonus with the aim of clearing the screen of the baddies. Great fun in multi player mode. My personal favorite.

- 2. **Powerball Football.** I recently rediscovered this at the back of my games collection. The console answer to Kick Off, at least until KD is released into the Super Famicom.

- 3. **Parasol Stars.** The continuing saga of Bub and Deb in the CLITE game. Platform action at it's best.

- 4. **TV Sports Football.** Just released, and like Parasol Stars will sell out very quickly, both here and Japan.

- 5. **Jackie Chan.** A great action/drama film romp, with lots of kung fu action.

By Geoff Knight

THE END OF AN ERA...

At 11 years a well deserved to the PC Engine collection for the Miscellaneous section, but most success continues new Super Nintendo and Lynx releases into the second edition. Being to end of our first year and this issue, if you've got them all together and officially release the collection in the UK, the subject will return.

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GAMEBOY



No marketing speak. Let's get going straight away and take a look at a couple of imported games!

DRAGON'S LAIR

Most readers will no doubt be familiar with *Dragon's Lair* graphically amazing but totally unplayable *Dragon's Lair*. As a conversion it was perfect - because the original console was totally unplayable as well!

So it was with more than a little concern that I plugged the cart into my Gameboy. Without the superb graphics and sound, would there be anything to hold my attention? So imagine my surprise to find that *Dragon's Lair* is not bad at all.

Mind you, it has to be said that, as a conversion it's got the game designers have cheated a bit. The only link left between this cart and the console is the game's name. Some are the cartoon-like graphics. Instead, the player now has to guide Dirk around a network of platforms, avoiding monsters and treasures and collecting flashing gems (a bit like *Super Mario Land*). Dirk has been reduced to a tiny, almost unseeing missile, sprite, but the scrolling, backgrounds are superbly drawn. There's quite a bit of gameboy variety - use part of the game overboard. Dirk riding a speeding motorcycle like *Indiana Jones* and the Temple of Doom.

Overall, *Dragon's Lair* is a decent game. The platform action is a little on the fiddly side, due to small size of the sprites, and it's very tough. Unless you have the reaction speed of a catwalker, you'd be advised to play the game as easy!

DUCK TALES

The more platform and it seems game designers think that the Gameboy was built for platform and puzzle games. There's more, because *Duck Tales* is really pretty good.

You take control of Scrooge McDuck as he waddles and leaps through level after level of wacky platforms. Various monsters attack and try to make duck leap out of him, so it's lucky that he's armed with a wad of cash with which he can knock the baddies away. By jumping and pressing fire Scrooge can cling to the cane and use it as a pogo stick to bounce himself out of trouble.

Along the way there are special objects which, when hit by the cane, drop up to reveal gems and money - not the sort of thing the average kid foud.

Duck Tales is the sort of game to wear in the face of colour handsets owners who laugh at the Gameboy's graphic capabilities - it features some gorgeous backgrounds and large well-animated sprites. And while you're gawping, remind those *CyberCade* owners that the Gameboy's batteries last for more than a short car journey - unlike some handsets, I could mention...

But be warned that *Duck Tales* is *very* tough and sometimes frustrating. Which is a pity, because this game would otherwise be ideally suited to the younger gamers. If you fancy a real challenge, then this is the cart to buy.

TIPS, TIPS, AND MORE TIPS

Maxi *Wipeout* from *HamptonHill* has sent in a couple of tips for *Tennis* and *RAMM*. So, take it away, Maxi.

TENNIS

When serving, press A or B to force the ball into the air as usual, but instead of hitting it straight away, wait until the ball's in the high and press A or B again. Naturally, you'll miss, but you can now move the player up so that he's directly under the ball. Let it hit him on the head. You'll find that you've won the point without actually hitting the ball. Do this and you'll win easily.

WIZARD AND WARRIOR 2

Some playing tips:

- Level 1-0: Walk left and get the extra life and key.
- Level 1-1: Go through the bottom door, get the extra life, then leave the room.
- Level 1-2: Get the invisibility spell using the key from Level 1-1. You should now be in a room with three gems: take them, jump onto the life and jump to the right. Now you should be able to enter two rooms, one with a life and a key.
- Level 1-3: Stand at the bottom platform to kill the giant and finish the stage.

By David Graham

ACE + WORD

PUZZLE PRIZES

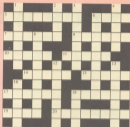
If you're the number of the first correct crossword solution out of five sent, you'll get a free game for your machine. We suggest that you submit quickly several times, but we'll do our utmost to ensure that the prizes get your favourite gaming. Don't forget to specify your machine format!

CLUES ACROSS

- 5 Carl is, um, developing Microstyle game (8)
 6 Mean to produce new title (4)
 7 Original digital computer! (6)
 9 Uncivilized game from Firebird (6)
 10 Is Gun Battle from Lankhor? (1,4)
 11 Step ACE's new edition first (5)
 14 A way to destroy art (5)
 15 Calling ACE before assessing less leaders from Ocean
 17 George The First - young version of Megadrive game (6)
 18 Laura's tantrum about game from Sega
 19 Cassette player on a ship (4)
 20 Pat's line playing Mark Eaton game

CLUES DOWN

- 1 Zortech's possible origin of the universe (3,4)
 2 Top games magazine's cards (4)
 3 The RAM's destroyed by pet (7)
 4 I'm taking a long time to get the picture (5)
 6 Any slaves struggling with new game from Ocean? (4,5)
 8 Fling stone at Core Design product (5,4)
 12 Trips up! (7)
 13 Game boy in pain (7)
 16 Betty decoded units of data (5)
 18 Part played in petroleum manufacturers (4)



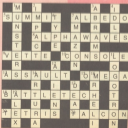
HOW TO ENTER

Every month we offer a free game worth up to £25 for your machine if you're the number of the first correct crossword solution out of five sent. The chance to score your solution is in ACE June 91 Crossword, Penny Quest, Countdown Live, London, £1000 Live, £1000 Live.

The deadline for entries is always the 25th of the month prior. Following the closing - usually by noon 26th - 1991.

APRIL 21 RESULT

The number of the April 1991 crossword was 104. The number of the crossword was 104. The prize is on the way. Pat...



Our monthly prize word puzzler, set by the inimitable MIPs

SHOP WATCH

The most frequently asked questions feature in computer retail are over the past few months have covered two subjects:

1. Mega-Land Discy - where is it going to be available as a stand alone product? and
2. Commodore's CDTV - when will it be available, how much will it cost, is it an improvement on the Amiga? when will the add on CD drive be available for the Amiga, and how much will THAT cost? and so on, and so on...

Well, here are the answers:
1. Last month - cost \$160 at least. If your retailer tells you different, then he probably has large stacks of the Discy's (complaints he would like to move from a 30 line version to a 40 line version is also "not even now"...

2. The strongest indications to the CDTV OFFICIAL Launch have now been received by three key industry figures (in other words, the AGI editorial staff). The indications were printed - lastly lastly - in CD MAGAZINE and the date is June 2005. It should be available to buy within the next two months. It will retail at £299 and, yes, it will be quite an improvement over a standard Amiga - already in the second department and

Software seller Dirk Longhorn looks forward to CDTV...

also in the oft ignored area of user and friendliness departments. The CDTV is surely going to be available in very small numbers initially and only through certain dealers. If your local dealer is going to be a stocker then urge him to hold a demonstration evening because it really is worth seeing.

Commodore have insisted that the price of the CDTV will be stable to last until Christmas and that the add-on CD drive for the Amiga should be released before Christmas and will retail at £299. This, if true, will surely ensure the success of the machine. It will be THE add on that every Amiga owner will demand from Father Christmas and if I were you I'd ask your local dealer NOW for one you see, because demand is sure to outstrip supply once existing owners have seen the enhancements

possible with CDTV.

Speaking of enhancements, those flight sim enthusiasts with a 386 based VGA PC are in for a real treat within the next few days. FSX Simulator is being released and will crash along all that mountains of previous incarnations. The graphics display is so highly detailed it could be a real simulator and if you think you've seen smooth fast graphics in a flight sim then you're really ought to see this.

Games will be providing dealers with demonstration disks to don't feel shy about asking him to demonstrate it for you. If you really want to be really, take along an Amiga-carrying friend who has C28 and ask to see it - although it would probably be more for watching your friend's face!

With the launch of Sega's Game Gear, commodity only machines being the hand held console leader is really hotting up. About time too, with just Lynx and Game Boy there seemed to be an unofficial truce with each machine professing to be aimed at different ends of the market. Total lack of sound, there is only one market and it has no ends - people either want a hand-held or

they don't. It's in the consumer interest for there to be a competition between brands. It needs retail prices down and improve the rate of software production (because the increase in Lynx and Game Boy titles over the last few months) which encourages people to buy which stimulates more software and so on...

Some people are holding off from buying to see if there will be a return in the hand held war, but this seems pretty silly - both the Lynx and Game Boy have their own users and it seems unlikely that the Game Gear will be any different. Basically, the trade-off is between battery life and colour. You pay your money and you make your choice. Personally I'd pick the machine that has the first decent version of Quake for it.

Incidentally, don't quote me on this, but a little bird told me that Game Boy cartridges are actually produced in volume and just the machine is non-existent. I don't think the little bird has got it exactly right, but I don't think it's for nothing either. I'd leave you to draw your own conclusions.

and so are giving an amazing foot-bath in my place. Not content with putting out their little dogs that you can throw a token out at, there will be CDTV in September and Mega-Manager in December (in those people have no regard for family life!)

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HOT OFF THE SHELF

Summer's coming! Which, knowing our weather, will mean either three months of non-stop baking heat or constant torrential rain. Either way, looks like you'll be spending a lot of time indoors escaping from the heat/rain.

What are you going to do with all that free time? Why not play a top game? But what to buy? Just read on, and know that whatever you select from this list will keep you happy into the autumn and well beyond.

AWESOME

Agony ■ Amiga £24.95 ■ Atari TT £24.95 (without 1 disk)
A about "mix-up where you'll need to master four different gameplay styles if you're to sur-

vive. The first is similar to Asteroids, except that here your ship stays stationary and the aliens and rocks rotate about you. Next is a Space Invader-like battle against a giant space slug. After that you pilot your ship over the multi-dimensional parallel scrolling surface of an alien world, shooting aliens and searching for the landing bay. Finally there's a Gauntlet-style run-around the maze looking for the entrance to the space station. The graphics, wouldn't look out of place in an arcade. A stunning game, if a little derivative, and well worth its ACE rating. ■ ACE RATING: 900 ON AMIGA

BATTLE CHESS 3

Electronic Arts ■ Amiga £24.95 ■ Atari TT £24.95 ■ PC £25.95

Spiced its speech from Hollywood to the computer industry! This time round the rules are based on the Chinese variant of Chess, which introduces some new moves, has a river blocking the board (which some pieces can't cross) and lets the King's movement to an "Imperial Palace". As before the board is viewed in 3D, with all the pieces taking each other in a variety of amusing and well-animated ways. While a bit slow and lacking running from Ruggles, due to all the die snapping, a hard disc shows the game to be far faster and more lethal than normal Chess. A game that should keep even the most jaded

Chess fan happy.

■ ACE RATING: 891 ON IBM PC

BOULDERDASH

Vector Medical Industries ■ Gameplay £38.95 (import)
Yet another steal from the C&A catalogue of great games. Hey kids, remember that Guide rule and carefully foot-foot around crimson (that's joypad) controls for more than can be copied on one hand) masses of boulders and enemies in pursuit of diamonds. But bear in mind that digging around boulders can make them tumble down on your head! An arcade puzzle game of the most addictive kind and yet another game ideally suited to the IBM hand-held wonder. ■ ACE RATING: 910 ON GAMEBOY

BRAT

Imageworks ■ Amiga £24.95 ■ Atari TT £24.95 ■ IBM PC £24.95

Where cartooning lead the way, others now follow - and why not as long as the game is as good as *Brat*? Little Nathan, the world's mightiest nappy-wearing rigger, wanders around various cartoonish levels. Unfortunately he's a little stupid, and will happily walk off the edge of cliffs and into traps and monsters - unless you guide him otherwise by placing direction-changing looms in his path. Those who are deft with the mouse can guide Nathan into

the coins and top littering the landscape for bonus points. A magic mix of cuteness and cut-throat, *Brat* will have you playing into the small hours. ■ ACE RATING: 888 ON AMIGA

CRACK ROCK

Cross Design ■ Atari TT £24.95 ■ Amiga £24.95

Impa-Impal Floor Crack Rock's spouts has been kidnapped by the Finnish Gary Gitter and is now held prisoner at the end of five massive levels of platform-jumping, rock-throwing, belly-busting pandemonium. Graphically, *Crack* is a real treat, with some hilariously animated dinosaurs and very slick 3D-rendered arcade-quality parallel scrolling. Although a fairly basic platform game, the varied backdrops, rapid pace, novel attack modes and humorous setting ensures that boredom won't set in. ■ ACE RATING: 886 ON AMIGA

FLAMES OF FREEDOM

Micropos ■ Atari ST £24.95 ■ Amiga £24.95 ■ IBM PC £25A

Now this is a challenge, how do you turn up a huge game like *Flame*? The big show has set in, and Midwinter is now Agira, the island HQ of the Atlantic Federation. You play one of their crack agents with the task of escaping an impending attack by the evil Saharan Empire. The majority of the game takes place in a massive solid-3D world, with your spy able to use any mode of transport he/she may come across, everything from on-foot to helicopter. But this is no shoot-'em-up. There's more than enough strategy and subterfuge to keep any non-arcade fan happy. A major contender for game of the year - already! ■ ACE RATING: 914 ON ATARI ST

GO SPORTS BOSS

Micropos ■ Amiga £24.95 ■ Atari ST £24.95 ■ PC £24.95

This violent clash between two solid-polygon generated pugilists is the best rendition of the "middle art" yet seen on a home computer. The use of polygons allows the action to be viewed from absolutely any angle, and a video playback option allows you to watch that decisive uppercut again and

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• ACE RATING: 900 ON 8000 FC

JOHN MACKEN'S FOOTBALL Electronic Arts • Megadrive £29.99

What a game! The definitive US footy game yet available on any home system. The graphics are superbly realistic - as is the gameplay - and the excitement is non-stop. The scripted events and goals add to the action. If you're a Megadrive owner then you'd be a mad to miss this. Set out for your software shop right now!

• ACE RATING: 900 ON 8000 MP

KILLING CLOUDS

Miramax • Atari ST £24.99 •
Amiga £24.99 • PC £24.99

San Francisco, 1980. (By the way, have you noticed how many games are set in 1980? Why the hell reputation?) The city has been enveloped by a thick poisonous smog, causing untold chaos and leaving the population at the mercy of psychotic criminal cults. As one of the last surviving officers in the SFPD, it's your job to try and restore law and order. The game takes the form of missions, where you must try and fly you hover-bike into the city fearfully protected, of course and try to arrest criminals and so forth. Exciting street-level action depicted in smooth 3D and a highly atmospheric plot combine in a superb game that should please any would-be gang buster.

• ACE RATING: 910 ON 8000A

LEMMINGS

Prophecy • Atari ST £24.99 •
Amiga £24.99 • PC £24.99

In an age of ever-faster vector graphics and smoother palette scrolls, Prophecy was the last company expected to release a simple-looking game based on the suicidal tendencies of some cutesy little rodents. The object of the game is beautifully straightforward - you must guide a certain number of randomly meandering lemmings to safety from one end of a path-drawn level to the other. You can employ various lemming with a range of special abilities, such as climb or dig, with which you can get them past traps and

obstacles. Incredibly playable and addictive, it's a game that will hopefully encourage programmers to spend as much time on a game's gameplay as its graphics.

• ACE RATING: 910 ON 8000A

PIPE DREAM

Blizzard • Amiga £25 (Import)

Most readers will probably be more familiar with this game under its original title of Pipemania. All the action takes place on a 16 x 7 grid. Using a cursor you have to drop varying sections of piping onto the grid, with the aim of making a pipeline for "flow" to flow down. Should the flow last before it has passed through a set number of pipe sections then it's game over. Later levels introduce directional pipes (the flow MUST flow a certain way) and obstacles. Incredibly addictive - it's the son of game the Gameboy was designed for.

• ACE RATING: 910 ON 8000B

POWERFRONTS

Electronic Arts • Amiga £29.99 • Atari ST £29.99

A new computer class, with the highest ACE rating ever. You play a warrior, raised from your homeland along with twenty followers, who has just landed on the shores of 200 islands, ripe for conquering. Unfortunately the current residents are not quite so keen on your enhanced leadership, and will do all they can to resist you. Using a similar viewpoint to Populous, the landscape is here polygon-based and thus can be manipulated in just about any way you require. The excellent visuals are supported by highly atmospheric sound. All control is by mouse, and couldn't be easier. To play it is to winship it. An absolutely essential buy.

• ACE RATING: 911 ON 8000A

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Broderbund/Softdisk • Amiga £24.99 • Atari ST £24.99 • IBM PC £24.99

A game that could so easily go unnoticed and unnoticed by the shelf-avoiding hordes looking for the latest Soosoo. The graphics, when static, are fairly unimpressive (although they do get better on the later levels), but when they move... The animation as you guide a young

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reposes, tricky courses and intelligently-driving opponents. The only place it falls down in comparison to, say, Goemlin's Lotus, is in the lack of courses. But as the review said, SMOG's well up with the leader.

➔ **ACE RATING 87% ON AMIGA**

INTOCHLASE 2

Gremlin ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ Amiga £24.99

At last! A game to make the 16-bit console owners realise that they haven't got the monopoly on slick graphics and superb gameplay. Although a sequel, the game bears few similarities to its predecessor. The inspiration from the Spider coin-op and obvious guide fire through level after level of baddy-laden mayhem, collecting varied (and wonderfully depicted) power-ups to help in the quest. Admittedly, there's very little here that you haven't seen before, but rarely has it been done so slickly.

➔ **ACE RATING 90% ON AMIGA**

TEAM SUZUKI

Gremlin ■ Amiga £24.99 ■ Atari

ST £24.99 ■ PC £24.99

Gremlin go from strength to strength with this marvellous bike game. The action is depicted using amazingly fast 3D polygon graphics, allowing a greater degree of realistic modeling for the bike's performance. Control is very responsive - perhaps a little too responsive, which can make play frustrating at first. Yet like game for the Amiga - but remember that you'll need to put in a lot of practice to begin with.

➔ **ACE RATING 90% ON AMIGA**

TURBIDIAN 2

Rainbow Arts ■ Atari ST £24.99 ■ Amiga £24.99

There are some games that you've got to have, the original Turbidian was one of them. It proved that, given the right programmers, the Amiga could do anything an arcade machine could do and better. The sequel, though still an excellent game, is perhaps a little too similar - it's almost everything - in its predecessor to become a clone in its own right. However, anyone looking to relive that old magic or has yet to discover it should go on an amazing looking odyssey.

£25 for IBM. The Atari ST version (rated an 88%) is especially worthy of mention for its superb graphics, which are rarely on par with the Amiga's.

➔ **ACE RATING 89% ON AMIGA**

WING COMMANDER

Origin/Mindscape ■ Amiga £24.99 ■ PC £24.99

Another 3D space combat game, but radically uses of stunning ray-traced and digitised graphics for the spacecraft. They rotate, shrink and grow with amazing speed and fluidity. Animated scenes punctuate the action and present the first true cinematic experience on a home computer. The multitude of missions mean this isn't a game of surface gloss. Satisfy only on PC, at the moment, and then best appreciated on the high speed models.

➔ **ACE RATING 94% ON IBM PC**

WONDERLAND

MagicSoft Sorbus ■ Amiga £29.99 ■ Atari ST £29.99 ■ PC £24.99

The Sorbus, having stormed the world with The Moon way back

in 1987, returns with a new classic. An adventure game based on the famous novel Alice in Wonderland, the plot follows the book enough to retain its weird flavour but not so slavishly as to make it soluble by simply knowing the story. The level text, teeming with hundreds of tough (but logical) puzzles, is accompanied by a number of stunning animated graphic scenes. All adventure fans know and pray - an essential buy.

➔ **ACE RATING 91% ON IBM PC**

WYATH OF THE DEERSON

Empire ■ Amiga £29.99 ■ Atari ST £29.99 ■ PC £29.99

Mainline £29.99 ■ C&A £24.99 A highly polished Shadow of the Great J looks. The plot is per usual slay-the-demon and-win-a-princess effort, but the superlative graphics and audio, combined with enjoyable, if ultimately shallow, gameplay. The game is split into 'scenes', each with a different style. I.e. lefthand-style colonial soldier or barbarian-style back-ten. This variety helps sustain longlasting interest.

➔ **ACE RATING 84% ON AMIGA**

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Park Ennol PH42 7SL.

HELP/INE

HELP NEEDED on SAT
Write to Kevin Langston,
15 Sprindwood Close,
Heath Hayes, Carmok,
Staff

Will anyone help me on the
Tutiles to get me to help
Splinter on Level 3 and 45,
I just can't get his if you
can tell me how to do the
burles. Reply to R. Thomas,
Lynx Crest, Dyfed, SA36
0B2

NEED help, students
might or anything that
would help me complete
Propolis, Omega LG 2
Powermanger, Amiga
AMS versions. Please
write to Daniel Moore, 133
Cambridge Drive, Ipswich,
Suffolk, IP2 8LN

Although I have a CPC I
am interested in Dragon
Computers the help I need
is free much it is and if it
is compatible with other
computers like the C88
64-128 Spectrum etc. if
you have any information
then write to: Magic
Systems, 4 Buckingham Rd,
Hemel Hempstead,
Herts HP1 7TU

NEED000 Hens and

Translation to Chase.
Sticker Book and Tips on
Powermanger please. I
have a wealth of tips hints
for other games too
numerical to mention here.
Please write to: Mr PB
Booth, 4 Canterbury Ave,
Went, Essex SS16 2NA.

NEED Help with following
games Amiga Guild of
Towers, Rainbow Islands,
Turbo Outrun, 3 Out, 2
Out, Turbo Outrun, State
Powermanger, Heist 2
and Splendary 2. Send your
maps, games etc. to:
Daniel Moore, 133
Cambridge Drive, Ipswich,
Suffolk, IP2 8LN

Calling all Nintendo
owners, help is needed
urgently. If you are one
of the great owners of
Simon Quest please reply
you help me to get across
the large stretch of water,
and the large off shore to
the grandest. If in please
write to Christian
Anderson, The Old
Vicarage, Church End,
North, Somerset,
Lincroftville, LA2 7PZ

Please help: Sega Masters
Lithia 4 Winem can I find
the Statue of Spirituality?
Kopponin Miska Palms,
07942 2100 Oudine
Belgium

COMPLETE SOLUTION for
Shadow of the Beast 2
needed 081 643 0847 82
Computer Way Middlesex
Junction, Manchester M20
2EP. Oh and by the way
does anyone know the
cheats for Midnight
Resistance or Power? All
solutions needed for Amiga
versions Ask for David.

How to win on the ACE
Stockmarket. Send S&M to
"The Market, 40 Bow,
Becken Pettingham

S Perks, Success rate
80% +

TOWERS of Babel please I
am desperate on Group 12
Tower 5 Excellent game
would like to finish it please
help.

HELP! needed desperately
for Warhead (ST). I can't
get past the Mission with
the black hole at Star "OH
810". Please help me as I
haven't got a clue how to
complete it and it is really
frustrating me. I can give
the solution to total
Professor Warhead and tips
for Warhead, Interceptor,
Carrier Command (Action
Game) and Battle of
Britain. Please write to
Jonathan Stone
Maltby, Cough, County
Down, Eire.

ATARI Lynx owners help is
all hand. Put up with no-
one interesting games for
the Lynx. Then send S&M
to Andrew Reed 63
Cortney Selby, R.Volks,
Please write and support.

NOTICE

Unfortunately, due to space
constraints in the February issue,
ATF have been forced to
discontinue the use of the
Readers' Page. We apologise to
previous subscribers for any
inconvenience.

Any unpublished material will be
forwarded to the Publications
Editor. Readers who still take action
against Phobos.

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ADVENTURELINE

Stuck in an adventure? Want to know where to meet adventuring pals? Want to win a free ticket to an exclusive adventurers' convention? Want to know which number to phone for adventure help? It's all here in Pat Winstanley's latest and - sadly - final Adventureline. So what comes next on these Pinkies? Write to us with your suggestions at: Son of Adventureline, Pink Box, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU and stand by for a new section!

NOW HEAR THIS!

Although the Adventureline section is closing down this month, we will still be offering regular information for adventurers within the new section that replaces it. We're looking not only for suggestions as to what you'd like to see in each section (see above) but also for people to contribute to it. Do put those thinking caps on and let us know...

For years ago two brand new adventuring matters graced every magazine of the newspaper's shelves in the hope of being some thing about their hobby. At that time several magazines ran columns but as today, editors limited the space allocated to what was best to best as a minority interest.

Two of the best columns around were by the Pigeon in 44 and Keith Campbell in CMAG, but even these were insufficient to satisfy the cravings of our novice adventurers. Refusing to accept defeat they decided to set up a complete magazine dedicated to the interests of adventurers so that fellow enthusiasts could share information, opinions, hints, solutions and general togetherness. The result was Adventure-Probe which this month will see its 50th consecutive issue: making it the longest continuously running adventure fanzine around.

Probe started life being typed into a CPIC 128 using 'Samwell' with each copy printed out on a long suffering DMF2000 telex in its own right. Within a few months it became clear that a photocopier was needed so this was acquired over the objections of one husband and a bank manager. From that point Probe began to reflect the format and presentation it has today, an A5 booklet of some 48 pages crammed with everything that interests adventurers. Probe is still production a 4428 but the print quality has improved beyond recognition.

The chronology of Probe runs like this: June 1984 - first issue with a cover date of June 1986 - I peeped guilty and later editors have retained the mistake for posterity - such. The magazine was conceived as a club forum written by and for adventurers of all levels. From the start the emphasis was on home produced stuff even which, although well produced, received its exposure in the mainstream magazines.

November 1985 - Probe and Adventure Contact (Contact was exclusively for adventure writers and lasted around 35 months) split and Sarah Stansley took full control of Probe.

May 1986 - Mandy Rodriguez took over as editor of Probe and from Sarah Lansdowne, writing between the Drimes, comes this report:

Mandy saw Probe first on the recommendation of another reader and was immediately enchanted. "Everything an adventure needs," she said. When Sarah decided that she could no longer handle the work involved, Mandy was asked to take Probe over. Unable to stand the thought of Probe not appearing every month in her journal, she formulated for a month or less her agreed to shoulder the burden.

Surprisingly Probe is almost identical in format and content now to what it was five years ago.

The emphasis is still on homegrown software with reviews by readers rather than the editor. Writers are unpaid as the magazine is not and never has been profit making. Advertising is taken but if a game is stated the review will be published alongside the advert - no hidden format.

Currently the subscription list numbers around 400 and includes adventure columnists on all the major computer mags. In the summer of 1990 about a quarter of the readership gathered in a Birmingham hotel for the first Probe Convention (nice to see a meeting outside London for a change) and were entertained by the sight of Nic Rumsey - all 6'4" of him - arriving in traditional style with a silk lined velvet cloak, rope around waist and shoulder and chest, a long staff and a belt from which dangled a brass lantern and an oversized bunch of holly.

His appearance in the convention room was greeted by stunned silence, promptly followed by fits of appreciative giggles. On rising to the bar for a drink Nic was served by a splendid barmaid who giggled, went away, then returned a minute later in a pose which he had come from. Rather embarrassed Nic admitted "The other room." In fact he had stood up in the gents of the hotel. Believes it or not, the hotel is allowing the convention again in 1991.

The convention itself was an extension of the friendship circles which have developed over the years by post and telephone, through the medium of the magazines. Unlike many other fanzines there has been little in the way of serious bookering between members, the only black spot arising from a subscriber who bought a range of games from different homegrown producers, remained firm and then attempted to market them as his own. He was expelled.

In addition to the annual convention, a couple of local groups have grown from the magazine. One in Wigan meets monthly with up to a dozen readers from a 25 mile radius crisscrossing into a room full of computers to swap gossip, hints, tips, boasts, plotting, demonstrations of new games and several hours of fun. There is also a group which meets in Cleveland.

The magazine itself can be a little daunting at times to newcomers who may not understand the 'jargon'. For instance, Spectrum owners are unlikely to have come across the Gnu which takes its name from an enthusiastic appreciation of intrusion games. These tend to contain dark means which, if solved without a lamp, result in the intended adventure being eaten by a Gnu. Much better than taking over and mowing your head! I can exclusively reveal in this column that the uniform of a Gnu is long hair covered by a

FREEBIES

Mark Serididy, looks at some new releases in the wonderful world of PD

H of news this month is the arrival of the first completed AMOS game. What makes this a real sucker is the game has arrived before the complete Daylight 2 in the brain-child of the AMOS Club's Marco Pöllinghoff with graphics by his brother, Adam. According to AMOS entrepreneur Sandra Sheehan, the game benefits greatly from the compiler because it relies heavily on calculation. "The original version," she commented, "is a bit slow, but the compiled one can really fly..." Was that put intentional, Sandra?

The game, which has a multitude of options, had only just landed as this issue went to press, so I haven't seen it yet. However, according to Sandra the player can fight up to seven human foes on joystick and six, yes, six on the keyboard! or computer-controlled opponents in a battle for supremacy of the skies. Special bonuses allow for such things as extra weapons and even a cloaking device. A new version allowing multi-computer combat is being worked on, and thus you'll need 1 Meg RAM, two joysticks and seven friends. Daylight 2 is Licencedos - a measly £3.50 - order code LP017.

Other new releases include a new version of Reversi, Reversi 2, the sequel, plays like the original, but the new licencedos version has animated sequences based on themes like, Night and Day, Rain and Shine, and Cars and Buses etc. As the title change, an animated sequence fades from one tile to the other. Well, also new from the Spare stable are Aggravate and a parent pleaser, Play It Safe - a home safety program for kids. Finally, on a related topic, the Sandra Sheehan's TT20 PD library has now been taken over by Goodson Enterprises.

ACE FREEDOM WORKS!

ACE knows this column actually results in more sales for participating liberators - at least one has had to be reprinted from under the deluge of extra mail. So why, we wonder, are all these nice PC people writing back and saying it's not for us? Come on folks - if you don't fancy your boat will get sunk by the US and Japan crowd. Are you really going to suffer that outrage?

GO GETTER Amiga Mouse £3.50

I have seen the future of AMOS games - his name is Reversi Simpson. How can you describe a game like this in the few short lines allocated to it? Briefly, it's a 3D isometric board game with super graphics like life screen is a suit dressed and animated. The idea is very simple - and like High-Low, the computer gives you a number from 0/9 and you have to guess if the next will be higher or lower.

Sounds boring! Not on your nelly - because of all the extra features this is one of the most addictive games I have ever played. Since you start a game it's difficult to leave it alone. Everything about Go-Getter is highly polished - and the only criticism I have is the instructions, set on a rainbow background which makes them hard to read. Go Getter

SHARPERE PLUS

Thanks to the following:

PC Advantage Services - 0942 830440
Amiga AMOS PD Library - 0942 830285
ST Goodson PDL - 0782 239650, Bridgely
UK, 8 Minster Close, Ruyhugh, Essex,
SS9 5BP.

can be played with someone else or against the computer - and unlike most computer board games, this one works! Get it.

4-WAY LYNX Amiga Joystick £2.50

This is a puzzle game almost certainly inspired by Populonia but really nothing like it, invented and written by Andreas Anders. The idea is to link a series of line together. There are 22 levels in all, each one harder than the last, but the game includes a level creator so you can create your own levels.

This is a quiet game with a word count system that takes a lot of getting used to. In fact, you'll probably have to read the instructions at least twice before you get the hang of it. Once you do, however, you'll be hooked - I was.

4-Way Lynx has not attracted a lot of attention because of its apparent complexity - first-time users will probably need to be a member of Mensa with a duplicate in ten-physians to complete a level without reading the instructions. That should not be taken as a warning to avoid this one, it really is a great,

well polished and original game. However, I would urge Sandra to write some more level instructions - do that and you're on to a winner.

MONEY SPINNER ST Mouse £3.00

Personally I find that machine simulations about as interesting as watching paint dry and Jim Woodcock's implementation is, sadly, nothing new. There's nothing wrong with the game, the animation is adequate and the graphics interesting, if nothing special. The sound is pretty average - although a few spot samples do add a little and the bonus screens are fun. In its favour, at least you cannot lose real money. A fair amount of work has been put into this, but the idea is, frankly, rather tired.

EXODUS ST Joystick £2.00

Chris Jeffery's strange arcade shoot-'em-up is a curious mixture that looks something like a cross between Phoenix and Speedball with a pinch of Xexon thrown in for good measure. Quite what's going on in this game is beyond me - but who cares, it's darned good fun. The graphics and sound are well up to par for a budget title, the four-way scrolling landscape and animation smoothly as efficient. The idea is not very new, but it's a highly playable mixture which earns the bigger fringe more than your average, together great life from Budget.

It is with some regrets and many fond memories that I am finally handing the baton of Peak PD to someone else. My thanks and best wishes go to PD and licencedos authors for machines the world over. May all the long nights be worthwhile and your games be great.

PUT WIMSTABLEY THRU OVER!

At a recent computer exhibition, the latest rowing reporter was spotted wailing through the mists and accented by some demo writers. "Why can't we get a mention in your column?" they demanded. "Because Put Wimstabley's taking it over!" I replied heartily. And how do we get it touch with her? They cried. By writing to Peak PD, ACE, Proxy Court, 30-32 Farnington Lane, LONDON EC2R 3AU. Anything will do - as long as it's an original offering.

ACE DIARY

MAY 1991

12-18 MAY SOFTWARE RELEASES

Acadulea: Strategic III, Amiga (£18.95). Board game in which you must strategize your pieces to capture your opponent's flag. **Outburst Strategy (£20.99)**

Virgin: Isle (CPC £9.99 tape, £14.99 disk). Maze-capers with characters from the infamous comic. **Supremacy (C24 disk £19.95), oligarchic strategy/reading/writing/plotting action game set in deep space.**

Electronic Arts: Galactic Empire (C2, Amiga (TBA), 3D strategy game - Galileo (C4) Amiga (TBA). Rescue fire from the slabs of the futuristic dragon, filled in an "action" game.

Electronic Arts: Civilization II (Amiga £29.95). Carve out a career for yourself in the Roman Empire. **Powermonger: Old Road (£1.99),** hints and tips for all breeds.

Software Business: Water Grand Prix (PC, £25.95), water cycle racing game. **Millennium Strategy (C24) £19.95 tape, £15.95 disk).** One-to-one combat for one or two players set against five different historical backdrops.

Stonark: Aquila (Superman, C64, CPC £19.95 tape, £24.95 disk). Tengen color-up conversion flight off manoeuvres and fireworks to deliver packages around the world.

Sunday 12

Formula One racing: Monaco Grand Prix (United Computer Fair, Monday Evn, Lower Castle St, Bristol). Contact Bryan Butler on 02022 896610 for details on the one day show.

Monday 13

Tuesday 14

Independence Day, Paraguay

Wednesday 15

Football - European Cup/Final Cup Final

Thursday 16

Anniversary of the Relief of Mafeking, on this day in 1900.

Friday 17

Constitution Day, Norway

Saturday 18

Football: FA Cup Final between Tottenham Hotspur and Nottingham Forest at Wembley Stadium-Cup Final (United) vs. Tottenham.

19-25 MAY SOFTWARE RELEASES

Acadulea: such: Achilles' Championship Course vol 1 (Amiga, PC) £19.95, Macintosh £10.95, Amstruc disk.

Mastermind/InfoAmaze: Shakespeare (C2, Amiga, PC £9.95), Shakespearean text adventure from Infomaze's library.

Electronic Arts: Ball Game (C1, Amiga (TBA), Puzzle game.

Software Business: Living Against (C1, Amiga £25.95, PC £20.95), Puzzle game (jigsaws, either traditional or with various templates).

Audiogenic: Trackers (C1, Amiga £26.95), Space-based shoot 'em up.

Interplay: Cyberball (Amiga £24.95), Two player arcade style game.

Resquing/Domark: Symbic (C1, Amiga, PC) £1.95. Second chance to buy this shoot 'em up on Stonark's Budget label. **Royal Pursuit (C1, Amiga, PC) £7.95, Dragon Spirit (C1, Amiga, PC) £7.95.**

Sunday 19

Monday 20

Tuesday 21

COBOL Europe: 3-day conference and exhibition at Novotel, Farnborough, London W6, Charles

Leibnigh, 25, became the first person to fly non-stop across the Atlantic, from New York to Paris, on this day in 1927.

Wednesday 22

Thursday 23

Cricket: One-day international, England vs West Indies.

Friday 24

Saturday 25 Independence and Army Day, Jordan Cricket: One-day international, England vs West Indies

26 MAY - 1ST JUNE SOFTWARE RELEASES

Acadulea: such: Mafeking extended Play Book (Amiga, PC, (TBA).

Virgin: Sandlot (C1, Amiga, PC, C24 (TBA).

Electronic Arts: Brigade (Amiga (TBA), Wargame (scrolling real-time action, digitized sound), non-editable scenarios and scenario disks 10-10000.

Electronic Arts: Magik Castle (C1, PC) £29.95. Sports and entertainment in this role-playing game from Blackwell.

Oxford Software: Chess (1/2) £9.95 (TBA).

Audiogenic: Trackers (Amstruc, CPC £16.95 tape, £14.95 disk).

Stonark Computers: Aqueduct (C1, Amiga (TBA).

Domark: 888 (J) Baseball (Superman, C64, CPC £19.95 tape, £14.95 disk, PC, Amiga, PC £20.95), Baseball sim featuring 15 teams and complete with 1990 statistics to help your team selection.

Sunday 26

Monday 27

Spring Bank Holiday (UK, Cricket: One-day international, England vs West Indies: Tennis: French Open Championship begins in Paris

Tuesday 28

Wednesday 29

Memorial Day, USA Day: Apple Day

remembered for the flight of Charles II after the battle of Worcester in 1651. He hid in an oak tree to avoid capture. If you feel particularly keen to demonstrate your loyalty to Charles II, wear an oak leaf turtleneck today.

Thursday 30

Friday 31

Republic Day, South Africa

JUNE

Saturday 1

Victory Day, Tunisia 1951: reports that Hillary and Tenzing had colon-quizzed Mt Everest were confirmed.

2-8 JUNE SOFTWARE RELEASES

Acadulea: Conspiracy (PC £25.95), Clear name from the murder suspect file. **Strategic (C24) (TBA),** Board game in which you must capture your opponent's flag.

Micro Business: Discovery (Amiga £25.95), Exploration and alien-fighting aboard a crashed spaceship.

Virgin: Magnetic Anvils Collection vol 1 (PC, Amstruc) £14.95.

Electronic Arts: Skills of Mathematics (C1, Amiga £25.95).

Stonark/Palace: Metal Mutant (C1, Amiga, PC) £25.95. Garage band 'em up.

Sunday 2

Formula One racing: Canadian Grand Prix (Montréal)

Monday 3

Tuesday 4

20th anniversary of Tusserman Square massacre

Wednesday 5

The Derby at Epsom

Thursday 6

Cricket: First 3-day test, England vs West Indies/Friday 7

Saturday 8

Wrestling: The Oaks at Epsom Hill. Some prices uncertain this month due to VAT increase.

THE W E E K L Y E N D

A GOLDEN AGE?

Super Mario World on the Nintendo is an awesome creation. If ever anyone doubted whether games could inspire art, they ought to spend a few hours with it; it probably became a few weeks with this one. You can read more about it in this issue, but IBM really deserves an entire magazine to itself. As far as Miller's concerned, this game is evidence that video entertainment has truly arrived.

We have to credit the Japanese with starting the journey. It's true that they have vast R&D budgets to work with, but throwing money at game design doesn't necessarily produce a good game, and IBM is an ultimate classic. And it's the most recent of a long line of tremendous game concepts — the original Super Mario was superb and Donkey Kong, in which Mario first appeared, was a stroke of genius.

There are also lots of Japanese games that we very rarely see over here and which deserve far greater recognition — something they'll get, hopefully, now that Japanese console software is becoming more widespread. How many readers, for example, remember *Mappy*? This horribly addictive platform game topped the Japanese charts for months, and featured a fabulously original scenario in which a cat bounces between platforms using trampolines. *Sopors*. And then there was *Sakusaku Wars*, which featured a unique control system for manipulating hundreds of on-screen soldiers. You named the general, and everyone followed. Select other leaders, and their various squadrons followed. Select a single warrior, and he fights alone. The game was a frantic rush over a bloody landscape, but none the less gripping for all that.

Things are going to get even better when we get a more global console market. (In Westerners we pretty much all game design as well, but the directions we move in tend to be very different. Of course, there was *Nebuta*, a very Oriental-style business though not in sales terms, but for the most part our users tend to simulator-inspired efforts like *Gal Meier's Railroad Tycoon* and *Ultima VI*. We've also been more successful than the Japanese in integrating new graphic presentation styles — look at *Papadon*, for example — with more complex gameplay.

Together with the proliferation of optical disk technology, the next two years look like being a golden age for gamers. Even in the short term we've got some starters to look forward to: *Gal Meier's Civilization*, for example. Besides to do for mankind what *Railroad Tycoon* did for chuff chuffs. If Sid doesn't take off more than he can chew, this could turn out to be a classic.

David Robinson's been quiet for a while now, but you could be making users of this in ACE very soon, with a launch planned for Spring 1992. *Ultima VII*, like all the others, will combine Ultima depth of play with King's *Conquest* graphics — help!

And there's more. The possibilities of two-field-of-view gaming, possibilities that haven't even begun to be exploited. Imagine a Game Boy version of *D&D*, played by four players simultaneously using the

four player link up. Teamsters could do round in a circle and explore the dungeons separately or together, each with real time control of his own character. Hot stuff! And what about the Sony Data Discman — when the graphics models come out, you can expect some mind-blowing titles on that. Even ACE is threatening to go portable...

No doubt about it, there's never been a better time to get into gaming. Miller used to sit back in the old armchair and reminisce about Pac-Man, but not any more.

And as if to prepare themselves for the Golden Age, software impresarios have been playing musical chairs, jockeying for positions that will carry them into the '90s. Their movements can teach us a few lessons. Unstable American boss Rod Cousens has gone to America, so he's obviously in to do about Nintendo's future in Europe. Microprose UK boss Peter Jones has abandoned Prose to join narrative software giant Sierra — and don't believe everybody who says the Broderbund deal isn't going to happen. Finally, Andrew Hewson has managed to move from a company with lots and lots of debt to one with...hey presto!...no debt at all.

— Bob Bell

IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

The next issue of ACE hits the streets on June 8th — and it's going to be a corker. For the first time, ACE goes **RIGHT AROUND THE WORLD!** We'll be bringing you details of games culture from Finland to Tierra del Fuego, from Bombay to Bratislava. Don't miss it!

PLUS:

- ACE Conference get on the road again. See page 28 of this issue if you want to participate.
- News of a major entertainment event later this year, sponsored by ACE.
- A 5.1g round another world, created by the new Dimension Superscope system.
- All the latest games titles tried, tested, and tortured...plus much, much more!

Dear Newsagent,

Allow me to introduce myself as a potential customer of your fine establishment. I am a sophisticated connoisseur of digital entertainment — a medium that will change all our lives. Please reserve me a copy ACE magazine — the most authoritative coverage of the future of game technology. PS ACE is out on the 8th of every month.

Name _____
Address _____

YOU WON'T BELIEVE IT!

Remember our exclusive report on Steve Spielberg and the ACE VR system? We soon thought that some readers might take us at our word, but... First, we received a letter... (all from a foreign gentleman who wished to... offer Spielberg financial backing... But it was all a joke, no prize won. Scanned version of the other end, followed by... Oh, as I see... He-he and a shaking tone. And the letter? (In favour he was the one from an intrigued reader who said that we'd been... combed by Mr Spielberg. Oh surely not.

GO WILD!

No ugly wart-nose is gonna make a monkey out of me! But that's just what that witch has done - one minute I'm the mighty Goli and the next I'm having breakfast delousing my armpits. I can't walk a step without tripping over my knuckles and, oh, there's an overhanging vine - time to swing out sister! But my broken heart is going up. My beloved Miho I can't wait to share a banana with her! Has been kidnapped and somehow I've got to regain my manhood - until then I'm just swingin' in the rain!

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